

THE FREETHINKER

Founded 1881

Editor: F. A. RIDLEY

Vol. LXXI—No. 39

[REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL
POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER]

Price Threepence

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Papal Imperialism in Australia

OUR contemporary, the London *Observer* (September 9, 1951), issued a report upon the current referendum now being held in Australia by its present Conservative Government. As our readers are no doubt aware, the aim of this current referendum is to enable the present Australian Government to introduce constitutional legislation for the express purpose of "outlawing" the Australian Communist Party. A law to this effect had already been passed by the present administration of Prime Minister Menzies prior to the recent general election which was held principally upon precisely this issue and which ended by returning the Menzies Government to power. However, the Australian High Court had declared the previous Bill for the "outlawry" of Australian Communism, illegal, and, in order to override this legal decision on a fundamental issue affecting the constitution Mr. Menzies requires, and is now seeking, what amounts to a national vote of confidence by means of the present referendum. An absolute majority of both the national vote and of the six constituent States into which the Australian Union is divided, is constitutionally required in order to validate the proposed governmental legislation.

The issue now raised by the Australian referendum extends, however, far beyond both the geographical bounds of Australia and the political implications of the constitutional issues involved. For religious issues have now become involved along with political in the Australian referendum. For the political opposition to Mr. Menzies regime is constituted by the Australian Labour Party, which itself constituted the previous government. The Australian Labour Party, however, is itself divided upon this issue; officially it is opposed to the current Bill to "outlaw" Communism, not, of course, out of any particular sympathy with the Australian Communist Party which, there as elsewhere, is apt to be a thorn in the side of social democracy, but on general principles of political liberty and, perhaps, actual fear that similar prohibitive legislation may in time be used against other anti-governmental parties, thus facilitating a dictatorship of the Right.

However, the issue inside the Australian Labour Party is the reverse of clear. For at precisely this point religion in the form of the Holy, Roman, and Apostolic Church, takes a hand. For it is a matter of common knowledge that the Vatican nowadays regards the Kremlin as its major rival upon a world-wide scale, and Catholicism is well to the fore in the generality of anti-Communist "fronts." The Church of Rome is now, as always, in essence a semi-political dictatorship controlling a superbly disciplined and world-wide organisation which swings into action upon a planetary scale at a signal from its infallible Führer in the Vatican. Australian, like other Catholics, are Catholics first and nationalists afterwards, for, in the ultramontane, rigidly centralised Catholic

Church of the mid-twentieth century, the old slogan of Daniel O'Connell; "I take my religion from Rome and my politics from my country," is not in favour in Rome. Consequently, in Australian "democracy" we find many peculiar "democrats" in the present Australian Labour Party who, so the *Observer* informs us, are obeying their Church before their party and are voting with the Conservatives against their own party on the anti-Communist issue. For the largely Irish Australian Labour Party is a stronghold of "Catholic Action," that is, of political Catholicism, and many of its leaders (including its recently deceased leader and ex-Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley) were Roman Catholics.

Fortunately there are other religious leaders of non-Catholic bodies in Australia who know enough about the Church of Rome to realise the grave dangers involved in her present intervention in the internal politics of Australia. This appreciation of the long-range issues involved is clearly expressed in a letter to his diocese by the Anglican Bishop of Goulburn, Dr. Burgmann, which clearly indicates the long-term aspects of the problem. In his diocesan letter Dr. Burgmann urges the Anglicans and, presumably, other Protestants to vote against the Government in the referendum to outlaw the Communist Party. His reasoning appears to us to be so penetrating and far-sighted as to be worthy of exact quotation.

"Rome," he declares, "has got both political parties on the spot and unless Anglicans and others awake in time and come to the rescue of traditional British freedom, Rome is likely to win a victory in this referendum which she will know how to use in the future. It is not difficult to imagine an Australian Government dominated by Roman Catholics accepting guidance from their Church."

A far-sighted man is Bishop Burgmann! It is, indeed, not at all "difficult to imagine" and not only in the antipodes! for papal imperialism is, not confined to Australia, and whilst its methods can and do vary from time to time and place to place, its fundamental aim remains *semper eadem*—"always the same"; it can be expressed in two words: world domination.

Thus the problems raised in and by this Australian bishop are by no means confined either to Australia or to the present generation. Far from such being the case, Rome is to-day only doing what she has been doing persistently since the era of the Crusades, she is seeking first to conquer and then to dominate the entire world. Her present world strategy is to "cash in" on the widespread fear of Communism so as to obtain support, often in circles which have little sympathy with Catholicism, on *religious* grounds, and thus to prepare the way both for the eventual destruction of her major rival and for her own subsequent return to the medieval power which Rome once possessed, and which still haunts the imagination of the papacy now as in past ages.

We repeat: this is no local or imaginary danger. Papal imperialism, militant Catholicism, represents the most formidable contemporary danger both to human progress

in general and to freethought in particular. The struggle against "Catholic Action," political Catholicism, is actually more immediately urgent than academic disputes about dogma in which our present world seems largely to have lost interest. In this life or death struggle, in which the very existence of secularism may well be at stake, freethinkers may find it expedient to seek for allies amongst tolerant and socially progressive protestants of the type of Dr. Burgmann, who have remained true to the best principles of the Reformation. For it cannot be repeated too often that Rome, ecclesiastical Fascism, is the totalitarian form of Christianity, the triumph of which spells the inevitable end of human freedom. Papal imperialism, which is an empire rather than a mere church, "the ghost of the Roman Empire," as the old philosopher termed it, waiting patiently and working tirelessly for the return of its medieval domination when "all roads led to Rome."

F. A. RIDLEY.

[As we go to press, we learn that the referendum has returned a verdict unfavourable to Mr. Menzies. We congratulate the Australian people on a victory for democracy and common sense.]

RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES IN THE 1830's

AFTER the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, there raged an agitation to secure the removal of various ecclesiastical abuses. In all reformist circles in England, Ireland and Scotland alike, this desire was general. The Radicals advocated the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican Church and the complete separation of Church and State. They asserted that now the Catholics had been granted full civil rights and the Protestant Dissenters relief from the disabilities imposed by the Test Act, remaining restrictions must be removed. As Prof. Elie Halevy testifies in his invaluable *History of the English People* (vol. III, p. 135, Unwin, 1927): "The Dissenters," they claimed, "must be freed from the obligation to be baptised, married and buried according to Anglican rites. The Church must be deprived of her monopoly of higher education and the Dissenters either allowed to found a University of their own or admitted to the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. The clergy must cease to exercise the administrative functions which were still entrusted to their performance, and the House of Lords must no longer include the 'bench of bishops' so unpopular since 1831."

Also, with or without compensation, it was said that the payment of tithe must cease, for this clerical imposition was resented everywhere in the British Isles. Church rates, especially in urban areas, were strongly condemned as unjustified. But the earliest Radical achievement was the Vestry Reform Act of 1831. This measure, however, was permissive merely, and had been barely applied outside the Metropolis, while in the provinces corruption still prevailed.

The reformers who clamoured for the abolition of Church rates and tithes were moderates when compared with the revolutionaries who "desired the State to confiscate the possessions of the Anglican Church, as in the sixteenth century, the Anglican Church had confiscated the possessions of the Catholic Church." Cobbett suggested that the proceeds might serve to redeem the National Debt, while others wished it devoted to poor relief, or national education. After a long fought fight many of the evils previously enumerated have disappeared,

although the Bench of Bishops remains in the Upper Chamber at Westminster.

The most prominent assailants of the Established Church were the Utilitarian Radicals—the disciples of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill—who renounced all forms of religion whatsoever. Then there were those whose anti-clericalism was far fiercer than that of the philosophical Radicals. Nevertheless, some Protestant Dissenters joined the advanced Radicals and revolutionaries in their campaign against the Church of England. The Nonconformists were growing in number, and were better organised than ever. They formed a Union to review and redress their various grievances. A Nonconformist committee, however, published a programme noticeably moderate in form. As Dr. Halevy observes: "If the committee demanded that Dissenters should be placed on a footing of complete civil equality with the Anglicans, it carefully refrained from putting forward the demand made by the extremists for the disestablishment of the Church."

In truth, in 1833, the avowed objective of Dissenters for disestablishment was in Scotland, more than in England. The established Church north of Tweed was Presbyterian, but in the previous century several sects had forsaken the State establishment on differences of dogmatic teaching. They now asserted that the connection of Church and State had promoted latitudinarianism and rationalism and that the alliance of religion with the secular authorities "involved corruption and precluded the possibility of purification." To remedy this alleged evil, a Voluntary Church Association was established to release religion from temporal control which was certain "to secularise religion, promote hypocrisy, perpetuate error, produce infidelity, destroy the unity and purity of the Church and disturb the peace and order of civil society."

The Irish leader, Daniel O'Connell, who voiced the aspirations of some 6 million Catholics in Erin, naturally favoured the separation of Church from State. O'Connell, although a political adherent of Bentham, was a fervid Roman Catholic, and his antagonism to the English Church established in Ireland, was fully justified. Yet, its disestablishment was delayed until 1869. Indeed, in O'Connell's day, Erin furnished stronger reasons for reform than any other part of the then United Kingdom. As Halevy inquires: "On what possible ground could this State Church—equipped with a large body of ministers and provided with rich endowments be justified in a country where the immense majority of the population were Catholics?" For two centuries the Protestant Church outside Ulster had made little or no impression on Catholic Ireland whose peasantry still remain among the most superstitious in the Western World.

There were shrewd ecclesiastics in England who desired Church reform. The menace of scientific materialism and increasing Dissent, induced practical Anglicans to strengthen their Church. These, however, were few, while the High Church party detested the very name of reform. All alleged evils they attributed to political patronage, and their remedy was a larger episcopal authority, the bishops being appointed from their own party, when all would be well.

There were few dignitaries of the evangelical group, but these favoured reform. The Dissenters' expanding influences alarmed them, and the evangelicals strove to strengthen the Church from within. They desired stricter observance of the Thirty-Nine Articles and the negation of the Athanasian Creed or at least, as Halevy

notes, "its damnatory clauses which doomed to everlasting punishment all who maintained certain theological opinions, and the rites of ordination, baptism, marriage, burial and absolution so revised as to get rid of many formulae which were a stumbling-block to the orthodox Protestant, and still bore the impress of Roman superstition." And as the reform of clerical abuses could not be entrusted to High Churchmen, they were constrained to accept secular jurisdiction, but in this they simply adhered to Anglican tradition for in "the 16th century the Church of England had been the creation of Parliament."

Pluralism was condemned, and a minimum stipend for the parochial clergy demanded; the latter to be secured by the reduced incomes of the Cathedral chapters. Various other schemes were suggested, but public opinion and Parliament proved indifferent, and little change occurred.

