

THE FREETHINKER

• EDITED by CHAPMAN COHEN •
— Founded 1881 —

Vol. LIX.—No. 19

SUNDAY, MAY 7, 1939

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions

The Consolations of Religion

I RECEIVE a fairly large number of letters from Christians who tell me of the consolation they have found in their religion. I daresay if I were to ask for them I could receive an equal number of letters from Mohammedans that they also receive consolation from their faith. The same would occur with the devotees of any other religion I cared to select. I do not question the truthfulness of any of these people: I would rather affirm it. But on running my eye over a number of quack medicine advertisements I get the same kind of information. I do not of necessity question the truth of even these people, who after taking certain pills or powders "feel better." It is quite beside the point for a medical man to point out that the ingredients of the pills or powders are innocuous, and could have no influence whatever on the diseases they were supposed to cure. The people who took them *felt* better, and they must be taken as authorities as to what their feelings were before and after. And even though some of them may have died from the diseases the pills were supposed to cure, yet the statement that they *felt* better stands. I also get the same assurance from some who think that a good dose of whisky when one is feeling depressed or "out of sorts" is a sure way of enabling one to face the hardships of this none too comfortable world. People get comfort from all sorts of remedies, religious and non-religious, spiritual and spirituous. That is one of the commonplaces of experience. The explanation of it would not be difficult, but it would take me away from the particular items I wish to bring before my readers.

* * *

The Appeal to Facts

For some time there has been lying on my desk a number of clippings from American newspapers, which show this theory of religious consolation in a peculiar, but not unusual, light. The first item is concerned with the celebrated Chicago gangster, Al

Capone. He is at present serving a long term of imprisonment in the Terminal Island Federal prison. He did not get religion while he was there, because he was always a member of the Roman Catholic Church. But, perhaps because Capone thought the Roman Church already had more than its fair share of the criminal population, and desired to help other forms of Christianity that were not quite so well-supplied with criminals, he has been converted by a Baptist Minister, the Rev. Silas A. Thweatt. Mr. Thweatt preached a sermon in the prison; the Lord moved the heart of the gangster, and Capone is now among the saved—a shining testimony to the power of religion and of the truth that Christ delights to get the biggest sinners. I do not think that the records of Atheism have anything of this kind to offer. The Atheist who has robbed, or murdered, or run a murder gang, has no way of getting forgiveness while he is doing a "stretch." His creed holds nothing of so consolatory a character. If I were to go and deliver an address on Atheism to the inmates of Dartmoor or Parkeston, I do not imagine for a moment that any Atheist criminal would jump to his feet and say he was "saved." I might make him feel sorry, I might induce the resolve to behave better in future, but I could not give to a hardened criminal the feeling that his past deeds did not matter, or that he would be counted as amongst the stars in the crown of the Saviour. In this matter Religion has something that Atheism is without.

* * *

Back to the Bible

Here is another example, also from America. Robert S. James has recently been electrocuted for the murder of his wife. It happened thus, James had been married seven times. The Lord only knows how he got rid of the previous six wives, but there came a day when R. S. J. hungered after yet another mate. James might have left his seventh wife and either lived, unmarried, with the desired number eight, or married her and so have been guilty of bigamy. Either of these alternatives would have shocked the religious conviction of Mr. James. The American nation, having no longer faith in the privilege given man by the Bible that if a man's wife no longer finds favour in his eyes then he may give her a bill of divorcement and send her about her business, James devised another plan—in fact, two plans. The first consisted in placing his wife's naked feet in a box of rattlesnakes. But the rattlesnakes, like the lions in the Bible who refused to eat the prophet of God, did not bite. So James devised another plan. He drowned his wife in a bath, and then, to give the appearance of suicide or accidental death, threw her into a fishpond. But he was discovered, tried, found guilty, and electrocuted. He did not, like another Biblical character, go to heaven in a chariot of fire, he got there through its modern equivalent—a flash of electricity.

That James has gone to heaven is no idle specula-

tion. James had always been a religious man, but a rather careless one. Still, he was no Atheist, and just as Al Capone would have urged that without religion no man's property would be safe, so James would have argued that if the belief in God were to disappear no person's life would be secure. While waiting in prison James became more and more religious. He was rebaptized, and his religious fervour was such, that after his conversion, as a Los Angeles paper says, he "never strayed from the path of virtue to the extent of smoking a cigarette." He read the Bible regularly, and confessed that "The Bible has shown me the way home." Whether his wife and her six predecessors had found *their* way "home," James does not say. Perhaps not; they had not committed murder; they had been given no time to "get right with God." James has at least shown others a way to salvation. Let us hope that many may learn the moral of the life of R. S. James.

* * *

A Convincing Case

Another instance, also from the United States (Columbia, South Carolina). In this case, six men were executed for murdering a warden, while trying to escape from prison. These men died as edifying a death as did R. S. James. They did not have quite so long in prison to meditate on religion, but they got there just the same. The first one to be executed, walked calmly to the electric chair, told those around him that he "had made his peace with God," and died in the calm assurance that he and God understood each other. He was not of such religious purity as James, because he walked to his death smoking a cigar. Another of the five was actually singing, "Lord, I am coming home," as the electric current was turned on. There is not a preacher in the United States who can say that this man did not reach his designated destination. It may be that by this time he has met James and "swapped" experiences. During the translation of the whole five from Columbia to Heaven the hymn "Till we meet with God" was sung. That hymn should be renamed "The Gangster's farewell to his Mates." An Atheist might have faced death calmly, but could he have looked forward to meeting his chums in heaven? Such profound faith in the presence of death deserves its reward.

But there was a sixth man? It is not said he was an Atheist, and one feels sure that, if this had been the case, it would have been mentioned. So unusual a thing would be what newspaper-men call "News." It is stated that this sixth man "expressed no interest in his soul." It is true he might have prayed privately, but he ought to have considered the feelings of the five. They were shocked at such behaviour. They knelt and prayed for his obdurate soul. They had earned the greeting: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"; they could bid each other good-bye in the face of the death chair, with a "Till we meet with God." They realized the glorious truth expressed by that great English preacher, Spurgeon, "You great sinners shall have no back seats in heaven. You shall be near to Christ. You shall sit with him on the throne."

How providential it was that the callous example of this single man was not permitted to weaken the religious convictions of the other five! Until their last moment on earth their eyes were lit with the faith that defies the terrors of this world and fastens its gaze on that brighter sphere that lies beyond the tomb. The sixth man could have no such consolation. The barrenness of unbelief, its utter inability to minister to a troubled mind, were never better shown than in these electrocutions. The five had faith in their God and Christians know that that faith is never in vain.

In Search of a Moral

Now, I feel that in all this there is imbedded some profound religious moral. There seems something "providential" in all that happened. Consider first the case of James. Providence did not prevent his killing his wife. If that had been done, he would never have been able to say that God had shown him the way home. His wife *had* to be murdered as the first important step in the salvation of James. Had she simply left him, had the Lord removed her by an ordinary death, still the salvation of James would have been uncertain. The wife had to be killed as part of "the plan of salvation."

Take also the case of the rattlesnakes. If they had bitten Mrs. James, she would have died a death that might very easily have passed for accidental. Her death had to be of such a nature that detection and conviction would follow. And it did. James at no time expressed regret for having killed his wife, or gave vent to a desire that she would also find her way home—the same home as himself. Greater things were in his mind; he had caught a glimpse of the "vision splendid," and was filled with thankfulness to the Being who had used his wife as the instrument of his own salvation. And who was he to question the wisdom of God's method of saving souls?

So with the other six. They might have been shot in some gangster's quarrel, and buried with no greater circumstance than that with which the earth is shovelled over a dog. They might have been "taken for a ride" by some rival gangsters and have passed from the scene "unshriven and unsaved." It was the murder of the warden that was operative in their case. It was also the murder that supplied the condition of their sanctification, and not merely the murder but their being sent to prison and so given time to turn their thoughts to religion. All the incidents fit together like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. Such a concatenation of distinct circumstances could never happen in a universe in which a supreme mind had no place.

The lesson to be derived here is truly a Christian one. The central lesson of Christianity is not so much that you must not sin, but that if you do you may escape the consequences of sin. The Atheist can hold out no such hope. He can only talk of "cause and effect" being as inevitable in the ethical as in the physical sphere. The Buddhist can only repeat that no man can escape the consequences of his actions. Modern science teaches the same hard lesson. It is Christianity that can take another view. It can recall the lesson of the thief on the Cross who went to heaven with Jesus because he had faith in the Lord. It is Christianity alone that can say with Martin Luther, "Sin and sin mightily, but have all the more faith in Jesus who conquers all sin." The power of God did not prevent these men committing the crimes for which they were executed; but it did save their souls at the last moment, and it is not the body but the soul that is of importance. And the power of God to save souls, the evidence of his desire that the sinner shall be saved, is to be seen in the fact that Mrs. James and a prison warden were used to save the seven sinners.

Perhaps I may not have caught the moral of these executions aright. So I offer a final suggestion. Some little time ago the *Daily Telegraph* published a number of letters from different people on "How to Find God." May it not be that R. S. James and the other six provided an answer to the question? After all, Christianity began with a murder, and but for that murder the world would have been without salvation.

Glances Back

Thinking of the days that are no more.—Tennyson.

We make and pass. We are all things that make and pass, striving on a hidden mission out to the open sea.

