

THE FREETHINKER

Founded 1881

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Vol. LXIV.—No. 12

Sunday, March 19, 1944

Price Threepence

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

The Education Crisis

IT is with some degree of timidity that we venture to question the accuracy of the "one and only" when he said "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." For in sober truth our actions, whether they be good or bad, *do* live on, sometimes with a glaring publicity that invites attention, but mostly to form part of that mass of accumulated good and bad that meets us in what we call human history. The truth is, of course, that it is the things that hurt which are brought most forcibly to our notice; the pleasant things are accepted, enjoyed, and then fade into a mass of vague memories. What completely healthy person thinks about the quality of his digestive organs, or the comfort that accompanies a good set of teeth, until he runs against a less favoured brother, and then he is apt to take his good fortune as being in some vague way due to his personal superiority over the less fortunate? The dictum quoted needs revision—at least in its general application. For human actions live on whether they be good or bad.

The truth of what has been said finds ample justification in the present turmoil over education. Little more than two generations ago this country was, in educational matters, behind many of the Continental countries. Substantially, education was still under the control of the Churches, although there had been many endeavours on the part of the "Owenites" to educate the people. But the state of education was such that the Government was compelled to take a hand, and 1870 saw the first steps taken towards a national educational system. The Bill of 1870 was not of a very heroic character, but it opened the way to better things, and one of the obstacles to the establishment of better things was religion. Another was the threat to all sorts of vested interests in the development of an educated proletariat. One recalls the bother over the appearance of Green's "History of the English People" (the first history of the *people* that had appeared). As we had a State Church, it was naturally expected that two things would follow. Religion would be taught in the schools, and it would be the religion of the Established Church. Against this there stood the Owenites and their successors, a great many Radicals (Radicals then occupied the place that the Russian Communists did in this country in 1930), the Freethinkers and the Nonconformist Christians, who held that the State should not interpose in matters of religion. The slogan was then "Education, Free, Compulsory and Secular." In this "Joe" Chamberlain was one of the leaders. In the end a compromise was agreed upon by the Churches. The Nonconformists sold the pass, and religion has been one of the strongest obstacles to a sound system of national education ever since. That statement remains true even

when one recognises that zeal for religion is often a cover for self-interest in other directions.

History Repeats

To-day we have another clash over religious education, and this time there is an attempt by a Tory Government, which has long since outlived its legitimate span, using a majority that dare not face the electorate with the religious clauses of the Bill now before the House of Commons. This Bill, we may note in passing, has already had its repercussions in the North of Ireland Parliament. That also has ventured on a new Education Bill, and there has been the usual bother over religion. According to the "Northern Whig," the Prime Minister has declared that it is the intention of the Government "not to force on anyone a system of education that does not allow the fullest possible measure for the teaching of religion." This may be taken as an echo of our own Government's idea of absolute fairness where religion—the Christian religion—is in question. To the impartial onlooker both have the same element of unfairness and of even impudent arrogance. For everyone knows that there is about the same chance of Roman Catholics being treated with absolute fairness in Belfast as a Protestant has of being treated with consideration in Dublin. The two opposing forms of religion poison Irish social life. Christianity divides where an uninterrupted social life would unite.

It must be admitted that in this parade of *religious* equality the Imperial Government in London has set the pace of this humbug, for when our Prime Minister and the Minister of Education talk about religious equality they mean at most equality among Christians. They do not mean that arrangements may be made in the schools for the fantastic conglomeration of humbug and ignorance that go to make up Christian Science, they do not include Spiritualism, which now claims to be a religion, nor would Atheists be permitted to enter the State schools in order to teach pupils what science has to say concerning the origin of the gods—all the gods. The utmost favour bestowed upon these would be the withdrawal of children from a religious instruction which the parents disliked. But the saturation of the whole of the school time is aimed at; and it takes a politician to appreciate the favour of not being compelled to eat a dinner one doesn't like, but to be still forced to pay for one that he will not eat. Christian freedom is a very curious thing whenever and wherever it is encountered.

Christian Justice

That the Government Bill will become law seems certain. The Government has its followers well in order, and they will respond to the party whip, irrespective of their own private opinions. Assuming complete honesty of expression, there are enough members either to reject the Bill or to cut down the majority to such a figure that

the victory would resemble the farthing damages by which a judge shows his disapproval of the verdict of a jury. But there is the consideration of spoiling one's "political career," and the most that some may venture on is to be absent when the vote is taken. The Conservative vote will be solid, for it is part of the Tory creed to uphold the Church, as it is part of the business of the Church to preserve "order."

The Labour Party will also obey Party orders; their vote will go as the Executive orders, and the Party will not run the risk of being identified with Atheism, or pictured as ungodly. As to the Nonconformists, they, with a few exceptions, long ago sold whatever principles they possessed. Pledged to the principle that the State should not interfere with religious beliefs, they have always supported Sunday laws, blasphemy laws, and other regulations that are in favour of themselves, and now, with the exception of salaries and certain public parades, there is little of a fundamental character to separate them from the Established Church.

There remains the threatened opposition of the Roman Church. This State within a State will bluster and threaten to the last moment, but their opposition is financial in character, and in the end they will vote for the Bill. In voting matters the Roman Church can exert a dominating influence only here and there, and in every case this State within a State can control its members with a Hitler-like rigidity. It has the political advantage that its members are reared like sheep and at the polling booth will act like sheep. Whatever road the priest indicates, the good Catholic will tread.

The other day, Bishop Marshall, of Salford, said it was not true that the general public took any interest in the matter of this new Bill. We think there is a great deal of truth in this, but he followed it up by excepting Roman Catholics, because they are interested in education, and that is emphatically not true. They are interested in what the priests tell them to be interested in, and that is not education, but the advancement of the power of the Roman Church. Roman Catholics will muster at the polling booth because they are ordered to be there. The block vote of the Catholics may be taken as the contribution of the Roman Church to our democracy. We had the same tribute to our democracy from the Prime Minister when he so warmly commended the return of Lord Hartington to the voters of West Derby because his family had dominated that area for several centuries. Lord Hartington might well have asked "Call you this backing o' your friends"? But Mr. Churchill was never noted for his finesse.

A Gift to the Churches

I think I may well close these notes with a reprint of part of an excellent article that appeared in a recent issue of "Tribune" (March 3). It is from the pen of Mr. C. A. Smith, who writes "as one with authority," because he has had a lengthy and varied experience as a teacher in a public school, as House Master, Senior History Master, and Headmaster. He thus speaks with authority, and we feel sure that what he says must be running through the heads of all intelligent teachers. The Bill, says Mr. Smith:—

1. Prescribes a collective act of worship at the beginning of each school day in all schools from which it was previously excluded.

2. Extends undenominational teaching to certain secondary schools from which it was previously excluded.

3. Extends undenominational dogmatic religious teaching based on agreed syllabuses.

4. Make further grants of public money for the teaching of sectarian creeds in schools owned and staffed by sectarian bodies.

5. Give priests and parsons the right of entry into (some) schools maintained by public funds.

6. Prescribes religious tests for many thousands of teachers directly, and for more thousands indirectly.

7. Penalises (despite its absurd assertion to the contrary) a large proportion of teachers by denying them promotion to headships because they are Rationalists; thereby

8. Decreasing the efficiency of the profession by considerably narrowing the circle of selections for headships so far as teachers are honest; and

9. Putting a premium on hypocrisy by ensuring the promotion chiefly of those who are not honest.

Our readers will remember that in one form or another we have gone over the ground traversed by Mr. Smith, but the points stressed are here tabulated with an authority that we cannot claim, for Mr. Smith has spent his life in schools and knows the climate of these institutions far more intimately than we can. The Bill before the House of Commons, devised by a troop of priests and fathered by a government that has made greater play with the cant of "Liberty and Democracy" than any government that we can remember, and has done so with complete contempt for the electorate of the country. No government would dare to bring forward such a Bill as an election issue.