T. F. PALMER.

(To be concluded)

CHRISTIANITY AND WITCHCRAFT

(Concluded from page 347)

Some facts and dates may interest: St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), posing as the first Inquisitor, drew from a Manichean girl, aged 12, the confession that the Manichees made their sacrament of human semen and flour, and secondly the same confession from a sacred virgin of the sect. Mr. J. McCabe considers that here is the origin of one of the ingredients of the early myth of the witch (*Little Blue Book, No. 1132, p. 23*), and he says: "The synods of Elvira (306), Ancyra (314), and Laodicea (375), and the sermons of St. Chrysostom and the other great preachers, show that the new Christians brought with them the magical practices as well as the vices of the pagan world." (p. 16.) He recounts that "a life of Pope Damasus (of fourth century) pretends that as early as 367 a Roman synod took cognisance of these women who rode on beasts at night with Herodias;" and he considers it was clear that by the sixth century there was some organised witchcraft in Europe with numbers of women meeting at night to honour Diana, the goddess of the moon and of fertility. (p. 20.) Mr. McCabe further says that the Dianists of the sixth and seventh centuries had gone and there were a few isolated executions of witches until the twelfth century; in the thirteenth century the swords of the troops and the fires of the Inquisition suppress heresy. (p. 25.) The blood-sucking night prowlers of ancient Greek and Roman belief—the night screech-owl was *strix*—*striga*, to the Church—for the imagined vampire; and a synod under Charlemagne in 785 condemned to death anyone for believing in it. The Lombard law treated the *striga* as non-existent. In 860 Archbishop Hincmar believed in magic as sheer devilry. In the tenth century Abbot Regino refers to wicked women seduced by the illusions and phantasms of the demons to believe that they ride with Diana long distances through the night: Bishop Burkhard follows the Abbot, adding the vampire idea. Pope Silvester II (999-1003) was accused of magic. Psellus, Greek orthodox writer of tenth century, in his *Operations of the Devils*, described the meetings of heretics as what are now known as witches' sabbaths, with their sexual orgies with devils appearing in the shape of animals, etc. In 1211, 1220, and 1233 other books about witches and devils appeared. In 1232 Pope Gregory IX put the Inquisition in charge of the Dominican monks to carry out the bloody examples set up by its great

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216). In 1233 Gregory IX wrote a letter urging the bishops of Germany to persecute the heretics, the letter endorsing the fables about toads as devils, kissing the black cat's buttocks, the usual sex orgies, etc. In 1275 is given "the earliest example of a witch burned to death after judicial sentence by an Inquisition." (C.E., XV, 676.) The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74), gave the Church a manual of devilry and gave details of sex intercourse between humans and incubi (male demons) and succabæ (female demons), and of other performances of witches. In 1320 Pope John XXII showed interest because of the black magic efforts of an archbishop and bishop to kill him. In 1390 the Paris Parliament had checked persecution by transferring trials to the civil courts, but the Church soon regained its control and made fierce use of it. Joan of Arc (1412-31) now canonised, was burned as a witch by the same Church. The fifteenth century had decrees by Pope Eugenius IV (1437) against the witch heresy, and by that Newgate gallery of Popes Alexander VI, Julius II, and Leo X. In 1471 Pope Sixtus IV reserved to the papacy the privilege of making and selling the wax models of limbs used as preventives against enchantments. "Pope after pope set the seal of his infallibility upon the bloody persecution. At length came Innocent VIII, who, on December 7, 1484, set forth his bull, *Summis Desiderantes*. Of all documents ever issued from Rome . . . this has doubtless, first and last, caused the greatest shedding of innocent blood." (A. D. White, I, 351.) That bull followed a report on witches by the German Inquisitors, Institor and Sprenger, who in 1486 compiled a manual, *Malleus Maleficarum* (Hammer of Witches), published 1489, with 13 editions up to 1520, its first two parts dealing with the reality of witchcraft as established by the Bible, and its third part giving practical rules for procedure.

"Witch trials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were for the most part in secular hands." (C.E. XV, 676.) In England under Henry VIII sorcery was a felony (1542), and death was the penalty for sorcery in 1563 under Elizabeth. James I of Britain ordered Reginald Scot's remarkable protest, *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), to be burned. In 1736 all acts against witchcraft were repealed in England and Scotland. The experiments of Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655) went far to discredit the superstition and influenced Colbert to over-ride a witchcraft decision (1670). B. Becker, in his treatise 1691, denied the reality of witchcraft and had to resign as preacher. "The Reformed Church in all its branches fully accepted the doctrines of witchcraft and diabolic possession, and developed them still further." (A. D. White, II, 114.) Secular sanity and the scientific method have left Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Beza, Casaubon, Cudworth, Wesley, Baxter, Blackstone, Hale, Coke, and their large company, in a gallery of religious, childish credulity doped in absurdity.

Mr. J. McCabe's *Little Book, No. 1132*, shows evidence of a cult of devil or sex worship and sex indulgence, away from the traditional description of witches. See article, "Black Mass," in his *Encyc.* (1948), p. 61. The case of Abbé Guibourg, 1678-9, is notorious, Mr. A. D. Howell Smith refers to it in his *Thou Art Peter* (1950): "The reality of the Black Mass has been questioned; but there is little doubt that it has existed, and perhaps it still exists obscurely. The apostate Abbé Guibourg, who celebrated the Black Mass over the naked body of Madame de Montespan, mistress of Louis XIV, was no naive pagan; on this occasion the blood of a sacrificed child was drunk from the chalice." (p. 87.)

GEORGE ROSS.

ACID DROPS

So the rite of Baptism is not yet finally settled! Is it a "sacrament" or is it not? The problem is still being discussed in *The Methodist Recorder* where recently the Rev. R. Brunskill pointed out that the Methodist Conference "sent back the statement on Baptism to the Faith and Order Committee because of its ambiguity and dangerous teaching." Except to give some Christians a much needed wash, of what earthly use is Baptism? Mr. Brunskill calls Roman and Anglo teaching on Baptism "a mixture of confused thinking and superstition." But isn't that the case with *all* Christianity, even the Methodist brand?

In championing Unitarianism in the *Inquirer*, Mr. J. Rowland refers to the "atheists or agnostics (who) join the fellowship of a Unitarian church" because they "despise the aridity of agnosticism." We would certainly like a little more information about this terrible "aridity" which sends complete unbelievers back into the arms of a God about whom they know literally nothing. Some of us find Unitarianism far more "arid" than even the Salvation Army—and that's saying a lot.