H. G. Wells.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE was the leader of the Free-thought Movement before Bradlaugh, and, as such, excited my youthful curiosity. Being in search of a portrait of Charles Southwell, I made this my excuse for seeing Holyoake at his house at Brighton. Frankly, I was disappointed at the meeting. He was old and querulous, and plainly annoyed at my act of hero-worship. I also was young and inexperienced. It was entirely my own fault, but I came away with the impression that the old lion was far more concerned with his own aches and pains than with his friend Southwell, and that I was as welcome as a hawk trying to sell bootlaces to a man with two wooden legs.

The next, and last, time of my seeing him was at an early meeting of the Rationalist Press, when he was chairman. Holyoake was unimpressive on the platform, small of physique, and with a plaintive voice. To one accustomed to the robust personalities and resonant voices of Bradlaugh, Foote, and Watts, it seemed almost impossible that Holyoake had ever any claim to leadership. Yet this pale, ghostly figure had, in his younger days, held the pass against the enemy. He had outlived his generation, and like Ulysses after his travels, faced a changed world.

Doubtless, it was a defect of his quality that made Holyoake so conceited in his old age. This trait crops up in his writings, for it is difficult in reading his *Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life* to resist the conclusion that other people were famous because they had met Holyoake. What galled him was the fact that Bradlaugh passed him in the race for leadership, and Foote succeeded Bradlaugh. Against such giants he had no chance of the "throne." He was left a lonely figure in his lonely furrow. There was a touch of envy in him. He quarrelled with Southwell; he quarrelled with Bradlaugh, and he did his utmost to quarrel with Foote. The Rev. Price Hughes, a very prominent Nonconformist minister, published a book narrating the bogus story of an infidel's conversion. Foote replied with his booklets, *The Atheist Shoemaker, A Lie in Five Chapters*, giving his proofs of the pious deception. Holyoake rallied to the defence of Price Hughes, his reply reminding one of the Irishman's defence of a charge of theft: "Two people say they saw me in the act. I can bring twenty persons to this Court who didn't see me do it!" That Foote was entirely right in his criticism is proved by the fact that later, the offending book was quietly withdrawn from circulation.

Dr. Edward B. Aveling bulked largely on my youthful horizon. I was little more than a schoolboy when I heard a lucid explanation of the mysteries of evolution from his lips. It came at a most impressionable period of my life, and saved me from becoming a nasty little literary prig. After that I heard him again and again, and read his books, always with advantage, for he initiated me to the mysteries of science.

Aveling had talent enough to have made a great name for himself, but he was erratic. With brilliant gifts as a writer and speaker he did not like continuous work, and too often trod the primrose path of pleasure. Still, he did real service to the Free-thought Cause. When Foote was imprisoned, it was Aveling who stepped into the breach, and edited the *Freethinker* for twelve months. Later, he drifted into the Socialist ranks, married the daughter of Karl Marx,

and helped to popularize the master's teaching in a very helpful volume, worth reprinting to-day, *The Student's Marx*. He was a brave soldier in the Army of Human Liberation, and no man could desire a better epitaph.

Aveling taught me one thing for which I shall always be grateful. It was that the book of the world is far more important than the world of books. Science is, indeed, the great corrective. Tennyson, staying at a country house, was gazing through a telescope at the heavens. "What do you think of it?" asked his host. "I don't think much of the county families," replied the poet. Science gives things a true perspective, and our entire educational system will be largely inefficient so long as it is based on ancient legends and not on ascertained knowledge.

To the solid ground of Nature
Trusts the mind that builds for aye.

William Heaford was another stalwart. He was a linguist, and had a very wide acquaintance with foreign Freethinkers. Possessing a shrill voice, and an earnest, intense manner, he was a singularly effective open-air speaker, but he was not quite so happy under quieter conditions.

In the late "eighties" and early "nineties" of the last century the Camberwell Branch of the N.S.S. was at the peak of its success. The evening meetings at the New Church Road Hall were filled Sunday after Sunday, and the morning out-door "services" attracted enormous crowds, due to the talented lecturers who spoke there. Foote was then still speaking in the open-air in the morning, and inside the hall at night, as did most of the other lecturers. At the hall he used to preface his lecture by a Shakespearean or other recital. His renderings of Othello's final speech, and of Tennyson's "Rizpah," were magnificent efforts, and challenged anything done on the professional stage. Other lecturers followed his example, notably Arthur Hyatt, who used to recite Buchanan's "Phil Blood's Leap," and George R. Sims' verses. This, remember, in addition to a string-band, and the lecture that followed. The audiences did not know how lucky they were, and what value they were receiving.

Hyatt was a deserved favourite. At one period he used to ride on horseback to the open-air meetings, dismount, throw the reins to a looker-on, and mount the rostrum. He was a good horseman, and a fine speaker, and the crowd idolized him. Once Station Road was packed with a huge audience. Raising his hand, Hyatt commented on the numbers facing him, and said that nowhere else in London could such a crowd be assembled to hear a discussion on religion. Someone in the crowd shouted "Spurgeon?" Quick as lightning, Hyatt replied; "The Boanerges of the Newington Tabernacle addresses mostly women and children. This audience is composed of men, and thinking men too." It was a palpable hit, but Hyatt could always hold his own.

Arthur Moss was another popular favourite. He used to bring an attaché case with him and sell his own books and pamphlets to the audience after the lecture. I believe that all his publications were produced at his own expense; anyhow, they sold well.

MIMNERMUS

Those who dwell in the tower of ancient faiths look about them in constant apprehension, misgiving, and wonder, with the hurried, uneasy mien of people living amid earthquakes. The air seems to their alarm to be full of missiles, and all is doubt, hesitation, and shivering expectancy.—John Morley.

Shakespeare's Religion

Our Prince of Peace in glory hath gone
With no Spear Shaken, no Sword drawn,
No cannon fired, no flag unfurled
To make his conquest of the world.

For him no martyr-fires have blazed,
No limbs been racked, no scaffolds raised;
For him no life was ever shed
To make the Victor's pathway red.

And for all time he wears the crown
Of lasting, limitless renown:
He reigns, whatever monarchs fall;
His throne is in the heart of all.

Gerald Massey

SHAKESPEARE is inexhaustible. Age cannot wither nor custom stale his infinite variety. Though the topic of his faith be trite, I also will give my opinion. *Shakespeare was a Freethinker.* To me it is incredible that the glory of the human intellect, the foremost man of all this world, was bound by the trammels of the Christian creed. But I would decide this matter on no high a priori grounds. To the evidence.

Let it not be supposed that his age necessitated that Shakespeare should be a Christian, either Papist, Anglican or Independent, for he has been claimed by each of these sects. Out of the fierce conflict of the generation which preceded him—a conflict above which his works rest serene and indifferent as the stars above the clouds—Freethought arose. The dominant note of the Elizabethan literature is that of freedom. It was swayed even more by the Renaissance of Paganism than by the Reformation of Christianity. Italian Humanism had not only infiltrated our literature, but, in the person of Giordano Bruno, its highest representative visited our shores just before Shakespeare went to London. Bruno had the friendship of Sir Philip Sidney and Fulke Greville. He lived here, as George Henry Lewes said, "in the interchange of great thoughts and glorious aspirations, in the high communion of noble minds." He publicly disputed at Oxford. That Shakespeare heard of him is more than probable.²

If ever man influenced Shakespeare it was Marlowe, the proud, full sail of whose great verse he possibly alludes to in Sonnet 86,³ and whose hand can be clearly traced conjointly with his own in *Henry VI.*⁴ Marlowe, says Swinburne, "first guided Shakespeare in the right way of work." Yet Marlowe was an Atheist and a pronounced anti-Christian. Only his death prevented a trial for blasphemy. Greene, in his *Groat-worth of Wit*, that "crazy death-bed wail of a weak and malignant spirit," immediately preceding his reference to that "upstart crow" Shakespeare, alludes to Marlowe as a companion in saying, "like the foole in his heart, there is no God," and mentions a companion who died miserably, possibly alluding to Francis Ket, M.A., who was burnt at Norwich (14 Jan., 1588) for blasphemy. Greene, as a Norwich man, would know of this case and the other martyrdoms for "blasphemy" in his city.⁵ Shakespeare's method of dealing with religion was not that of the irreverent Titan Marlowe, but he none the less shows that he only concerns himself with human interests.

² That Shakespeare was acquainted with the philosophy of Bruno is urged by Drs. Benno, Tscherschwitz, Brunnhofer and Falkson. Much also is said for his having been acquainted with Bruno's life and death.

³ Sonnets 78 to 86 fit Marlowe better than any other except Chapman. He is also clearly alluded to in *As You Like It*. Act III., sc. 5.

⁴ Swinburne and Fleay concur in this opinion.

⁵ Matthew Hammond in 1579, John Lewes in 1583, and Peter Cole in 1587.

The only evidence adduced in favour of Shakespeare being a Catholic, beyond the references, in character, to such beliefs as purgatory,⁶ is the tradition reported by Parson Richard Davies, who died in 1708, that "he dyed a Papist." That this is without authority, the late date, together with the fact that Shakespeare was interred in the parish church, suffice to show. But, as Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps points out, the story probably arose from his having refused the service of the vicar at his death-bed. This would set afloat such a tradition, though it would not have hindered his being accorded burial in the chancel as a highly-respected parishioner. On the other hand may be set the story that he died after having a drinking bout with grand old Michael Drayton and rare Ben Jonson. Dear Robbie Burns, with Willie Nicol and Allan Masterton, could not match that trio.⁷

The evidence that Shakespeare was a Protestant consists mainly in his frequent use of the Bible. Of this far too much has been made. Mr. Henry A. Jones, the dramatist, ridiculing the inferences drawn by Bishop Wordsworth from the fact, says: "Here is baptismal grace tottering upon the rickety foundation of two such dubious connoisseurs of spiritual matters as Harry of England and the Spartan dog, while our poet's confirmed, desperate, ineradicable, irreclaimable, irrefragable Paganism stands sure and 'four-square to all the winds that blow,' based upon no less than one hundred and twenty-nine adjurations and appeals to heathen Jove and Jupiter, to say nothing of the rest of the Pantheon."⁸

Shakespeare was familiar with his Bible. When I come to the internal evidence, I will show that he used it as he used the supernatural—as its master. It is Sir John Falstaff who is richest in Bible allusion. The other books which we know Shakespeare used were profane and secular stories and plays, with North's Plutarch, the Pagan, Florio's Montaigne, the sceptic, and Rabelais, the blasphemer.

