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VIEWS AND OPINIONS

God Save the King

FLETCHER of Saltoun, a famous Scottish republican politician and political philosopher of the seventeenth century, once went on record with the historic remark: "Let me make the peoples' songs and let who will then make their laws."

We have been reminded of the above remark during the past few weeks, particularly as we have received several inquiries regarding the origin of our official national anthem, *God Save the King*. We all know who "God" is—or do we? But there seems to be much uncertainty, even amongst the people who sing it so habitually and lustily, as to what "King" "God" was originally invoked to "save," and from whose "knaveish tricks" the good Lord was beseeched to deliver His Majesty. Nor is our national anthem the only song with a history. For since Fletcher of Saltoun's day, several famous songs have been written and sung which fully justify the historical importance which the old Scottish republican ascribed to them in his acute observation cited above.

Perhaps the first and, probably the most immediately influential of English political songs, though now long since forgotten along with the political and religious crisis that produced it, was the anonymous ballad, *Lilliburlero*, written early in 1688 and which became the "theme song" of "The Glorious Revolution" of that famous year: an unofficial but extremely effective "theme song" which, or so a contemporary declared, "whistled King James off the throne of three Kingdoms." The event which provoked the astonishing vogue of this in itself insignificant ballad, was the arrival of an Irish Catholic army, at the King's orders, on Hounslow Heath, universally believed by James' Protestant subjects to be part of a deep laid plot simultaneously to restore the Roman Catholic Church and absolute monarchy. *Lilliburlero* informed its hearers that, "there's an army coming without any shoes" and, after conjuring up this grisly advent of the Hibernian savages, come to restore the Pope and the fires of Smithfield, called lustily on all good Protestants to "hang 'em up high."

Lilliburlero, however, only ran for a brief Indian summer. But there quickly followed the 18th century, a century of famous English—and Scottish—songs. Here, lack of space reluctantly keeps us south of the Border.

Several of these songs are still household words. The first, of unknown date, though early in the 18th century, and of anonymous authorship, is the still famous *Vicar of Bray*, the "potted" biography of that model perpetual pensioner, that smug evergreen "yes-man," the only too representative Anglican vicar who summarised—and survived!—the kaleidoscopic political and ecclesiastical revolutions and counter-revolutions which alternately filled the years between the reigns of Charles the Second and George the First. Like a golden thread, there runs through the chequered story the central and recurring theme:

"For Kings may come and Kings may go,
But I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir."

We now approach the generation of our national anthems, both official and unofficial.

Upon August 1, 1740, the Prince of Wales attended the production of a patriotic play, *Alfred*, of composite authorship. The play itself has long been forgotten but one of its authors was the Scottish poet, James Thomson, author of the once-famous poem, *The Seasons*. *Alfred* contained a song by Thomson which has long survived *The Seasons*—all of them! its title—and its theme—was *Rule Britannia*.

The song of the Scottish author took on; since *Rule Britannia* fitted the times and the then mood of the British people like the proverbial glove, for Britain was then on the very eve of that astonishing maritime and industrial expansion which was shortly destined to transform the hitherto insignificant North Sea island into the "workshop"—and mistress of the world. For *Rule Britannia*, the work of a Calvinistic Scot, is essentially a hymn, and a predestinarian hymn, the hymn of a nation predestined to Empire.

"The nations not so blest as Thou,
Shalt in their turn to tyrants fall,
But Thou shall flourish great and free,
The pride and envy of them all."

No one but a fervent believer in the twin Calvinistic dogmas of Predestination and the Divine Election of nations and of individuals could have written that. As the present writer has elsewhere remarked: "the pen may have been that of James Thomson, but the voice behind *Rule Britannia* is the authentic voice of John Calvin."

Rule Britannia for the part two centuries has always been the unofficial national anthem of Great Britain, the inspired summary, written in advance, of its modern world-expansion.

The *official* national anthem of Britain, however, never became Thomson's masterpiece. This supreme distinction was, rather ironically—since it is a far more insignificant production from every point of view—reserved for a song which appeared five years after *Rule Britannia*. *God Save the King* first appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in October, 1745. Its exact date of composition is unknown, as is also its authorship, which was probably composite, though Henry Carey is usually regarded as, at least, its final editor.

Like its predecessors, *God Save the King* fitted the times exactly. For at the precise moment when it first appeared in print, the reigning monarch, King George the Second (1727-60) was in the most urgent need of all the Divine assistance that he, his dynasty, and the entire Protestant regime which he represented could get. For "the 45," the famous Jacobite rebellion, was in full swing: Charles Edward, the Stuart "Young Pretender," had landed in Scotland like a bolt from the blue with only seven companions, had over-run the northern realm in a few weeks

and had beaten the Royal army at Prestonpans in half an hour. Now, at the very time *God Save the King* first saw the light, the Stuart army was marching on London, the Royal Family were packing up to return to Hanover, and the Bank of England was paying out in sixpences in order to avoid being ruined by the panic-struck "run on the bank."

Under such alarming circumstances, it seemed clear that, if "God" did not "save the King," no one else was likely to be able to do so.

That it was not on account of any abstract piety that the aid of the Deity was so urgently invoked, is clear from the final stanza of the original version, which has, of course, long since disappeared from our current text. This stanza ran as follows:—

"Lord, grant that Marshal Wade
May by Thy mighty aid,
Deliverance bring.
May he sedition hush
And like a torrent rush,
Rebellious Scots to crush;
God save the King."

