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Professor G. W. Keeton, M.A., LL.D., on "Has Civilization
A Meaning?"

Readings from: Tolstoy's "War and Peace."

January 11, 1948

Broadly speaking, in reviewing recorded history there are four main hypotheses which may be employed to explain it:

1. That we are fulfilling a divine purpose. This is naturally the point of view which is reflected in theological literature, but it raises the age-old problems of the inscrutability of the ways of God and of the conflict of good and evil (with some notable instances of the triumph of evil, at any rate on earth). Even such triumphs, however, can be explained by the acceptance of either of two subordinate hypotheses: (a) the compensation theory of the hereafter, i.e., that if we suffer on earth our reward will be greater in heaven; and (b) that if we take a sufficiently long view then good will finally triumph and accordingly the city of God will be established on earth. Some extremely impressive works have been written on this theme. However, today, this method of approach is less frequently adopted than formerly because it raises so many difficult problems, e.g., why are there so many recessions in the struggle to achieve the divine purpose? What reason have we to suppose that man, the inhabitant of a speck of dust in space, is the centre of the universe? What evidence have we of the divine purpose? Was it not one thing in the Middle Ages, another in the sixteenth century, and is it not still another thing today? In fact, is this hypothesis anything more than the progress theory in theological garb?

2. The progress theory of human evolution. This was the theme of all those who in the nineteenth century, following the publication of Darwin's great work wrote upon the ascent of man. Progress, however, raises the question: To what ultimate goal? Is there a goal at all? Is perfection in the abstract conceivable? Is it not just "better than before"? And what do we mean by better? Do we mean mechanically, morally, or culturally, or all of them? Finally, would not perfection really be very dull? Except in the field of applied sciences, can we really say that we are better than the Greeks or the men of the Renaissance? One of the most important characteristics of Christianity has been its emphasis upon the principle that a man can rise above his circumstances, that he can alter his destiny and that he is personally responsible for his actions. This has placed Christianity apart from the mass religions of the further East, with their slow unrolling of destiny, which subconsciously reflects the submissiveness of the mass to Eastern despotisms. Christianity derived its doctrine of personal accountability from Judaism, with its monotheism, and from the individualism of the Hellenistic world. It transmitted it to Western civilization, which in our own day is discarding it.

3. Determinism in its various manifestations. Put crudely this implies that things happen because other things have happened in the past. We must therefore think of every single event today as the summit of a cone stretching back endlessly into the past. So every individual attitude today is simply the product of past attitudes. If I select a course of action, it is because I am what the past has made me, and can do no other. This attitude of mind has been attacked by the theologians because it

eliminates free-will in the real sense altogether. It suggests that there can be neither sin nor punishment in the accepted sense.

4. The chaotic theory. This would have stood little chance of serious consideration half a century ago, but there are numerous hints of it in the literature of today. According to this theory there are no overriding laws in human development. Chance is as important as past history or perhaps more important. Thus, the record of the human race becomes no more than "a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing." According to this hypothesis, if Napoleon had not had a cold at the battle of Borodino, the whole of human history would have been different. But is history really so chancy as this? Is the record of human endeavour simply one of millions of possible patterns, any one of which might have happened? On the other hand, chance obviously operates at some level, and it is possibly better to think of the element of chance as the waves on the surface of the sea below which deep tides are nevertheless running.

We cannot solve the riddle of history without going outside history. That is to say that our initial hypothesis must be metahistorical. The historian's problem is ultimately the same as the scientist's. Obviously history is one thing if we are no more than lantern slides, projected on a screen called the universe by some super-human beings or by a first cause. It is quite another thing if this life is the ultimate reality, and we are, as it were, insulated in time and space. In any event, recorded history is no more than a tiny fragment of the known duration of human life. It is, in fact, simply the last six or seven thousand of a hundred thousand years, i.e., rather more than one-twentieth and we only know this very imperfectly. Thus, every conclusion is not much more than an inspired guess, more especially as human characteristics have not changed very greatly during that time. Alexander and Julius Cæsar were very much the same sort of men as Napoleon, and intellectually Euripides and Shakespeare are as close together as Shakespeare and Cervantes. So we can do no more than frame provisional hypotheses and leave it at that.

(Contributed by Professor Keeton)

Archibald Robertson, M.A., on "Dialectical Materialism"

Readings from: (1) *Speech at the Anniversary of the People's Paper, 1856*, by Karl Marx;

(2) *Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx, 1883*, by Friedrich Engels.

January 18, 1948

Materialist philosophy begins with the criticism of religion.

From the dawn of civilization we have been trained to believe in two different worlds—first, in the natural or material world, which we get to know by our own senses and by reflection on the information they convey to us; secondly, in the supernatural or spiritual world, of which our senses tell us nothing, but of which we learn on the authority of persons claiming to be in possession of a revelation about it. The first materialists were men who challenged the truth of such claims. The question is not purely theoretical, but extremely practical. For from the dawn of civilization priest-hoods and churches have based their title to public support on their claims to supernatural knowledge, and the exploitation of man by man has been justified on the grounds which depend on the existence of such knowledge, e.g., the existence of God, a revelation made by God to men, the immortality of the soul, and the dependence of our eternal happiness on submission to the revealed will of God. By denying revelation materialism challenges the right to live of those classes which profit by it. The issue, therefore, between

religion and materialism has never been merely academic, but fundamentally economic and social.

The first great challenge of materialism to religion in modern times was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and coincided with the first great conquests of natural science. Observation and experiment had established the reign of law in fields which the Church represented as continually subject to divine intervention. As the Church was convicted of error on important issues, men asked why they should submit to its authority on any. Why suppose that there is a God and an immortal soul simply because priests say so? Why not make probability the criterion of belief, and utility that of conduct?

But the early conquests of science were chiefly in the field of mechanics. This led to a twofold weakness in early materialism. It tried to explain social phenomena by physical causes (as when Holbach attributed wars to "too much bitterness in a fanatic's bile" or "the bad digestion of a monarch's stomach"); and it laid itself open to a specious counter-attack by the religious. What, after all, asked Berkeley, did we know of the material world except from our ideas? And must not ideas be in a mind? Mind therefore was logically prior to matter; and since none of us created the world, there must be another mind—God—who did. Thus philosophic idealism became a weapon in the hands of theology, and even scientists in many cases did lip-service to it by assuming a Creator to start the world-process.

Since those days science has extended its conquests to the phenomena of life and society. As a result modern materialism is able to meet the idealist objections. This has been done by philosophers who are not Marxists (e.g., Santayana and Sellers); but Marx and Engels can fairly claim to have been the first to answer the idealists. In his *Theses on Feuerbach* (jotted down in a note-book in 1845 and published by Engels in 1888) Marx points out that man is not a passive recipient of sensations. He acts on the world and changes it, and by doing so successfully, proves the truth of the ideas on which he acts. This is the only test of truth. Ideas which cannot be tested in action, e.g., those of the supernatural, are fantasies evolved by man to compensate him for secular frustration. As Marx elsewhere puts it, they are "the opium of the people."