Trust a Scottish parson for grumbling about the way religion is *not* taught in schools. He claims, in fact, it is being "squeezed out" of schools. This parson—the Rev. W. Neil of Aberdeen University—wants a Biblical "specialist" in every secondary school and a "reasonable" number of similar teachers in all other schools. And the teacher must be "enthusiastic"! Mr. Neil should know that the days of miracles are past—how can any intelligent teacher be "enthusiastic" over the religion of the Bible?

We now have the "convinced" opinion of a Dr. W. Phillips that the Queen of Sheba really lived, though he has no information as to whether she was a "beauty." Dr. Phillips gives no *evidence* for his opinion and it looks as if he is following in the wake of the enthusiastic parson who, after making a trip to Mt. Ararat, came back to his enthusiastic congregation with a stone in his hand. "And," he said scornfully, "if anybody tells you he disbelieves in the story of the Flood, tell him you have actually seen a stone from Mt. Ararat!"

This "eminent" archaeologist, Dr. Phillips, is also convinced that "science will prove the truth of the stories in the Bible." There is optimism for you. Science will prove Elijah going to Heaven in a fiery chariot; Joshua stopping the sun; Jesus being carried about by a Devil; it is all very amusing—and pathetic. For if there is one thing certain, it is that science has completely smashed miracles and the supernatural. And that means the Bible.

In a leader, the *Church Times* does its utmost to blame the current juvenile delinquency to lack of religion but, of course, it recognises that this is far and away a too easy explanation. There are, in fact, many causes and, in any case, all children have religion forced down them, willy-nilly, at school. But neither the *Church Times* nor any other religious paper can answer the plain statement that most of the inhabitants of our prisons are believers and have their own special chaplains. And most child delinquents form, later on, our prison inhabitants.

Our Prime Minister wants "peace and reconstruction," so do the prime ministers of all other countries, but the world is being overloaded with weapons for war and des-

truction, it does not make sense, maybe the prime ministers have been wrongly reported, or not informed as to what is taking place.

The "Sunday School Chronicle" says, "the anti-gambling section of the Christian Churches has been having a bad time lately." Does that mean that the pro-gambling section of the Christian Churches has been having a good time lately? We take it that both sections have the support of Jesus.

Replying to complaints that religious talks follow "Music While You Work," etc., in B.B.C. broadcasts, the Rev. Maurice Dean (Head of Religious Broadcasting in the Midland Region, B.B.C.) says why shouldn't it be between the jazz and all the rest of it? Exactly; in fact, we can go one better and say, why not combine religion with jazz? Readers of *The Freethinker* would welcome broadcasts of jazz hymns, jazz sermons, and really funny spiritual gags. We guarantee such broadcasts would attract more listeners than many of the variety programmes. *The Freethinker* would help by giving publicity to those broadcasts.

A pious correspondent who refers to Coventry Cathedral adds the pertinent reminder that "the first person who suggested that money should be spent on 'social schemes' was Judas Iscariot." We have always had a sneaking suspicion that poor old Judas was a bit of a rationalist, and that this may have been the *real* reason why the Lord eventually caused him to "burst asunder."

Here's News! A new evangelical campaign has just been launched called "1951 Anglo-Catholic Progress." "The aim, in brief—one Church." Well, that is easily obtained; all they have to do is to "submit" to Rome and be received into the "one True Church." However, they are, apparently, looking in other directions. For, we are told, their leader, Fr. Petitpierre, "carries the assault to the very seat of Anglican orthodoxy, the Chapter House in Canterbury Cathedral," and nowadays Canterbury Cathedral appears nearer to Moscow than to Rome!

Robert Lewis, an American ex-airman, has entered a monastery in order to "recover his peace of mind." Who is Brother Lewis and what has he done to destroy his peace of mind? He was the American airman who, upon August 2, 1945, pressed the button that "released" the atomic bomb which destroyed Hiroshima. But what about the seventy thousand odd innocent victims of the bomb? Will Brother Lewis's belated conversion restore them to their loved ones? The whole thing strikes us as yet another example of Christian hypocrisy and lack of social feeling.

At the dinner at St. Ermine's Hotel, Westminster, which concluded the recent conference of the "Inter-planetary Society," the toast given was: "To the first orbital flight, to the first voyage to the moon, to the first voyage to Mars, to the first voyage to Alpha Centauri (the nearest star to the earth) and to the first voyage into extra Galactic space." At this rate of progress, the aerial navigators will probably overtake the Virgin Mary, with only an old-fashioned pair of wings to assist her, some time before she completes her Assumption into Heaven, and even our Lord may be beaten on the last lap.

"THE FREETHINKER"

41, Gray's Inn Road,
London, W.C. 1.
Telephone No.: Holborn 2601.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

THE FREETHINKER will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates (Home and Abroad): One year, 19s. 2d.; half-year, 9s. 7d.; three months, 4s. 11d.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. 1, and not to the Editor.

Will correspondents kindly note to address all communications in connection with "The Freethinker" to: "The Editor," and not to any particular person. Of course, private communications can be sent to any contributor.

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

Correspondents are requested to write on one side of the paper only and to make their letters as brief as possible.

Lecture Notices should reach the Office by Friday morning.

SUGAR PLUMS

All over the country, Freethinkers should take full advantage for questioning candidates for Parliament on the question of Secular Education, on the spending of 8½ million pounds of public money on restoring war-damaged churches after allowing the churches free insurance under the War Damage Act, 1941, on the interference with the private opinions of citizens. Remember, in questioning the candidate, you are enlightening members of his audience on many matters.

The cost of running indoor lectures is well in line with the general steep rise in prices. It is the more commendable therefore that Manchester, Nottingham, Bradford, Birmingham, South London and Lewisham, and West London Branches, N.S.S. have prepared attractive lists and no doubt other Branches will follow. All Freethinkers within range owe it to the Branches and to the movement to give every possible support and encouragement. Those unable to attend but ready to give some financial help can obtain the name and address of the local secretary from the Head Office, 41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. 1. There is inspiration in the feeling that one is connected with and helping such a grand movement as Freethought.

