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## VIEWS AND OPINIONS

### Man and His God

TWO men went out in a small boat and were caught in a storm. They were near the shore, but it looked as if they would never get there; it seemed that matters were hopeless. So one man went on his knees and prayed to God. He started with "O God, save our lives and we promise . . ." "Wait," cried the other man, "Hold on, don't promise anything, we are near the shore." That little story gives us the Christian philosophy in a nutshell. No one trusts God while there is a good prospect of help elsewhere. No one drags in the name of God until human help has reached its limits. "God help us" is a synonym of ignorance. "The Will of God," said Spinoza is the "asylum of ignorance." No one has ever bettered that definition, no one ever will. It is the philosophy of religion in a nutshell and a really scientific definition. From dawn of human philosophy until to-day, "God" has never been more than the phrase which hopeless ignorance or despairing hopelessness seeks to narcotize the consciousness of its own impotence.

For many years the world has been at war, and during the whole of that time thousands of parsons, to say nothing of laymen, have been trying to explain God's part in the conflicts. What good has God done to protect the world? Has he helped to bring warfare to an end, will God prevent another war? The parson will say that God will see to it. What guarantee have we that He will? God, if there is such a being, seems remarkably impartial in the distribution of his favours. Judging by results, God helped Germany to conquer France, then he helped the Japanese to conquer Russia. And after a long time of semi-insane games managed almost to break up civilisation. How can anyone depend on such a God, if he exists? One cannot count with any certainty on so variable a factor. And, surely, if there is one thing certain it is that whoever wins a war he does so at the cost of a great deal of the finer forms of life. Right is trampled underfoot. And if there is a god it should be his work to see that wrong is *not* done.

Why then should we, as Christianity insists, believe that God will help? The troubles and difficulties of life—including the force of human passion—do not exist uncaused. Such as they are, such as the world is, they are God's work, and why should we expect him to remove difficulties he has himself been to the trouble to provide? If God really intended helping us, He would have helped us much more effectively by doing so at the beginning. And if God did not choose to arrange such things why should we assume that He will help us to alter them? If God does all things well, to ask Him to alter them, or to help us alter them is ridiculous. And if otherwise, the correction must come from man himself, even though he is magnanimous enough to give God credit for the change.

But is there really anyone who really believes that God does help us? Is it the clergy? They say so: but it is their business to say so. We may readily grant that God helps *them*. But do even the clergy trust in God when help is to be obtained elsewhere? Looking at them generally, one fails to detect any difference between their behaviour and that of other people. If a parson is sick, he visits a doctor or a health resort. If he is in trouble, he appeals for sympathy or help as readily as other people. Strip him of his collar and coat and dress him in ordinary clothes, and you cannot distinguish him from the layman. And the layman is equally contemptuous of God's help. The lesson of experience tells him with even greater force than it does on the parson, because he has no obvious self-interest to serve in ignoring its lessons. Our clergy fall back with the cry that man has forgotten God. But a God who clearly did something that was useful would not easily be forgotten.

How glib is the phrase, "The protective providence of God". And what a bitter satire life presents to the world. During the World War the clergy told us that the war we were fighting was God's war, and he would look after his own. It was a Scotsman who excused himself from a thanksgiving service after a very, very bad season. When pressed to explain, he replied that to think of the quality of the harvest God might be thinking that he was speaking in sarcasm. To prate of "God's Providence," or to praise him for the world at large as "God's" hope for man, might be taken by the recording angel as satirical.

Of course it will be said that God had nothing to do with our wars, whether they be large or small or fiendish in quality. Well we agree with our priests that God had nothing to do with the world's brutalities. It is not the Atheist who really blames God for anything at all. It is not the Atheist who charges gods with being brutal, and unbearable. The Atheist does not charge God with anything—good, bad or indifferent. To the Atheist gods are neither good nor bad, they are just nonsense.

It is not, after all, the Atheist who charges God with ill doings. It is the believers in God that bring these charges against their deity. The Atheist knows that natural forces operate with absolute impartiality, and the question of the existence of God may be set on one side as of no practical importance whatever. If there is no protecting providence, human safety and human welfare resolves itself into a question of understanding. And if that be granted, religion may be dismissed, once and for all as a gigantic imposture. By sheer force of facts religious philosophy is being driven out of the scene. Civilisation is the work of man, not of gods, and not a small part of our task is to relieve the human mind of the incubus of a belief that rests on no better foundation than the fear-stricken fancies of primitive man.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## CHRISTIAN EXISTENTIALISM

MOST people in any way interested in the development of philosophical ideas will be aware of the emergence, in comparatively recent years of a new concept of philosophy which has become known as Existentialism. I have written in these columns on the subject more than once, mainly in connection with the work of Jean-Paul Sartre, the French novelist and playwright, who is in some respects the most eminent advocate of the particular line of thought which is covered by the word "Existentialism."

But the origin of Existentialism really lies in the writings of Kierkegaard, the Danish mystic of a century or so ago; and, while in some of his books Kierkegaard criticised the Church of his day, he nevertheless remained a Christian, though in many respects an unorthodox one. In consequence it is somewhat strange that Sartre and his followers of the present time are Atheists. And that there should be a school of what may be termed "Christian Existentialism" is in no way surprising.