It follows that there are no eternal truths. Dialectical materialism does not deny objective truth; to say it does is to travesty it. But truth, justice and all other ideas have been evolved in the course of time as aids to man in his struggle for life. They are therefore relative and not absolute. Marx welcomed Darwin's *Origin of Species* as a valuable support to his basic position.

It further follows that all our ideas are experimental and subject to correction. Nothing can be more false than to regard Marxism as a rigid body of dogma. It is curious that the same people who condemn Marxism as dogmatic also condemn the Soviets for opportunism when they correct their policy in the light of events! But such correction is of the essence of Marxism as of all scientific thinking. All scientific laws are approximations, e.g., those of mechanics: bodies do not really fall with a constant acceleration; for as they fall, their distance from the centre of the earth diminishes and the force of gravity increases. Similarly for Marx the classical labour theory of value is a first approximation, which he modifies in *Capital* as he goes along. Hence science is not afraid of contradictions. Two contradictory ideas may both be necessary; and we may use them, provided we remember that they are tools and do not pretend that either is absolute truth. This has been strikingly vindicated in the recent history of physics, when it has been found necessary to describe material particles for some purposes as particles and for other purposes as waves.

Dialectical materialism provides the answer to the religious taunt that we cannot explain ideas in terms of physics and chemistry. Why should we? Our thinking powers were not evolved to explain everything, but as aids in the battle of life. To cope with our physical environment we use one set of intellectual tools; to cope with our social environment, another. Neither set is a master-key to the universe. The world evolves: physical processes give rise to vital, and vital to mental and social; and to cope with each we use different concepts. But it is all one world; and there is no need to go outside it to explain its ways.

In its special application to human history dialectical materialism starts with the fact that, as Engels puts it, "mankind must first of all eat and drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, religion, art, etc." Consequently the politics, science, religion and art of a society are coloured and biased by the necessity impelling its members to win a living. The capitalist system is doomed, not because it conflicts with abstract justice, but because its inherent nature forces it to destroy its own market by cutting its costs and then to seek new markets by war. To end such a system with minimum cost is our primary interest. To any who fret in this time of crisis about the "political and intellectual freedom" of its beneficiaries and champions, my short answer as a Marxist is, "First things first."

(Contributed by Archibald Robertson)

Dr. Olaf Stapledon, M.A., Ph.D., on "The Plight of Man"

Readings from (1) Samuel Butler. "The Way of All Flesh."

(2) A. S. J. Tessimond's "Voices in a Great City."

January 5, 1948

A drowning man is said to see the whole of his past life in his last moment. Mankind is perhaps today in the last moment of its long though astronomically brief career, so it is appropriate that we should review Man's past, his present, and his chance of having a future.

What sort of thing is Man? Astronomically, he is a minute parasite on a minute planet. It is now rumoured that planets are not so rare as was recently supposed. There may well be not only thousands of strange worlds with strange inhabitants but also many "other Earths", much alike our own, occupied by beings much like ourselves. *Homo sapiens* began only in the last flicker of astronomical time, say half a million years ago. His planet will probably be still habitable two thousand million years hence. Hitherto confined to his own planet, Man might (if he survives) very soon explore and exploit the rest of the solar system, for good or ill. It seems very unlikely that he will ever reach out to other stars, let alone other galaxies.

Physically, a man is about half way in size between an electron, which is about the smallest known thing, and the cosmos as a whole: The littleness below him and the hugeness above him are equally stupendous. But in at least one respect Man excels even physically. He is the most complex and organic of all known systems. For this reason he needs very special conditions to maintain his life, conditions which, so far as we know, occur only on the surface of this planet. But owing to his intelligence and versatility he can create his appropriate environment even in regions that are by nature inhospitable to him. Compared with other animals he is remarkably adaptable, ranging from the arctic to the tropics, the bowels of the earth to the stratosphere. His ingenuity may in time conquer even the grim conditions of other planets, for good or ill.

Biologically, man is a product of a seemingly fortuitous evolution.

Most species have come to a premature end, or have been specialized in sheer unspecialization, in adaptability, by means of an extraordinary development of brain; correlated with subtle eyes and supple hands.

Psychologically, the ground plan of man's nature is much the same as the ape's; but he is far more integrated than any other animal, and therefore he has been able to break through into *kinds* of experience impossible to any beast. On the one hand, owing to his power of speech, he is capable of abstraction; and so of practical skills far beyond the sub-human capacity; and also far-reaching intellectual analysis and synthesis. On the other hand, his power of regarding himself objectively (up to a point), and of being disinterestedly interested in things other than his own biological self, has enabled him to rise to true personal love, to art, to philosophy, to genuine religious feeling. Human sensitivity and intelligence open up new spheres of objectivity, and these confront man with new values, not reducible simply to the sub-human values.

Spiritually, man finds himself (in his most awake states) invaded and possessed by a vision of values far beyond the ken of the beasts, and unattractive even to man himself in his "unregenerate" state. These spiritual values suggest to him an ideal way of life, namely, the way of sensitive and intelligent awareness of world and self and other, the way of love and of coherent and creative action in relation to the world. This is the ideal that has haunted the great religions, and has been mistakenly supported by means of all sorts of quite unreliable doctrines about the universe and man's destiny. Alas! Human thought and language are really far too crude to formulate any reliable theories about ultimate reality. To found one's religion on theories is to found it on sand. But the spiritual experience or attitude, which such mere theories vainly seek to justify or explain, is seemingly at the highest reach of human sensitivity and intelligence, and is not to be dismissed merely because we cannot adequately theorize about it.

Man is a half-made creature. Unlike the bird, which is perfected for its appropriate environment, he, in his vaster environment, is no more than a clumsy flying reptile. Man is capable only of hesitant and crude sketches of personality and of the spiritual life.

And now, with the discovery of atomic power, this imperfect creature has gained the possibility of either destroying himself or creating a new *kind* of human world, in which all individuals will have a fair chance of developing whatever human powers they possess, and in which (I apologize for the language I am about to use) the race as a whole will become as fine an "instrument of the spirit" as it has the capacity to be.

Today it looks as though Man may destroy himself in atomic warfare. The world is divided by a deep and seemingly insurmountable, ideological cleavage. America (at its best) is the custodian of one half-truth, namely, the importance of individuality, and therefore of individual liberty. (Yes, but the liberty to exploit the weak?) Russia at its best is the custodian of the other half-truth, namely, that we are all members one of another, that community or mutual cherishing is also important, and that to establish community we needs must plan society and maintain social discipline. (Yes, but what *kind* of discipline?) Between stands Europe, torn by divided allegiance to each half-truth, but destined *perhaps* in virtue of this conflict to effect the true synthesis.