The sequel indicated that God heard, and answered the petition on behalf of the pious Protestant King and our present dynasty. For "Bonnie Prince Charlie" inexplicably turned back at Derby, just when victory seemed within his imminent grasp. And though the Hanoverian Commander, Marshal Wade, did not fulfil the invocation made on his behalf, his successor, the Duke of Cumberland, finally crushed the Jacobite rising and movement on Culloden Moor (May, 16, 1746), and thus saved the British throne for George the Second and, ultimately, for his descendant, its present occupant.

It will be seen from the above, that whilst England has never produced a world-famous ideological battle-song like the *Marseillaise*, the international anthem of militant Democracy, or *The Internationale*, the anthem of militant international Socialism, yet the great English songs represent and illustrate important landmarks in the chequered annals of "Our Island Story."

F. A. RIDLEY.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS DEBUNKED

THE Pilgrim Fathers, the name given to the English migrants who left England in 1620 in the ships "Mayflower" and "Speedwell," numbered 74 men and 28 women. By the number of Americans, especially of the well-to-do class, who claim descent from the Pilgrims, they evidently bred like rabbits as their descendants must, by now, have reached over a million.

The Americans are not unique in this class of snobbery. It is the proud boast of many English titled families that they can trace their descent to the time of the Norman Conquest. Why anybody wants to swank that they can trace their pedigree from William and his gang of Norman robbers and freebooters, is one of those things that just passes comprehension.

What manner of people were these Pilgrims? Colonel Ingersoll said that on such and such a date the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock and it would have been a good thing if the Rock had landed on the Pilgrim Fathers.

These English settlers left their homeland to avoid religious persecution, but no sooner were they settled in their adopted country than they put into force the same intolerance and persecution against any who differed from them (especially the Quakers) that they themselves had suffered in their native land.

Cape Cod, the peninsular on which the Pilgrims landed, is part of the State of Massachusetts and the new settlers gave to the towns names of those in the country from which they had fled—Barnstable, Chatham, Harwich, Falmouth, Truro, Eastham, Yarmouth, Sandwich, etc. As the centuries passed, a legend, mostly false like legends generally are, grew up round the Puritans that they were people of deep religious convictions who led austere and blameless lives, but when we examine the evidence, we will find that the Pilgrims could, and did drop the Holy Mantle and become intensely human.

The *Cape Cod Guide*, a very interesting weekly magazine, devotes many of its pages to the early Colonial days. Here are some extracts taken from its pages:—

THE MEANING CHANGES

"In the popular mind the word 'Puritan' conjures up visions of a stern, religiously rigid, proper and prim people with a pretty sour outlook on life. It is true that the Puritans worked hard and took themselves seriously. But it is not true that the Puritans' life was all work and no play.

Fanatics like the Rev. Cotton Mather have given the Puritan his reputation. But they weren't all like that. Puritans could and did behave quite humanly, and even countenanced activities which we to-day wouldn't consider 'proper.'

For instance, 'bundling,' although condemned by many, was practised by the colonists of Massachusetts Bay. Imagine respectable parents to-day inviting a young man into the bedroom to 'bundle' with their daughter!

Drinking, contrary to most beliefs, was common, and a variety of beverages served to our proper forebears, would credit the wine list of the most exclusive of to-day's night clubs. There was cider, which even children drank; Charles Francis Adams says that 'to the end of John Adam's life a large tankard of hard cider was his morning draught before breakfast.'

And that famous 'New England Rum,' a potent, fiery beverage; Burke says: 'The quantity of spirits which they distill in Boston from the molasses they import, is as surprising as the cheapness with which they sell it . . . but they are more famous for the quantity and cheapness than for the excellency of their rum.'

Whatever the modern Puritan may think of the evils of alcohol, the Pilgrim Fathers regarded it as a necessity. Quoting from the magazine:—

"With the Puritans' arrival in this land came the use of alcoholic drinks. With them, the use of intoxicants had always been a custom. They saw no harm in their use; indeed they considered liquor a necessity of life, and when they came here they saw to it that a plentiful supply followed them . . . but, aside from their personal customs the Puritans had an eye to the liquor traffic as a profitable as well as an honourable one. They formed The Massachusetts Company as a commercial enterprise and the records show that mercenary considerations ranked high in their councils.

However, it is equally true that hardly had they obtained a foothold in their new home than they were obliged to take drastic steps against the misuse of a product which, though profitable, was already causing much trouble, especially in their relations with the Indians."

NOT ALL ANGELS

"All the records show that the Pilgrims were no better or no worse than other people. At nearly every court session fines were imposed for drunkenness and idleness (yes, it was a sin to be idle in those days).

One, Daniel Clark, had to pay 40s. for being drunk; and John Wedgwood was placed in stocks because he kept company with drunkards . . . then there was Thomas Petit—three charges against him—drunkenness, idleness and slander! He was kept in 'the hold' and flogged in front of all his friends."

Apparently the colonists added considerably to their revenue by fining for all kinds of things.