The leader of this school is undoubtedly Prof. Karl Jaspers, a German, who is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Basel in Switzerland. Very little of his work has hitherto been accessible, save to those readers who can understand the very difficult language of German philosophy, written in the German language. That is really saying that the work of Jaspers has been to all intents and purposes a closed book to English readers; which is a pity, for, whatever we may think about the ultimate ideas of the professor, there can be no disputing the fact that there is stimulus in his work, even for those who are driven to disagree with it.

Typical in many respects of the writing of Jaspers is his little book on "The European Spirit," which has just made its appearance, in an excellent translation by Ronald Gregor Smith (S.C.M. Press; 2s. 6d.). The volume is, as its title would indicate, a discussion of the basis of some sort of cultural or spiritual unity in Europe, as Jasper envisages it. There are, naturally enough, some points on which many will disagree; on the other hand, the points in Jaspers's argument at which there will be broad agreement among most people not tied tight to a predetermined party line are more than one would have thought in any way likely.

As a line for agreement, let us consider this, as a definition of what Jaspers considers most people mean when they speak of Europe:—

"Europe is the Bible and the classical world. Europe is Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, it is Plato and Aristotle and Plotinus, Vergil and Horace, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe, Cervantes, Racine and Moliere, Leonardo, Raphael, Michaelangelo, Rembrandt, Velasquez, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Nicolas of Cusa, Spinoza, Pascal, Kant, Hegel, Cicero, Erasmus, Voltaire."

That is fair enough, though it would appear to be somewhat heavily overbalanced on one side. Most Free-thinkers would retort that Europe is also Thomas Paine, Charles Bradlaugh, Darwin, Freud, Clerk Maxwell, Rutherford, Niels Bohr, Shaw, Wells, and Somerset Maugham. "Such names," says Jaspers, commenting on his list, "mean something for the man who has lived in what they represent, in the historically unique." With his final summary on the definition of Europe will, however, be disputed by few: "Three words may be taken to build the characteristic structure of Europe—freedom, history, science."

And what, the reader may well be asking, has this to do with Existentialism, the new concept which, in spite of its difficulty, has created such a stir in Europe in recent years? Well, I think that this is best seen in Jaspers's definition of what he means by freedom. Here is the relevant paragraph:—

"Freedom is the conquest of arbitrariness. For freedom coincides with the necessity of what is true. If I am free I do not will in the way I do because I will it so, but because I have been persuaded of the right."

It will be remembered that earlier on in this article I said there were points at which many readers would disagree with Jaspers's diagnosis of the situation. And the main place at which this disagreement will become obvious is in his discussion of the origin and development of European science. He states, for instance, that modern science, as we know it, could not have arisen without Biblical religion. That is a statement which is so completely counter to the facts of the situation that it is extremely difficult to understand. The religious authorities have, after all, always attacked the scientific innovator, from the time of Galileo to the time of Freud. Indeed, it seems to be only too likely that the religion derived from the Bible, Old and New Testament alike, has done more to hinder scientific advance than anything else. That, however, is a point at which any Freethinker can only agree to differ, even with such an eminent philosopher as Prof. Jaspers. And later in the book there is another point at which disagreement is bound to ensue—the point at which he discusses what he terms "the polarity between Christianity and Humanism." That there are Christians who regard themselves as Humanists is undeniable; indeed, when the B.B.C. broadcast some time ago a series of three talks on Humanism, the speakers dealt with "Scientific Humanism" (Julian Huxley), "Classical Humanism" (Gilbert Murray), and "Religious Humanism" (Rev. J. H. Oldham). But to say that there is a branch of Humanism associated with religion is far from claiming that Christianity is the necessary background of Humanism of all kinds, and that the cruelty and oppression which we have seen in the past twenty years or so is the result of the neglect of Christianity.

Much of this article has been taken up with the detailed criticism of individual items in Jaspers's argument; I hope, however, readers will not think from this that I regard his book as a bad book. Much, in which he argues that the world is really based on a European culture, with the great power-States, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., as off-shoots from this central stem, is exceedingly stimulating writing, which should contribute something towards that world synthesis that must emerge from the troublous international scene of to-day if Europe is somehow to survive.

JOHN ROWLAND.

## WAR PAINT

We have often said that a distinctive dress is as important as a distinctive language where religion is concerned. The Convocation of Canterbury is obviously of the same opinion, for a lengthy discussion preceded the motion that the "celebrant shall wear a surplice or a stole with cassock—with or without a scarf or hood," etc., etc. We guarantee that if priests wore ordinary clothes, spoke ordinary language, used modern idioms, and used a Bible and Prayer book in modern English, the procession of priests and parsons to the Labour Exchange would take hours to pass a given point.

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

## II

If we have no knowledge of causes, we certainly have some knowledge of the belief in causation. But that is not the concern of metaphysics, which is not a science. Its method is unscientific. Science will scrap any theory that does not give results, as it did ether and phlogiston. But in metaphysics it is the theory that matters; it is a handmaid of theology; theory is a ghost of *theos*.

Metaphysics comes in where science ends. It is not concerned with knowledge, but with the Unknown. It mentally eliminates the known, using analogies to cover, or appeal to, ignorance. It is interesting only insofar as it shows fallacies involved. In seeking origins, it goes back historically and traditionally towards primitive ignorance. Analogy may be legitimate in face of ignorance, but why make a virtue of necessity? Notions of physical force are derived from psychological analogies, and in seeking physical analogies for non-physical fact, metaphysics necessarily comes back to psychology. Abstraction leads back to personification; not simply to something as cause, but to some one.