A more developed creature than Man might easily solve the problem. But man's plight lies in his being sufficiently cunning to win great power, yet insufficiently sensitive and integrated to subordinate his primitive nature to his incipient spiritual nature and to deal with his too complex circumstances intelligently.

If Man destroys himself, it will probably matter very little from the cosmical point of view; if there is such a point of view. But Man, profoundly feeling himself to be in *some* sense a vessel of the spirit, though a lowly one, needs must strive to fulfil the spiritual potentiality of his planet.

The issue depends in the last resort on the calibre of ordinary men and women. What are they? Pterodactyls, not true birds! And mostly crippled pterodactyls, at that! Men have in the past constantly blundered into circumstances beyond their control. And these circumstances have constantly reacted upon them harmfully. And so today they are such as we find them: "human-all-too-human" business men, artisans, labourers, spivs and drones, and so on. Many are also neurotics and sadists; but most are ordinary, half-baked, amiable, "unregenerate" persons like ourselves. The outlook is black!

Yes! But not quite hopeless! Given favourable psychological conditions from birth to maturity, ordinary human beings are capable of surprising generosity, kindness, understanding and even heroism. Men are indeed not angels, but neither are they sheer brutes. If human nature in us all were not so sadly warped by untoward conditions, mankind could save itself. And even as we stand today, there is still some hope that the very conditions that frustrate and torment us will at last stimulate us to overcome them by generating in us the powers that our plight demands, as a disease generates its appropriate antibodies.

(Contributed by Dr. Olaf Stapledon)

Joseph McCabe on "The Revolutions of 1848"

Readings from: (1) Orsini's "Austrian Dungeons in Italy,"

(2) Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus."

February 1, 1948

A Conservative historian of the last century, Sir Richard Lodge, says in his history of Europe: "The year 1848 was an *annus mirabilis* in European history." He had covered 500 years since the Renaissance, and apparently found that 1848 was the most wonderful year in those five stirring centuries. How many folk in this country have honoured the centenary of it? How many could say in one of our popular quizzes what happened to give the year 1848 any distinction at all? The Press is very mindful of centenaries yet so far as I know only one paper in London made any notice of the great events of 1848, and that was a not unsympathetic reminder in the Conservative *Times*. Were these grandfathers of ours fighting for issues that interest us no longer? Are they eclipsed in the blaze of the ideas for which we fought yesterday and may be professing to fight again tomorrow? Well, whatever the nature of *our* professions *they* certainly fought for Freedom and Democracy, and at least 50,000 civilians—men, women and children—died fighting the royal troops for them in three months. Lodge says that thrones were falling or tottering all over Europe, and revolutions were announced almost daily. That is a figure of speech. But four kings did fall, ten thrones were shaken, and four new republics were set up in three months. And within another year the giant-killers were flying to the ends of the earth, and the princes and prelates basked in the sun once more.

It began in Sicily. We are so educated today that we regard what we call the dagoes of South Italy as beggarly lotus-eaters for whose lack of backbone we can find no reason but the enervating sun. The truth is that in the second half of the eighteenth century this Kingdom of Sicily was one of the most progressive parts of Europe; just as it had been in the early years of Greece, and under the medieval Arabs. They were the first to

adopt the best ideas of the French Revolution, but they had to deal with the most corrupt and most savage royalty in Europe, backed by Austria and the Papacy, and in the next 20 years, the Neapolitan historians tell us, 250,000 of the finest men and women in the little kingdom died for Freedom and Democracy, and further hundreds of thousands suffered horribly. Professor Croce has assured us that this is sound history; that after more than half the butchering was over the people of Sicily, down to the bare-footed boys and girls, fought the king's troops for ten days, drove them out and set up a republic. The wonderful news echoed over Italy and every tyrant shuddered. In a bloodless revolution the people of Naples brought the brutal Ferdinand to his knees at the altar, surrounded by his bishops, taking a solemn oath to their Liberal Constitution; and within the next few years, still surrounded by his bishops, he would torture and butcher 100,000 of the best of them. The Pope, Pius IX, who had been dallying with reform, hastily promised a Liberal Constitution to the Papal States; and before the end of the year he would fly, disguised as a cook, to his cousin of Naples, and call upon Catholic Europe to smite these pestilential republicans for him. Tuscany and other Italian states followed and unfurled the flag of Freedom and Democracy.

Meanwhile, it had been unfurled in France for the third time. In the august restoration of law and order after the fall of Napoleon, kings had returned to Versailles; and the French people sank into the condition which Victor Hugo describes in *Les Misérables*. Could France do less than the Neapolitans? The workers of Paris, under the lead of Louis Blanc, raised 3,500 barricades and faced the troops of Louis Philippe, and he fled to England and left them to set up the Second Republic. Metternich, the evil spirit of reaction, watched the lightning on the horizon, and one day, a fortnight later, he saw the workers of Vienna and the university students marching along the Ring with the hated banner of Freedom and Democracy; and he also sought the sanctuary of rejected princes and parasites across the Straits of Dover. The emperor abdicated, and the banner hung on the Chateau of Schönbrunn, the citadel of reaction since Waterloo. Hungary rose and soon declared itself a republic under Kossuth. On the day that Metternich fled the workers and students of Berlin rose and faced 12,000 of the veteran troops of the King of Prussia. There was little fighting, and soon the proud King of Prussia signed the Magna Carta, stood by the grave of the democratic martyrs and fraternized gloomily with the students. All Germany followed, and within four days of an almost bloodless revolution in Germany, the people of Milan rose and, once more down to the boys and girls, flung themselves upon the 20,000 seasoned soldiers of Radetsky, the greatest soldier in Europe, and after five days of heroic and appalling carnage drove them out, almost out of Italy. Within three months the political face of Europe changed as it had never done before in so short a time and with such soldiers as those.

And within another year it was all just another chapter written in blood in the history of Europe. Why? The recoil began in France. As long as a new political form only was sought the Liberal fought with the Radical and the Socialist but in June the bodies of more than 10,000 Radicals and Socialists lay in the streets of Paris, and before the end of the year law and order set the imperial fox, Louis Napoleon, on the old throne. He needed the support of the Church, and in reply to the fugitive Pope in Gaeta he sent an army to take Rome from Mazzini and Garibaldi and prepare the way for a restoration of what Lord Clarendon called "the shame of Europe," the Papal States. Francis Joseph of Austria warned the Tsar that these Hungarian rebels were disturbing the loyalty of the Poles, and an army of 150,000 Russian and Polish peasants crushed the Hungarians and Italians by the spring of 1849, and the disillusioned Democrats everywhere became

rebels, bandits, guerillas. They had made no reprisals in their triumph. The royalist victors soaked the soil of Europe with their blood. Their leaders were scattered from Constantinople to New York, so we, their grandchildren, have again to breast the hill and raise the old flag. Are we really at the top of the range? Are we on the right path to the summits? Are we marching into another reaction? One wonders if the press of today is calculated to give the nation its true bearings on the slow pilgrimage of lasting peace and justice.