F. A. HORNIBROOK.

(To be concluded)

A COPERNICAN FALLACY

SURELY there could not be a greater affront to the memory of Copernicus or a worse travesty of the facts than to repeat the fallacy that he delayed publication of his book *De Revolutionibus* because he feared persecution by the Church. There is no evidence for this, while there is conclusive evidence against it.

It was not persecution, but ridicule, that Copernicus really dreaded. He had been satirised on the stage in 1531 near Frauenberg; Martin Luther, too, had called him "a fool who wanted to overturn the whole science of astronomy." It is known that Copernicus felt this ridicule very acutely, and in his dedicatory letter to the Pope prefaced to *De Revolutionibus*, he makes it clear that such reasons as these caused him to delay publication. "When I considered how *absurd* my doctrine would appear, I long hesitated whether I should publish . . .", he wrote. And he concluded . . . "If there be some who, though ignorant of all mathematics take upon themselves to judge of these, and dare to reprove this book because of some passage of Scripture which they have miserably warped to their purpose, I regard them not and even despise their rash judgment. . . ." That defiant and fearless passage in itself proves Copernicus was not afraid of persecution.

What he realised vividly was how *incredible* his doctrine of a "stationary" earth moving would appear to religious people of narrow prejudices and no knowledge of astronomy. The only way to combat continued ridicule of his views was to substantiate his theory with corroborative evidence. And so he delayed giving his views to the world in the hope of collecting such evidence. It was the peril to his theory and not the peril to his life that caused him to delay publication.

Oliver Lodge appreciates this fact when he writes in *Pioneers of Science*: . . . "It was not dread of the consequences to religious 'truth' that led Copernicus to delay publication of scientific truth. . . ."

It is too often overlooked that the very nature of Copernicus's task prevented prompt publication. The mathematical astronomy entailed was a work of many years. One of his tasks was gradually to compile a table of planetary motions constructed up to that time. But his retention of the ancient notion of uniform circular motion for the planets impaired his work, involving as it did the use of the cumbersome epicyclical machinery. Actually many years passed during which he hoped to investigate the whole idea of abolishing epicycles altogether.

Added to this, several objections in his theory of a minor character occurred to him which could not be met without more accurate and detailed measurements—again necessitating time. It is known that certain anomalies in his results worried Copernicus, and this in itself was sufficient to restrain him from rushing into print. It took

him at least 30 years to elaborate his theory, but he never did in fact perfect it, as he lacked the necessary equipment.

Apart from astronomical considerations the pressure of other affairs contributed to delay the exhaustive analysis needed to improve his theory. Though he was persuaded to publish by many friends, including bishops, it took many years of earnest persuasion before reluctant permission to publish was drawn from Copernicus. Even when he had completed his MS., with his conclusions arrived at up to the time of writing, he was still held back because he alone knew only too well that his work required still further revision. He was not so cock-sure of all the small details that he was willing to chance placing his work prematurely before the world.

An account of Copernicus's system was issued under the title *Narratio Prima de Libris Revolutionum*, and *Everyman's Encyclopedia* makes this significant comment: "The resulting *ridicule* being less than Copernicus feared, he consented to publish the complete *De Revolutionibus*." "There was no question of persecution," an admirable summing up of the fact that it was *ridicule* and not persecution that was the consideration with Copernicus.

In 1597 Galileo confirmed in a letter to Kepler that ridicule was Copernicus's bugbear. He wrote: "I have for many years been an adherent of the Copernican system, and though I have collected many arguments in its favour, I have not brought them to the light of publicity for fear of sharing the fate of Copernicus who has, with many, become an object of ridicule. . . ."

Copernicus's work was, in fact, received with much favour by the Catholic Church at first, the only objections coming from the Protestant Party. It was not until about 73 years after publication that trouble began on the theory of the "infinite universe" advanced by Bruno, when it became apparent that Copernicus's ideas had paved the way to acceptance of this.

Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus* was published in 1543. Had its author lived to turn the page of his book he would have discovered the treachery of the editor, Andreas Osiander, a Lutheran theologian, who had omitted Copernicus's preface and interpolated an anonymous one of his own. This represented the opinions of Copernicus as mere hypotheses not necessarily based on physical reality. Osiander's motive for this deception was to save possible conflict with religious dogma. But his action is all the more despicable because it totally disregarded the wishes of Copernicus who, when Osiander had suggested that the book be offered as a hypothesis, had sternly and adamantly refused the suggestion. His friends were indignant, and tried fruitlessly to expose the fraud.

RUBY TA'BOIS.

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A. E. C.

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ACID DROPS

St. Illtyd's Church, Swansea, has a Church Repair Fund, into which money is flowing at what must be a very satisfactory rate from the point of view of its clergy. Over £60 a week is not to be sneezed at, and other churches may care to copy St. Illtyd's methods of raising the cash. Nothing so old-fashioned as prayer or appeals to the goodwill of church members is needed; just the knowledge of how to keep on the right side of the British Lottery Law. St. Illtyd's Guild runs a weekly football lottery, issuing 6d. tickets "restricted to Guild Members only." For the week ended January 19, £263 16s. was subscribed, 25 per cent. of which went to the Church Repair Fund. But is it not a fact that true Christians have always considered playing cards, theatres, lotteries and, particularly lately, football pools, works of the Devil? Yet we are told that 10,552 lottery tickets were sold in one week to Guild members! Oh, Hell!