Mr. Smith, summing up the situation, says, wistfully:—

"The left Parties are pusillanimously inactive. Not one demands freedom from this compulsory indoctrination of children with superstitions condemned by ethics, history, logic or science. There is actually more protest against compulsory vaccination. The Labour Party remembers what John Scurr and his thirty-nine Roman Catholic Labour M.Ps. did to the Education Bill of 1930. Common Wealth, in its Information Bulletin, recognises the evils of the dual system, yet the Party will not oppose either dogmatic or even denominational teaching in public schools. The Communist Party can be relied on to do nothing to destroy our national unity or embarrass the Dean of Canterbury.

So there is no one to care for freedom or intellectual integrity or the scientific spirit, or to respect the mind of the child."

But Mr. Smith overlooks that we are fighting for the freedom of Europe, and against that what matters the freedom of the child? And of what avail is it if the English people grow up more intelligent but less religious, stronger in the sense of their own independence but unwilling to declare themselves weak and miserable sinners in the sight of God?

CHAPMAN COHEN.

THREE INDIAN DIVINITIES

CONTEMPORARY Hinduism, when compared with the counsels of the ancient Vedic literature, displays many modifications. The marked contrast between the early Sacred Books of the East and the several later Hindu Scriptures is striking. Yet, the Vedas have been long venerated as inspired writings and still possess their votaries. Present-day Hinduism is regarded by many scholars as the outcome of what was little less than an intellectual revolution, although this transformation was so gradual and was so skilfully incorporated by the Brahmans within the older cults that the change was effected with little or no friction.

The emergence of Siva and Vishnu from former obscurity into the two outstanding deities in the Pantheon was a conspicuous feature of the religious departure. When surveying these phenomena in the second volume of his fine historical study, "Hinduism and Buddhism," Sir Charles Eliot concludes that: "The worship of the new deities grew up peacefully in the midst of the ancient rites; they received the homage of the same population and the administrations of the same priests. The transition is obscured but also was facilitated by the strength of Buddhism during the period when it occurred. The Brahmans confronted by this formidable adversary, were disposed to favour any religious movement which they could adapt to their own interests."

Hinduism revived in India in the days of the Guptas, while Buddhism steadily declined. The cults of Siva and Vishnu seemingly assumed a noticeable form about the fourth century B.C. But dates are uncertain, as Indian writers rarely provide any clue to the period to which they refer. New gods are added to the Indian Pantheon even now, when dead men celebrated when living, are raised to the dignity of deities. When Siva and Vishnu became popular divinities the Brahmans readily admitted the newcomers to their Pantheon, while from these deities others arose who became objects of popular adoration and worship.

The Vedic deities were vague and indefinite, and there is ever a popular craving for a superhuman personality to whom the devotee can look for guidance and protection.

The cults of Siva and Vishnu supplied this requirement until they were largely superseded by that of Krishna, an Indian Saviour.

Phallic worship is associated with Siva, but this seems a later growth. Eliot notes that the outlines of this cosmic divinity exist in the Vedas, but in this literature there is no trace of phallicism in his cult. A leading addition to Siva worship "is the worship of a column known as the Linga, the emblem under which he is now most commonly adored. It is a phallic symbol though usually decent in appearance."

Linga worship prevails in all parts of India and "forms part of the private devotions of the strictest Brahmans, and despite the significance of the emblem, the worship offered to it is perfectly decorous. The evidence thus suggests that this cultus grew up among Brahmanical Hindus in the early part of our era. The idea that there was something divine in virility and generation already existed." To the Western mind the veneration of the genital organ by cultured Hindus seems quaint. To the Sivaist it is axiomatic that sexual phenomena rule the mundane world, and this is in many ways a biological truism. As Eliot reminds the prudens: "All animal and human existence is the product of sexual desire: it is the transient and temporary form of a force having neither beginning nor end but continually manifesting itself in individuals who must have a beginning and an end. This force, to which European taste bids us refer with such reticence, is the true creator of the world. But the Creator is also the Destroyer, not in anger but in the very nature of his activity. When the series of changes culminates in a crisis and the individual breaks up, we see, death and destruction, but in reality they occur throughout the process of growth. The egg is

destroyed when the chicken is hatched, the embryo ceases to exist when the child is born: when the man comes into being the child is no more. And for change, improvement and progress death is as necessary as birth."

Vishnu is a more benevolent deity than Siva and with the former is associated the genial Krishna, who is regarded as an incarnation of the older god. Rama seems an earlier avatar of Vishnu, but has not the extensive popularity of Krishna, who is perhaps a deified national hero. According to tradition, Krishna was entrusted to the care of a herdsman to escape the doom pronounced by the King of Mathura on his family, a member of which had been predicted as the monarch's slayer. After passing a merry youth with the milkmaids and performing feats of valour, Krishna killed the threatened king and then founded a kingdom of his own, but was accidentally slain by a huntsman in the forest.

In the innumerable stories that have clustered round Krishna there may be a modicum of truth. Men easily become gods in India, and Krishna may be one of them. Like the infant Christ's in the New Testament, the legend of Krishna's childhood appears in Indian tradition, and Hindu women adore an image of the infant, who is represented as clutching in his hands the butter he has stolen. This commemoration of juvenile sin may appear strange. But as Eliot intimates: "Clearly there is an analogy between these childish escapades and the caprices of mature deities, which are respectfully described as mysteries."

Another favourite image of Krishna represents him as a youth playing on a flute in a graceful attitude. Here he is in communion with the Gopis or milkmaids. But the tales of his erotic adventures with these damsels and the unseemly rites that celebrate them, have discredited Krishna's cult in educated India. Yet, Eliot considers that "Krishnaism offers the most extensive manifestation to be found in the world of what W. James calls the theopathic condition as illustrated by nuns like Marguerite Marie Alacoque, Saint Gertrude and the more distinguished Saint Theresa. 'To be loved by God and loved by him to distraction (jusqu' à la folie), Margaret melted away at the thought of such a thing. . . . She said to God, 'Hold back, O my God, these torrents which overwhelm me or else enlarge my capacity for their reception.' These are not the words of the Gita-govinda or the Prem Saga, as might be supposed, but of a Catholic Bishop describing the transports of Sister Marguerite Marie, and they illustrate the temper of Krishna's worshippers." Hindu poets and philosophers have also stressed the emotional theory that the human and divine can only be fused in the transports of love.

In some of his aspects Krishna appears as a sort of Indian Christ. But many legends picture him as a pastoral and erotic divinity. The most widely-known and most complete exposition of his godhead, however, appears in the Bhagavatgita, where he is seen in human form as a warrior and charioteer. It is estimated that Krishna's present-day adherents number 75,000,000. His personality has become much less realistic and, under the name of Hari, he now assumes a pantheistic character and has been closely assimilated with the Supreme Power that pervades the Universe. The god's human attributes thus diminished, if not altogether eliminated, Krishna's worshippers feel that they are now more firmly united than ever by ties of affection and trust with the spiritual sovereigns of Nature. T. F. PALMER.

MAGICAL FAITH

The Rev. Leslie Wetherhead says that "Faith (Christian faith) is not a form of magic." Well, what is raising a dead man from the grave, feeding a multitude and having more food when the feast had finished than when it commenced, and so forth and so forth. We think the things mentioned would pass for first-class magic.

THE SABBATH QUESTION

IV.