There remains the preamble to Shakespeare's will. As this has been supposed decisive on the Christian side, let me recite it in full, premising only that it was executed on March 25, 1616, that is within one month of his death.

In the name of God, amen! I, William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the countie of Warr., gent., in perfect health and memorie, God be prayesd, doe make and ordayne this my last will and testament in manner and forme following, that ys to saye, first, I commend my soule into the handes of God my Creator, hoping and assuredlie beleeving, through thonelic merites of Jesus Christe my Saviour, to be made partaker of lye everlastinge, and my bodye to the earth whercof yt ys made. Item, I give and bequeath," etc.

This was the stereotyped legal phraseology of the time. It was not written by Shakespeare, but by his lawyer's scrivener. Shakespeare had evidently given to this lawyer a statement of how he wished his things disposed of, letting him use his own legal jargon. That Shakespeare signed the document does not even warrant that he was "in perfect health,"⁹ still less his adherence to other than the testamentary items which follow. My signature of a document with the

⁶ The reference to "evening mass" in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act iv., sc. 1, and the character of Cardinal Pandolph in *King John*, suffice to show he was no Papist. Shakespeare thought much of Rome, but it was of ancient, Pagan Rome, to which he devotes three great plays.

⁷ I by no means credit that Shakespeare died through a drinking bout, though he may have died after one. His works prove he was a temperate man.

⁸ "Religion and the Stage," *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1885.

⁹ It is signed three times with evidence of the hand growing weaker.

legal formula "in the year of our Lord 1891," does not imply that I acknowledge Jesus as my Lord or believe he was born so many years ago. Shakespeare was not the man either to insert needless phraseology or to spoil a will by objecting to it.

Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, who, in his *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, has brought together all that is known concerning him, says (Vol. I., p. 266) "there is nothing in short in a single one of the contemporary evidences to indicate that he ever entered any of the circles of religious partizanship."

But I contend not only that he was no sectarian, but that he was essentially a sceptic. For this I must beg the reader to examine the internal evidence and read himself into the huge heart and comprehensive mind of our poet. I only argue that there is nothing in the external evidence to overthrow my contention. It must not be forgotten that the Church and Stage Guild is a very modern institution. For two hundred years plays and play-actors were the opprobrium of the pious. The great dramatist has only been patronized by the priests since they discovered that he could not be suppressed.

In the dearth of external evidence the following little item may be worthy of notice. In 1589 the Martin mar-prelate tracts, which defied attempts of the Star Chamber to gag opinion, excited much controversy. Lyly, the Euphuist, and Nash, the satirist, among others, entered the lists against them, and they had been ridiculed on the stage. As these plays were on the side of the clergy, they were not interfered with. But in November, 1589, in consequence of certain players handling "matters of Divinity and State without judgment or decorum," in other words having the impertinence to suppose there were two sides. Lord Burleigh—who in 1572 had complained of the Queen's own household as "a coverture for no small number of Epicures and Atheists, because the court is not comprehended within a parish, but seemeth to be a lawless place"—sent an order to "stay" them. This Shakespeare's company resented and defied. The mayor "committed two of the players to one of the compters." But they gained their end, for plays on both sides were suppressed. Mr. F. G. Fleay (*Chronicle History of the Life and Work of W.S.*, p. 103) says: "It is pleasing to find Shakespeare's company acting in so spirited a manner in defence of Free-thought and free speech: it would be more pleasing to identify him personally as the chief leader in the movement. And this I believe he was." Mr. Fleay—one of the best judges in such a matter—determines that it was *Love's Labour Lost*, which was produced in November, 1589. The very moral and purport of this play is to show the inutility of vows.

Then there is the epitaph on Mrs. Hall, Shakespeare's eldest daughter, which implies, as Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps remarks, that Shakespeare's life had not been one of piety. She inherited his wit, but received from God what her father could not bestow, the wisdom necessary for salvation.

Witty above her sexe, but that's not all,
Wise to salvation was good Mistriss Hall;
Something of Shakespeare was in that, but this
Wholly of Him with whom she's now in blisse.

Shakespeare had no part or lot in her religion.

(Reprinted) J. M. WHEELER

(To be continued)

Novelists and Freethought

THOUGH we may well ignore the references to religion, or irreligion, by mere novelists, however eminent as such—on the double ground that they largely cancel one another and that in any case they do not matter—we welcome such passages in the books of one who is not only a great novelist, but one who has made himself adequately acquainted with the scientific, historical, sociological and other facts and principles bearing upon theology and ecclesiasticism.

H. G. Wells has not chosen to become a comprehensive and active expositor of Freethought, but has abundantly shown in several novels, and in his *Anatomy of Frustration* and in his *Autobiography*, his total disbelief in all varieties of occultry and mysticism and the observances associated with them; and it was gratifying to find in his recent novel, *Apropos of Dolores*, a further instalment of rationalistic matter, admirably expressed.

That which we may call the cardinal human debacle of the era of civilization is stated as follows: "The inundation of the western world by the dogmatic Judeo-Christian mythology was a vast intellectual catastrophe that left man's understanding buried deeply under a silt of fear, error and intolerance." And of fundamental errors the deepest was perhaps that of which the publisher specially warned his son, viz., the false opposition between the material and the spiritual—"based on the rude assumption of primitive physics about substance and essence," insisting that there was no such dualism, and that the assumption was "the mental Fall of Man," "the key error of our race"; and he also tells the young man to beware of the word "spiritual," which is "a buttered slide, meaning nothing, and like all empty words, a deadly trap for all but the most wary and penetrating intelligences."

Among other things, new religions, revivals and the like receive useful direct or indirect condemnation, such as that of Father Divine (alias, "God," according to his followers, and presumably to himself); and at a hotel he asks himself—or the universe at large—why he should be bored by a persistent woman psychist, whose "religion," she explains, differs from Christian Science in one particular; and so on. And this provides opportunity for drawing attention to the fact that "the mind healers and psychic confessors seep poisonously through the world of thought more and more abundantly. . . ."

The treatment of St. Paul and his writings is interesting and significant, though less complete from the point of view of Freethought. In particular there is no mention of the large share that Paul must have taken in the Christian enthronement of ignorance, by denigrating Greek science as "science falsely so-called," and his comprehensive and calamitous pronouncement that "knowledge of this world is foolishness with God"—notions which were very effectively driven home by Lactantius and other "Fathers."

Wells thinks that if Christians did "less reverential gasping" and more intelligent Bible reading their minds would become more lucid. But more intelligent Bible-reading has been called for in some, if not all, of the recent Bible-booming articles in educational periodicals. And the call is, of course, futile unless it is made clear what is meant by and is involved in the practice. Wells reads the Bible in the light of extensive knowledge of the real significance of the medley of matter contained in the book. But probably very few others, unless they are unbelievers, possess that knowledge. And so we have to advise, not reading of the Bible (or the Koran or the Book of Mormon, or any other such work) other than by those who have as a preliminary acquired at least an outline knowledge

To refuse to take the trouble to think out whether your religion is a supernatural religion or not, is either cowardice or else the most ignoble kind of ignorance.

Morley.

of world history, including the history of religious ideas and practices (as well as of the associated magic), and some knowledge of science and its history.

We are not surprised at Wells' statement that he seems to meet more and more minds, and this at every level of intelligence, that are discoloured by "superstitious deliquescence." But he points out that a large measure of escape from the European medieval abyss has been achieved, and expects further progress: "First cosmogony emerged, the world which Christian ignorance had stamped upon and flattened was rolled up again and measured, and the stars were set back in their places, then, as biology developed, that absurd story of Adam and his irascible Creator faded out, the fires of hell sank, the Fall lost its date, and now in the interpretation of history and our standards of conduct we free our minds from its last lingering obsessions with that great misconception of life."

J. REEVES

Acid Drops

There is not much to be said concerning Hitler's speech to the world in reply to President Roosevelt's questions. Everyone ought to have known that so soon as he was faced with a situation clear of the policy of "appeasement," and which had been displaced by one of collective action, he would roar much more gently. But for this we have largely to thank Roosevelt, and also a prospect of collective action that would include Russia and Poland. Hitler's talk about encirclement is a piece of characteristic dishonesty. As we said last week, it results from his position that he cannot afford to have on his borders countries in which freedom and a sense of human dignity exist. Enlarging his borders does not alter that, neither does restricting them do so. The fact we have to face is that Fascism is at war with modern civilization. It is not a question of differing religious or political ideas.

Meanwhile we have to go on paying a price for Munich. The latest form of payment comes in the shape of Conscription. The military necessity for this was very small. It was avowedly a gesture to show the Continent that Britain was in earnest in resisting Hitlerism. But why was that ever doubted? The answer, the only valid answer, is Munich and its aftermath. It was commonly held after Munich particularly by the smaller nations, that Britain could not be depended on to resist Hitler so long as there was no immediate threat to British possessions. Austria, Czechoslovakia, Memel, Spain, drove that lesson home. Some definite gesture was required to prove to Hitler and to the other States that we were in earnest. This was given in the closer approach to Russia, the more definite guarantees to Poland, and the Conscription of young men from 20 to 21.