From our Catholic contemporary, *The Universe*, we get this interesting news: "The North Shields Tynemouth Park and Land Committee last week decided that people who put up crosses in a pets' cemetery in North Shields must remove them. Councillor D. F. C. Carr said that the practice was incompatible with the dignity of the cross." Thus, the Biblical query: "Is thy servant a dog?" is answered in the negative.

In a radio address delivered recently from the Vatican, the Pope deplored the apathy and irreligion of our time. However, he declared: "The problem of the world no longer is one of ignorance, as it was in pagan days." Precisely, now it is knowledge, not "ignorance," that is the danger to Christianity.

"Communism," proclaims the *Daily Telegraph*, "is devil-worship." Our contemporary adds the weighty dictum: "To convert black sheep it is not necessary to have red shepherds." If this is true, what are we to think of a church which, like the present Church of England, pays a "red shepherd" to—presumably—worship the devil in its metropolitan shrine, Canterbury Cathedral. Were the early Christians also devil worshippers when, according to *The Acts of the Apostles*, they also practised communism?

The Bishop of Leeds, Mgr J. C. Heenan, has attracted considerable publicity by his outspoken attack on the B.B.C. for wrapping the nation in "organised gloom." For once, we agree with his lordship! But is it not typical of Catholicism that, whilst Cardinal Griffin was assisting "organised gloom" on the B.B.C., his episcopal colleague of Leeds was denouncing that institution. Holy Church believes in having a foot in both camps simultaneously, so that, whatever happens, she will be on the winning side.

Looking casually into a shop window the other day, we noticed a rather remarkable advertisement issued by "Corpun," whatever that is. The advert offered "cleansing canes from 6d. each" upwards, and propounded the startling motto: "A Cane in Every Home." Can you beat it? Probably "Corpun" considers that since it discontinued the "cat," Britain has gone to the dogs!

Passing the corner of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street (London, W.C.) the other day, we noticed that, almost side by side, Communists and Catholics were

selling their respective papers. We noticed that, whenever a passer-by bought a copy of *The Daily Worker*, the ladies selling the Catholic press made a careful investigation of his or her personal appearance. For the use of the Recording Angel at the Day of Judgment, we suppose.

Our contemporary, *Reynolds News*, which began with a fanfare of publicity its "investigation" into Spiritualism, has now issued its report. Its answer to the question—and it is the only question that really matters—"Can the dead speak with the living?" is an unequivocal "No." Mr. J. Ennis, who has been investigating Spiritualism for nine weeks, adds, "If you rule out the deliberate frauds who can so easily attach themselves to such a movement, I believe that the only deceit in Spiritualism is a self-deceit." *Psychic News* is, of course, highly indignant, but "does not complain that Ennis has failed to find conviction of our claims in so short a time." Well, we have studied Spiritualism for forty years, and have failed to find "conviction." There is no evidence for survival.

But we sincerely hope that the test we propose is not "lèse-majesté"—for it really would put Spiritualism on the mat. As everybody knows who has been to a public seance, the medium never has any difficulty in contacting a deceased Uncle Albert or Aunt Martha or somebody who has recently died, and whose cheerful spirit is simply dying to get into touch with weeping relatives in the hall. Well, why has no medium so far got into touch with the late King who, no doubt, would also like to assure his loyal subjects how happy he is as a spirit in the Great Beyond? Surely a medium can look to a King?

Why should there be any surprise that the famous French artist, Henri Matisse, who is a Freethinker and anti-clerical, should decorate a chapel with "religious" paintings? After all, a myth is a myth, and no doubt Matisse would have decorated a pagan temple just as well. For a true artist, the story of Mary and the "Holy Ghost" has just as much significance pictorially as the story of Leda and the "Swan." If Matisse sees pictorial possibilities in a Christian myth—well, good luck to him as an artist!

Just as there are two kinds of Buddhism—Esoteric Buddhism and ordinary Buddhism, so there are Astrology and Esoteric Astrology. The latter is "intuitional astrology," and it is bound one day to supersede the ordinary kind which so fascinates the millions of readers who turn to its "predictions" before the news, or anything else, in those journals which make a feature of it. We give a sample of its thought-provoking, scintillating teaching—"The etheric body of the planetary Logos is swept into activity by His directed will, energy is the result of His thought-form playing in and through His energy body." That's the stuff to give 'em!

But we really must give some more: "In esoteric astrology, we are, therefore, dealing with the life and lives which inform the 'points of light' within the universal life. Constellations, solar systems, planets, kingdoms in nature, and microscopic man are all of them the result of activity . . . whose infinite purposes lie outside the comprehension of the most advanced and illumined minds on our planet." We understand that these marvellous teachings come "by telepathy from Tibet." But surely Tibet is getting a rough enough deal from its invasion by China, without having to be blamed for this twaddle?

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TO CORRESPONDENTS

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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.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS

The oldest Secular Society in Britain is, we believe, the Leicester Secular Society which was founded by some local followers of Robert Owen as far back as 1853. Despite a temporary lapse in its early years, the Society was revived in 1875 and has been continuously active ever since that date. It possesses a fine hall at 75, Humberstone Gate, where weekly lectures of a very varied character have continued to be given by many famous figures in the annals of British Freethought, including Owen, Bradlaugh and Holyoake; whilst Mr. Joseph McCabe was secretary of the Society after leaving the Church of Rome. Leicester was, also, the birthplace of one of the most eminent of contemporary Freethinkers, Mr. Chapman Cohen.