Since Hume's day there has been much scientific research. We have philological research of such men as Max Muller, Roth and Bergagne. Lewis Morgan's idea of material development from savagery through barbarism to civilisation, has been expanded in E. B. Tylor's cultural development. Flinders Petrie gave us a method of connecting up in chronological sequence. Frazer's monumental effort facilitated the research of such men as Grant Allen and Ernest Crawley. And Elliot Smith's idea of migration of culture gives world-wide connection. There may be points for discussion, but the evidence of evolutionary development is sufficiently conclusive.

Determinism is not based upon the assumption of causation, but upon observable and calculable sequential consequence. On the other hand, the assumption of causality has been inherited from the past; it is tradition. There were a multitude of causes for our primitive ancestors, and for the ancients; the curse or blessing, and magic incantations of known or unknown magicians. Anyone and everyone used magic; there was both private and public magic. With magic and animism everything is caused by someone.

Various cults have left their mark on the notions of causality. Fertility in phallicism gives analogies of birth, growth and parental responsibility. The mystic seed continues in a succession of births as cause and effect, giving affinity and communion on the analogy of family unity, kin or relationship. Such words as *genitals*, *genesis*, *genera*, and *general*, all derive from the latin *gens*. With classification and generalisation as family distinction and likeness; law has the rule of the *paterfamilias*; and personal relationship in the ancestral or familiar spirit; metaphysical analogies connect with theology. In ancestor, and hero, worship, as personifications reflecting social relationships, the gods were the causes of, and responsible for, everything.

The gods of polytheism merge into pantheism or disappear with monotheism. Causes also diminish in number and disappear. Reviewing and classifying the numerous notions of causes, Aristotle reduced them to four; the first cause, the formal cause, the efficient cause and the final cause. These, one by one, have gone the way of all flesh. The first to go was the formal cause. Plato's philosophy of Forms merely duplicates everything and explains nothing; the form of a thing is a composition

of its parts. Also, the old theory of ideas put forward by Democritus to explain vision, became obsolete with Leonardo da Vinci's new theory of vision and the science of optics.

Mathematics and astronomical methods of measuring time brought the ideas of infinity and eternity; and the logic of determinism shows the inconsistency of the notion of creation with an infinite eternal; and physical science showed the absurdity of something coming from nothing. With the geological and biological concept of evolution came the demise of both the first cause and the final cause. There can be neither beginning nor end in a process of continuous change. With creation goes the notion of predestination. So also, the ends of the moralist and power-politician.

The efficient cause went with the absurdity of the search for the secret of perpetual motion; of one hundred per cent. efficiency. Modern science tries to reduce the margin of error in closer approximation. It is this margin of error that necessitates greater accuracy and precision, and more elaborate and systematic methods. The question of efficiency needs comparison. It is, therefore, a matter of subsequent judgment, of relativity and not of cause. The notion of causation disappears in the concept of relativity.

The history of the belief in causality also shows a change in its conception; with the disappearance of teleological and metaphysical notions in physics. But in the psychological analogies involved we can see the social character of science. We see the absurdity of attributing feeling and motives, of personal projection, in physics; and can accept them as poetic allusion. The social analogies show the relatedness of the psychophysiological and the social interdependence. But we still have personification of metaphysical abstractions in social life where the interdependence is more obvious. We have the metaphysical assumption of motives, the personification, the confusion of personalities in identification and communion in social organisation; in the idea that someone is responsible.

Against such metaphysical absurdities as Marx's personification of economic categories, we can set the research of men like Malinowski in anthropology; which corroborates that of others like Freud and Jung in psychology. And we can replace the absurdity of dialectic by expanding Chapman Cohen's idea that everything is the outcome of at least two things. This seemed true with a metaphysical consideration of energy and inertia in physics. But the psychological analogies need further attention; for psychological development, both individually and historically, is an evolutionary social fact, involving the complexity of social life. In psychology everything is the outcome of at least three things.

If the family is the smallest social unit, there is the influence of both parents upon the child and the child's reactions to them. It is the complication of the eternal triangle, confused still further by the influence of those outside the family; of the group upon the individual. It is the period of the dependence of the child on the parents that facilitates the development of that childish fancy which is the basis of poetic allusion and metaphysical analogy. In their own way, these are as descriptive as a scientific formula, but lack precision. More mature judgment finds expression in greater accuracy in generalisation, and an appreciation of social interrelatedness and interdependence; and not in personal causes.

## ACID DROPS

We shall be interested to note the reaction of the Clergy to "Jan's Journal" ("Evening Standard") which we have followed with interest and profit. "Jan's" latest effort relates in amusing fashion how the local parson had tried by cajolery, threats and appeals to Christian duty, to fill his church, but to no avail, until the parson tried working on the parishioners' sympathy and pity. With tears in his eyes he complained that it was lonely for him preaching to empty pews, until with resignation and pity, the parishioners promised to attend church. We think that almost everything from Film Shows to Miracles has been tried to fill churches, but we do hope that the habit of weeping parsons will not spread; nothing, surely, is more degrading than self-pity.

Let Stalin take heart, there is hope yet. Lord Pakenham, Minister of Aviation, and well known Roman Catholic, is reported in "The Times" as repudiating the "Communist Doctrine of Hatred," and asserts that we ought to love the Russians and that he prays for them twice every day. This is twice as much as was asked for by Our Lady of Fatima, and the result will be, of course, doubled.