Personally we do not see that any valid objection can be raised to Conscription on grounds of Democracy. In this matter we must not confuse "Democracy" with the will of the people. The will of the people might declare for a strict dictatorship, or for restricting the vote to the ownership of property of a given value. And whatever may be the value of either of these forms of Government it is certainly not Democratic. A Democracy can exist only so long as each individual counts, as an individual, so long as there exists a legal equality in political power, the equality of all before the law and freedom of speech and publication. Whether we raise an army by Conscription or by Voluntary effort is, so far as Democracy is concerned, not vital, it leaves Democracy untouched, and it leaves militarism with its qualities unaltered. If we must have an army we must pay the price, material and "spiritual," for it.

The real objection to Conscription, whether necessary or not, is that it places an extra check upon the freedom of the individual, and tends to give the soldier undue prominence, besides lending encouragement to autocratic action, and setting a dangerous standard of values. If we must have an army we must pay for it in moral currency as well as in gold. If we must have a war now and again, we must pay for that also. And to put into force during peace a war-time standard of life, in order to impress Hitler, and to show the world that we mean what we say, is, on the one hand, to prove how deplorably our statesmen have failed, and to dance to the tune that Hitler is piping. Some time back we pointed out that the current policy was bound to end in making Hitler the Dictator of Europe. Whether it is pleasant or unpleasant that is unmistakably the present state of affairs. We would insist upon our own policy because of the threat to certain established interests, so we end in following a policy dictated from the outside.

General J. F. C. Fuller was one of the guests of honour at Hitler's birthday party. Only one other Englishman enjoyed that very doubtful honour. We expect that General Fuller has had things said to him, for he contributes a letter to the *Times* explaining his position. He says he is convinced of the truth and value of Fascism, and we should be the last to object to his adopting and publicly advocating Fascism or any other "ism." Nor, other things equal, should we object to the General worshipping at the shrine of Hitler. No sensible person would raise objections on either of these grounds, but we cannot permit the General to get away with what is an exhibition of intellectual dishonesty.

But before we come to this, we may note another excuse that is offered. The General gives one of his genuine reasons for applauding Hitler in the last paragraph. He asks people to remember that we are "at this very moment dallying with the U.S.S.R. and Democrat or Fascist we are a God-fearing people, and at least several millions of us are revolted by the idea of an alliance with Anti-Christ." Fascists are not notorious for the intelligence displayed in their falsehoods, their logic or the decency of their advocacy, and this man will have done his cause little good in writing. We need only cite Socrates, "Speak that I may know thee." We know General Fuller from his speech, and that will not raise him in the opinion of many people.

No objection ought to be, and so far as we are concerned is not raised against General Fuller voicing any ideas he pleases. But the indignation at his being a guest of honour of Hitler is not because of the man's ideas, but because of his character. General Fuller was congratulating the man, the man who had connived at arson and robbery, torture and the brigandage of independent States, and upon whose word there is not a Government in the world that can rely. Our own Government, rather late in the day, has labelled him as the arch-enemy of civilization, and under his rule no honest man or woman that exercises the right to think and speak can live. It is for concerting with this man that people have said what they have concerning General Fuller. It is the company he keeps, not the ideas he holds, that warrants his condemnation.

There is another point—the objection to Russia. We are not living under Hitler, and everyone is—until Fuller and his kind establish Fascism—at liberty to hold what opinions about religion he pleases. General Fuller would not object to an alliance with Hitler, he would, obviously do anything to bring it about. But he jibs at Russia, the one great power in the world that has had nothing to do with establishing the Fascist terror. When Britain forms an alliance with another country it has simply nothing to do with its ideas about religion. We are concerned only with its relation to us on certain well-

defined lines. General Fuller's position is that rather than see us in alliance with a Government that is anti-Christian, he would prefer us to be under the domination of Hitler. We leave it at that.

A final note. We have not spent this space on General Fuller because either the man or what he says matters very much. We are paying him the undeserved courtesy of our attention because there are so many in this country who are inclined to give surreptitious support to the German criminal gang that is in command, who give the reasons General Fuller rather foolishly sets forth. He is one of a type, not a very numerous, but a very objectionable type. And not objectionable on political grounds merely, but mainly on grounds of regard for human decency and individual self-respect.

Those who are in doubt as to whether Hitler is religious or not may have their doubts removed by the fact that in the German "Who's Who," he is still described as Roman Catholic. That is as good proof as anyone could have of his place in the religious world.

A headline in the *Methodist Recorder* is more truthful than many emphasized statements in religious newspapers. It says:—

War in China Aids Christianity.

Comment is superfluous.

Of Dr. Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle (who, in 1887, initiated the plan for the Church House now being completed in Dean's Yard, Westminster), it is said that a habit of going about with his mouth open earned him the name of "The Flycatcher" from his fellow bishops. The pressman who relates this as an oddity overlooks the fact that it is the essential business of bishops and priests to go about with their mouths open, "Fly-catching."

Quite recently, we saw in a Church Magazine, a statement that we were wrong when we said that the Church was partly subsidized from the rates. The alleged "correction" took the form of the statement that the Church did not receive a penny from the rates. Our meaning, in view of what we have so often said, was quite clear. It is true that no exact and precise vote of any Council gives money to the Churches. It is also true that many millions of money that would be paid in rates and taxes are not paid because the buildings which should incur the taxes are relieved by law. Perhaps some reader will explain the substantial difference of the fact and our statement. We cannot expect the parson who made the statement to offer an explanation. It is an historic maxim of the Christian Church to tell a lie as long as it can profitably be told, and, when it cannot be told any longer, say nothing about it.

We were reminded of this by an address given by the Archbishop of York at the opening of a senior school, to meet the needs of certain villages. The building cost £20,000; the Churches contributed £5,000. The Lancashire County Council contributed £15,000. Yet this school is Church property, and we shall be told that this school was built by the Church.

The Archbishop of York also said that the reason for building the school (and bleeding the public) is that if a school does not teach religion, then it is a training ground for Atheism. We are not seriously inclined to dispute this. But it means that no amount of education, no study of man or nature, will make a person religious. The subjects taught will no more lead a pupil's mind in the direction of religion, than it will lead him, or her, to accept Jack and the Beanstalk as an historic event. The child, when it leaves such a school, will not become religious because he will be of an age when he can bring

his critical powers to bear on what is placed before him. He can only become religious by having religion forced upon him and being forbidden to question its truth. We imagine that while the Archbishop was speaking he must have murmured to himself, "Thank God these listeners of mine have never been trained to reflect upon the significance of what is said to them from the pulpit. It is not for nothing that the New Testament likens believers to sheep, and unbelievers to goats." And what is the use of sheep, if they cannot be sheared?

An extremely reactionary and dangerous step will be taken by the medical profession if certain suggestions offered by the Council of the British Medical Association are adopted. From the Council's Annual Report, published in the *British Medical Journal*, we read:—

The Council recognizes that clergymen . . . can perform valuable work of an educational or preventive character, and it sees no reason why the medical profession should not co-operate in the instruction of the clergy in the principles of medical psychology.

On the face of it there does not seem any special objection to this resolution, and, if the clergy were not the clergy, their help might be welcome. But it is difficult to believe that the British Medical Council can be ignorant of the fact that to give the clergy the approval of the B.M.C. is to give their sanction to them using psychopathology—which has no necessary connexion whatever with religion, as a mere instrument of superstition. The B.M.C. has had a deal to say about "quacks," and much of it is well-deserved. But if ever the medical world gave its sanction to, and its co-operation with, the worst of all quacks, they have done so in this resolution. We hope that the Freethinking section of the medical world will not lose time in making a strong protest against this alliance between doctors and "Medicine-men."

But the following passage in the report makes one wonder whether the membership of the B.M.C. does not need a very careful combing out:—

It would be of advantage, in dealing with patients suffering from mental disorder, that medical practitioners should have some knowledge of moral philosophy; and there may be some cases which medical practitioners would wish to refer to clergymen for spiritual direction, for which they would take no medical responsibility.

It strikes us that the medical man who has no knowledge whatever of "moral philosophy" ought to be struck off the list; for if there is one department of life on which the average clergyman is incapable of exercising a healthy influence, it is in that of "moral philosophy." And one would like to know what cases there are which a qualified and intelligent doctor would wish to refer to a clergyman for "direction." If doctors are not afraid of losing custom amongst their possible clients in the religious world, there should be a strong protest against this lowering of medical dignity, and the implied unsuitability or inability of a medical man to deal with a "mind diseased" without the help of a preacher.

The other day Cardinal Hinsley said he wished that for some time the press could be muzzled. We have no doubt that on this occasion the Cardinal was expressing his real feelings. But there is really no great need for the press to be officially muzzled when it can so effectively muzzle itself. For example, we have good reason for saying that a considerable number of letters were sent to the press protesting against the letter being sent "from Windsor" to Hitler congratulating him on the fiftieth anniversary of his birth. So far, we have seen but one letter published, in the *News-Chronicle*. We attach no blame to the King for this—"his acts they are his Minister's," and one would like to know the name of the Minister who gave this advice. So far as we know the Prime Minister is the only person who is in a position so to advise.