On Sunday, March 2, the Leicester Secular Society is holding a celebration at 75, Humberstone Gate, to commemorate the 71st Anniversary of the present Hall. Upon this auspicious occasion the Executive Committee N.S.S. will be represented by Mr. E. W. Shaw, President of the South London and Lewisham Branch, who has lectured several times at Humberstone Gate. We are sure that our readers will join with us in wishing the Leicester Secular Society a long and prosperous future.

The West Ham Branch N.S.S. meets on the last Thursday of the month at "The Community Centre," Wanstead (two minutes' walk from Wanstead Central Station (Underground)). On Thursday, February 27, the Branch is holding its Annual General Meeting at the above address at 8 p.m.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AND MATERIALISM

SOME of our readers have asked me to explain exactly what is the relationship between the Materialism which I accept, known variously as "old-fashioned" or "effete" or "blatant" or "scientific" or, as I prefer to call it, "mechanistic," and what is called "Dialectical" Materialism.

I hope that I have in some of my preceding articles made it plain what I mean by Materialism—the absence of "Vitalism," that is, the absence of a God in "matter," or a soul, or a spirit. All I know about "matter" are phenomena or experience, but while I can record a fact such as cherries grow on a cherry-tree the "why" and the "how" is quite beyond me. Under certain conditions

"THE FREETHINKER" FUND

Donations for week ended Saturday, February 23, 1952:—
L. B. Steer, 3s.; Len Ebury, 3s.; G. A. Kirk, £1 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Warner, 5s.
Total for week: £1 12s. 0d.
Total received to date: £461 7s. 8d.

of heredity and environment, "matter" can "think" but I see no evidence for any separate *entity* which can "think" called a mind or a soul.

Now as far as I have been able to understand Dialectical Materialism—and of course I am open to correction—it completely opposes my kind of Materialism. It opposes Idealism as well. I am by no means clear as to what it actually means; that is, it reminds me of Christian Science which is neither Christian nor Science and, as far as I can make out "Dialectical Materialism," it is neither Materialism nor Dialectic. "The word 'dialectic' must not be taken in its ordinary meaning," says Joseph McCabe in his *Rationalist Encyclopædia*; while Prof. John Macmurray, in *Aspects of Dialectical Materialism*, insists that "it is not Materialism in the ordinary sense" (p. 39).

Moreover he adds, "Dialectical Materialism is not a mechanistic philosophy in any sense." But the only alternative to a philosophy not "mechanistic" must be one which is "vitalistic." It must be either "mechanical" or not. If it is not mechanical then it is vitalistic—and as such all genuine Materialists must oppose it.

In his pamphlet written in 1933, entitled *Dialectical Materialism and Communism*, Mr. L. Rudas begins with, "Since the time of Huxley, Materialism has not been discussed in England; it was officially considered to be dead." The only excuse for this piece of hopeless ignorance and twaddle is that Mr. Rudas, as a Russian, knows nothing whatever about England. I have no need to refer readers to *The Freethinker* which always, under Foote, upheld Materialism in the only sense it has a meaning, and to the many essays written by John M. Robertson, to say nothing of a book like Buchner's *Last Words on Materialism*. Huxley certainly refused to call himself a Materialist but, in a way, so did both Bradlaugh and Buchner, though they were literally "mechanistic" Materialists. And I seem to remember Huxley saying somewhere that most people would certainly call him a Materialist. Mr. Rudas adds, "Even the 'Socialists' were anything but materialists," a charge which though quite true, does not substantiate the nonsense that since Huxley, "Materialism has not been discussed in England."

But does Mr. Rudas mean Materialism or Dialectical Materialism? I must confess that he does nothing but—to me—completely confuse the two. He actually says, "Einsteinian physics, which bring space and time into the closest dependence on matter, only justifies here, without having any suspicion of it, what dialectical materialism has always maintained, viz., the closest dialectical unity between matter, movement, space and time." I think we ought to hand it to Mr. Rudas for so completely claiming as "dialectical materialism" something which every Materialist has claimed for centuries before anyone even thought of Dialectical Materialism.

An ardent Communist, Mr. E. F. Carr, who does not see eye to eye with the sacred and sacrosanct official Dialectical Materialism, innocently asked Mr. Rudas where in the works of Lenin and Marx—or rather Marx and Lenin—can be found an exposition of their "system." He himself could only find "scattered pronouncements" in Marx. I also have searched Marx for his explanation but failed to find it. As Mr. McCabe points out, "There

is no trace of Dialectical Materialism in *The Communist Manifesto*."

But Mr. Rudas indignantly repudiates it as a "system." "*Dialectical Materialism*," he cries, "is no 'system,' and whoever seeks such a 'system' in Marx, Engels or Lenin, will seek in vain." I am quite sure that if there had been such a "system" in their works, Mr. Rudas would have been just as vehemently for it as he is in his pamphlet against it. But, though not a system, it can be studied in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin—indeed, we are told it has been "classically expounded" by Engels and Lenin though obviously not "classically" by Marx, which is a pity. But you won't properly understand it unless you study "the whole of Marxism-Leninism and then combine this theoretical study with practical participation in the revolutionary proletarian movement . . . its chief task (is) the transformation of the world." Some task, especially as Dialectical Materialists appear to be so confused themselves that they cannot agree what it really is or means or wants.