As an example of the excellent way in which our Branch Secretaries are getting up a syllabus, here is the one which the West London Branch has got together. First Session, 1951. October 7: "Lecture on the Culture of the Abdomen"—Illustrated with Abdominal Exercises, and an Exhibition of Native Dances. F. A. Hornibrook (N.S.S.), October 14: "The Contribution of Christianity." Good or Bad?—Debate. T. Sargent, L. Ebury (N.S.S.). October 21: "Some Recent Banned Books." Alec Craig (Author of "The Banned Books of England.") October 28: "Vivisection and Animal Rights." The Rev. W. I. Piggott London and Provincial Anti-Vivisection Society. November 4: "Science and Free Thinking." Dr. R. L. Worrall. November 11: "Rationalism and Politics." E. W. Shaw, B.Sc., A.I.Q.S., M.I.C.W.A. (N.S.S.). November 18: "Humbug in Modern Education." Victor E. Neuburg (R.P.A.) November 25: "Thomas Paine." Adrian Brunel (Founder of The British Thomas Paine Society). December 2: "The Play of Ideas." Peter Cotes (Director of the New Bolton Theatre). December 9: "Shakespeare or Shaw." Bonar Thompson (The Famous Hyde Park Orator). December 16: "Has Religion a Future?" F. A. Ridley (Editor of *The Freethinker*). Freethought Literature on sale at all meetings.

The Freethinker Fund

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To find space for the numerous articles awaiting publication we shall acknowledge all contributions by post instead of printing lists.

is now open

If any readers of *The Freethinker* resident in or near London, wish to spend a pleasant and instructive afternoon, they would be well advised to look in at the *Whitechapel Art Gallery*, High Street, E.1. For many years past, this famous East End repository of culture has been noted for the variety and artistic excellence of its exhibitions. Some readers may, for example, recollect the fine collection of late Venetian art displayed there last year. Now, another less "high brow" but perhaps to English people even more interesting exhibition is on view until October 6. Under the picturesque title of "Black Eyes and Lemonade"—the title is taken from a poem by Thomas Moore—"a Festival of Britain exhibition of British popular and traditional art" is on view. This accurate and many-sided reflection of English popular life and manners is of absorbing interest particularly as the organiser, Miss Barbara Jones, states in the introduction to the catalogue: "The things in this exhibition are seldom found in museums and galleries." They indeed range from rocking-horses to wax models and prints of the New Jerusalem. The Whitechapel Art Gallery is open week-days—Monday excepted—from 11-6. Sunday 2-6. In our "century of the common man" "Black Eyes and Lemonade" should interest all progressively-minded people.

EVOLUTION DENIED

THROUGH the kindness of readers, we have been able to learn of the attack on the theory of evolution by the Rev. E. K. Victor Pearce, the Rector of Bucknall, in Nottingham. Nobody should be surprised that, even in these days, many of our very earnest Christian friends have not yet managed to swallow an uncomfortable theory which, to put it mildly, annihilates Christian claims. Let there be no doubt on this point. It is true that "broad-minded" Christians and Modernists and half unbelievers and indifferent Christians profess readily to subscribe to the theory of evolution—even if they have to admit that, in thus evolving man from some slimy denizen in primeval seas, the Lord has piled mystery upon mystery; or in other words, the Lord's ways are not our ways. But your true-blood believer—and he does exist—knows perfectly well that evolution and Christianity are deadly enemies. He knows that the most terrible blow ever inflicted on God and his religion was the publication of Darwin's classic work, *The Origin of Species*. And this, in spite of the way the great naturalist kow-towed to a God in its last pages.

And just here it may be as well to pull up those perfectly dishonest Christians who, having swallowed evolution, insist that Darwin at least believed in God, if not altogether in the Christian faith, and who arrogantly cite the *Origin* as proof and go no further. Darwin was certainly a Theist—this is not surprising when one reflects that he was brought up to be a clergyman—up to about

the age of 50; but from then onwards he began to believe less and less until, in his *Autobiography*, he declared, "The mystery of the beginning of all things is insoluble by us; and I for one must be content to remain an Agnostic." This passage, and many more or less similar passages, will be found in the standard biography of Darwin written by his son, Francis Darwin; and there it is made clear why he preferred the word "Agnostic" to the "Atheist"—it was simply that he did not like to be "aggressive." But as far as any *logical* meaning can be deduced from his references to his disbelief, Darwin was as much an Atheist as Bradlaugh.

To revert to Mr. Pearce, we must congratulate him on his courage—for it requires a great deal of courage to proclaim that you do not believe in evolution. It requires just as much courage to say that the earth is flat, and that the Sun goes round it even though you can triumphantly point to the undeniable "fact" that you can *see* the Sun move. And considering what we know about the thousand millions of stars in the heavens, some of them being perhaps a million times bigger than the Sun, it requires courage to affirm that you believe Holy Writ when it says that God "made the stars also." The question for Freethinkers is whether it is now really worth while to answer people like Mr. Pearce, or even to answer a fool according to his folly.

He insists that evolution is "bolstered up by a few scraps of evidence" and he has a right of course to demand evidence. We demand evidence when he puts forward the Virgin birth, a serpent speaking perfect Hebrew, a Devil scurrying across the sky with the Son of God desperately clinging to his tail, Elijah flying upwards to join Jehovah in Heaven, an angel—that is, a *real* angel—appearing to somebody in a dream, and a host of dead Jewish saints waiting courteously for Jesus to rise from his tomb before getting out of their own tombs and rejoining their friends in their former towns and villages. We never get any evidence for these, yet Mr. Pearce, week after week, year in and year out, regales his flock with such delectable histories as if they were quite true. And no doubt he gets quite angry if they are questioned.