The "Methodist Recorder" pleads for more intelligence and realism in prayers and appends what we presume to be taken as an example of intelligence:—

Lord Christ, whose Kingdom is not after the fashion of this world, but is a Kingdom of the spirit, a Kingdom without frontiers; enlarge the spirit of Thy Kingdom in every nation.

Give grace to Thy servants not to despise Thy wisdom, not to doubt Thy purpose of love, nor in cowardice to refuse Thy way of the Cross.

This is about as intelligent as any other bleatings which pass for prayers in our numerous god shops.

The leader writer in "Nature" has been at it again. He writes, "Free institutions cannot be safeguarded solely on a secular basis, and democracy demands for its working those qualities of self-restrained discipline such as have flowered in the training provided by Christian fellowship." For confusion and ambiguity that passage is a real gem. One is left to guess how he reaches the decisions; but then, the purpose is to get his bit of religion across, and clarity, accuracy, understanding must not be allowed to intervene. One expects that sort of thing in a religious weekly but not in a journal of science. Democracy and free institutions are not Christian in origin, and do not demand Christian protection. They are secular in origin and maintenance, and spread when Christianity had lost the power to prevent them.

Mr. Christopher Hollis, M.P., the other Sunday, broadcast a talk on G. K. Chesterton in the series "Famous Men." Or rather, it should have been on Chesterton, but actually he was only used to drag in Mr. Hollis' opinions about Roman Catholicism, two words he never used—he called it Christianity. Needless to add, of course, that only Christianity—that is, Popery—will save the world, helped a little, perhaps by Chesterton's books against blatant Rationalism.

It would be interesting to know how the B.B.C. would like a talk on Charles Bradlaugh, using him to dilate on Atheism as the only rational philosophy reason has yet

found to combat the credulity and superstition of the God idea in general, and of Christianity in particular. It would be interesting also to learn how the listening public, and particularly the religious section, would react to such a talk. Perhaps it is quite useless to ask such questions for Sir William Haley has already declared that this is a Christian country, and he is going to see that **only Christians** will be properly catered for; proof, surely, what lip service Christians pay to the words constantly used by them—tolerance and freedom.

If the Roman Catholic King James II can easily take the prize for being the biggest cad who ever sat on the throne of England, what are we to say for his devoted henchman, Judge Jeffries? A new book about him has just been published, the author, Mr. Montgomery Hyde, doing his best to whitewash one of the foulest, perhaps the foulest, judge Catholicism ever spewed forth. It is true that, as one reviewer suggests, something can be said for him, though Lord Campbell "who began to examine his career with the idea that his misdeeds had been exaggerated found him without a single redeeming virtue." All his savage sentences were "within the law." In spite of this wonderful "redeeming" feature even Christians fight shy of putting Jeffries up as a shining example of the blessings and example of true Christianity.

On the one hand, eminent Catholics like Mr. Richard O'Sullivan, and celibate priests like Cardinal Griffin, are constantly exhorting their sheep to increase their flocks; and, on the other hand, the sheep are constantly complaining they can't get a house or a flat for love or money—that, in fact, they are homeless. Every week, Catholic journals publish their pathetic letters—but not a hint comes from the hierarchy as to what is best to be done. According to Catholic dogma, it is far better to bring children into the world, even if they have to live in ditches or in a pigstye than prevent them, for God, who always looks after the dear little sparrows, will also look after hordes of little Roman Catholics.

Unfortunately, this comforting teaching—given so freely by celibate men of God—does not always bring solace to those who are faced with rising families and no houses, and their letters are most pathetic. Perhaps some of this undoubted hardship will make a few sheep think and think hard. It may even cause some of them to see in Roman Catholicism a huge fraud kept going by millions of unhappy people swallowing the unmitigated lie that they will all be fully recompensed in—Heaven.

The Bishop of Gloucester deplores the present-day observance of Sunday, and thinks that we are not conscious of the debt we owe to the "English Sunday," to which unconsciousness we personally humbly plead guilty. It seems that the Bishop looks back with nostalgia to the Victorian Sabbath when Church going was more or less compulsory and Bishops counted for something in the scheme of things. The Bishop tries to suggest that he is solely actuated by idealistic motives when he says that he would like to see at least one day in the week when people could be quiet and forget the bustle of weekday life; but then, so would transport, electricity, water and gas workers, for if all these workers did not work on Sundays, our Bishop would perhaps have a too-quiet Sunday.

# "THE FREETHINKER"

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Lecture Notices should reach the Office by Friday morning.

## SUGAR PLUMS

We have received a copy of the "Ceylon Rationalist," and a most interesting number it is. Most of the articles are written, we think, by natives of Ceylon, and it is significant to note how clearly they recognise the beneficial results of religion—not just the Christian but also of the Hindu and Buddhist religions. The writers see the harm any religion exercises on the minds of individuals, particularly in making them believe that their particular creed is the only depository of truth. The article on Gandhi by Mr. P. A. Varkey, cleverly shows how a legend can grow. "Gandhi is already deified," he writes "He is referred to as 'God,' 'the Truth,' 'One that will never die.' It is suggested that Hinduism be reformed and renamed 'Gandhism'." It is an excellent article—but all the writers are imbued with the spirit of Freethought and we wish the "Ceylon Rationalist" every success.