(Contributed by Joseph McCabe)

CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE

On Tuesday evening, December 2, 1947, Mr. W. B. Curry, M.A., B.Sc., gave an extremely interesting lecture on *Education and World Order*. If he suggested that there were grave fears for the future; and there was something about a war that we liked, people would agree to the former, partly on account of the atomic bomb which was a menace to survival, but would repudiate the second statement. Mr. Curry contended, however, that war was one of the oldest institutions; it was not just a bad habit like wife-beating or gambling, but was something for which we were always prepared; it was maintained at public expense; its tactics were studied at our universities, and only in China was it not highly honoured. Of recent years we had not changed the nature of war, only its decree of destructiveness. War had always caused hate, misery, widows and rubble, and had always been the same whether described by Euripides or Erasmus. As no serious effort had ever been made to get rid of war, it was natural to conclude we must like it.

To kill an individual we called murder, but to kill in masses we called war. There had always been a certain abhorrence felt towards murder, and in defending capital punishment recently the Provost of Eton said it was necessary to keep this abhorrence alive. Soldiering was however thought to be noble, and in it there was risk and excitement. War tended to satisfy a need in man. Man had an impulse to cruelty which being so often frustrated found an outlet in war.

War however, was not always merely political and economic, but also psychological. The League of Nations had never studied the psychological problems involved, but U.N.O. stated war began in the minds of men so it was in the minds of men we must begin to search for peace, and this was more hopeful.

Mr. Curry advocated World Federation Control, and the abatement of sovereignty. There was at present an urgency in the need for common citizenship. Not only was it necessary to think this, but to feel it emotionally also. There was 70 sovereign States still in the world, and intense nationalism. People gave allegiance to the particular country in which they were born and would go to great lengths in its interests. The hope for world order lay in weakening this. It had been stated nationalism was an instinct. If so it was queer the instinct was so varied, and presumably the only one that had to be kept alive by propaganda.

There was an inborn sense of partisanship—of taking sides—and we called it loyalty. This idea was fostered in schools and led to countries being keen for their side to win in any dispute, instead of being anxious for a fair solution to be found. To rectify this group activities should be emphasized where the object was *not* the defeat of the other side, but the creation of something, such as in the arts, dramatics, etc. It was essential to inspire the desire to achieve, not the desire to defeat. To present rivalries and foster loyalties encouraged the child to carry these ideas into adult life.

A peaceful world was a democratic world. In spite of failures this gave the only chance for the individual to be himself and for us to achieve our ends. As Shaw had once said it was useless to bring up an individual as a slave to the age of 21, and then present him with the key of the street and a vote, and expect him to be ready for citizenship. More likely under such a system he would want to be a slave owner himself! It was necessary therefore to understand democracy to have any real feeling towards it, and the feeling was essential as well as the thought. It was our duty to do our best to develop changes in education, so that these new ideas and feelings should be imbued in the child, and in this way he would be better suited for world citizenship.

A speaker suggested that competitive spirit was a good thing, especially in adult life, in business. Mr. Curry explained that he would not dispense entirely with competition, only he did not wish to foster it unnecessarily in the young. The main thing was to help the individual to know what he wanted in life as that led to happiness. Each should do the best of which he was capable, in the line for which he was best suited.

On Tuesday, December 16, 1947, a most interesting debate took place on *Did Jesus Rise From the Dead?* between **Mr. J. H. Higginson**, who took the affirmative, and **Mr. Howell Smith**, who took the negative view.

Mr. Higginson was not concerned with whether Jesus lived, which seemed without question. He was not basing his remarks on the New Testament, but pointed out one could go back 400 years in history to Erasmus and Luther, to faith of that time, and so many more years back to the first century to Pliny, a Roman Governor (who could have no bias in the matter), and who wrote describing what was happening in his province, namely of the existence of faith and of Christians, and their practice of meeting and singing hymns. This faith must have had a basis.

Of the teachings that Jesus had risen he wished to test explanations in a scientific way. Some might say that Christ's disciples were deceived or were deceiving others, in which case they would be liars. There was first and foremost the empty tomb. It might be said, it was dark and the women had gone to the wrong tomb, but according to St. Mark they were told by a young man: "He is risen" and to see the place where He lay. One should take the account as it stood, because the thing existed. If wrong, and Christ had not risen, why did the authorities not disprove the story and the teaching at once by producing either the young man or the body of Christ?

With regard to the resurrection of the body, there was the theory that the early disciples were so used to going about with their Lord and receiving kindness from people that they stole the body and tried to live in the same way as they had before, but this was untenable, as the New Testament did not give any idea that the disciples were such men. St. Paul not only had faith and integrity, but was an educated man capable of enquiring into details, and the only thing to fit the facts was to say Jesus rose from the dead. Mr. Higginson doubted if the disciples of St. Paul or believers who followed would have suffered martyrdom for an untruth.

Mr. Howell Smith agreed that Jesus was not a myth, but he spoke of incompleteness of the story of the Resurrection, and conflicting accounts in the New Testament. He admitted there was the theory of persons manifesting themselves after death, but this was spirit not body, and because of this it was possible the Jews had jumped to the conclusion Christ had risen. There were, however, conflicting reports as to the actual tomb. St. Paul admittedly was sincere, and mentally honest, but his self-sacrifice only meant he truly believed, not that the faith was justified. In the same way people had suffered for Buddha.

The list of appearances in Corinthians 1 were suspicious. In one case

Jesus was supposed to appear only as a voice, and this might be subjective. Even the earliest of the Gospels, Mark, was not written until A.D. 65 to 70, at least 35 years after the event described, while Matthew was A.D. 80 to 100, Luke A.D. 93 to 96, and John A.D. 80 to 110. There was little doubt the New Testament was tampered with and interpolations made at later dates. Discrepancies and omissions were prevalent. Matthew, Luke and John all varied in accounts of the tomb, and the words spoken, and Luke did not even mention the appearance in Galilee. Because of these differences and interpolations and the fact no accurate account was made by anyone at the time, he submitted that Jesus did not rise from the dead.

To a question whether sincerity was sufficient guarantee of authenticity, Mr. Higginson suggested that would depend on what was meant by sufficient, and stated that the reappearance of the physical body; that is, the resurrection of the body, was the basis of the Christian faith, but it did not necessarily have the same characteristics but new properties and new capabilities which would enable Jesus to pass through the door and appear to the disciples in the upper room.