It is of course, quite impossible to produce all the "stages" inferred by Evolutionists through which the being we now call Man had to evolve. It must have taken 1,000 millions of years at least, and for the primitive gaseous mass to become our earth as we know it now might well have taken many thousands of millions of years. The great antiquity of our rocks has been studied by geologists and now they are almost unanimous in agreeing that it has taken an almost immeasurable time to form our earth, and that for something like half that time life in some form or other was gradually evolving.

In the books written by competent scientists who have devoted their lives to studying the evidence, will be found the details which have confirmed their belief. Far from there being "a few scraps of evidence" the facts are overwhelming—but naturally these facts are not "mathematical." So overwhelming are they indeed that, at the Festival of Britain, evolution is taken for granted—as it is, of course, by very nearly all the scientists in the world.

People like Mr. Douglas Dewar and his Genesis-minded friends are just ignored, exactly as the flat-earthists are ignored. Scientists have no time for downright stupidity. Even among the religious organisers of the Festival of Britain, anti-evolutionists had to be pushed on one side. The Pearces were very much in evidence against Darwin and, even before Darwin, against his grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, against Lamarck and against Robert

Chambers, whose remarkable work, *Vestiges of Creation*, is practically forgotten these days though it preached evolution as far back as 1844.

One of Mr. Pearce's "unanswerable" arguments is that Evolutionists have had to bolster up their case with deliberate fraud—most of us know to what he was referring, the so-called forgeries of Haeckel—but even if this were true (and it is an unblushing lie) it can have no bearing whatever on the facts of the case. Even if Darwin's "natural selection" were proved to have no foundation, the theory of evolution, however it came about, would stand fast for it is the only one which can answer the "riddle" of the Universe, the only one which can fit the facts of the case. It would be safe to say that, apart from the all-believing Christians, there is not a professor of science in the world who does not believe in evolution and they would scornfully refuse to discuss the question with religious fossils like Mr. Pearce, and the still sillier fossils who have rallied to his support in the columns of the *Evening Sentinel*, giving proof in nearly every case of an appalling lack of knowledge.

If any reader is influenced in the least by these ignorant anti-Evolutionists he should forthwith hie him to the nearest public library and get one of the many excellent works on the subject which he will find on its shelves. He will be almost sure to find an answer to all his doubts. Or let him read the article on Evolution in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or *Chambers*. In a short article in these columns it is quite impossible to touch even a fringe of the case.

One last word. Do not be inveigled into a discussion as to where is the beast from which our spiders were evolved, or a bumble bee, or even a tapeworm. All that matters is *Man*; for if he was evolved then the Christian religion is just so much twaddle.

H. CUTNER.

BIRD IN HAND

Earth could be Eden, let sunshine pervade it—
Why damp and dim it, deciding who made it?

Life's full of wonders, of learning and love,
Why waste it, arguing who sits above?

Youth can be Paradise, happy its hours,
Why spoil it, cringing to Heavenly powers?

There's a Treasury of Touch in Life's lovely scene,
Why grasp, instead, at a storehouse unseen?

There are tasks all can tackle, in setting things right,
Why work at worship, with no end in sight?

There are marvels and miracles, all thro' life's span
Unheeded, while pondering a purpose and plan.

Live, laugh and love, without abject apology,
Why drown delight with droning Doxology?

There's a world in a wisp, and a sun in a star,
Beauties we miss, seeking fancies afar.

ARTHUR E. CARPENTER.

CORRESPONDENCE

AN APPRECIATION

SIR,—Please find herewith £1 towards "The Freethinker" Fund. I wish I could do more. Hearty appreciation of the high standard of your writings.—Yours, etc.,

J. G. BURDON.

THE MEANINGS OF "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—I am writing from Paris, I have seen the very lengthy and very long rejoinder of Mr. Yates to my articles on Shaw. I can think your readers are interested in ill-natured personalities. Evidently I am not. Mr. Yates has dragged this controversy to a low plane of childishness and triviality on which I cannot follow. But there is one matter over which he is rude (and rash) enough to accuse me of "bluffing" (i.e., deliberately deceiving) *Freethinker* readers. Therefore, he challenges me to cite "any passage" from the works of Dean Swift, Gray, Thackeray, Lord Morley, where the word "Freethinker" is used in a wider sense than its specific anti-religious one.

Very well. I can easily cite not one passage but several. Perhaps the first two may serve to doubly-discredit Mr. Yates. Swift, in *The Sentimental Church of England Man*, in 1708, puts "libertines" as well as "atheists and despisers of Religion" amongst his category "of those who usually pass under the name of Freethinkers." (This is freethinking in morals as well as religion.)

As to Thackeray, from his best known book alone, *Vanity Fair*, there is the famous Sir Pitt Crawley who is "inclined to be a sad Freethinker on those points," the points being crops, corn-laws and politics. And what about Miss Crawley with "her shocking freethinking ways" and her "free notions" about morals *à la Voltaire*? Clearly Thackeray recognised Freethinkers in Agriculture, Politics, Morals and women's ways as well as in Religion.

As to Lord Morley: your readers will probably know Lord Morley's famous declaration in 1874 that "The Modern Freethinker does not attack Christianity, he explains it," which is repeated in *On Compromise*.

Gray, of course, contrasted the "mode of freethinking" with "the mode of not thinking at all."

I believe the first time the word "Freethinker" appears in any English book was in 1692 in Smith's *The Religious Impostor*. Freethinkers are there described as the "new Religious Fraternity of Freethinkers."

Mr. Yates is foolish to assert that the "original signification" of "Freethinker" was one who denies the doctrines of Christianity." As he himself says, the first Freethinkers were deists. Belief in God is a vital part of Christianity.