"Osservatore Romano," the Vatican organ, criticises the United Nations for excluding the name of God and the divine origin of man from the United Nations preamble to the Rights of Man. The "Catholic Herald" is quite worried and adds to the Vatican criticism that the preamble is not complete. There have been some famous "Rights of Man," the American, the French and the League of Nations, wherein God has not been mentioned, which reminds us of the famous reply of Laplace who, when Napoleon asked him why he did not mention God in his astronomy, replied, "I have no room for God in my hypothesis." So U.N.O. is in good company.

Newcastle-on-Tyne readers are reminded that Mr. R. H. Rosetti speaks for the local N.S.S. Branch to-day (December 5) in the Socialist Hall, Royal Arcade, Pilgrim Street, on "God or Man?" at 7 p.m. In the hands of Mr. J. T. Brighton the local arrangements will be efficiently carried out, and will deserve the support of friends and sympathisers. Admission is free; with some reserved seats at one shilling each.

On Thursday, December 9, a Freethought Demonstration, arranged by the Executive N.S.S., will be held in the Town Hall, Broadway, Stratford, London, E. Mrs. E. Venton, President of the West Ham Branch, will be in the chair, with Messrs. L. Ebury, Archibald Robertson, M.A., F. A. Ridley and R. H. Rosetti as speakers. The hall is easily reached by L.N.E.R. train to Stratford Station or road transport to the Town Hall, Stratford. Proceedings commence at 7-30 p.m., and admission is free.

## THE PAPACY AND THE SOCIAL ENCYCLICALS

"No one can be both a sincere Socialist and a good Catholic"—Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" Pope Pius XI.

THE proclamation of Papal Infallibility which marked the high watermark of Papal supremacy in and over the Roman Catholic Church—a church, incidentally, now more "Roman" and less "Catholic" than in past ages—was quickly followed by the loss of the Popes' Temporal Power. For war broke out between France and Germany immediately after the Proclamation of Papal Infallibility upon July 18, 1870. The counter-revolutionary French Dictator Louis Bonaparte (Napoleon III) was forced to withdraw his troops from Rome, where they had safeguarded the last days of the Papal Power. The Italians thereupon promptly marched in. Rome became the capital of the secular Italian Kingdom, whilst the Pope, now the (self-styled) "Prisoner of the Vatican," henceforth sat and schemed behind its walls.

In 1878 the ultra-reactionary Pope Pius XI who, in his famous "Syllabus" of 1864 had denounced modern civilisation and all its works, died and was succeeded by Leo XIII, probably at bottom equally reactionary, but a good deal more intelligent. The long reign of this remarkable Pope (1878-1903) marked important historical developments, particularly in the social and political spheres. For it was Leo's Social Encyclical Letters which marked the beginnings of the powerful modern movements of "Christian Democracy" and "Catholic Action."

As this is the predominant type of Catholicism in the twentieth century, a word may usefully be added upon these recent developments in Papal policy. For the Church of Rome particularly since those political opportunists, the Jesuits, took charge of its destinies, is a very flexible institution in worldly affairs, and one must not make the mistake of judging its subtle policies purely on the strength of the denunciations of its opponents.

Upon May 15, 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued his most famous Encyclical on "The Condition of the Working Classes" or "Rerum Novarum," to give it its proper Latin title. This Encyclical of Pope Leo, whose chief adviser here is said to have been the English Cardinal Manning, was the first of many such defining the new social and political outlook of the Papacy as and when faced with the problems of the modern industrial age. Its teaching is the foundation of modern Social Catholicism, and it is necessary to understand it if one would understand what modern Catholicism is to-day.

If we penetrate the long-winded verbosity which characterises modern Papal pronouncements, we can express the essentials of this policy in the following terms. (The two most important documents that are relevant in this connection are the afore-mentioned "Rerum Novarum" and the later "Quadragesimo Anno"—"In the fortieth year"—after Leo's Encyclical—of Pope Pius XI—May 15, 1931.)

The following paragraphs may be taken as a summary (not at all in ecclesiastical inflated phraseology), of the modern Social policy of the Popes that began in 1891.

Prior to the publication of "Rerum Novarum" the social policy of the Popes had been one of pure undiluted reaction in every sphere. All, and any democracy was alien to the Vatican. The French Revolution, that potent seed of modern political progress was anathema to Rome. The Papacy sought for its allies not among the broad masses of the people who, to be sure, did not count for much politically before the French Revolution, but solely at Courts and in the narrow and exclu-

sive circles of the governing classes; amongst royal autocrats, landowners, generals and, in brief, amongst the feudal ruling classes of the old pre- (French) Revolution regime. It was in alliance with these atavistic feudal relics that the Papacy tried to drown the European revolutionary movements in blood during the era between 1814 and 1870 when the "Holy Alliance" was in its hey-day.

However, as the nineteenth century wore on the European landscape began to change with increasing rapidity, particularly after the "Year of Revolutions" 1848. The Industrial Revolution crossed the Channel from its birthplace, England, and began to transform the ancient agrarian civilisation of Europe. In country after country the factory system made its appearance and, along with it there came the inevitable problems that accompany industrialism everywhere, the struggle of Capital and Labour, the rise of Socialism, the emergence of the masses to political consciousness. The fundamental social fact about the past century has been undoubtedly the entry of the popular, previously inarticulate masses upon the stage of history.