To the idea that if the body was produced the rumours could have been quieted, and it was *not* produced because it *could* not be, Mr. Howell Smith suggested Pilate was not interested and did not think it worth the trouble. The resurrection story was such as to appeal to the Jews. Jesus was popular, and the people wanted to believe Him alive. People were reluctant to give up an idea: if they wanted to believe in something they found reasons, so once the idea came Jesus was alive the Jews declared: "He is risen from the Dead."

It proved a most interesting evening, although it is possible that those attending the debate with certain convictions came away with those convictions unimpaired.

L. L. B.

On Tuesday, December 19, Mr. Geoffrey Trease spoke on a very interesting subject *Historical Fact and Historical Fiction* in a most human and entertaining manner.

The historical novel was less popular today, and tended to be written by second- and third-class writers while the best authors depicted their own times. Some writers referred to text books, although Scott relied upon his own knowledge, and might be forgiven his few errors as they suited his purpose. At the present Mr. Trease deplored the pseudo-biography which purported to be frank, and he also objected to the romantic veil thrown over the past.

It was not only necessary in writing an historical novel to make sure of such details being correct as to food and clothing, but essential to produce the atmosphere and feeling of the period, and realize people had certain belief, such as in witches, and so depict their attitude to witchcraft accurately.

Historians had to be very cautious as so many judgments had been upset recently. Although the modern tendency was to debunk history, and this was to some extent good, he thought the new judgments should not be accepted *too* readily. In the case of the Battle of Hastings most children had been taught the Normans feinted and so drew the Saxons down from their hill, and that an order was given for the arrows to be shot in the air, thus fatally wounding Harold. Miss C. V. Wedgewood had however debunked these ideas, maintaining as the long bow had not yet been invented the only way to shoot with the weaker bow and arrow was at a sharp angle, and hitting Harold was mere good luck! While historians in the past had tried to be accurate it was natural for them to copy from one another, and eventually all one could be sure of in the Battle of Hastings, was that the Saxons did not win.

Themes that once abounded in novels were changing; the class bias

was dwindling and the romantic haze fading. There were however political biases, but Mr. Trease thought it did not matter showing one was particularly in favour of one side in say the Civil War, provided the writer made it clear he was biased, and indicated there might be two sides to the question.

Certain novels were declining in popularity because of stilted dialogue which seemed pompous and unnatural. Pseudo history was the villain of the piece, but in the case of Lytton Strachey writing of Queen Victoria he had used his imagination, and while no one could say with certainty what thoughts were in her mind as she lay dying he had used *possible* images and recollections of the past, and was justified in so doing, and in creating a real atmosphere and the character of the queen. His followers however might be less successful and fall into the mistake of omitting the word "perhaps" when speaking of thoughts going through a person's mind. It was necessary when writing to be as accurate as possible, but in wanting history to be truth pure and simple one should remember Oscar Wilde's comment that truth was seldom pure and never simple, and that life would be tedious if it were so.

BOOK NOTICES

ETHICS OF THE GREAT RELIGIONS. By E. Royston Pike. Watts & Co. 15s.
This book has been read with profit and pleasure by the writer of this notice.

The author's exposition of the Religions of the World, which could not conceivably have been bettered within the limits of a volume of 240 pages, the plates—some beautifully coloured, and the many line drawings of E. C. Mansell, all contribute to make this volume one of the most attractive that we have read in recent years.

Reading the first chapter on Ethics and Religions, and thereafter the chapters on the Dead Religions of Antiquity—Egypt, Babylonia, Greece and Rome; the Religions of India—Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Parseism (Zoroastrianism); the Religions of the Book—Judaism, Christianity, and Mahomedism; and, finally, the Religions of the Far East—Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto, we understand why so many insist that it is impossible to treat ethical principles fully and satisfactorily without becoming involved in religious questions, and that the attempts to put Ethics upon a basis which shall be quite independent of all theological opinions must, in their view, fail.

To the many who speak disparagingly of the "independence of Ethics," those of us who would substitute "ethical culture" for Religion, ethical teaching for religious education, and ethical societies for Churches, can reply that the words "right" and "wrong" have a distinct meaning which does not involve any immediate reference to the idea of God, and that, in this sense, we are undoubtedly right in speaking of the "independence of Ethics."

The ideas of right and wrong, or good and evil, are found in the adherents of the most diverse religions, in people who have never embraced a religious creed or have deliberately abandoned one, and in people who have never consciously and explicitly accepted any particular theory, positive or negative, as to the ultimate nature of things. Such persons have the notion of right and wrong in general, more or less fully developed, in their minds; they act upon such ideas, or they condemn themselves when they do not; and, though it cannot be said that men's notions of what particular acts are right or wrong are unaffected by their religious beliefs or disbeliefs, their actual moral code tends to be more and more nearly identical as they approach the higher levels of moral experience.

What is, in practice, the moral value or influence of religion? Religion, it is contended, has exercised a moral influence which has never been exercised on a large scale by any purely ethical system. It is also contended that although the intrinsic obligation of morality would not altogether disappear if we adopted a purely agnostic, or a purely materialistic, theory of the Universe, the meaning of moral obligation would be profoundly modified. We may argue that the belief in an objectively valid law is speculatively possible without religion, or at all events without theistic religion, but our opponents would then reply that Theism represents the form in which that belief has exercised the strongest influence upon great masses of men, and to this, after a careful reading of Mr. Royston Pike's book, we should have to agree.

We must find a niche on our shelf of "volumes to be re-read and referred to" for this most commendable effort, and we strongly urge our readers to do likewise, for this is a book to treasure and keep for reference.

C. J. TURNADGE.

THE ENCHANTED WOOD. Eden Philpotts. Watts & Co. 5s.

The Enchanted Wood is enchanting indeed. Mr. Eden Philpotts has produced an allegory of absorbing interest. Not only can we appreciate his blank verse, and the variety caused by his intermittent verses in rhyme, but as well as being able to enjoy his lovely similes, metaphors, and rich colourful beauty of descriptive passages, we find the advance of man's ideas, as typified by Jack, thought-provoking. With increasing interest we watch how the outside world affects him, and see how he shapes his philosophy, with the help and inspiration of Jill, who shares so much with him, and whose patience and sensible, quiet courage are well shown.

We can delight in "milky, tender radiance woven from opals," and "Where, cushioned moss their liquid cradles drape, with emerald and ruby," and in the river which "trails her beauty like a string of beads." We appreciate, too, the description of the seasons, and the fine similes of "Reason, like a sturdy, rather drab, old barge," and Faith "a joyous galleon" with their respective cargoes of "discipline, obedience, patience, pluck" and "chivalry, and honour, constancy."

In Jack's pursuit of beauty, loveliness, and ideas and truth, he comes to these conclusions: "Pathetic fallacies are dear to youth," and is surprised to "find a knave far more exhilarating than a saint."

"Still water is a perfect looking-glass,"

Prosed Jack, "and just as still the mind must be Ere its reflection mirror actual truth;"

"A common error, child:

To think your neighbours foolish when they find

The answer to life's challenge not your own."