NO sooner had Constantine forced his Christian followers to observe the day of the Sun as the Sabbath Day than the Bishop of Rome, Sylvester, changed the name to the "Lord's Day"—which it still has except when Christians talk about the Sabbath Day, and then they insist that the Lord's Day is the Sabbath. They hate to be reminded that Sunday is a purely pagan day upon which the Sun has been venerated by "heathens" for centuries before Christianity. Still, the Church had to toe the line when admitting converts, with the result that their religion is permeated with paganism.

As Gibbon puts it:—

"The most respectable Bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstition of paganism if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved in less than a century the final conquest of the Roman Empire: but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals."

Actually, the Bishops and those responsible for spreading the faith had no difficulty in proving that Constantine was right, and that the express command of God in his divine work, the Bible, could be abrogated; exactly as members of the Lord's Day Observance Society in these hectic days are ready to prove the same. And if we add to this, the Christian hatred of the Jew and Judaism, we can easily see why God's Sabbath Day—Saturday—became in time laughed at by the orthodox Christians—in spite of the fact that at the same time they would acclaim the Bible as God's Precious Word.

Jerome, Augustine, and other Church writers, added their weight—though it must be admitted that it took centuries before Saturday was finally abolished. The usual procedure in many Christian communities was to "Sabbatise" Saturday—that is, keep it as a day of rest and make Sunday one of rejoicing and festivity. It was not at all easy to make Sunday the day of gloom and misery it eventually became.

In England, one of the earliest notices of Sunday as the Sabbath was in A.D. 692, when Ina, the King of the West Saxons, made a law forbidding any work on that day. Any servant—serf is the right word—who worked on Sunday on his own account was "to be beaten with stripes or ransom himself with a price." While "a freeman, if he works on this day, shall lose his freedom or pay 60 shillings; if he be a priest, double." Later, in A.D. 747, it was ordered that the Lord's Day was to be "celebrated with due veneration, and wholly devoted to the worship of God." While if anyone got married on Sunday he had to do penance for seven days. I expect a good many bridegrooms felt their marriage was worth it. All over the Continent it was much the same. Rigorous laws kept the people in check—though it is obvious these laws were most distasteful to them and often they were evaded altogether.

But the Church was already beginning to be a wily hand at the old game, and many of her priests, when the Sunday laws were flouted, had no difficulty in either seeing apparitions, angels and other inhabitants of heaven with special messages from the Most High, or they would spread various reports as to what happened to desecrators of the Sabbath Day—that is Sunday. These unfortunate people, it was insisted, became paralysed, or struck blind, or if they baked bread on a Sunday, blood would spout from it, or no matter how long the bread was in the oven, the dough would still remain raw. This kind of story still does duty where the Roman Church is powerful and where it holds education in its grip, but even British Catholics are beginning to feel that all is not well in this direction.

The curious thing is, we have records that in spite of all the trouble taken by the Church to keep the Sabbath Day holy, as late as in A.D. 1444, fairs and markets were actually held in churches in England; while even later they were allowed in harvest time.

It has been suggested that one reason why the sect called the Waldenses was suppressed by the Church authorities was because they insisted on keeping Saturday, and not Sunday, as the Sabbath. This was bad enough, but to make things look even worse, the report was spread that the Waldenses kept the Sabbath in a horrible way—no less a way than that of witches with their "Sabbat." How much love for these erring sheep is shown by the true Christian can be read in D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation." For example, an immense multitude surrounded de Broussart, the inquisitor, on one occasion when large numbers of unfortunate Waldenses, men and women, were all burned alive after his sermon. It was a truly pious exhibition of love.

Other heretics, naturally slandered by the Church, also kept the seventh day Sabbath during the Middle Ages and suffered in consequence. No rival was brooked by Popery while it had the power.

When the Reformers began their vigorous onslaught on the Roman Church, however much they differed on many things, some insisted on Sunday. Even Tyndale declared that they could make the Sabbath Day Monday, or any day they liked. Calvin found himself in a quandary, and could only support Sunday by claiming Saturday was set aside because of the "superstition" of the Jews. He certainly did not think much of Sunday all the same, as he had Servetus arrested on a Sunday.

As for Luther, when he gave up the Church, he had to go to the Bible for his rule of Faith, and he was by no means happy on the Sabbath question. His great opponent, Carlstadt, unreservedly bowing to the Bible, felt it was impossible to give up the Saturday as the Sabbath; Luther hated the Jews almost as much as Hitler, and was against anything savouring of Judaism. Hence, in spite of the Bible, Luther kept Sunday as the Lord's Day and "desecrated" the true Sabbath.

His influence was immense, yet through many centuries, all over the Continent, people were found to keep Saturday as against Sunday, often in the face of terrible persecution. Certainly that was the case in England, where they could be found before the 16th century—and many of them were either broken in spirit or put to death. The story of John Trask and his wife is a case in point. For years he preached the Seventh day observance, but after being flogged and imprisoned he recanted. His wife, however, refused to be broken and lay in prison for 16 years before dying there.

There were plenty of other "heretics," and all seemed ready to don a martyr's crown. They believed in Saturday and not Sunday, and nothing could shake them. But it must be observed that their intolerance appears to be as great as that of the Sunday believers. Whichever side got their way matters little. Both were ready to suppress all freedom on the Lord's Day, whether it was Saturday or Sunday, and both made the Sabbath Day a kind of hell. One feels inclined, reading the history of the movement, to say "Perdition to both sides."

H. CUTNER.

GOD AND US

God, we are told, is our Father, and we must ask him to help us. That is an insult to parents. Parents should not need prayers to help their children, and decent parents never expect it. The law, the human law, says that a parent *must* look after his children. Evidently God has not yet developed to the level of a human father.

“HUMILIATING”

I WONDER how many Freethinkers saw Press reports of a speech delivered by the Archbishop of York on January 27 last? I think that it would be as well if we all made a note of the statements made in this speech, for they contain an interesting lesson for us, and one which the pious would do well to notice. He was speaking at the annual service to commemorate the founders and benefactors of Durham Cathedral. Discussing what he described as disloyalty to the Church of England, he said:—

“Some members will yield easily to the demands of the Roman Catholic Church that in the case of a mixed marriage the non-Roman Catholic should promise that any children should be brought up as Roman Catholics. It is a hard, a cruel choice presented to a man or a woman deeply in love. A loyal member of the Church of England would unhesitatingly refuse to assent to such humiliating terms.”

There is, of course, one standard piece of repartee which the Freethinker will automatically make to this speech. It is the classical retort: “How these Christians love each other.” But I think that the matter goes a little deeper than that. Have parents really the right to decide how their children shall be instructed in controversial matters? Can Christians really make up their minds that their children should be Christians? Can Atheists or Agnostics make a provision for their children to be given the attitude towards religion that their parents hold?

My feeling is that no parent can possibly decide that his or her child should be given any sort of religious bias one way or the other. And (with all due apologies to Mr. Butler and the other supporters of religious education) it appears to me that it is not the place of the schools to give children any kind of religious education either. A child should not be given a religious (or, for that matter, a non-religious) attitude towards life at an age when it is in no position to decide these things for itself. At the tender age of three or four years old, no child can possibly decide whether the Biblical fairy tales are any better than the tales of Jack the Giant-Killer or Red Riding Hood. And if it is told these tales at all they should be frankly told as fantastic explanations of things, which were believed in the early stages of man's history, and for which there is really no evidence of any convincing kind. In other words, no child should be told, as truth, stories for which there is no real evidence of a non-superstitious kind.

The Secular solution of the education question appears to have little support among the powers that be; yet among teachers and (if truth were told) among parents and prospective parents it has much support. If the B.B.C. would only give the freedom of expression on religious affairs which it gives, say, to gardening or to music, such a thing would become obvious to the world at large. Make no mistake, the dictatorship of the orthodox will be continued as long as possible. And this leads to many things as “humiliating” as that against which Dr. Garbett kicks. If a member of the Church of England, marrying a Catholic, were to insist that none of the children should be brought up in the Romanist faith, Dr. Garbett would probably give the matter his benign approval.