Surely it is a serious charge to bring (on no evidence at all) against any writer that he misuses names of dead writers to deceive his readers. Perhaps Mr. Yates may now think that he should withdraw his accusation and apologise—not to me who desire none—but to your readers for placing before them a quite untrue and utterly unfounded accusation arising merely from his own ignorance of the authors in question.—Yours, etc.,

C. G. L. DU CANN.

ISLAM

SIR,—In the article on this creed by "F. A. R." in *The Freethinker* of September 16, the writer omits an important point in Muslim ethics, viz., that it is forbidden to lend money out at interest. This strikes at the very roots of our economic system and will probably cause Islam to survive long after Christianity is dead and buried.—Yours, etc.

R. G. ABBOTT.

[Our correspondent should consult M. G. Demombynes *Islamic Institutions*, p. 190, where he will learn how this economic prohibition of usury is honoured in the breach rather than in the observance.—EDITOR.]

CHARLES DICKENS

SIR,—Not for worlds would I enter into a discussion with Mr. Owen. He has every right to his opinion as I have to mine. There are people who prefer the late Charles Coburn singing "Come where the booze is cheaper" to a symphony concert. I don't, and I frankly prefer Rembrandt and Michael Angelo to Picasso and Henry Moore—a million times.

I think Charles Dickens one of the greatest creative artists who ever lived, and his *Pickwick Papers* a world masterpiece. It never bores me and I have read it over and over again. And I am delighted that he "exaggerated" in drawing his characters. Had they been literally true to life, they would have been bores.—Yours, etc.,

H. CUTNER.

THE COMMON INFORMER

SIR,—Our attention has been drawn to a paragraph in your issue of the 16th instant. You state therein that supporters of the Lord's Day Observance Society are "bemoaning the hard lot of Christian informers." You go on to say that "these gentlemen and ladies who made a fine living as Common Informer, always ready to scotch any Sunday enterprise for money, are now completely wiped off the map."

As I take it your policy is to keep rigidly to the truth in your columns, you will appreciate a small correction. There is no gnashing of teeth, dressing in sackcloth and ashes and bemoaning, in the circles of the Lord's Day Observance Society and its supporters, because of the Act of Parliament abolishing Common Informers.

On the contrary, we welcome this new Act and have done nothing whatsoever to oppose its passage through Parliament.

The Lord's Day Observance Society has never acted as Common Informer, has never paid, or employed, or encouraged any person whatsoever to take such action.

Perhaps you will very kindly give publicity in your paper to these facts and in the future kindly ascertain the truth before printing assumptions for which there is no ground whatsoever.—Yours, etc.,

HAROLD J. W. LEGERTON,

Assistant Secretary.

[We must point out that our "Acid Drop" never referred to the Lord's Day Observance Society.—EDITOR.]

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

Report of Executive Meeting, September 20, 1951

The President, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, in the chair. Also present, Messrs. Griffiths, A. C. Rosetti, Ridlev, Hornibrook, Morris, Shaw, Ebury, Woodley, Johnson, Cleaver, Corstorphine, Barker.

Minutes of previous meeting read and accepted. Financial Statement presented. New members were admitted to Manchester, North London Branches, and to the Parent Society.

Progress was reported in the Executive's action over the refusal to grant a certificate for marriage under the Marriage Act, 1949, to a member of the N.S.S. The Executive has received an assurance that the offending anomaly in the Act will be brought to the notice of the Royal Commission on Marriage.

A report from the Nottingham Branch revealed prompt action taken over the sale of land to churches at reduced prices, with further inquiries to be made.

Lecture arrangements for the indoor season were decided for Manchester, Nottingham, and Bradford Branches. Lecture reports were received from Messrs. Brighton, Clayton, Ridley, and from the Nottingham Branch N.S.S.

Merseyside Branch N.S.S. reported on the recent trouble over meetings held on a bombed site in Liverpool and the fines imposed on those who were arrested.

Messrs. Ridley, Griffiths, Shaw, Ebury, and Johnson were appointed as a sub-committee to inquire into ways and means for encouraging suitable speakers for the N.S.S. platform.

Instructions given for further efforts to be made to get clerical representatives to take part in a Brains Trust in Conway Hall.

The next meeting of the Executive was fixed for Thursday, October 11, and the proceedings closed.

JOHN SEIBERT, General Secretary.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

OUTDOOR

Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Broadway Car Park).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. H. DAY.

Blackburn Branch N.S.S. (Market Place).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON.

J. CLAYTON'S Lecture Engagements: Oswaldtwistle, Friday, September 28, 7-30 p.m.; Enfield, Saturday, September 29, 6 p.m.

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

Manchester Branch N.S.S. (St. Mary's Gate, Blitzed Site).—Lunch-hour Lectures every weekday, 1 p.m., Platt Fields, Sunday, 3 p.m. Speakers: C. MCCALL, G. WOODCOCK and R. BILLING.

North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, 12 noon: Debate, "Christianity, For and Against." Pro, Mr. ROBBINS (Church of England Lay Reader). Con, Mr. L. EBURY (N.S.S.).

Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Saturday, September 29, 7 p.m.: Mr. A. ELSMERE.

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

South London and Lewisham Branch N.S.S. (Brockwell Park, Herne Hill).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. J. WEDGEWOOD (Leader of Tory Opposition on the Battersea Council), "The Pathetic Fallacy of Doctrinaire Socialism."

West London Branch N.S.S. (Hyde Park, Marble Arch).—Sunday, 4 p.m.: Mr. C. E. WOOD.

INDOOR

Birmingham Branch N.S.S. (Sati's Cafe), 40, Cannon Street.—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. TOM MOSLEY, "What do Unbelievers Believe?"

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, September 30, 11 a.m.: Prof. T. H. PEAR, M.A., B.Sc., "On Being a Foreigner."

PERSONAL.—Vegetarian single lady; small income; offers semi-detached country cottage; low rent; congenial person. Particulars: Pollard, Nadderwater, Exeter, Devon.