For example, I turn over the pages of *Aspects of Dialectical Materialism* and I find Prof. H. Levy, a staunch Dialectician, saying, "Unfortunately, the stress that has been laid on the Economic Interpretation of History, to the exclusion of other aspects of materialist dialectics, has encouraged what in many ways is a false associated philosophy, closely akin to the rigid mechanical determinism from which Marx and Engels had emancipated themselves. This has been largely assisted by a curiously undialectical attitude—and I say attitude designedly, since it is most unbending—on the part of many expositors of Dialectical Materialism." Here we have a confession that many "expositors of Dialectical Materialism are 'curiously undialectical'—whatever that means. Perhaps Mr. Rudas would say, "You're another" to Prof. Levy, but I call attention to this because if Dialectical Materialists can be so prominently undialectical, what chance has an ordinary layman like myself of finding out what is the honest-to-goodness-truth in the matter? It is true that I am told that I must read the *whole* (italics are Mr. Rudas's) of Marxism-Leninism, but have not the expositors of Dialectical Materialism also read them complete? Or—if I dare whisper it—did they fail to understand these classical Masters?

But there are so many other "aspects" of Dialectical Materialism that I must defer my own "exposition" to another article.

H. CUTNER.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF BUDDHISM

(Concluded from page 59)

The transition of the Sangha after the death (Nirvana) of the first Sathá from the monarchical to the republican type seems therefore to be rather peculiar—no analogous idea being found in Jainism and surely none in Hinduism. Of the Ajivakas and other sects we know next to nothing on this point. On the idea of a succession of masters the canonical literature is far from being silent. It is likely that the question was agitated among the Bhikkhus in early times and the emphasis with which it is answered may have been due to its having been seriously propounded at some time. In the Cullavaga VII, 3, 1, Devadatta proposes to Buddha that as he has grown old and is near the end of his life, he (Buddha) should hand over the leadership of the Sangha to him. Buddha retorts with the reply that he would not hand over the leadership

of the Sangha even to Sariputta and Moggallana, much less to an evil person like him. In the Maháparinibbána Sutta, Ananda expresses the hope that the Tathagata will, before his decease, leave some instructions regarding the Sangha. Buddha in his reply strongly negatives the idea of a successor to him *leading* the Sangha, and his words are intensely emphatic:—

"Be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the Truth. Look not for refuge to anyone besides yourselves."

This is made still more clear in a further passage:—

It may be Ananda that in some of you the thought may arise, "The word of the Master is ended; we have no teacher more? But it is not thus, Ananda that you should regard it. The Truths (Dhamma) and the Rules (Vinaya), which I have set forth and laid down for you, let *them*, after I have gone, be the Teacher to you."

This is further elucidated in the Majjhima Nikaya, where a Brahmin asks Ananda whether Gotama has marked out any particular Bhikkhu who should be the refuge of the Sangha after his death. Ananda answers in the negative. The Brahmin then asks if anyone has been nominated in that behalf. Being answered in the negative, he asks how unity exists among the followers of Gotama. Ananda answers:—

"There is no want, O Brahmana, to us of a refuge, we have a refuge, the Dhamma."

Evidently the republican organisation of the Buddhist Sangha was somewhat incomprehensible to outsiders.

"Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp!" So the lamp has become a significant symbol in Buddhism and in one of the Buddhist parables we are told that the light of lamps possesses the mysterious quality that by lighting other lamps with its flame it loses none of its radiance or usefulness. To divulge the doctrine is one of the main duties of Buddhist disciples, and by spreading "the good doctrine," *saddhammo*, or the glorious doctrine, the *Kalyāno dhammo* (as Buddha calls his religion), far from sustaining any loss, we can only be benefited. Here the saying becomes literally true that "by giving we gain; by scattering, we lay up treasures; by imparting wealth, we grow rich." The idea of *light* as an emblem of the religion of enlightenment has found a beautiful expression in one of the Buddhist sculptures from Gandhara. We see a teacher holding up a lamp and a disciple looking up at it in a reverential attitude and with clasped hands. The strictly autonomous character of the Buddhist way of life threw a man back upon himself and his own strenuous efforts to conquer the upsurge of craving based on the false self. Then there comes to the disciple the realisation that there is no *separate* self. In a profound sense, all life is *one*. In taking refuge in the Dhamma he also takes refuge in the *Sangha*, the spiritual commune, the spiritualisation of the collective. He lets his mind pervade all the four quarters of the world with thoughts of love, far reaching grown great, beyond measure, unstinted, unmixed with any feelings of opposing or *differing interests*. This state of mind is the best in the world. There is the famous Mahayana picture (*Mahayana*—"the greater vehicle"); we see the Lord Buddha with his two attendants, Love as particularity on the elephant and Wisdom as universality on the lion. Ananda, the disciple of loving service and Kashyapa, the disciple of philosophical comprehension, have approached their Master and

grasped the significance of his doctrine from two opposite and contrasting sides. Those who fly *from* the world and mortify their bodies have not understood the doctrine. We are not ego-souls. For that reason the thought of an individual escape, the salvation of our ego-soul is a heresy and an illusion. We all stand together and every man must work for the salvation of mankind. *This* was the profound meaning of the Mahayana. The doctrine of the Buddha was compared to a great ship or a grand vehicle in which there is room for all the multitudes of living beings; and we who stand at the helm must save them all or perish with them. And herein is the sure foundation of a spiritual communism. Herein are no dictators; on the Buddhist and humanitarian principle we have listened to, no man has any right to command his fellows. Rather we learnt to co-operate with each other in our great task of helping to build up a better state of the world. In the words of our own George Eliot:—

“Presentiment of better things on earth sweeps in with every force that stirs our souls to admiration—self-renouncing love, or thoughts like light that bind the world in one!”