But the Prime Minister has publicly stated that Hitler lied to him, deceived him, and that he will no longer rely upon his word. Lord Baldwin has also stated that it is Hitler who threatens the safety of civilization. We are forced into Conscription to protect ourselves against Hitler, and his controlled press has been vilifying the people of this country without stint. The French President, with whom we are in alliance sent no such greetings. Neither did the American President. Russia, whom we are asking to join us in keeping this danger to civilization in check, sent no birthday greetings. Lastly it is Hitler whose hands are red with the blood of men, women and children, and whose name has become synonymous with cold-blooded brutality. We might have been spared that humiliation. Was it necessary for the Prime Minister to go out of his way to wish this scourge of Europe "Many Happy Returns"? We decline to believe that this telegram was sent by the King without consulting his Ministers. What an example of "appeasement."

Another anti-Nazi film has been prohibited. This time it is the story of Miss Steele, who was arrested in Berlin last August, and she has embodied in the film her actual experience in solitary confinement until the United States Government was able to secure her release. The title of the film is "I was a Captive in Nazi Germany." The film has been passed in America and in Canada. But probably the "fifth column" is not so powerful in these countries as it is here. The capers of the film censor in this direction in England will not stop until the film producers take the bull by the horns and exhibit a film and challenges the censorship. It is seldom that a censorship is broken down save by open defiance.

A censorship is nearly always an insult to all self-respecting people. Its character was well expressed by that fine writer, and thinker, Joseph Conrad:—

I have lived long enough to learn that the monstrous and outlandish figure . . . whom I believed to be but a memorial of our forefather's mental aberration . . . seems to be alive with a sort of unconscious life worthy of its traditions. . . the censorship, like a Bravo of old Venice with a more carnal weapon, stabs its victim from behind in the twilight of its upper shelf. Less picturesque than the Venetian in cloak and mask, less estimable, too, in this, that the assassin plied his moral trade at his own risk . . . it stands more malevolent, inasmuch that the Bravo striking in the dusk killed but the body, whereas the grotesque thing nodding its mandarin head may in its absurd unconsciousness, strike down at any time the spirit of an honest, of an artistic, perhaps of a sublime creation. . . One wonders that there can be found a man courageous enough to occupy the post. It is a matter for meditation. Having given it a few minutes I come to the conclusion that . . . he must be unconscious. It is one of the qualifications for his magistracy. Other qualifications are equally easy. He must have done nothing, expressed nothing, imagined nothing. He must be obscure, insignificant and mediocre—in thought, speech and sympathy. He must know nothing of life, or art—and himself. For if he did he would not dare to be what he is.

There does not seem much more to be said concerning so ridiculous and so objectionable an individual.

The Bishop of Chelmsford foresees the downfall of Hitler, because this is "God's world." We do not know, but at any rate God seems to have left it to drift into a devil of a mess. But that appears to be God's way of doing things. It reminds one of the tailor who made a suit of clothes for a priest and then charged him fifteen guineas for it. The priest enquired how long it took to make the suit. "Three weeks," replied the tailor. "Three weeks," said the priest, "but it only took God six days to make the world." "Maybe," retorted the tailor, "but look at the finish of my work and then consider how God left his."

We gave, the other week, a sample of the propaganda that is carried on by Germans, in Germany, in their letters to friends in this country. As their letters are read they must be careful in what they say, and must write as ordered concerning the state of Germany. Here is another sample received in this country:—

Do not believe the lying press. Germany is a happy country, the only country in the whole world where there is true liberty and freedom irrespective of race or creed. Uncle Isaac, who did not think so, was buried last Friday.

As we have before said, German propaganda is very persistent, but it is not very intelligent.

One thing we are pleased to see is the growing number of people who have discovered that a cheap holiday in Germany may be clearly bought when it provides Hitler with funds to make war on Britain. Tourist agencies, as well as British arms-makers, have done their share in helping Hitler to carry out his programme.

The death of Sir William Ramsay, the other day, gave our pious newspapers a chance of saying again that the Bible is true. The *Daily Express*, for example, declared that "the Bible was proved right by Sir Ramsay," and the flaming headline said, "His Research Proved the Bible True," though the article itself put it much more modestly in asserting that "his discoveries in Asia Minor confirmed the historical accuracy of some parts of the New Testament"—which is a quite different proposition. Sir F. Kenyon, who was a director of the British Museum, and who is an authority on the Bible, was even less confident. On being asked his opinion, he said, "The effect of his conclusions stands to-day, although there may be differences of opinion about certain details."

The question is not and never has been whether geographical sites mentioned in the Bible existed or not. The question is, whether any of the Bible miracles really took place, any of the Bible devils, or angels, or gods, were ever seen, or whether there was ever a virgin birth, or a resurrection from the dead. Neither Sir W. Ramsay, nor anybody else, has ever proved these things, and to say that he or any other man has ever proved the Bible true through researches of any kind is a gross falsehood.

The Rev. J. A. M. Clayson, in a recent sermon, rightly claimed that "the attainment of the great things of the world—truth, freedom of speech, justice, the personal liberty of which we are so proud, the democratic principles on which the British Empire is based—required unstinted contribution of suffering and sacrifice." But who made the first great sacrifice for these ideals—upon which the British Empire is founded? As Mr. Clayson is a parson, the answer is not hard to find. It was, of course, Jesus on Calvary. In fact, as Jesus himself so truthfully put it, "All that came before me are thieves and robbers"—and perhaps Mr. Clayson would have liked to add that all who came after him, who are not Christians, are the same.

Fifty Years Ago

"Why do you speak in such a low voice?" said a member of a certain church to the pastor. "Well," he replied, "when I first began to preach they called me the shouter, because I spoke so loud. One Sunday morning, just after I finished the prayer, and while the solemn hush was still upon the congregation, a little fellow broke the silence with the question, 'Ma, is God deaf?' I have never shouted since."

The Freethinker, May 5, 1889

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No. : CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. WARD.—We have in no way altered our opinion as to the necessary evils connected with war, but it is a question of war and something worse than war. If so many people in this country had not been fooled and frightened by talk of war, we should not be so near as we are to the fact. We agree with you as to the many sinister interests that make for war in this and in other countries, but that is rather beside the present issue.

C. COMPTON.—Patience. We have only one pair of hands, and there are only 24 hours in a day.

B. PAYNE.—Some things must be left in the "hands of the gods," and the answer to your question must be one of them. Thanks for correction.

A CORRESPONDENT points out an error in our obituary notice of H. S. Salt. The age was given 78; it should have been 87. We apologize for the error.

C. L. COCKS.—Thanks for effort; will refer to it in next issue.

L. JAMES AND H. HILTON.—Thanks for addresses of likely new readers; paper being sent for four weeks.

J. ARNOT.—In your letter you have mistaken the son for the father. Your reference applies to Pierpont Morgan who died in 1913.

The "Freethinker" is supplied to the trade on sale or return. Any difficulty in securing copies should be at once reported to this office.

Friends who send us newspapers would enhance the favour by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, R. H. Roselti, giving as long notice as possible.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London E.C.4, and not to the Editor.

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioneer Press," and crossed "Midland Bank, Ltd., Clerkenwell Branch."

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One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

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Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4 by the first post on Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

Sugar Plums

N.S.S. Branch Secretaries are reminded that the names and addresses of delegates for the Annual Conference should now be in the hands of the General Secretary, also details of hotel accommodation required. Members of the N.S.S. other than delegates, requiring hotel accommodation for the Conference should also send details without further delay. The Annual Conference entails much work, locally, as well as at Headquarters, and delay in forwarding matters in connexion with it helps to increase the difficulties of organization.

From one of our universities comes the following:—

I have been reading the *Freethinker* for three months and I wish to tell you how pleased I am with it. I am pleased to find that it is vigorous without being vulgar, written intelligently without being dull. I am renewing my subscription.

We get many such tributes, and print this one in order to encourage those of our friends who are doing what they can to bring the oldest Freethought paper in Europe into new hands. For the rest, we have never made the blunder of mistaking dullness for profundity or plain speech for vulgarity. The *Freethinker* is really no paper for anyone who is always fearful of offending this or that religious person, and who imagines that the way to make Christians see the absurdity of their beliefs is to talk of the example of Jesus, or the beauties of true Christianity.

Reviewing the recently published autobiography of Margaret Sanger, one of the pioneers of the Birth Control movement, Mr. Basil De Selincourt, says:—

Broadly speaking we must admit that the movement was not religious in its origin, and that the weight of established ecclesiasticism is still dominantly male, in an attitude which has been largely determined by fear and shame. One could understand such an attitude in Christians if the founder of their religion had left his family to perfect his soul.

Why will so many able men, and women, make such exhibitions of themselves whenever the question they are dealing with touches established religion? And what, in the name of all that is sensible, does he mean by saying that Margaret Sanger's "attitude in the whole of her book is profoundly religious"?

The habit of calling everything with which one agrees, or which is now recognized as good, religious is one of the established dishonesties of the world of writers. It is perfectly true, perfectly true, as Mr. De Selincourt says, "religious leaders of high authority and unassailable integrity" have pronounced on Mrs. Sanger's side. But that is true of quite a number of causes that have fought their way to the front and are now adopted by religious leaders, after these causes have had to fight for their very existence in the face of massed religious leaders of "unassailable authority." Is there any actual need, beyond that of maintaining a position on the press and earning, more or less honestly, a handful of guineas, why men of intelligence should sell their pens in so scurvy a cause?

Mr. De Selincourt, must know as well as we do, that from the beginning until yesterday the cause of Birth Control was fought and won by Freethinkers. Many of them went to prison for their advocacy. Mr. De Selincourt pays no tribute to the men and women who did so fight. He announces merely that the movement is profoundly religious, and thus lies in substance and under cover a word which, in this connexion, involves dishonesty in the statement. And even to-day the largest Church in Christendom is dead against Birth Control, and probably the majority of other Christians would back it up, even while practising Birth Control in their own lives. Such language as that used by Mr. De Selincourt almost amounts to literary prostitution. And, after all, matches might be sold in the gutter and newspapers from the street-corner and the vendor still retain his self-respect.