Confronted with an age of such a kind, both political and ecclesiastical reaction were forced to remodel their traditional methods; either they had to find a broader basis in popular support or else face a speedy obliteration. Secular reaction solved this fundamental problem, as I shall show in my next chapter, by resorting to Fascism, the essential feature in which it differs from old-style Conservatism, is that it uses demagogic "leftist" phraseology in order to attract the unprivileged masses to support its essentially counter-revolutionary aims.

But here again, as in the case of its adoption of a totalitarian dictatorship in 1870, the clerical reaction was a generation ahead of the political reaction. For the Social Encyclicals of the Popes between 1891 and 1931 discharged an identical purpose. Their essential aim was, and is, to find a mass basis for Papal policy by the use of "leftist" demagogic phrases. *Here again the Popes were the teachers of Fascism.*

The Papal Encyclicals envisage a definite Social order, which the Church of Rome seeks to put into force wherever it has the power. A Social Order which may, perhaps, be defined as a Church-controlled capitalism resting on a judicious balance of Capital, Labour and peasantry in which the Church has the last word as umpire. Both the excesses of Capitalism and Socialism are denounced. Capital, according to Pope Leo "lays upon the workers a burden but little lighter than that of slavery itself." Whilst Socialism according to Pope Pius, "conceives society in a manner entirely repugnant to Christian Truth."

Here the Church becomes the "rejoicing third"; it simultaneously safeguards the propertied classes against Socialist and Communist expropriation by the workers, whilst simultaneously protecting the masses against the abuses of capitalism. Such was and is "Christian Democracy," the ideal State of Roman sociology. Who was it once said that one cannot serve God and Mammon simultaneously?

The above type of social order obviously requires a clerical controlled dictatorship to enforce it, and it is in fact, the formula since revealed to the world as Clerical Fascism, from Austria to the Argentine.

A word may here be usefully added upon the attitude of Roman sociology to respectively, Capitalism and Socialism, the two main social ideologies of the modern world. Contrary to the opinion of many people the Vatican is neither completely pro-capitalist nor completely anti-socialist. It all depends (to quote that eminent

pundit Dr. Joad), what one means by capitalism and/or socialism.

Competitive Capitalism was the creation not of the Church of Rome, but of its bitterest enemies, the Protestant Reformers, amongst whom it has always found its main support. Competitive Capitalism has actually always fitted in much easier into the atmosphere of Protestant rather than of Catholic countries. And whilst the Vatican may, and to-day, does regard Capitalism as a lesser evil than "godless communism" it has never unreservedly accepted the competitive ideology of Free Trade, so profoundly foreign to Catholic Traditionalism.

Similarly with regard to Socialism, in spite of the dictum of that ultra-reactionary Pope Pius XI quoted at the head of this chapter, the Vatican has never officially condemned the moderate (non-Marxian) socialism of such bodies as the British Labour Party, and the Canadian "Co-operative Commonwealth Federation."

Here again, it all depends on what one means by that somewhat elastic term "socialism." Some forms of socialism are undoubtedly irreconcilable with Catholicism, for instance, Marxist Socialism with its Materialist analysis of human history and society. Anarchism with its categorical repudiation of any and all authority, such manifestations of socialist thought will never, one can assert with complete confidence, be received at the Vatican.

But there is socialism and socialism! In Australia for instance, the Vatican works quite well with the Labour government. Under the title of "Catholic Socialism," Signor F. S. Nitti has collected an impressive array of authorities and Catholicism could co-exist with socialist governments provided they were not too materialistic in outlook and, an important point, did not socialise too much church property.

Thus a new political Catholicism developed along with the industrial age between "Rerum Novarum" (1891) and "Quadragesimo Anno" (1931). This new Catholicism has the ultimate intention of dominating European (including American) society, let there be no mistake about that! But in 1917, before the new Catholicism had acquired sufficient strength for this ambitious purpose, a new wave of revolution set in with the Russian Revolution, the successor to the Reformation and the French Revolution.

Once again, as in the days of the Inquisition and the "Holy Alliance," Rome had occasion to seek for a secular sword wherewith to drown the anti-clerical revolution in blood. She found it in her secular pupil, Fascism.

F. A. RIDLEY.

## HAIL AND FAREWELL

Through alien lands and over many seas,

I come at length to these sad funeral rites,  
To offer thee, my brother, those last fees

Which death makes due, and, as the heart indites,  
To speak, forsooth in vain, to ashes dumb,

Since fate, my brother, thy dear self has ta'en  
Away from me, who have in sorrow come.

Apprised of this cruel theft, which is death's gain,  
Now meanwhile take these offerings of mine

Which by the custom of our ancient sires  
Are rightly made to be sad tribute's sign:

Receive them, gifts at these dissolving fires,  
Wet though they be from eyes that weepings swell,  
And Hail, my brother, Hail! and also Farewell.

CATULLUS.

(Translator, J. G. Lupton.)

**PLEASE DOCTOR, UNCLE'S QUEER**

I'VE come to see you about my Uncle, Doctor. I think he's all right in himself, really. He's got a very strong constitution, and powerful arms and wings. He's forty times as heavy and four times as big as when he was born. The Life Insurance people say he would have been a very poor risk, being so cumbersome, but he's got just the right kind of constitution to keep him hearty for ages yet, the insurance people say.