R. J. JACKSON.

DID THEY LIVE?

In his popular series of broadcasts, “Have a Go,” Mr. Wilfred Pickles ends up as a rule by setting a competitive question, the quickest answer to which is rewarded by all the money in the “jackpot.” Recently, the question was: “Name three famous men who never lived.” Mr. Pickles is a pious Christian—R.C. convert, we believe—so, had anyone suggested, say, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, we don’t think that it would have been “give him the money, Barney.”

CORRESPONDENCE

THE B.B.C. VERSUS DEMOCRACY

SIR,—As a footnote to the story of the B.B.C. versus Democracy, I think you might be interested in the case of Karl H. Wichodil, author of the famous *Psychologie des Unfreien*. Wichodil has written to the committee of the Authors’ World Peace Appeal to report that he has been warned by the B.B.C., to whom he sold a considerable amount of material, against his “peace bias.” The German author writes: “My stuff, they claim, is too peace minded!”—Yours, etc.,
OSWELL BLAKESTON.

COPERNICUS

SIR,—I regret any confusion re prefaces, dedicatory letters, etc., between Ruby Ta’ Bois and myself. I did not state that Copernicus did not fear ridicule, I said he did fear persecution, in these matters the jeer precedes the blow.

G. A. Dorsey (*Civilisation*, p. 675) states: “The scorn which I had to fear,” said Copernicus, “. . . almost moved me to lay the completed work aside,” and so he dedicated it to, and also wrote to, the Pope to use his influence to defend him . . . against those who might attack his theory.”

A sane man would not have told the Pope he feared persecution, but if the Pope had granted him protection he could have published the work himself in Rome. In view of what others have suffered before and since, for proclaiming scientific truths, anyone without fear would be a greater fool than Luther said Copernicus was.

The Church still persecutes to-day wherever it has the power. It suits the Church very well, in its claim to have supported science, when Freethinkers say “Copernicus had nothing to fear.” My sole purpose in writing my first letter was to refute this notion. White’s *Warfare of Science*, approved by Professor Tyndall, gives the facts. The larger and later work, *Warfare of Science with Theology*, confirms them. I accept White’s judgment, and I have read nothing to cause me to modify my view, which is admittedly widely held. It is, therefore, a matter of opinion.

As for the insulting statement about my humorous and ignorant pretensions, etc., I leave my reputation to those who know me, and, so far as I am concerned, this controversy is ended.—Yours,
LEN EBURY.

SATAN

SIR,—I greatly appreciate your giving “the Devil his due” in the last issue of *The Freethinker*, and I would merely like to suggest two names to the list given of those who present the “historical” Satan.

The first is Michael Bakunin who, in his *God and the State*, hails Satan as the first rebel. Bakunin contends that the emancipating faculties of man are the ability to think and the desire to rebel—and thus the initiator of progress.

The second is that benevolent cynic, Anatole France, who, in his *Revolt of the Angels*, uses Satan to point a moral that many professed liberty lovers would do well to think deeply about in this period of the increasing power of that secular manifestation of the god-idea—the State.—Yours, etc.,

S. E. PARKER.

[Both the books mentioned by our correspondent are well known to us. But, unfortunately, the literature relating to His Satanic Majesty is so extensive that it is quite impossible to mention it all within the limits of a short article.—EDITOR.]

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

OUTDOOR

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

Manchester Branch N.S.S. (St. Mary’s Gate, Blitzed Site).—Lunch-hour Lectures every weekday, 1 p.m. Speaker: G. WOODCOCK.

North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, 12 noon, F. A. RIDLEY and W. G. FRASER. . .

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

INDOOR

Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Mechanics’ Institute).—Sunday, 6-45 p.m.: W. G. K. FORD, M.Sc., “Some Thoughts on Education.”

Conway Discussion Circle (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1). Tuesday, March 4: PHILIP SANSOM, “The Case for Anarchism.”

Leicester Secular Society (Humberstone Gate).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m.: 71st Anniversary of the opening of the Secular Hall. Musical items.

Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society (Technical College, Shakespeare Street).—Sunday, 2-30 p.m.: Dr. H. FISHER, “The Psychiatrist and Delinquency.”

Nottingham Union Debating Society (The University, Highfields).—Monday, March 3, 4-30 p.m.: Debate: “That this House would attend the funeral of Organised Religion with rejoicing.” For: T. M. MOSLEY (N.S.S.); Against: Rev. K. L. WAIGHTS (Albert Hall Methodist Mission).

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1).—Sunday, 11 a.m.: D. G. MACRAE, M.A., “Science and the Social Process To-day.”

West London Branch N.S.S. (The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, Edgware Road, Marylebone, W.1).—Sunday, 7-15 p.m.: JANET CHANCE. “Abortion Law Reform.”