As to the suggestion that Jesus did not leave his family to "perfect his soul," this is nothing but sheer verbiage. If Jesus lived at all, he led the life of a wandering preacher; the like has been met with in all ages, and in large numbers in the East. And in the New Testament there is no evidence that Jesus paid the slightest attention to his own family, or to anybody else's family. His teachings pay no attention to the family. We have had many different pictures of Jesus, but none has presented him as devoted to his own family or bothering about the family of others. But we should not be surprised if some Christian believer in birth control teaches that Jesus advocated this also, and that it was the unconscious influence of Jesus that brought Carlile and Bradlaugh on the scene as its advocates. They were "Christians without knowing it."

Mr. J. T. Brighton is hard at work again in the Tyne-side area, and we are pleased to receive reports of excellent work done. Recently he has had several debates, each of which has served to arouse interest in Free-thought in the districts in which the debates were held. We are not surprised. Mr. Brighton possesses tact in handling an audience, an ability to see the essential points at issue, and wit that enables him to enforce an argument and interest the listeners. We wish him every success in the work he is doing.

Lord Hewart, the Lord Chief Justice, is to be congratulated on keeping the essentials of progress to the fore, even in difficult days. He was the principal guest at the Annual Dinner of the Sylvan Debating Club, held at the Hotel Victoria, and in proposing the toast, he said that "freedom of discussion and debate was among the most precious of our rights." One may add, that this fundamental axiom distinguishes man from beast, but with many examples before us, near and far, we must at least be fair to the lower creation.

Will Materialism Explain Mind?

DURING the last half dozen articles I have been engaged in showing how the concept of mind can be, and is being, brought within the mechanistic framework of science. I propose to conclude the series under the present title, which opens up such extensive scope that at least the previous articles must be assumed as data.

Without further exposition, therefore, I am basing my remarks on these data: that the study of mind is that of conscious behaviour; that consciousness is capable of mechanistic interpretations; that the behaviour of persons is related causally to factors and conditions, both external and internal; that the latter are importantly illustrated by physiological conditions. How we react to, and learn from, external stimuli depends on our make-up, which finally analyses down to the matter of which the human body is composed.

That is to say, that human personality may roughly be likened to the apex of a pyramid of emergents, the complex at each stage dependent on the simpler. While at each successive stage novel arrangements yield novel types of behaviour of the same material, yet the whole percolates down to the matter of which the body is composed.

I will enlist only one authority, Sir P. Chalmers Mitchell, "Even the analysis of mental phenomena and of the springs of conduct is leading us to see in these a medley of reflexes, instincts and emotions all in ultimate dependence on the matter of the body."

Cells, in their turn, are made up from molecules, whence we pass through the atom to the electric charges which serve as its base. But we have now left all sciences but physics, and are on the verge of ether-physics.

Is the ultimate behaviour of this primary reservoir of energy sufficient to account for all the phenomena which exist, including mind?

I believe it is, and so I accept the label materialist, though I should prefer "neo-materialist," and am not averse to the contemporary American tendencies illustrated by Prof. R. W. Sellars' *The Basis of Physical Realism*, because, while preserving the essence of nineteenth century materialism, they take note of modern development in physics and philosophy.

What would discredit materialism?

Materialism would be discredited if it were shown that this primary reservoir of energy is inherently in-

capable of evolving all phenomena, including mind. Materialism fails if it can be established that it is interfered with at any point in evolving nature, if at some point in its evolution it is added to from some outside force, or is inoculated by some outside force. By "outside force" I mean, other than conditioned in monistic nature. Materialism fails, again, if it is proved that there is some other principle of existence coexistent and interacting, or, alternatively purposefully guiding or controlling the universe to some pre-conceived end, or moulding it to suit some final purpose. Or materialism can be exploded when it is shown that at some point or points something breaks loose from its conditions and, turning round on nature, imposes a unique type of causation, a departure from the already existing causal unity.

Materialism fails, once again, if the parts of nature are shown to be used for the housing of "spiritual monads," or if nature is otherwise invested with "spirit." (I will not attempt to define a non-existent, except negatively. For our present purpose, spirit is something not conditioned in, and existentially independent of, nature.)

Finally, materialism falls to the Idealist if he can show that the phenomena of nature—mountains, stars, bricks, men—are no more than appearances ejected from our minds, or from God's mind.

But materialism conceives a self-existent universe, in which purpose is an evolved product, there being no independent purposive agency at work. The complex is capable of analysis (though not of description) in terms of the simpler; mind, like other phenomena, being dependent on conditions, cannot therefore survive their dissolution.

Let me conclude by applying this to mind.

Materialism fails if psychology has to posit a new causative principle. It fails if the ordinary deterministic procedure is interfered with in such a way that a given phenomenon does not cease to exist when broken up into its factors; that is, if there exists a remainder which defies analysis and continues in its own right in the absence of the conditions.

Physics supplies us with the data and causal skeleton of the world of science, and these are not violated in later sciences which deal with life and mind. New things appear, whose investigation requires instruments and concepts not needed by the physicist, but they nowhere appear as the result of any addition to the original material dealt with by the physicist or any departure from determinism. Their emergence comes as the consequence of the properties of that same existence studied by the physicist, but whose later behaviour is irrelevant to his aims. Materialism fails if psychology now gives evidence of some new principle working on or in or through material nature to bring about the ends realized therein. It fails if the logic used in physics, and again in intermediate sciences, is not serviceable. But "the method of science in investigating living things follows the same logic as the method used in physical sciences" (Prof. Burniston Brown). Materialism, then, fails if it can be shown that the type of causality which suffices for other branches of science is inadequate to bring about the development of mind. A point must be indicated in the evolutionary process at which a new causal factor is operative, something not latent in the world of physics, something not susceptible to analysis in terms of factors percolating down to the world of physics.

If there is no unique endowment at any stage in the process, nothing but what has developed from existing conditions, then materialism is correct in the contention that the universe is fundamentally impersonal, non-mental and monistic. Affirmations to the contrary represent a contribution from religionists and

¹ *Materialism and Vitalism in Biology.*

philosophers, not from science, which supplies enough evidence to disprove them.

The opinion of Maudesley, that "an honest observation proves incontestably that mind is the most dependent of all the natural forces" (*Physiology of Mind*) has been well substantiated.

What would discredit materialism in biology or psychology would be the discovery of a new noumenal² principle at work, an irreducible causal agent which upsets the monism (unity) and violates the type of causation dominant in physics, a basic existent making its appearance for the first time and acting on the mechanical process by the introduction of extraneous purpose. If it interferes with deterministic causation it should be possible to locate and define this new force. If it does not (as with Lodge) the onus of proof will lie heavily on its protagonist. If the force be immaterial and without material concomitants of any sort, the difficulties of proof will be insuperable. While the materialist himself recognizes the existence of immaterial phenomena (e.g., happiness), he sees them as essentially embedded in material conditions.

"The important question," writes Bertrand Russell, an important precursor of contemporary American realism, "is not whether matter consists of hard unyielding lumps or something else . . . but whether the course of nature is determined by the laws of physics. The progress of biology, physiology and psychology has made it more probable than ever it was before that all natural phenomena are governed by the laws of physics" (*The Scientific Outlook*). Some apparent slackness is discernible in this remark, which might profitably be elucidated by adding that though physical laws are not the only ones that exist, yet they are not *violated* in later sciences. They are ingredient.

Is the activity of the material investigated in physics sufficient data with which to account for the whole of existence, or does some new unrelated datum gain entrance? On the redundancy of the latter the materialist case depends.

Let me illustrate what I mean when I say that in the sphere of life and mind physical law is not violated, but is subservient. Let us suppose we have analysed down as far as an isolated unit of response; let us suppose a light suddenly flashed on the eyes of an animal just taken out of the dark. The events are, first, a physical change in the receptive area, the retina; secondly, the propagation of a disturbance along the nerve-paths, "a physical event whose space-time relations can be defined as concretely as the passage of an electric current through a wire" (Hogben),³ and thirdly, the liberation of energy at the seat of the response, the "effector organ," in this case the muscles of the eyelids. All this goes to make receptivity "a measurable physical event whose magnitude is related to the intensity and duration of the stimulus."

The propagation of the nervous impulse can be carefully observed. The nerve fibres have very thin membranes, and as the molecules of nerve matter break up positive ions are believed to pass to the outside of the membrane and remain balanced by the negative particles inside. Stimulation at the terminal by light or sound disturbs the balance and a wave of depolarization passing along the nerve. Between consecutive nerve cells are one way junctions (synapses) whose conductivity can be increased by physical agencies (such as strychnine).

Prof. A. V. Hill finds that one nerve transmits about 1,000 impulses per second, giving a rise in

temperature of one six to eight millionth of a degree (F.).

Now it might be asked what becomes of physical law when these impulses reach the brain, and particularly when they affect that part of the brain concerned with consciousness, the cortex (= "bark"). Do physical laws still operate, or does the soul get to work and interfere with them? An effective answer comes from the experiments of Berger.

Now it is not easy to watch and examine the cortical region at work because it is protected by a thick bony skull. There is as yet no means of studying the individual cells at work, but Berger has shown that it is physically possible to see the brain working. He found that when the eyes are shut a regular electrical rhythm becomes established with a wave frequency of 10 per sec. The rhythm is disturbed by concentrated thought, e.g., doing a sum. These are waves of mental activity, literally brain waves. And so thought can be detected by purely physical means.