No, doctor, he never had a mother, or so he says. He says he was just the result of a rather peculiar friendship. But he's always talking about his fathers—thirty-nine of them, he had, to hear him talk. They hardly expected to rear him. Even a hundred years ago, when he was only about 50 years of age, a specialist (Mr. de Tocqueville it was) said he couldn't be expected to last much longer.

Yes, he did have some trouble in his lower regions, doctor, when he was about 70. We think he had swallowed some foreign bodies, and he got himself one of those Mason-Dixie belts. Nasty, dangerous things they are—nearly cut himself in half, he did. But after about four years of terrible pain and agony he recovered all right, hale and hearty as ever.

Except that now he is frightened to death about germs and microbes—thinks people are plotting to spray them all over him, because of his anatomical secrets. Silly, I think.

He tries not to quarrel with the neighbours; and so he is always lending them money and never getting it back. He says he's determined to live on good terms with everybody, even if he has to fight the whole neighbourhood to do it.

Now you ask me, doctor, I do recall that Uncle is allergic to red. Even red, white and blue annoys him sometimes, but red really does make him see red, if you get my meaning. He is always taking purges to eliminate all the red corpuscles from his blood, so he says, but I think they do him as much harm as good. He says they are guilty of "anti-avuncular activities" whatever that may mean, but I don't think he knows enough about medicine to doctor himself, do you?

So I do hope you can do something for my Uncle Sam, doctor. I feel certain something awful will happen if he isn't cured soon.

What's that you say, doctor? He ought to be treated with World Federal Government? We all ought to have it? Well I never! I might have known a psychiatrist would say something potty.

If you expect me to pay for that, you whistle for it.

HAROLD S. BIDMEAD.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**DOES DETERMINISM IMPLY FATALISM?**

SIR.—in my article of November 28 the seventh sentence from the end, as printed, is neither grammar nor sense. Not having a copy of my MS., I forget what I originally wrote, but it was probably something like this: "Every particle of matter is as much an agent as any other; we are agents as much as molecules or atoms or protons or electrons or neutrons."

I beg your readers to acquit me of the stylistic horror that disgraced the printed article!—Yours, etc.,

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON.

[We regret the above line in Mr. Robertson's article was "dropped" by the printers.—EDITOR.]

**LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.**

**LONDON—OUTDOOR**

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

**LONDON—INDOOR**

Conway Discussion Circle (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Tuesday, December 7, 7 p.m.: A lecture.

National Secular Society (Town Hall, Broadway, Stratford, E.15).—Thursday, December 9, 7-30 p.m.: A Freethought Demonstration. Speakers: Messrs. L. EBURY, ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON, F. A. RIDLEY, R. H. ROSETTI. Chairman: Mrs. E. VENTON.

Rationalist Press Association (Alliance Hall, Palmer Street, S.W.1).—Monday, December 6, 7 p.m.: "Current Theories of Personality." Fourth lecture: "Psychoanalysis" (Sigmund Freud), Dr. FRIEDA GOLDMAN.

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, 11 a.m.: "The Changing English Character," Mr. S. K. RATCLIFFE.

West London Branch N.S.S. (Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, Edgware Road, W.1).—Sunday, 7-15 p.m.: "The Spoken Word," Mr. RAYMOND RAYNER, I.R.A.M.

**COUNTRY—OUTDOOR**

Glasgow (Brunswick Street).—Sunday, 3 p.m.: Messrs. S. BRYDEN, E. LAWRIE and J. HUMPHREY.

Kingston Branch N.S.S. (Castle Street).—Sunday, 7-30 p.m.: Mr. J. BARKER.

Sheffield Branch N.S.S. (Barker's Pool).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. A. SAMMS and others.

**COUNTRY—INDOOR**

Birmingham Branch N.S.S. (38, John Bright St., Room 13).—Saturday, December 11, 7 p.m.: Whist Drive. Tickets, 2s., including refreshments.

Blackpool Debating Society (46, Adelaide Street).—Tuesday, December 7, 7 p.m.: "Thoughts Concerning a Way of Life," Mr. W. JONES.

Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Science Room, Mechanics' Institute).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m.: "Christianity and Communism," Mr. JOHN E. BINNS.

Glasgow Secular Society (East Hall, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall St.).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: "Crowd Psychology," Mr. Geo. GILGOUR, M.A.

Leicester Secular Society (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m.: "First Hand Account of Germany," Miss EDITH MOORE.

Newcastle Branch N.S.S. (Socialist Hall, Arcade, Pilgrim St.).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: "God or Man," Mr. R. H. ROSETTI.

Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society (Technical College, Shakespeare St.).—Sunday, 2-30 p.m.: "The Great Contradiction," Mr. J. CRISPIN, N.C.I.C.