"Kind with kind should ever blend,"

"Reason must fight if it would live,"

"Love unshared is but a sorry wraith,"

"Art cannot make the ugly beautiful,"

Said Jill, "but helps to make it bearable."

"Change, none can evade—

So with Religion, that, too, must suffer change."

"Love's built on trust. That comes first,

And when we learn to trust our fellow-man,

Then we shall surely learn to love him too."

Jack speaks of a sudden inspiration, "Now everybody knows

"That beauty is man's own discovery;" but "I awoke,

As at a marvel, to perceive how light

Henceforth must be my steadfast corner-stone."

Words were Jack's medium; but "Beauty hath many mansions," answered Jill. And "Art is one of them, but only one." From her, he learned, came forth, "Perfection from unlovely sources."

This is no mere fairy tale as it has topical application, for Jack reaches his main theme of the need for the linking of lands, and the Brotherhood of Man, and when after the loss of Jill, "with strengthened spirit" eventually he manages to fight on, trying to be useful, and, still pursuing Truth,

"He found in patient, human fortitude,

A zenith of triumphant loveliness

Making all other earthly manifests

Nought by comparison."

And he comes to the conclusion, not creeds nor religions, but

"Religion is the all-enduring thing;"

and he speaks of "The steadfast triumphs of Humanism's cause."

Thus Mr. Eden Philpotts brings Jack to a faith in human nature, and leads him from beauty, joy, love, through sadness, sorrow, doubt and wondering, to action, service and hope.

This is a book that is well worth studying.

L. L. B.

THE HOLY HERETICS. By Edmond Holmes. Watts & Co. 2s. 6d.

THE EARLIEST ENGLISHMAN. By Sir Arthur Smith Woodward. Watts & Co. 2s. 6d. Two new volumes in the Thinker's Library.

The first describes the Crusade, launched by Pope Innocent III in the early thirteenth century, against the Albigensian heretics in the South of France. This is a terrible story of massacre and torture, of man's inhumanity to man, and, although the author has written with restraint, we confess that we finished this almost calm and dispassionate account of a very unsavoury episode with a feeling of nausea. Nevertheless, we thoroughly recommended this book to all of those interested in the treatment of heretics in general, and that of the Albigensians in particular.

The second book, with a Foreword by Sir Arthur Keith, was, on the other hand, a sheer delight to read. It contains a description of the author's part in the research on the Piltdown Man, and should, we think, be read by everyone interested in the Evolution of Man. The illustrations are very good for so small a volume, the text itself contains much which we should like to quote if we had the space, but we must content ourselves with one small, but very interesting, quotation—the last words of Sir Arthur Keith's foreword: "The mistake I had been making all along I found to be this: I shared the common idea that the earlier the type of man, then the more symmetrical would be the right and left halves of the hemispheres of his brain. It was not till I realized that in Piltdown Man the left hemisphere dominated the right; both in size and complexity; that discrepant parts fell into their appropriate places. The specialization of the left half of man's brain at so early a date took me by surprise. How many other surprises may be in store for us before we reach a final settlement? So dominant is the left hemisphere in modern man that the right half has been removed and yet men and women who have had this Herculean operation performed on them have been able to earn a livelihood as before."

Even if, which is quite unlikely, you have read nothing about the Piltdown Man before, you will certainly enjoy this book.

FRIAR'S LANTERN. By Dr. G. G. Coulton. Watts & Co., 3/6. Thinker's Library 118.

By the simple expedient of holding hands and dipping their faces in bowls of water The Rev. Herbert Rashleigh and Father Duvet find themselves back in the Middle Ages. Thereafter, we follow their peripatetic

peregrinations across Merrie England and the Continent with increasing interest. Dr. Coulton has based their experiences on actual historical research of the period, and we confess that, starting our reading with but little interest, we were so impressed that we found ourselves unable to put the book down until we had finished it.

In the Epilogue, Dr. Coulton gives his main points as: (1) that clerical morals in the Middle Ages were such as no civilized modern country could tolerate; (2) that even in reverence and care for their churches these men were far below the modern standard; (3) that the so-called Ages of Faith were in fact too often ages of doubt and despair for sensitive souls; (4) that, less than a century after St. Francis's death, spiritual Franciscans were tortured and burned by their "relaxed" brethren for their strict adherence to that rule to which all were alike pledged; and (5) that the injustices and cruelties of the medieval Inquisition were almost past modern belief.

His last paragraph is worth quoting: "With the men who lived in the Middle Ages it is impossible for the honest student not to feel the greatest sympathy; they tried, like ourselves, to do their best, but the world in which they lived reduced them to despair. The true lesson which their history has for us is that of content with the age in which our own lot has been cast, and in which we shall do most good by looking onwards instead of backwards. We shall never make the best of our present world until we realize how false it is to hanker after the ideals of a dead past."

IDEALS AND ILLUSIONS. By Professor Susan Stebbing. Watts & Co., 3/6. Thinker's Library 119.

To those who did not purchase this book when it was first issued by Watts & Co., in 1941, this Thinker gives them an opportunity to acquire this fine piece of polemical writing at a reduced price.

Professor A. E. Heath has written an Introduction to this edition and we note that Susan Stebbing was enticed, as we were, by Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* into studying the Moral Sciences.

Of all Professor Stebbing's books, her published works on Logic used as textbooks in University classrooms, her smaller book on *Logic in Practice* which we use as a textbook for teaching the elements of Logic, her *Philosophy and the Physicists*, and her *Thinking to Some Purpose* (Pelican), this Thinker will give the greatest pleasure to the ordinary reader.

Her reasons for writing this book are given on page 53, and we quote: "I should not be writing this book unless I were convinced of three things. First, I am convinced that we are too unready to reflect upon our conduct for the sake of making explicit the principles upon which we act. We are too eager to act first and to think, if at all, only when it is too late to affect our action. Even then our reflections are muddled and more inconclusive than they need be, or than they would be if only we attached some importance to having clearly discerned principles of conduct. Secondly, I cannot agree with Matthew Arnold's dictum to the effect that it is not difficult to know what we ought to do, but the difficulty lies in doing it. Thirdly, I believe that there is no clear and certainly true answer to any of the questions that press upon us most urgently today. We are tempted to simplify the questions in the hope of obtaining an answer that is quite unmistakable and right. I do not find the question simple; I do not discern any clear principle, or set of clear principles, in the light of which I could unravel all my perplexities. In this respect, I am, I believe, a normal person."

To say that you would find this is an important book would be labelling the obvious. It may be that the author's works on formal logic are too technical for your liking, but this book, written for the ordinary reader, will be read with profit by those whose training in formal logic has been precisely nil.

C. J. TURNADGE.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sir,

In Mr. Robertson's address on November 9, 1947, he asserted (and the assertion was repeated in his further address on January 18, 1948) that capitalism was the prime cause of the two world wars in the present century. I feel that such a statement ought not to be allowed to pass unchallenged.