There is, in other words, only one satisfactory solution. No child should be given religious ideas until it reaches an age at which it can judge such matters sensibly. And if (as we believe) such a solution would lead to a decline of religion which would be catastrophic—well, what right have the religious folk to object? They say that religion has a rational backing. If so, it should have its appeal to rational people of all ages. And the fact that children were not made victims of a Church conspiracy should have little effect on Church membership.

S. H.

ACID DROPS

THE new Archbishop of Westminster is not satisfied with at least a section of the people over which he rules. In his first pastoral letter he bitterly complains of the ignorance of Roman Catholicism of those who are outside that fold, and also those that are within it. He says that “Catholics who have been well educated at universities are often deplorably ignorant of Catholic theology.” We consider that the Archbishop is complaining of a situation which he should thank his God for creating. For suppose that both priests and laymen really knew the history of the Roman Church, understood its doctrines, and knew their origin. Why, in less than a generation the Church would be without followers. The Archbishop thanks God for much. He should thank God heartily that He has kept people ignorant of what their religion really means.

We, in common with others, have been living under the impression that the defence of Malta was carried to a triumphant end owing to the grit of the people, the courage of the five thousand men who formed the garrison, the assistance given from the outside, and the work of General Dobbie. But it seems we were wrong, we were all wrong, for General Dobbie, who is now resident in England, informs the people who meet him in public gatherings “The secret of the successful defence of Malta lies in the fact that we—the general and the people—asked for God's help.” So we must revise our judgment. The skill of the leader, the courage of the soldiers, the courage also of the people, had nothing to do with it. They won because they asked God to help them.

But suppose they had not asked God? In that case the justice of their cause, the right to defend themselves against the Italians and Germans, the courage of the defenders really counts for little—so far as success is concerned—or nothing at all. Praise of General Dobbie was just an exhibition of wasted breath. The people, as such, come badly out of the trial. So does God; for the assumption is that He would not have helped if the people had not gone on their knees and praised God. God had to be flattered before He would do anything to protect the people of Malta. And if He helped, we have nothing much to thank God for. He was paid for His job, and that ends the whole matter. But we wonder what God really thinks of His servant—General Dobbie—giving the game away in that manner.

Between “Primitives” and a very large section of the population there is but a little gulf. Here is an illustration from Brighton. Mrs. Kirston Parsons is the keeper of a Servicemen's canteen. Recently she found that there had been delivered only 40 dozen cakes instead of 81 dozen. Hard shell Atheists would have been in a fix. Not so Mrs. Parsons. She “offered up a silent prayer.” She then turned to speak to one of her helpers and when she looked again every plate was filled with cakes, and when the place was closed she had 200 cakes over. The “Glasgow Evening News” is responsible, but any who could swallow the fish and bread yarn in the New Testament should not feel a choking sensation when asked to swallow this one. We are quite certain the B.B.C. Brains Trust would find some reason for passing it. Anyway, we shall now turn to the New Testament yarn of the loaves and fishes with greater respect.

At the Edinburgh meeting of the Episcopal Church of Scotland it was announced the other day that it will not be contented until ministers have a basic payment of £350. We have no right to object to this, so long as the foolishness of the Minister harmonises with the foolishness of the lay members. But we do object when the general public is compelled to contribute to the upkeep of the clergy whether they want it or not. As a war-time policy we commend the method of Mrs. Parsons and the cakes. Surely Edinburgh is not too far north for these manifestations of God's care for His people.

A Catholic priest named Day has just published a book on his experiences trying to convert Jews; he became so notorious for his efforts in this direction that he was known as “Rabbi” Day. and modestly admits a bag of twenty. Unfortunately, he admits

also that "not all of them have stayed"—which will make most Jews smile. Father Day's really big successes in conversion have been with women, which is not altogether surprising; so he claims that Jewesses have "some striking features of superiority" over Jews. Rabbi Day still has a lot to learn.

On the other hand, an interesting historical sidelight on the question of conversion has just been unearthed. It appears that on first coming to Oxford in A.D. 1222, the Dominicans deliberately chose a site near some Jews in the hope of converting them. But it was the Dominican deacon, Robert de Reddinge, who "alas, renounced Christianity for Judaism!" And in those days it meant something to give up a safe religion for the hell of Judaism.

There have been many comments on the recent speech by Mr. Herbert Morrison on his suggestion as to methods of securing speed in setting this country right when the war is over. He suggested that Parliament should confine itself to passing "broad outlines of policy, and leave it for the Ministers in power to fill in the details." We hope that the suggestion will not realise itself in action. It means a continuation of what now exists under cover of the country being at war, and will give the order of any Minister the force of law.

It should be said there is nothing new in the suggestion. The method sprang into life when, some years ago, an enabling clause attached to Acts became a rule. In action, this meant that complete autocratic power was given to a Minister, by agreement with the Ministry, which made a decision by him legal. This also meant that the Minister having issued his commands, the power of the Courts of Law to check any assault by Ministers on the freedom of the public was at an end. It involves the most tyrannical of all customs, and we hope that those who have any liking for real belief in freedom will make it quite plain that this form of dictatorship, while perhaps inevitable in times of war, will not be tolerated in times of peace.

It is not easy to please Christians. One would think that if there was one recent institution that would satisfy Christian bodies it would be the B.B.C. Developed under that first-class bigot, Reith, it was decided on as a first principle that nothing should be said or done that was likely to injure the feelings of Christians. And the type of Christian, on the confession of the B.B.C., was not that represented by the liberal-minded Christian, but by the narrow-minded and uneducated one. As it was said by one of the B.B.C. governors, the microphone goes into a multitude of cottages, and their feelings must be considered. And in the last trial in this country for blasphemy, we listened to Lord Phillimore laying down the law to the effect that it had to be considered not whether the language would seriously offend the liberal-minded, cultured Christian, but would it be likely to incite the uneducated believer to the point of creating a breach of the peace. Of course in all religious prosecutions it is always the more bigoted and the more ignorant who are clamorous to treat the avowed anti-Christian as a deep dyed criminal.

And now the "Church Times," which, to do it justice, does occasionally give vent to spasms of liberality where religion is concerned, endorses a complaint against the B.B.C. for not giving a full-dress Anglican liturgical service every Sunday.

This is indeed ingratitude! The B.B.C. more and more mixes up its topics with Christian ideas and claims, and with no clear contradistinction. Even with the Brains Trust no one dares to challenge direct Christian claims. If he did he would be barred from further engagements. It engages a prominent clergyman to answer questions about Christianity, and then one discovers that the form and matter of the questions are provided by the Christian gentleman who answers them. It carefully provides that in all "discussions" of Christianity no one is permitted to attack Christianity, and now the "Church Times" wants a full liturgical service, and because some Christians may "be pre-

vented by illness from attending Church." Impudence could hardly go further than that.

What is the chief thing in the world? Very simply, and quite plainly the "Guardian"—Church of England—says, "The cardinal thing on which all life depends is the incarnation of our blessed Lord and His death upon the cross." And yet Christianity covers a period of less than two thousand years, while man as a species has been on earth about a million years.

At the Ilford Catholic Parliament recently a Catholic speaker had to undergo the indignity of turning himself into a common Atheist in order to advocate a case under discussion. The poor man did his best in awkward circumstances, and after setting himself up as the Aunt Sally he was, as we may expect, knocked into a cocked hat when the time came to reply to the Atheist case. All according to Catholic form, of course, but all very embarrassing, we feel sure. So next time the Ilford Catholics want an Atheist to knock about we suggest they write to us, and we will provide a real live one for their entertainment. Or would that be carrying the pretence of "freedom of opinion" a little too far for the Catholic Parliamentarians?