What the physicist deals with is still the concern of the biologist and psychologist. What the latter explore in its living complexities is the same material investigated by the physicist, who is not concerned with such later stages of its behaviour. No new principle has crept in to account for such complexity; it bears the mark of being capable of reduction by analysis. The data are the same, the behaviour different. When other sciences have finished there remains a valid sphere of study for the psychologist (though he may sometime have to change his name). Proof of mental telepathy would not discredit the materialist; it would simply set him looking for the physical media which rendered it possible.

It is not to be expected that an explanation of the most complex phenomena is to be understood with the same ease as finding the distance of the moon. Determinism, progressively successful in regions once thought to be outside its domain, is not to be evaded at higher levels. No limit can be seen to the deterministic procedure and no permanent barrier to a materialistic philosophy.

G. H. TAYLOR

'Neath the Shade of the Old Apple Tree

It was good of God to make the apple. Not only is it a delectable morsel but, in certain quarters, it is considered that the increased consumption of this fruit by the paragon of animals would make serious inroads upon the incomes of medical men. Men, of course, improve upon God's handiwork. They lay their profane hands upon the products issuing from the Divine Workshop and Lo! we have Cox's Pippin. We know the Divine Fructidor, however. He is quick to wrath and doesn't forgive a slight. It is therefore more than probable that the impudent attempts to improve God's original attempt at an apple, which Eve espied growing in the Garden of Eden, will be visited upon us in some unpleasant way. Probably, the improvements on God's handiwork—the "Real Mackay"—will at this very moment be creating some disorder in the framework of man. For are we not assured that our God is a jealous God and, not only that, but, that, although his mills grind slowly they grind very, very, very surely?

I've sensed, however, that the apple was one of God's good things, and thought a bite or two from it to be worth a few fibs. Naturally, not being a God, she was, herself, prepared to take responsibility for the offence, and probably was ready to take a good

² Noumenon = ground of phenomena.

³ *The Nature of Living Matter*.

spanking. Even Eve, however, might have thought twice, if she had realized that you and I, through her act, were to have a ninety-to-one-on chance of being fuel for the everlasting bonfire. She would have thought more than twice if she had realized that little Cain and Abel and Seth were to be implicated in her offence, and that any difficulty she had had in bringing them into the world was the direct result of her action.

But God, who, in the goodness of his heart, had made the apple for man's delectation, reflected, and the result of his reflection was that he came to the conclusion that considering how Eve had flouted his instructions the apple was much too good for Eve's children. He might have cursed the Apple Tree as his gentle portion, Jesus, would undoubtedly have done. Then there would have been no more apples and the British Medical Association would have sung pæans of joy, and held guzzles of rejoicing every week, instead of every year, for this special mark of the divine favour. Their opinion of their Creator would have reached a pinnacle almost as lofty as that now occupied by Lloyd George. But God gave the Curse method a rest. The First Person of the Trinity, accompanied by the Dove (the Third Person), retired to a portion of the Heavens where Jesus, the Second Person, couldn't hear them, and, there, they borrowed some of the Subtily of the Serpent, and matured their felonious little plans.

So He made little insects. Such a jolly little crew! Borers, hoppers, mites, curculio, aphids, bugs, weevils, cankerworms, scale, rollers, maggots, skeletonizers, etcetera, etcetera. Unto each one of them He gave a good healthy desire to make for the apple, and the self-styled paragon of animals found himself for the first time amongst gluttonous and greedy competitors. God made over 500 insects (*true* insects and other creatures which look like insects) to live on the Old Apple Tree. He would teach *homo sapiens* for being cheeky. So God made some of these insects with a partiality for the leaves; others for the fruit. He made them with faculties for sucking the sap, and living on the roots, or twigs, or branches. And when he disclosed his plans to the Third Person, the Dove, this bird flapped its wings enthusiastically and gurgled in its glee. This, the Dove was confident, was the very High Light of Creation, Creation with a Purpose, based upon a very acute degree of perception of what were the creatures that really mattered.

Jesus, being equally omnipotent and omniscient, of course knew what was going on. He had a contempt for the roundabout methods of the other partners of the Trinity. He knew himself to be the meaty, the essential part, of the Divine Sandwich. This indirect way of interfering with the apple-crop in order to get even with man, he had a contempt for. It was unworthy of Omnipotence. Just a slight imprecation—not so much, just a frown—and the apple-tree would have been no more. But to manufacture hundreds of creatures just to get even with man, and with only the remotest chance that one of them would bring about the eventual elimination of the apple, struck him as theatrical and ridiculous. But he did not so express himself—the old man, he knew, was getting more touchy every day—he just pondered these things in his heart. When his time came, he thought to himself, he would introduce methods slicker and snappier into the plan of creation. He wouldn't make animate objects in millions that hadn't got a soul to be saved. It was spectacular and ingenious, perhaps and, from a God who wasn't omnipotent, might even be accounted a *tour de force*. But if everything is for Man, the only creature with a soul, the only creature that is going to live for ever, what could be the meaning of all those Bugs? It wasn't even a Punch and

Judy Show for Man's entertainment, for many of these creations couldn't be seen with the eye that man had been endowed with. And in many cases it wasn't a fair fight. They hit man, who sinned in the matter of the Apple, but he couldn't hit back. Fair's fair! Give the man his apple or take it away from him. Hang it all, was He not co-equal with the old man, and the pigeon (Pah!) for that matter. His opinion should count, but it was that darned majority they had against him whenever he pressed a point to a division, that counted.

The First Person Omnipotent sits in his workshop sighing and turning over his thoughts. I know Number Two is grouching again in his own way. After all, am I not his Father? isn't it right that he should have to lump it? This Father and Son business isn't going to be upset as long as I can manage it. And this rot about the co-eternal. *Father comes first*, that's what I say. I know Man is the only creature with a soul but he's none the better for that. To me the Apple Aphis is much more interesting. [Ruminating]. Got it! Jumping Jehoshaphat! I'll send him down amongst the soulful brigade and give him a taste of their quality. (Chuckling) That'll larn him. I'll talk it over with the Pigeon. (Bending over his bench). Now what about making the legs of the Praying Mantis serrated. He, He! He, He, He!

T. H. ELSTON

The Story of Chinese Turkestan

TURKESTAN is a Central Asian territory situated between Siberia on the north and Afghanistan, India and Tibet on the south. Its western boundary is the Caspian Sea and its eastern, Mongolia and the Gobi Desert. Eastern Turkestan is now chiefly controlled by China, while its western area forms part of the Soviet Republic.

Chinese Turkestan was once the scene of a Greco-Indian civilization. Alexander the Great's invasion of Bactria and North-West India introduced Hellenic culture into those Eastern lands. The settlement and intermarriage of ex-service Greeks and Macedonian mercenaries modified the character of the population. Then the temporary Grecian rule was overthrown by the Parthians about 130 B.C. Later, the Kushans became predominant and established an empire in the Indus, in Bactria and Turkestan.

Prior to these events, Buddhism had invaded the Hindu Kush Valleys and the Kabul River, but its early memorials appear to have been comparatively poor. The Greek newcomers, however, fashioned their sculptures of the All Perfect Buddha in the lineaments of Apollo and Dionysus. In his narrative of the expedition to recover the remains of earlier art, the eminent archaeologist, Albert von Le Coq states that the district of Gandhara "became the Pantheon of Buddhist art, which through the whole of India, as far as Java and Central Asia, up to China, is the foundation of Buddhist art in all these countries."

Owing to the settlement of diverse stocks, three cults for a time co-existed in Turkestan. In the eighth century of our era Turkish tribes annexed its north-eastern area and embraced Buddhism. Their rulers, however, adopted the religion of Manes, while a proportion of the people were converted to a Christian creed. The message of Mohammed arrived in the tenth century and the Buddhists strove in vain against the Arabian and Persian intruders. The in-

¹ *The Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan* (Allen and Unwin.)

roduction of the Moslem faith coincided with the discovery of an ocean route from China to Persia and the precious silk products previously conveyed in caravans were transported by sea. This departure, coupled with the Mongol invasion which ravaged and depopulated the country, made the land desolate. Moreover, further impoverishment resulted when Jenghiz Khan conscripted the pick of the male population for his depleted armies. Thus, this rainless region, so completely dependent upon irrigation for its agricultural products, was largely reduced to a desert.

Civilization continued to decline until the sixteenth century, when Moslems from Samarkand, called Khojans, restored the country to something resembling its former prosperity. But dissensions soon severed the Khojans into two intensely hostile sections, one of which, with the aid of the Kalmucks, obtained the victory. Then, the Kalmucks were nearly exterminated by the Chinese. The Khojans fled to Khokand and afterwards attempted to regain their lost dominion but without permanent success. Then the Tungans revolted and the Chinese suffered severe reverses and the sanguinary Yakub Beg assumed sway in Eastern Turkestan, but his triumph proved transient, for the Chinese annihilated his army, and with his sudden death, the territory was in 1877 restored to Chinese rule.

Nearly all the country contains buried ruins of a once flourishing Buddhist civilization and invaluable MSS., mural paintings, monuments and other artistic treasures have been recovered from the deserted monasteries and temples. For in a region as rainless as Egypt, many old parchments and other antiquities have been wonderfully well preserved.