It appears to me to represent a completely fallacious interpretation of modern history, and I would submit that there are no grounds for supposing that the causes of these two wars (that of 1914-1918 in particular) were any different from those leading to similar conflicts in the past, as, for example, the struggle between Rome and Carthage, the wars of Louis XIV and the Napoleonic wars, all of which I submit arose out of what is and always has been the most fundamental in the political sphere, viz., *the struggle for power*, not questions of economic profit.

Human nature (or perhaps I should say political human nature) being what it is, there has always been a tendency for the strongest military power in Europe to strive to attain hegemony of that Continent. Louis XIV and Napoleon both attempted it in their day. By the twentieth century, France had receded into the background and Germany had become definitely the strongest military power on the Continent—and, I suggest, history repeated itself.

The idea that capitalism is the main cause of war on the theory that capitalism needs colonial markets and that this must inevitably lead to wars between rival aspirants for overseas territories has a certain plausibility, but will not bear serious examination. In my opinion, Sir Norman Angell has convincingly refuted it. There is, however, a *will to power*. Not capitalist profits, but will to power, I submit, lies at the root of the matter.

In conclusion, may I say that I write as no friend of capitalism (which, to be sure, has sins enough on its conscience), but to make it responsible for evils with which it has little or no connection, can only serve to confuse counsel.

J. A. GRAHAM.

Sir,

In his interesting article on "The Last Thirty Years" in the current number of *The Record*, Mr. Archibald Robertson appears to confuse Socialism and Communism. He inveighs against capitalism bedevilling the relations between Russia and the rest of the world, but is there a worse tyranny anywhere than Communism, or a more cruel and relentless religious dogma than that of Karl Marx, with its background of death in the Siberian mines for all who do not obey, or for those who wish to be individuals?

Mr. Robertson evidently considers no one is worthy of consideration but the "organized workers." Professor Keeton asks some searching questions about the outlook of this section of the community. In conclusion, Mr. Robertson himself says that "if the people are content to be dumb driven cattle; then nothing can save us."

May I ask what else are the masses of the Russian peoples, 130 million of whom are governed autocratically by a handful of the most powerful, ruthless, and greedy industrialists in the world!

MARY F. UNWIN.

(We have shown these two letters to Mr. Archibald Robertson, and have pleasure in printing his replies.—EDITOR.)

NOTE ON MR. J. A. GRAHAM

In my address of September 21 on "Modern History," I gave ample evidence of the inherent tendency of modern capitalism to make for

imperialist war. That address and its sequel, "The Last Thirty Years," should be read in conjunction.

"Power" is an abstraction. There is no such thing as power *in vacuo*; there is power to do this or that. When Mr. Graham says that war is a struggle for power, I agree; but power *for what*? The main and ultimate answer to this question, I contend, is material profit. Louis XIV and Napoleon both sought power. But the power they sought was power to surround themselves with luxury and to feather the nests of the swarms of courtiers, bigwigs and profiteers who hung on to them. The same with the warmakers of our own day. The Nazis looted Europe very successfully till they were licked.

Previous to 1914 Sir Norman Angell proved to the satisfaction of many people—myself among them—that no profit could be made by war. Within a few years, Lord Keynes, a greater realist than Sir Norman, was pointing to the number of "hardfaced men" who had "done very well" out of the war of 1914-18. Sir Norman Angell today is a museum piece.

NOTE ON MARY F. UNWIN

I did not say that capitalism had bedevilled our relations with the Soviets. I said that the Allied war of intervention in 1918-1920 had done so.

Many years ago, when the Tory Press was in full cry against the "dumping" of "slave-made" Russian goods during the first Five Year Plan, a Tory M.P., Mr. Boothby, pointed out that the important thing was not whether we thought the Russians were slaves, but whether *they* thought themselves so.

Until 1941 it was widely assumed that the Russians were groaning under an alien tyranny and only waiting for a chance to revolt. Hitler banked on that when he invaded Russia. Most of our military experts gave him eight weeks to get to Moscow. A distinguished continental scholar of my acquaintance gave him three! The Russians blew all these estimates sky-high by fighting to the death—not only in regular armies, but in guerilla warfare too; and that on behalf of what our propaganda-fuddled simpletons supposed to be the cruel slavery they were only waiting to shake off. However, memories are short, and the same old stuff does duty again.

I did not say no one was worthy of consideration, but the organised workers. I said they, above all, were in a position to stop the crime of a third world war. So they are. For, as Ben Tillet remarked long ago, without them the rest of us—including the war-makers—would "go lousy."

EDITORIAL NOTES

Leap Year Dance

A record was established at the Leap Year Dance held on February 7 when, a little over half an hour after the commencement, it became necessary to limit admissions to "members only" as 150 people had already arrived.

A feature of this dance, profits from which will be handed to the South Place String Orchestra, was a half an hour session of old-time dances. We are indebted to Peggy Haslam and her mother for their demonstration in costume, of each dance. Members of the South Place String Orchestra joined Edna Cecil and her Rhythm Girls in providing music for this session which included the Military Two Step, Eva Three Step, Destiny Waltz, Boston Two Step and Barn Dance. Judging by the large number who took part the innovation was much appreciated.

Members are strongly urged to reserve their tickets in advance for the March dance as, for the sake of comfort, the Committee is compelled to limit numbers and does not wish to have to refuse admission to members.

E. M. B.

At Home

On Sunday, January 18, Mr. Wallis Mansford gave a most interesting talk on the "History of the South Place Sites." This was so much appreciated that the General Committee are considering the possibility of publishing the whole of Mr. Mansford's paper with his poem as a brochure. If this is carried out, every member and associate will receive a copy. Meanwhile, we record the thanks of all members present to Wallis Mansford, G. C. Dowman, and Mrs. Grace James for their contributions to a very successful afternoon.

South Place Sunday Concerts

The appeal for the Subscription Fund in our January issue has, we are informed by the Hon. Treasurer, Fred Service, been fairly successful. We thank all those who have already sent subscriptions, but there must be many other music lovers who have meant to respond to this appeal but, for some reason, have not yet done so. It would greatly assist the Concert Committee in planning their next season's programme if all members and friends who intend giving financial help will do so before the end of this season's concerts. Send your donations to Fred Service, or hand them to C. J. Turnadge, at Conway Hall.