The Bishop of Bradford says he does not care for "sentimental and sloppy undenominationalism." Neither do we, but we go a little further than the Bishop. We dislike equally unsloppy denominationalism. They both smell strongly of clerical cant.

The Rev. W. Jones, Vicar of Denton, Manchester, appears to be a rather simple-minded cleric, since he has only just discovered that specially printed programmes for a Day of Prayer, and such like things are simply what American gangsters would call a "Racket." He says at the last Day of National Prayer—there seems to have been a scarcity of them of late—he was bombarded with appeals from a Church Publishing House to buy a number of copies. So Mr. Jones set to work, and after making enquiries, and calculations, found that the publishing houses reaped a nice little "rake in" of several thousand pounds. He adds there is no restriction of paper for such purposes. So the Vicar no longer agrees with Days of Prayer. If Mr. Jones will pursue his researches he will find Days of Prayer are not the only rackets that are run in the name of religion.

"Democracy," "Freedom," "Lovers of Liberty," etc., etc., are slogans that have been very prominent in the British press since the war began. And when we say "British" we include in that word the whole of the "Empire." But there are, of course, limits to liberty because we are at war, and war whether justifiable or unjustifiable always involves a step backward in the direction of freedom of speech and movement. Ministers issue orders that have to be obeyed without the general public having the slightest understanding concerning them. The military phrase, "It is an order," is enough, and pigmies become giants in the twinkling of an eye. All this proves that war, whether inevitable or not, whether in a good or a bad cause, always involve a step backward in civilisation. If we all keep this firmly in mind we shall be the better able to avoid war in the future, and escape many of the ills war brings.

Apropos of what we have said comes a copy of the South African paper, the "Rand Daily Mail," bringing the information that a book that has been in circulation for some years—"The Roman Catholic System," has now been banned, and not only banned but the police, acting under orders, are entering houses searching for copies of the book, and promptly confiscating them. The newspaper says that "studies and libraries of Pretoria clergy—mostly Dutch reformed Church Ministers—are being searched, and private houses are raided." A great many protests have been made, but we are, at home and abroad, a liberty-loving people, and therefore such actions that would be a disgrace if they occurred outside the Empire, must be borne by real liberty-loving people within. In England a book may be suppressed, so far as sale or exhibition is concerned, but they cannot be taken from those citizens who have copies. South Africa has improved on our plan. That liberty-loving institution, the Roman Church, needs protection and has its own idea of freedom.

"THE FREETHINKER"

2 and 3, Farnival Street, Holborn,
 Telephone No.: Holborn 2801. London, E.C.4.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

- H. J. G.—An excellent letter, and one that should do good. We have always urged those who are interested to make what use they can of the local press.
- C. E. G.—You will find Cole and Postgate's "The Common People," very useful, and also interesting. Although the book extends to over six hundred pages, necessarily a great deal of it is but outline. It is a series of books boiled down into one; and it should excite to further research, which is the highest praise one can give any book.
- H. THOMAS.—The news appears to have got round very quickly. It was just a warning that Mr. Cohen must exercise more care than he has done. It is better to live for a cause than to die for it—at least in the majority of cases—and the editor is looking forward to some years of work yet.
- H. JOHNSTON (Capetown).—We agree with all you say concerning the B.B.C. No legal action would lie in the direction you name. The B.B.C. is a chartered company, over which the State exercises certain rights. But it has sinned each government, up to date, not to have too much liberty "on the air." So the B.B.C. will continue to "fake," suppress and distort, and play a one-sided game, until the general public is intelligent enough to demand better management.
- J. SHINE.—Many thanks, but we had already written on it.
- J. HENSLAW.—Will appear as early as possible.
- A. E. POWELL (S.A.).—It is good to hear from two old journalists that in their opinion "The Freethinker" is "the cleverest journal that comes out of Fleet Street." We will do what we can to keep the fighting Freethought journal up to standard.
- H. SPINK.—Pleased to hear this journal excites so great an interest in your branch of the R.A.F. We have had many letters of late on the same lines.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2-3, Farnival Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.

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. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.

The FREETHINKER will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates (Home and Abroad): One year, 17s.; half-year, 8s. 6d.; three months, 4s. 4d.

Lecture notices must reach 2 and 3, Farnival Street, Holborn, London, E.C.4, by the first post on Monday, or they will not be inserted.

SUGAR PLUMS

ON Sunday next (March 26) Mr. Chapman Cohen will be lecturing in the Bradford Mechanics Institute, Town Hall Square. The subject is "Christianity, What Is it?" The chair will be taken at 6-30 p.m. Reserved seats 1s. It appears from local records that Mr. Cohen paid his first visit to Bradford 50 years ago. The present visit may therefore be taken as a Jubilee anniversary—or an invitation to the audience to commit murder.

Glasgow Freethinkers are reminded that Mr. R. H. Rosetti lectures in the Cosmo Cinema, Rose Street, Glasgow, to-day (March 19) at 6-30 p.m. on "Spiritualism and Common-Sense." The Cosmo is a very comfortable cinema, the subject is topical and should provide an interesting evening. Admission is free, with some donation tickets.

We are asked to announce that Mr. W. Hayhurst has been elected President of the Bradford Branch N.S.S. Mr. Hayhurst is a man who is held in high esteem by those who are acquainted with him, and is well known as an earnest and enthusiastic Freethinker. He succeeds Mr. Day who, during his year of office, had the satisfaction of seeing the branch make good advances. Mr. W. Baldie remains secretary.

Owing to war conditions and calls on the working members, the Manchester Branch of the National Secular Society has been silent for some time. Some of the principal workers have been away from the City and others have had but little spare time on hand. We are glad to learn that this period of inactivity—so far as public meetings are concerned—is now at an end. A new Committee has been formed and a more vigorous campaign will, we hope, follow. Those who are ready to lend a hand in any direction are invited to get into touch with the Secretary, Mr. C. McCall, 50 Stanford Street, Old Trafford, Manchester. New members will be warmly welcomed.

The "Durham Chronicle" publishes the following from one of the County Education Committee:—

"I have no use for Church schools and, in my opinion, they should, if possible, be taken over by the County Education Authority. The C.E. schools, as a rule, are old and prison-like, and not satisfactory buildings in which to teach the rising generation.

"Often the playground is very small; there are often old, smoky fireplaces, no central heating, and generally the whole place is out of date. The managers usually consist of about seven persons: chairman (the vicar, of course), four members of the church, lay readers and church wardens, the district education clerk, and one member from a council. They appoint their own headmaster, teaching staff and caretaker, so that if you are a good communicant, or can read the lessons, you stand the best chance of being appointed when a vacancy occurs.

"Yet the County authority is responsible for the full wages of the staff. Why should that be? Because you go to the Church of England, and are in the teaching profession, you have two chances as against one who does not attend church. You do not always get the best staff. The headmaster may read the lesson all right in church, but is he in all cases the most up-to-date teacher? I'm afraid not, and the children suffer thereby."

As we have so often pointed out, Church schools are merely breeding grounds for Church attendants. The purpose of a Church school is to train sheep for the fold. And the fate of sheep is to be sheared.

Some ought really to take the B.B.C. Brains Trust in hand and lead it to a better state. The other day we were listening to this exhibition of general knowledge and a question of the quality and value of science was raised. One of the brainy ones said, and the others appeared to endorse it, that with science materialism was dead, because science had given up the belief in a hard substance such as "matter" at the base of everything. Really such an unnecessary exhibition of the unscientific quality of our premier Brains Trust should be avoided. "Matter" as a basic substance was never more than a working hypothesis, it is now practically set aside by most philosophically minded scientists, and in any case, such a remark—accepted by the rest of the meeting—is an unnecessary display of want of understanding.