The country's eastern division is a hollow with a sanded centre encircled by towering eminences. Its most accessible western passage the Terek Pass attains the altitude of Mont Blanc. Elsewhere better facilities for travel are afforded by the Yulduz Valley, a road traversed by nomadic tribes from prehistoric to more recent times. But although the east lies open, the discouraging waterless Gobi Desert presents a perennial obstacle to travellers. Here the menacing sand storms daunt the hardest adventurers. Le Coq, who encountered these dreadful hurricanes, thus vividly portrays them: "Quite suddenly the sky grows dark, the sun becomes a dark-red ball seen through the fast-thickening veil of dust. A muffled howl is followed by a piercing whistle, and a moment after, the storm bursts with appalling violence on the caravan. Enormous masses of sand mixed with pebbles are forcibly lifted up, whirled round, and dashed down on man and beast; the darkness increases and strange clashing noises mingle with the roar and howl of the storm, caused by the violent contact of great stones as they are whirled up through the air. The whole happening is like hell let loose, and the Chinese tell of the spirit eagle so confusing men that they rush madly into the desert wilds and there meet with a terrible death."

When these storms occur man and lower animals lie face downwards on the earth, sometimes for hours together, and endure the pitiless blast as best they may. The horses are panic-stricken, and in 1905 a company of carriers, the custodians of consignments of silver ingots despatched from Peking to Turfan, was overtaken by a sand-storm. The mounted Chinese, numbering sixty, galloped madly into the desert, where a few desiccated mummies of men and their steeds were subsequently discovered, but most had been completely buried in deep sepulchres of sand.

Fortunately, in this arid region where rain so rarely falls, a beneficent stream meanders through the loess deposits. The water of this river and its various

tributaries is artificially conducted into irrigation channels and the peasants thus convert a naturally barren region into a fruitful territory. The vernal season is scented by the pale umbels of the oleanders. Choice fruits such as apricots, peaches, mulberries and juicy pears abound, as well as excellent nuts, while the carefully cultivated arable land yields bounteous crops of wheat, maize, millet, rice, cotton and even garlic, turnips and potatoes. Then there are vineyards, their vines bearing fine clusters of splendid grapes. The winter in Eastern Turkestan is brief but intensely severe, so the trench-grown vines are pressed down and buried in soil until the advent of spring. The melon, however, is the most extensively cultivated fruit, and forms a staple native food.

In an oasis such as this the inhabitants erect their homesteads, but each centre of population is separated by dreary and dangerous stretches of sand. Thickets of tamarisk and poplar growths are common, while other districts are nothing but rocks and stones, which prove sadly disconcerting to the wayfarer. Again the *Fala Morgana* is in many deserts extraordinarily deceptive. The native name for this mirage is "the misleader," and we learn from one who speaks from personal knowledge, that "the deception is so life-like that inexperienced travellers may very easily follow it; the mirage, as a rule consists of sheets of water with their shores covered with scattered shady trees."

The highlands are the habitat of shrikes, magpies, crows, merlins, eagles, falcons and other predaceous birds. Sparrows similar to the European species haunt the poplar woodlands, while ptarmigan and fine grouse frequent the wilds. Multitudes of the graceful gazelle roam amid the plains.

Wild cats, foxes and martens are numerous, and their usual prey is the native rabbit. Untamed swine dwell in the extensive thickets of reeds, where they are killed and devoured by hungry tigers and ravenous wolves.

During the campaigns of Yakub Beg the sacrifice of human life was appalling. Whole districts were depopulated. Strangely enough, although descended from an aggressive stock, whose military prowess in the time of Jenghiz Khan and Timur is only too well authenticated, and whose later truculence during the Mongol conquests in India was so pronounced, the natives have now become a singularly mild and inoffensive people. Le Coq found them more "gentle and amiable" than any other community he has ever encountered in his travels. Even the wolves and tigers are comparatively harmless to human beings. Le Coq considers that this serenity "is all the stranger since they (the natives) do not happen to be Buddhists but give their allegiance to warlike Islam. Perhaps one and the same reason is responsible for the harmlessness of the beasts, and change in the character of the inhabitants, viz., that life is easy here. Another contributory cause may also be that the Chinese since their reconquest of the country (1877) have put in force the complete disarmament of the subjugated population and broken their resistance by corporal punishment." Also, one is inclined to add to these suggested influences, the elimination of the fiercer sections of the native population during the sanguinary conflicts of Yakub Beg.

In a land that has long been the meeting-place of many races and religions, mongrelism is everywhere evident. Some of the inhabitants are distinctly European in appearance. Others are Persian in character, while Turkish and other Oriental stocks are represented. Although these competent farmers and traders are normally of placid disposition, their penal methods in moments of popular indignation may be-

come atrocious. For instance, a native who had plundered and murdered travellers was seized, stripped naked and crucified. Then, a fierce rat was imprisoned under a pot which was then firmly fastened over the criminals stomach. "There he lay in the merciless rays of the sun with the rat eating its way through his flesh, until loss of blood and sun together slowly killed him."

In Turfan during the long summer season a temperature of 130° F. is frequently recorded, and the more prosperous inhabitants seek coolness in subterranean apartments. But even there sand-flies and mosquitoes prove a pitiless pest. Abroad, the stinging scorpions are very dangerous, and huge poisonous spiders abound. Bugs are not obtrusive, but the flea is ubiquitous, and the body-louse is universally domesticated in Turkestan and Tibet. Le Coq and his archaeological assistants, however, evaded the deprecations of these loathsome parasites as the explorer had provided himself with grey ointment. "This mercurial ointment," he informs us, "was spread between pieces of blotting paper," and then transferred to the outer pockets of the clothing. The evaporation of the mercury induced by the intense heat destroys both lice and nits. "Every fresh servant who joined our camp had, before entrance, to wash himself with mercurial soap. During this proceeding his clothes were rolled up with strips of blotting-paper and laid in the sun. By the time he had finished washing, all the lice had been killed by the combined action of the mercury and the fiery rays of the sun."

T. F. PALMER

Correspondence

THE HOLY FIRE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—As truth and accuracy are highly prized by your readers, I am sure you will be willing to correct an error in your issue of April 16. It occurs in a review by F. A. Hornibrook of Roger Courtney's recent Book, *Palestine Policeman*.

Your reviewer quotes the author's account of the fight which, as it is well known, occurs annually in the Holy Sepulchre during the ceremony of the Holy Fire. He then makes the following comment:—

You will not find such descriptions as these in best-sellers like *Where the Master has Trod*, by H. V. Morton, which sells in thousands to the devout.

Might I point out, firstly, that the title of my book is *In the Steps of the Master*, and, secondly on p. 331, I give a description of the fight in the Holy Sepulchre, which does not differ very materially from that quoted by your reviewer.

If your reviewer had been able to quote the title of my book correctly, I might have let it pass, but as it is, I think it unfair that he should make an inaccurate comment about it.

This cannot be free-thinking. Or is it?

H. V. MORTON

FALLING INTO LINE

SIR,—Some time ago one of your contributors, Mr. Jack Walton, required information as to how far Churches were rated in reference to their Institutes and Halls that were being used for Concerts, Dances and Socials, etc. At present I cannot supply the information, but following upon an article by Mimmermus regarding how the Churches were exploiting this kind of thing, I send you the following, which may be of interest.

On March 28 the following two notices of motion were submitted at the monthly meeting of the Risca (Mon.)

Urban District Council, in the name of Councillor Walter Jones, the only Communist member of the Council:—

That this Council instructs the Clerk to ascertain what steps can legally be taken to ensure that all organizations—apart from those connected with Churches—appealing to the public for funds, whether by the holding of public functions or subscribing donations should publicly exhibit a statement of such money received.

There being no seconder it was ruled out.

E. COOR

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4 by the first post on Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

LONDON

INDOOR

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, Professor F. Aveling, D.Sc.—"Behaviour, Introspection and Scientific Method."

OUTDOOR

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.30, Mr. P. Goldman.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 7.30, Mrs. N. B. Buxton.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury. 3.30, Parliament Hill Fields, Mr. L. Ebury. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, Mr. L. Ebury. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Friday, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 6.30, Mr. L. Ebury. Rushcroft Road, opposite Brixton Town Hall, Tuesday, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. Undine Road, Tooting, Friday, 8.0, Mr. F. A. Ridley.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 7.30, Wednesday, Mrs. Buxton and Mr. Carpenter. Thursday, 7.30, Mr. Saphin. Friday, 7.30, Mr. Barnes. Sunday, 3.30, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes and Collins. Sunday, 7.30, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes, Tuson, Wood and Mrs. Buxton.

COUNTRY

INDOOR

FAIRSWORTH SECULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL.—Afternoon, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"What is Wrong with our Schools?" Evening, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Profits and Prophets."

TEES SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Jubilee Hall, Leeds Street): 7.15, A Lecture.

OUTDOOR

BLACKBURN MARKET: 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. Clayton.

BLYTH (The Fountain): 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

CHESTER-LE-STREET (Bridge End): 8.0, Friday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (Mound): 7.0, Mrs. Muriel Whitefield (Glasgow N.S.S.). A Lecture.

LUMB-IN-ROSENDALE: 7.30, Friday, Mr. J. Clayton.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Eccles Market): 8.0, Friday, Mr. W. A. Atkinson. Bury Market, 8.0, Saturday, Debate—"Is Christianity True?" *Affir.*: Rev. Norbreck, Bury. *Neg.*: W. A. Atkinson, Manchester. Stevenson Square, 7.0, Sunday, Messrs. W. A. Atkinson and C. McCall, Junr.

MIDDLESBROUGH (Davison Street): 7.15, Wednesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NELSON (Chapel Street): 7.45, Tuesday, Mr. J. Clayton.

NORTH SHIELDS (Harbour View): 7.0, Tuesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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