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## THE MYSTERY OF THE PRESBYTER JOHN

ACCORDING to Galatians, Paul attended the Council of the Apostles at Jerusalem either 14 or 17 years after his conversion. Dr. Robert Eisler, in his work entitled "The Enigma of the Fourth Gospel" (1938, pp. 84, 85), refers this Council to A.D. 42, which implies that the conversion of Paul must have taken place either A.D. 28 or A.D. 25. Moreover, since Dr. Eisler gives A.D. 21 as the date of the crucifixion, either four years or seven years must have elapsed between the crucifixion and Paul's conversion. The above dates have an important bearing upon Dr. Eisler's contention that the presbyter John of Ephesus, who, according to reliable evidence, had been a Jewish high priest, composed the Fourth Gospel. Dr. Eisler thinks that this John, whom he holds to have been a son of the Jewish high priest Annas, was probably born A.D. 15, and became very fond of Jesus, who returned his affection (p. 205). Yet, although this boy would be only 13 years of age at the latest date assignable to Paul's conversion, Dr. Eisler presents him as one of the judges before whom, previously to that date, Peter and another apostle were brought up for trial. But, the immature age of this John at that period seems to be an insuperable objection to such a fact. Of course, it is not unlikely that the sons of judges were allowed to sit in court that they might get legal experience, and that they were afterwards at a suitable age permitted to sit therein, as assessors; but there is not the slightest indication that the aforesaid John was anything less than a fully fledged judge. This person's life in the sketch of Dr. Eisler is as follows: son of the high priest Annas, he was born A.D. 15 (p. 205); made high priest A.D. 37 (p. 44); deposed A.D. 41 (p. 45); led a rebel army A.D. 66 (p. 44); became governor of Gophna the same year (p. 43); was defeated in A.D. 68 (p. 43); and subsequently exiled to Ephesus, where he died "probably" near the end of Trajan's, or, at the beginning of Hadrian's reign [i.e., about A.D. 117] (p. 209). Thus he reached the age of one hundred and two years.

Josephus specifies the five sons of Annas, but the name John does not occur on his list. The third son, however, is called Theophilus; and Dr. Eisler believes that the John in question, like many Jews of ancient and modern times, changed his name, whilst retaining its signification (pp. 43, 44).

He also identifies this Theophilus with the "high and mighty" Theophilus to whom Luke dedicated his Gospel and Acts (p. 208). But, one thing is certain, namely, that in many important matters Luke's Gospel differs from and even opposes that of John. Still, this fact does not invalidate Dr. Eisler's intimation.

Since no such person as the presbyter John is named either in the Pauline Epistles, or in the Acts, as having figured among the Christian community, it would seem that he joined it at a date later than that of the events mentioned in those works. Paul was already dead when in A.D. 66 the man whom Dr. Eisler identifies as the presbyter John experienced the defeat of his rebellion against the Romans. If for that offence he were exiled to Ephesus, where Paul had established a Church, he might have been there converted to Christianity, or have there openly acknowledged a secret inclination which he had previously entertained for it. The Fourth Gospel certainly contains Pauline elements, as for instance justification by faith, as taught in the similitude of the brazen serpent. Even in Paul's time there was a Jewish high priest at Ephesus whose seven sons believed in the power of Jesu's name, as Dr. Eisler duly noted (p. 42).

If because of his youth the presbyter John could not be the John mentioned in Acts (IV 6) as one of the judges at the trial of Peter and another Apostle, this does not prove that Dr. Eisler is wrong in identifying him with the Theophilus who became high priest in A.D. 37 if a man born, as he was, in A.D. 15, were eligible for the office. The evidence that the presbyter John had been a Jewish high priest appears satisfactory, but it does not follow that he had held this office at Jerusalem, or even that he was a Palestinian Jew. For Josephus (Wars. vii 10) relates that a few years after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, Lupus, the Roman governor at Alexandria, destroyed an Egyptian temple belonging to the Jews, which had been in existence 343 years. Hence the presbyter John may have been one of the disbanded priests of that temple. This would account for the echoes of Alexandrian philosophy perceptible in the Fourth Gospel, and for several other things in that remarkable work.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

## THE GODLESS MIKADO

WHEN a curious United States correspondent asked persons of Hirohito's entourage whether the Tenno of Japan believed in God now that he himself had ceased to be a god, the reply was, the Emperor considered himself "a man without religion."

For all this, he continues to observe the Shintô ceremonies in connection with traditional court duties; however, the backbone of the Japanese religion has been knocked out with the elimination of the God-Emperor on earth. So the Pope, the vicar of God on earth—or rather his American tutor, Monseigneur Spellman—considers Japan to be a vacuum where to penetrate for the higher glory of Wall Street. Spellman, the Archbishop of New York, therefore set out together with fourteen other high dignitaries of the Catholic Church, to be on the spot.

As a rule, business firms send their representatives to prospective customers to offer their wares. In a similar way, Cardinal Spellman hawks his rich collection of samples of the Church in order to win the Tenno over as Rome's client. We are told by "Stars and Stripes" that the Emperor Hirohito already has sent the Pope Pius XII his autographed photograph.

If Spellman's clerical trade mission will succeed in forging an agreement between the Japanese Mikado and the Pope as two representatives of the almost extinct profession of god-men, two birds will have been killed with one stone. The fight against "dangerous thoughts" in Japan will have received new impetus and Japanese reaction will be more closely allied with American; and the Pope of Rome will have received a new item of revenue for the depleted Vatican budget.

The defeat of German and Japanese fascism was a severe blow to Rome. The Tenno, while he has preserved his secular titles and big estates, has lost his divine virtue. Pius XII still has divine virtue, but has lost a considerable part of his revenue. The Vatican budget is painfully affected by the post-war impoverishment of Europe, and even more by the political collapse of certain Catholic governments.

However, having preserved a good deal of her spiritual influence, the Holy See can offer its services for the oppression of the Japanese people whose Emperor so shockingly fell from the skies.

TOM HILL.