Of course, the root of the trouble is that the questions are sprung on the wiseacres round the table, just as though the aim of the performance was on a level of a general knowledge examination in a school. But the questions that are sent in—if they are genuine—are sent by people who want to get the best answer possible. They are not really concerned with whether Professor Brown, or Dr. Blue is as well stocked with general knowledge as he might be. As it stands the exhibition of want of understanding is rather pitiful.

THE GREAT SILENT LIE

MADAME CURIE must inevitably take her place in history as one of those who, though belonging to the unbelieving classes, was too great to be denied her fame.

Consequently, it is to be expected, not only that her story should be made the subject of a film, but that that film should be well received by the Press.

But it is also to be expected, religion being the prime breeder of deceit and hypocrisy, that the truth about Madame Curie's attitude to religion should be concealed from the film-going and the newspaper-reading public; that once more the great "silent lie" should be told by avoiding reference to this aspect of a great person's character, and by allowing the inference to be drawn that what that person did was actuated by the so-called Christian spirit.

No more blatant example of this have I witnessed than the example of the "Catholic Herald," which on March 3 published a special feature by the Film Correspondent reviewing the picture, "Marie Curie."

With bold headlines and four pictures, this review, occupying about a third of a page, is presented in a fashion which seems to me, appearing in a purely Catholic newspaper, to be calculated to convey the impression, without actually saying so, that the young Polish girl, "from her home in Warsaw," and the French Pierre Curie, were members of the One True Faith.

Of course, I may be quite wrong in my deduction as to the idea behind this Madame Curie "splash" in the "Catholic Herald," but I do not think I am wrong in my deduction as to the effect of it; for I firmly believe that the average Catholic, reading this review, will be unwittingly led to form the opinion that the Curies were Catholics.

And if such an impression were to be the result of the article, well, Rome would not really be perturbed at sharing reflected glory from Madame Curie. The Church is hard put to it in finding great figures of its own, and has no objection to borrowing them, even under false pretences, as historical cases show.

The "Catholic Herald" might, of course, retort that it has a right to review any film it wishes. It might point out that no claim was made that the Curies were Catholics, and if such an impression should be obtained it would be a mistaken one. With all of which I am willing to agree—excepting that I wish to add this comment:—

If the "Herald," in exercising its right to review a film, and being a religious newspaper, honestly wished to avoid any wrong impression being gained from its review, it could do so by honestly stating that the great Madame Curie was a Freethinker.

The editor, and his film reviewer, must surely be aware of this fact, which is common knowledge in their professional circles if not in their religious circles. Not to state a fact in certain circumstances can have the effect of creating a lie. Why, then, was this fact not stated? Let us read a little extract from the review, for enlightenment on the question.

"Four years of hope and disappointment, sometimes despair and final abandonment. But, just because hope never actually died—and because faith in their mission was never altogether extinguished—even with their 5,000th experiment an admitted failure—they triumphed."

That sheds a little light! How could the "Catholic Herald," how could any Christian newspaper, admit that such a splendid pair of human beings were not possessed by the Christian faith; that, indeed, they were sceptical of it? So the unwritten lie remains. A Polish girl, a French young man, almost automatically spell Roman Catholic to the Catholic masses of this country. As automatically as Irish seems to spell the same words to the non-Catholic masses.

Such ignorance may be deplored by all, including the "Catholic Herald," but it is useful sometimes, isn't it?

I have not written this article to review the film, "Madame Curie," but to protest against what I regard as an act of hypocrisy, manifested boldly in the "Catholic Herald," and perhaps less boldly in other newspapers. In making that protest, I feel I cannot do better than refer the editor of the "Catholic Herald" and the film reviewer to some words written by Madame Curie herself in 1887 to Henrietta, a friend who had suffered a still-born child. After stating that she cannot understand the Christian faith, the faith of those who say, "God willed it, and his will be done," Madame Curie goes on:—

"Forgive me these philosophical reflections: they are caused by your complaint against the backward and conservative spirit of the town where you live. Do not judge it too hardly, for social and political conservatism usually comes from religious conservatism, and the latter is a happiness—even though for us it has become incomprehensible. So far as I am concerned, I should never voluntarily contribute towards anybody's loss of faith. Let everybody keep his own faith, so long as it is sincere. Only hypocrisy irritates me—and it is as widespread as true faith is rare. . . . I hate hypocrisy. But I respect sincere religious feelings when I meet them, even if they go with a limited state of mind."

Thus Madame Curie answers for herself. I would only add, what a very limited state of mind it is that needs to cheat the public by concealing something Madame Curie herself never would conceal; and which seeks by inadequate presentation to steal her fame for a creed which totally lacks the silver to reflect her glory.

F. J. CORINA.

SOME CELEBRATED SONGS

IT was said of old time that if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation. Ballads, however, are out of fashion nowadays and their appeal no longer influences our policy—for universal suffrage has superseded them.

Nurses used to be the chief reciters of old ballads and songs, and I owe to mine an early acquaintance with "Highland Laddie," "Barbara Allen," "Willie Winkie" and the, I think, contemporary "Pretty Polly Perkins of Paddington Green." These were fireside favourites for winter nights at that pleasant hour before the advent of the "Dustman," who, alas! no longer calls so punctually as he used to do. Nurses do not sing now these old songs; I gather, indeed, that they do not sing to their charges at all.

The most celebrated of all songs of the people is the "Marseillaise"; it was said to have been composed by the author, Claude Rouget de Lisle, in 24 hours. This stirring song, known originally as *Le Chanson de l'Armée du Rhin*, was sung by the volunteers of Marseilles on their march to Paris in 1792, and was at once adopted with enthusiasm by their compatriots of the capital.

In 1915 posthumous honours were paid to the author and a coffin containing his ashes was displayed beneath the *Arc de Triomphe*, and afterwards conveyed on an ancient gun-carriage, a relic of the First Republic, to interment in the Invalides.

During the Empire of Napoleon III. the "Marseillaise" was interdicted, and in its stead was substituted "*Partant pour la Syrie*." This sentimental and feeble song, the first verse of which runs:—

*Partant pour la Syrie
Le jeune et beau Dunois
Alla prier Marie
De benir ses exploits*

was written by M. de Laborde and the music composed by Hortense, mother of Napoleon III.

After the dissolution of the Monarchy, the "Marseillaise" was at once re-established in popular favour, and became again the song of the people.

Songs of an earlier émeute were "Ca Ira" and "La Cay magnole"; but the latter was really a kind of wild dance, performed to a chorus of: "Vive le son, vive le son du canon."

Paris, in 1872, was recovering from the Débauche and resuming that indefinable and appropriate air of gaiety which seems to belong to her by right; but the shattered public buildings and houses, the bullet-holed shutters, doors and walls, the sites of barricades, all told a tale of suffering and sacrifice.

The Maitre of Meurice's Hotel presented me with a souvenir, it was a lump of glass, in shape like the old-fashioned twisted barley-sugar. When the Tuileries was burnt, the great mirrors which had reflected the scenes "where Napoleon III. and his wife, his mistresses, his sycophants, his corrupt Ministers and his incompetent commanders had danced and made merry for 20 years," were melted and ran in molten streams. These cooled and lay in fantastic pools, and a fragment from one of them was my memento of the destruction of the historic Salle des Maréchaux.

During the siege of Paris, all animals disappeared, horses, dogs, cats and even rats were devoured. The monkeys in the Jardin des Plantes alone escaped the ragout, though African travellers have relished them, and Bates said that monkey-meat was the best he had ever tasted and that he usually had a joint of coaitá hanging in his cabin.