E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS—FREETHINKER

THE accidental death of E. Haldeman-Julius in the swimming pool at his home in Girard, Kansas last July 31—the day after his sixty-second birthday—is a calamitous loss to the cause of Freethought. He was a prolific and indefatigable worker, and published and sold more books propagating the cause of Freethought and humanitarianism than anyone who has ever lived. His personal writings, largely in the same field, were encyclopædic in their scope and volume, his annual literary output running into the millions of words. A dynamic personality, a virtual geyser of productiveness, he was at the same time a simple, unpretentious man, a delightful companion among like-minded people, and numbered among his friends and admirers the outstanding Freethinkers, rationalists and dissidents in various fields throughout this country and abroad.

Emanuel Julius was born on July 30, 1889, on the north side of Philadelphia, the son of David and Elizabeth (Zamost) Julius. The father was a bookbinder who struggled for a living for himself and his family, and there was never any margin of security. Emanuel's schooling was elementary, and in his early teens he left home to earn his living and to acquire the education for which he craved. Possessed of a fine memory, an insatiable desire for reading, a critical mind that readily detected a sham, and an innate sympathy for the under-dog, he naturally became a radical politically and a dissenter in the realm of religion. He was influenced early by reading the works of Voltaire, Thomas Paine, Robert Ingersoll and Mark Twain, among other iconoclasts.

In his early years, following the advice of Horace Greely, he went West. Before he was twenty he owned and edited, in a minor way, a magazine, *The Western Comrade*. As he had no capital, this venture was short lived, but he gained some experience. It whetted his appetite for journalism. After doing some newspaper work in various parts of the country he finally arrived in New York, that Mecca of all aspiring newsmen. Around the beginning of the first world war he joined the staff of *The New York Call*, the Socialist daily of that period, and served successively in the capacity of reporter, special writer, book reviewer and eventually became editor of the Sunday Magazine supplement, at which time the present writer first came in contact with him.

The little town of Girard, Kansas, had been the home of a Socialist weekly of large national circulation, *The Appeal to Reason*, published by J. A. Wayland. Among the contributors to this publication were Eugene V. Debs—four times Socialist candidate for President, Fred Warren, Allan Benson, Socialist candidate for President in 1916, and most of the other well known Socialists of that period.

About 1916, Wayland induced Lewis Copeland, then on the editorial staff of *The New York Call*, to come to Girard and help edit *The Appeal*. Soon after, Copeland sent for his colleague Julius, and as Wayland was in poor health, the two young Socialist editors took over and finally bought out the Wayland interests. Early in 1919, they began publishing the Little Blue Books from titles in the public domain, of which Paine's "Age of Reason" was No. 4 on the list. From this small nucleus grew one of the most significant ventures in the history of book publishing. Within ten years the series had expanded to well over a thousand titles, many of them written to order by authors from various parts of the world, and included H. G. Wells, Joseph McCabe, Bertrand Russell, Will Durant, Clarence Darrow, Upton Sinclair, Clement Wood, Maynard Shipley

and the undersigned, among many others. Within ten years over one hundred million copies of the Little Blue Books had been sold in all parts of the world. In the span of thirty years the titles published had exceeded 1000 and the total sales were over 300 million. These figures, amazing as they are, do not tell the whole story of Haldeman-Julius' influence, as they do not include the magazines of large circulation he had published constantly throughout his thirty-five years at Girard. It may be recalled that Will Durant's "The Story of Philosophy," which enjoyed a phenomenal sale in the 1920's as a five dollar book was first published in the Little Blue Book Series, each chapter to a book, and were written especially for Haldeman-Julius.

On June 1, 1916, Emanuel married a local Girard girl, Marcet Haldeman who, incidentally, was the niece of Jane Addams, the famous social worker of Hull House, Chicago. The marriage resulted in a merger of names, Haldeman being prefixed to Julius, and under the hyphenated name, the combination of man and wife not only conducted their successful business, but also collaborated in writing a number of novels and other books. Marcet died in 1941.

The shadow of personal tragedy seems to have cast its spell over the Girard enterprise in that Emanuel, the founder, died a violent death; Lewis Copeland, who next came on the scene and had a substantial share in the early development of the work, was killed in an airplane accident in Texas in December, 1949. Marcet passed away in the prime of life from the scourge of cancer, and lastly Emanuel died by drowning at the age of 62 at the very height of his productiveness.

Haldeman-Julius published and edited at the time of his death *The American Freeman*, and *Critic and Guide*, monthly periodicals. Among the magazines which he had published in the past, since discontinued were *The Haldeman-Julius Monthly*, *The Haldeman-Julius Quarterly*, *Life and Letters* and *Know Thyself* (co-editor with William J. Fielding).

He was the author of "The Color of Life," "Dust" (novel, with wife), "Literary Essays," "Studies in Rationalism," "Culture and its Modern Aspects," "Iconoclastic Literary Reactions," "To-day's Persons and Personalities," "An Agnostic Looks at Life," "Free Speech and Free Thought in America," "Myths and Myth-Makers," "Snapshots of Modern Life," "Sane and Sensible Views of Life," "The First Hundred Million," "The Outline of Bunk," "The Big American Parade," "Violence" (novel, with wife), two volumes of short stories (with wife) "The World's Great Isms," "How to Become a Writer," "What Can a Freeman Believe?" and editor of numerous volumes of Americana as well as the Little Blue Books and Big Blue Books.

Haldeman-Julius is survived by his second wife, Sue, and his children Alice and Henry. As one who had close personal and business ties with Emanuel for over thirty years, I feel the loss of a dear friend and an always considerate and appreciative publisher.

WILLIAM J. FIELDING.

(Reprinted from *Common Sense*.)

INFIDEL DEATHBEDS. By G. W. Foote. Revised and enlarged by A. D. McLaren. Price 3s.; postage 3d.

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, An Anthology for Freethinkers. By William Kent. Price, cloth 6s., paper 4s. 3d.; postage 3d.

MATERIALISM RESTATED. Fourth edition. By Chapman Cohen. Price 5s. 3d.; postage 3d.