We regret to have to record that Mrs. Annie Lister was knocked down in the street and taken to hospital with a leg injury. Many members have already visited her in the Dysart Ward of the Homœopathic Hospital, Gt. Ormond Street, W.C.1, and all report on her unflinching cheerfulness. We are sure that we are expressing the sentiments of all our members when we say that we wish her a speedy recovery. *Later: Mrs. Lister has now returned to Conway Hall.*

We have pleasure in publishing the following list of New Members and Associates, and extend to them a hearty welcome:

New Members

J. H. Powell, Morden; Wallace Owen, Manchester 14; R. Jones, St. Pancras; Miss M. Cherry, W.C.1; Miss E. M. Wells, W.11; Miss Alfreda Garbe, Dorking; B. Wexler, N.W.4; J. R. Evans, W.4; R. Goddard, Harrow; Miss Violet Sinha, N.W.3; Mr. and Mrs. G. H. R. Barton, S.W.5; A. Duroni, N.22; Miss Margaret Morgan, N.15; J. Pollard, Baldock; Mrs. S. C. Rackett, Harrow; R. H. Sheldon, Nottingham; Mrs. J. S. Smith, W.C.1; H. R. Allan, S.W.7; H. W. Armstrong, N. 22; A. E. Jordan, Gravesend; J. S. Smith, W.C.1; Roy M. Vining, W.2.

New Associates

Mr. and Mrs. G. Savage, W.12; E. J. Batson, N.W.5; J. G. MacFarlane, N.W.3; Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Sinclair, S.W.2; W. H. Brabant, Fiji; E. W. Lambert, Manchester 16; Geo. E. O'Dell, S.W.16; Miss P. W. Rackett, Harrow; P. J. Thornely, S.W.3; Wm. Burgess, S.E.15; W. E. Gibbs, Skegness; Miss M. H. King, and Miss R. M. H. King, S.E.5; L. G. Scoular, N.13; R. F. W. Cox, W.4; Miss G. E. Impey, Luton.

Marriage

Georgette Catherall to Major A. P. Johnson. Address: Thatchers, Cricklade, Wilts.

The **Monthly Record** is posted free to members and associates. The annual charge to subscribers is 4s. Matter for publication in the April issue should reach the Editor, G. C. Dowman, 112 Torrington Park, N.12, by Thursday, March 11.

SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES

Dance

The last dance of the season, Saturday, March 6, 7.30 to 11.30 p.m., in the Large Hall. Admission 2s. 6d. Profits to the Table Tennis Club. Members are strongly advised to purchase or reserve tickets in advance as numbers are limited.

Tickets available now at Conway Hall or by post from Colin Barralet, Hill Cottage, Farnborough, Kent. Phone reservations CHAncery 8032 or FARnborough (Kent) 3867.

At Home. 3 p.m.

For members and friends. In the library on Sunday, March 21. Tea at 3.45 p.m. (6d.). Play readings by Thursday evening members arranged by Mrs. F. I. Wood.

Social Evenings

Thursdays, 6.30 p.m. In the library.

March 4.—Mrs. F. I. Wood.

March 11.—Whist Drive.

March 18.—Miss D. Walters. Miss Hilda Hutton, Miss W. L. George.

March 25.—No meeting.

Table Tennis

Play is on Wednesday, March 10, 17 and 24. Visitors are invited. Rubber-soled shoes must be worn by players.

Rambles

Members and friends who have attended the dances are specially invited to join this Reunion Ramble.

Sunday, March 14. Home Park, Bushy Park, Hampton Court. Train : 2.23 p.m. Waterloo to Hampton Wick. Fare : 2s. 9d. return. Leader : F. James.

Good Friday, March 26. Gerrards Cross to Beaconsfield. Train : 10.20 a.m. Marylebone to Gerrards Cross. Fare : 4s. 11d. return. Bring lunch. Leader : G. Thornley.

Please check train times.

CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE

Tuesdays at 7 p.m., in conjunction with the Rationalist Press Association. Admission free. Collection.

March 2.—W. G. Minn, M.A. "The Probation Service."

March 9.—H. J. Randall, LL.B.(Lond.), F.S.A. "The Advance of Christianity."

March 16.—W. E. Swinton, Ph.D., F.R.S.E. "The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs."

March 23.—Mrs. Councillor Clark. "The Child and the Future."

CONWAY MEMORIAL LECTURE

Members and friends are asked to note the change of date of the 1948 Lecture by Dr. C. D. Darlington, F.R.S., on "Science versus Society." This will be given on *Tuesday, April 20, at seven o'clock.*

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY

SUNDAY MORNING MEETINGS AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK

March 7.—S. K. RATCLIFFE.—"Gandhi—Prophet and Portent."

Soprano Solos by ELSA CORRY: Der Lindenbaum
An die Musik
Lachen und Weinen

Schubert

Hymns: Nos. 41 and 216

March 14.—PROFESSOR G. W. KEETON, M.A., LL.D.—"The Influence of Sea Power on History."

Bass Solos by G. C. DOWMAN: "With joy the impatient husbandman" *Haydn*
"O ruddier than the cherry" *Handel*

Hymns: Nos. 30 and 92

March 21.—ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON, M.A.—"The Difficulties of Democracy."

Piano Solos by ELLA IVIMEY: Three preludes *Bach*

Hymns: Nos. 94 and 226

March 28, Easter.—No Meeting.

April 4.—GEORGE O'DELL.—"Ethical Aspects of American Thought and Life."

Pianist: ELLA IVIMEY. Admission Free. Collection.

SUNDAY CONCERTS (57th SEASON) AT 6.30 p.m.

Admission 1/-

March 7.—Marie Wilson, violin. Liza Fuchsova, pianoforte. Brahms in A, Op. 100; John Ireland No. 2 in A mi. (1917) Piano and Violin Sonatas. Beethoven Piano Sonata in C, Op. 53 (Waldstein); Bach Violin Sonata, No. 3, in A mi.

March 14.—Hurwitz String Quartet. Clarinet: Frederick Thurston. Brahms in B mi., Op. 115, Clarinet Quintet. Haydn in F mi., Op. 20, No. 5; Borodin No. 2 in D, String Quartets.

March 21.—Informal Chamber Orchestra. Conductor: Bernard Robinson. Bessie Rawlins, Solo Violin. Hope Hambourg, Solo Viola. Bach Suite No. 3 in D; Beethoven Romance in F, Op. 50, for Violin and Orchestra; Holst Fugal Concerto; Tchaikowsky arr. F. Butterworth, Suite: Au Village. Mozart Symphonie Concertante in E Flat, for Violin, Viola and Orchestra.

March 28.—No Concert.

April 4.—Robert Masters Quartet. Robert Masters, Nannie Jamieson, Muriel Taylor, Kinloch Anderson.

The Objects of the Society are the study and dissemination of ethical principles and the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment.

Any person in sympathy with these objects is cordially invited to become a Member (minimum annual subscription 10s.), or Associate (minimum annual subscription 5s.). Associates are not eligible to vote or hold office. Enquiries should be made of the Registrar to whom subscriptions should be paid.

Officers

Hon. Treasurer: E. J. FAIRHALL
Hon. Registrar: Mrs. T. LINDSAY
Secretary: C. J. TURNADGE

} Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.