After many years I seem to stand again before a house in one of the streets adjoining the Rue de Rivoli. Embedded in the façade is an unexploded shell; the owner of that house vowed that it should remain there till France was free.

A song which some old folks will recall created a furore in Paris in later years (1837-8); it was entitled "C'est Boulanger qu'il nous Faut." This was composed in honour of General Boulanger, then the idol of the French people, who acclaimed him with enthusiasm as a hero destined to avenge the débacle of 1870. A march entitled "En Revenant de la Revu" was equally popular; on the cover of this the "brav Général" was depicted mounted and en grande tenue. At that time it might have been said:—

"His hands the rod of empire might have swayed"; but, unlike the great Napoleon, he placed love before ambition. His love story was a sad one and he died by his own hand at the grave of his mistress, Madame de Bonnemains.

I saw the General in Paris several times, caracoling on his celebrated black charger and surrounded by an admiring crowd, a romantic and handsome figure reminiscent of one whose end was also tragic; the resplendent Murat, greatest of cavalry leaders.

Many of the songs composed by the well-known entertainer, Henry Russell, are still remembered; the libretti of some of these were written by Charles Mackay, the father of Marie Corelli, and sung with immense success by Russell, both here and in America. Two of the songs, "Cheer Boys, Cheer" and "To the West," were said to have been the most potent incentives to emigration in the "hungry forties" when, owing to their appeal, thousands sought "the Land of the Free, where the mighty Missouri runs down to the Sea."

Ireland has never lacked bards to incite her sons to rise against the "Saxon oppressor." Moore discreetly veiled his rebellious sentiments; but his contemporaries, and others of a later date, quite frankly expressed their ambition to "Pull the English Red below the Irish Green." One of the songs most popular with the rebels, or the "peasantry," as Irish historians prefer to designate them, was the "Shan van Voght"—anglice, the Little Old Old Woman—which foretold, prematurely, the landing of a French military force in Bantry Bay.

The French are in the Bay, said the Shan van Voght,
The French are in the Bay, they'll be here without delay,
And the Orange shall decay,
Said the Shan van Voght.

But the easterly wind so fervently prayed for and so often invoked in the toast:—

A stout heart and mind
And an easterly wind
And the Devil behind
The Saxon

failed to assist the adventure, and the fleet was forced by bad weather to separate and abandon all hope of an invasion, and "quit the shores of Ireland without having landed a single soldier, communicated with the disaffected, or thrown a musquet on the shore."

A later expedition was more successful, and on August 23, 1798, three French frigates entered Killalla Bay. This, the smallest of the armaments fitted out to invade Ireland, consisted of 1,200 men and 70 officers under the command of General Humbert. The force, though small, was composed of veterans who had seen service in the armies of Italy and the Rhine.

After some initial successes the invaders, outnumbered and destitute of artillery and supplies, were forced to surrender.

For their ignorant and useless allies, the French had the greatest contempt and regarded the Irish mob which accompanied them as a pack of senseless savages.

EDGAR SYERS.

(To be concluded)

THE MEANING OF "EMERGENCE"

LET us take a simple example from the realm of chemistry. Under certain environmental conditions, Hydrogen and Oxygen combine to form the compound water. This water is a new emergent, it has no resemblance either to Hydrogen or Oxygen, but is a fresh entity of itself. It is not true to say that water is nothing but Hydrogen and Oxygen. Yet water involves these two elements; and in the absence of either of them it cannot exist. If water is not only Hydrogen and Oxygen, something else must be involved in its production. This something else is a special relatedness of the component elements to each other and to the environment. Hydrogen can be mixed in all sorts of ways, subjected to all sorts of influences from the environment, thermal, electrical, etc.; but unless and until the requisite specific relatedness is achieved, there is no integration of the elements into water. . . . This special relatedness is the secret of new emergence.

. . . It is advisable to trace the process of emergence throughout evolution . . . and to support the thesis that all phenomena, mental and physical, evolve without the intervention of any outside agency, from the simplest to the most complex. For the sake of clarity, however, it is as well not to go back beyond the modern physical conception of the atom.

Physicists have shown that the atom consists of systems of protons and electrons, that is of positive and negative electrical charges, in relation to each other. This is true for all atoms, and brings out the importance of relatedness more than any other example could. Gold and Oxygen are both composed of protons and electrons, differing only in their relation to each other. Hence this relatedness is the variable factor in the composition of these utterly different elements. The same is true of the combination of atoms into molecules in respect of the importance of relatedness in determining differences. Thus given different forms of relatedness and different environmental conditions, the same components may result in different emergents. . . . This difference is due, not only to the quantitative proportions of atoms in the molecules, but also to the

structural forms taken by the molecule. In the organic chemical compounds this variation of emergents from the same elements is still more noticeable, for the varieties of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen compounds are legion. Indeed, carbon itself is capable of the most various manifestations depending upon the relatedness of its atoms.

. . . So far, we may have a clear idea of the environmental conditions, and the special relatedness which determines the emergence of the new entity; but at the next stage, that of the emergence of life from the organical chemical compound, this factor is beyond our knowledge. It is at this point, above all others, that the animists claim that all the rival philosophies have failed. They say that it is absolutely necessary to postulate an influence coming in from outside, to induce this change between living and dead tissue. This argument, however, only seems to obscure the issue still further. . . . The animistic conception of something coming in anew from the outside, leaves much unexplained. For example, what exactly is this new thing, and where is this outside and what resides there? It seems more reasonable to postulate that the new thing is the special relatedness, and that this makes the difference between protoplasm dead and alive. Because we do not know what this relatedness is, it does not follow that we shall never know it. . . . If the exact relatedness which constitutes the difference between living and dead protoplasm still escapes us, recent work on cellular physiology and chemistry does point the way for further research.

. . . Life having once emerged the process of evolution goes on by the emergence of new qualities, whose components can be studied without great difficulty, and the laws of whose relatedness, and the environmental conditions necessary for whose existence, have in large measure been worked out. A differing relatedness of very similar constituents determines the distinction between plant and animal, the one characterised by a dominant vegetative function, the other by a dominant motor function.

In our present study we are concerned with the animal kingdom, and especially the emergence of the nervous system. This system would seem to be evolved from a gradual specialisation of certain functions, characteristic of living protoplasm. There are the negative and positive tropisms, met with in the lowest forms of living organisms, such as the amœba. Certain mechanical, thermal and electrical stimuli, applied to such living protoplasm, induce motion of the whole organism towards the source of these stimuli.

. . . The next recognisable stage in the evolutionary process is the emergence of the conditioned reflex response from the combination of one or more reflexes, with fusion or suppression of certain of the component parts. . . . Experimental work has shown that many forms of behaviour may be explained in terms of the conditioned reflex. We must, however, guard against the suggestion that all sorts of behaviour are nothing but conditioned reflexes. The principle of emergence, with the appearance of something new depending on different relatedness, is essential. . . . Considered from the neurological aspect, reflex reactions are the function of a purely segmental nervous system, where there is no specialisation between one segment and another. Instinctive reaction depends essentially upon the specialisation of certain segmental nervous structures to form a brain. This is a new departure in anatomical structure, and therefore it is only reasonable to expect a new departure in psychological research.

In this scheme of emergent evolution, it is very important to notice how the higher planes involve the lower planes. The atom cannot exist without the electrical charges whose special relatedness constitutes the atom. The molecule cannot exist without atoms. Life is impossible without the phenomena belonging to the realms of chemistry and physics, and consciousness is inconceivable without life and all that it involves. So . . . whatever level we are examining . . . we must remember that the particular type of relatedness we are concerned with involves all other

forms of relatedness below it in the evolutionary scale. But it is not a mere summation of these, but a definite new entity of its own, different from its components and from everything else. . . . As we ascend in the evolutionary scale, the more complex is the pattern of unities in relation to each other, and the more subtle are the differences of the resultant product, even though the unities themselves are similar.

—"Personality" (1926), by R. G. GORDON, Chapter III.
(Kegan Paul).

CUMBERING STONES

I.

ON top of the bank above the River Avon at Evesham once stood a large monastery and abbey, of the greatest in England. All that remains of them are Abbot Lichfield's gateway and bell tower, almonry, two parish churches, a huge arch in a garden, and the monks' fishpond, now a paddling pool for children, as much of the land around is a playplace for them. An excellent use to make of the site—better than keeping it on show as a historic monument.

After dissolution of Evesham Monastery in 1539 under King Hal, people in Evesham and surrounding country made the monastery a quarry. Over great part of the adjacent area are farm buildings, cottages and country houses built of material from the old monastic structure.

Those South Vigornians showed great good sense. They turned the idle to the useful; converted an encumbrance into utility; made the discarded of service; in short, set we moderns an example of salvage.

One can only regret that more of it was not done. Britain to-day is littered with historic monuments which have no sort of value, are merely wasting good ground as they waste the time of those who gaze at them.

Ruined, derelict, shattered, tumbledown and decaying castles, abbeys, priories, monasteries, windmills and watermills, Stonehenge, Avebury, Chanctonbury, Rollright Stones, cromlechs, dolmens, walls of York and Chester, British and Roman camps, baths, villas, circuses, medieval bridges, gatehouses, towers: what an unconscionably long list one could make of relics and remains, often mere piles of stones and earth and rubbish, frequently obstructive when not wasteful of space and material. Even their supposed picturesqueness is doubtful. Many people would prefer to see them replaced by modern edifices, or the land whereon they stood devoted to farms, gardens, orchards, woodlands, cornfields or pastures.

In some cases use is made of these ancient buildings. Windsor Castle is a royal residence. A few others are habitable, though having to be expensively modernised and costly to maintain. Dudley Castle grounds are a zoo, Tamworth and Colchester parks, but in these the antique buildings are superfluous. The majority of historic monuments are litter, needing to be swept away.

Many are hindrances. Such are dozens of narrow, inconvenient bridges holding up traffic, yet rebuilding is delayed by outcries from sentimentalists, as over Clopton Bridge at Stratford-on-Avon. The Priory Gateway in Malvern, Bar in Southampton, Bridge Gate at Monmouth, gateways at Canterbury and Warwick are examples of what should disappear to allow modern transport free flow. The site of the Tower of London must be of enormous value could it be secured for commercial purposes. Where the ruined structures are merely tottering to decay, as Tintern, Glastonbury and hundreds more, to clear the ground would be public service.

Because their moral effect is bad. Their jealous preservation typifies a mentality which is antagonistic to the free development of the human mind. It is significant that when Mustapha Kemal and his helpers created modern Turkey they discarded Istanbul

as the capital. It had too much history, myth, legend and romance; held too many bygone associations which would turn Turkish thoughts in the wrong direction. They chose Ankara, a new, bare town whose name quickened no old, wistful memories.

So perhaps in Britain a clearing away of hoary and venerable objects might clean up the civic and national mind, badly needed.

Outstanding example is Nelson's "Victory" at Portsmouth. When the hulk became so rotten at bottom that it would no longer float it was dragged out of the water and set up on land, ceasing to be a ship. Better to have broken it up for constructional timber or firewood. To remember Nelson we do not need his old flagship or other relics of him. He lives in memory by his living actions, immortal by his character and deeds—not by material articles he left behind.

The danger from preservation of all these historic buildings and objects is creation of the museum mind, ultra-conservatism, danger not only of looking back but of hankering back, wishing back.

It has been said: Happy is the country which has no history. Perhaps happier is the country which has no historical monuments.

A. R. WILLIAMS.

DEI DEFENSOR

(A Lay of Modern Britain)

—With apologies.

And when the face of Science
Was seen amongst the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From God's minions rose.

In the heavens was no angel
But spat towards him and hissed,
And even God himself was mad
And shook his holy fist.

But now God's brow was sad,
And the angels' speech was low,
And darkly looked they at Britain
And Science, deadliest foe.

"Our forces have been overcome,
Our outposts are surrounded;
And if they take the B.B.C.
From heaven we'll be hounded."

Then up spake the brave Corporation,
Champion of God, most gracious,
"To many men in Britain
This fight may seem fallacious.

But how can men die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the enslavement of their progeny
And the maintenance of Gods?"

Then out spake C. S. Lewis,
Apologist proud was he,
"Lo, I will give talks weekly
And keep the Faith with thee."

Upon his ample shoulders
He bears a camouflaged shield,
And in his hand he shakes a brand
Which none but he can yield.

Right glad were all the Christians
Who, in that hour of dread,
Against great odds bore up the war
Around God, almost dead.

"Hail to thee Great Lewis!
Hail to your novel views!
Hail to the B.B.C. who use you,
God's mysteries to diffuse!"

S. B. W.

THE CHURCH AND SEX

"The Church and the Law are equally uncharitable in the harshness with which they punish any offender against their code of ethics. It was the Church that till recently looked upon sexuality as a sin and taught mankind to regard marriage as a concession to man's frailty. Pulpit and Bench are equally severe in their judgment of sexual offenders, equally ignorant of all that science has learnt of the nature of sex and its manifestations. In his summary of the commandments, St. Paul puts 'Thou shalt not commit adultery' before 'Thou shalt not kill,' and the majority of churchmen still regard love outside wedlock as more reprehensible than hate inside it."—From "The Physiology of Sex," by Kenneth Walker, Hunterian Professor of the Royal College of Surgeons; 1940; page 7.

CORRESPONDENCE

"WAR AND THE FUTURE"

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. S. Gordon Hogg, appears to be quite content to await universal destruction and, in the meanwhile, to "sizzle" by which I presume that he means—take it as a joke. I agree that, given the certainty of extinction, this is a brave attitude, much better than bewailing, but is he absolutely sure that his prognostication is correct? Admitted that there is little evidence to justify an optimistic outlook, the fact remains that if humanity perishes, it will be the fault of humanity of which Mr. Hogg is a part. Mankind may be within an ace of destruction, but while thinkers and workers remain, there is still a chance that Reason may ultimately prevail and that international wars may be sublimated into universal law supported by international force.

The struggle will call for every ounce of wit and energy.

I should like to think that every Freethinker was among the stalwarts.

I am old enough to remember Charles Bradlaugh, who declared: "I do not say 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' but I say 'Let us take hands and help, for to-day we are alive together.'"

However indifferent one may be as to our individual lives (and indifference comes with advancing age) it is refreshing and rejuvenating to be taking part in a struggle even apparently all but hopeless, to secure for one's children a world which shall be secure from the horrors of war.—Yours, etc.,

A. H. MILLWARD.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

LONDON—OUTDOOR

North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead):
Sunday, 12 noon, Mr. L. EBURY.

LONDON—INDOOR

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, 11 a.m. Conway Memorial Lecture. Dr. GILBERT MURRAY: "Myths and Ethics."

COUNTRY—INDOOR

Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Mechanics Institute).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m. J. M. THORNTON, B.Sc. (R.C.): "To Whom Shall We Go?"

Glasgow Secular Society (Cosmo Cinema, Rose Street, Glasgow).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m. Mr. R. H. ROSETTI: "Spiritualism and Common-Sense."

Leicester Secular Society (75, Humberstone Gate).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m. Mr. OTTO BENNEMANN: "The Problem of Germany."

Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch N.S.S. (Socialist Cafe, Old Arcade, Newcastle).—Sunday, 7 p.m. Mr. J. T. BRIGHTON: A Lecture.

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