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THE SPIDER'S BREAKFAST

JIM, the soldier, was lying upon his stomach, as such tradesmen sometimes have to do, in obedience to orders. The early morning was cool and golden. The northern breeze gently stirred the tender green grass and when he looked in the direction whence the wind had come, he saw the glorious, enduring mountains showing up bluish-brown through many miles of air. Those hills had been seen by Medes, Persians and Greeks ages ago, when these, severally, or in antagonism, had been engaged in operations essentially similar to the work now being performed by the force of which Jim was part.

They had looked upon a general scene not much different from Jim's. The air had been as transparent, the distant mountains as magnificent, the plain as flat. The grass of spring had, no doubt, made the same verdant offering to the nomads of that day, who had, presumably, deemed it as prudent as the wandering herdsmen of Jim's time to keep well away from contending armies. The Euphrates had then flowed as fast cold, usefully, and unsung, as it did now.

Jim looked down at the grass. There was an ant making a difficult journey between the blades. It was very conspicuous, but, perhaps, its home was near. God had created even ants, or so Dusty Miller had said. Dusty knew many things. He knew that many miles down the river, where it made a junction with its sister, the Tigris, near a place called Qurnah, there was the site of the Garden of Eden, where Adam had exchanged a rib for a wife, so that each of his male descendants had had one rib less than any of his sisters. Jim had heard this story before, and had once tried to verify it by counting his own ribs, which he was easily able to do, for they were very visible, then his sister's; but she was so fat that she seemed to have no ribs. He knew no other girl well enough to ask her co-operation in this scientific task. Most girls are too wise to let labels count their ribs. Those who do allow the accountancy are of the class of the unwise virgins, but they are liable soon to cease to be of that category, although possibly remaining unwise.

Dusty knew other things too. He had seen the Angels of Mons. You were advised not to question him about that event. He got too angry, for he did not like to be laughed at. There were, of course, things of which Dusty was ignorant. He knew nothing of geology, or of evolution. He did not know the use of the Pole Star. He had probably never even noticed it. He was once, when a corporal, benighted with his group, which was therefore obliged to spend a chilly night blanket-less in the open. A knowledge of direction would have brought it to the familiar river, where the permanent lights would have assured its return to camp.

He knew, however, about Adam's disobedience which first brought sin into the world and all our woe, but not, of course, Milton's version of the story. He had, probably, not even heard of Milton, the poet, although he had had the usual elementary education of his day. To-day many are in not much better case. Milton calls up to them, not verse, but a relation of Jeyes fluid.

Suddenly an unpleasant sound was heard, the crack of a hostile rifle shot, followed by others. Jim's comrades pressed closer to the ground, but the firing seemed so far on a flank that Jim had time to observe his ant marching on as steadily as the impeding blades of grass allowed. A small spider stood in its path, its jaws agape. It was the colour of the sparse young herbage. It was one of Nature's perfect camouflages. The apparently unsuspecting

ant walked into the spider's open jaws. These closed, and there was left visible on the soil only the spider and the tremulous grass.

The firing increased. With a ping the alluvium let loose a little spurt of sandy earth near Jim. He, himself, now pressed hard against the ground. The officer soon gave the signal to double; the men ran on in sudden effort, frequently dropping to the prone position, as commanded. The crackle of their own machine guns was added to the din. Then came the roar of their artillery. Jim could see the flash and smoke of the bursting shells. He heard also the shriek of the enemy missiles which passed overhead. He no longer noticed that it was a halcyon morning. He hardly saw the distant mountains, or even the grass when he was on his stomach. He was sweating and out of breath.

His platoon had now fixed bayonets, and raced towards a nullah. This was dry, and the enemy had prudently vacated it. Above the water-course wheeled no vultures, but a group of tamer birds. These were high in the air, and they passed quickly towards the marshes over the river. The human quarrel had set them squawking.

The firing had died down; presently it stopped altogether. They rushed on again without much hope of catching the fast-retreating foe. At last they stopped. The sun had grown in power. Jim was soaked with perspiration. He looked at the mountains; they were no longer clear, but distorted by the shimmer of the heat. The platoon came to rest, and, the enemy being reported well out of contact, the men brewed tea. Dusty Miller joined them; he had been in the rear with a stretcher, but a use for it had not yet arisen.

After breakfast they went forward at a walking pace, searching nullahs and the few bushes which the district sustained. Then they passed through a native village, investigating its mud hovels, and searching through the effects of earlier fighting for signs of decay. The villagers had mostly left, and the remaining ones remained timidly in their homes. The few who were left were chiefly old men and women, wizened and often suffering from disease. They were probably peaceful by necessity, and the part the absent capable villagers had played in the recent raid could at present only be guessed. It was wiser to depart.

The British force swung round to search another sector on its way back to camp. It descended a ravine, passed across an old trench system, now fallen into near chaos. Then Jim's platoon came upon the sight of what had been a hostile soldier. The services of Dusty were plainly unnecessary. The dawn had seen the man with all faculties in vigour. Now he was as nothingness, his flesh useful only to the hyena, and the vultures wheeling overhead.

They left him as he had fallen: to bury him would help none. He would be disinterred that night. Hyenas have a god: he provides them with offal. They held no services for him, for his was not a Christian body. They dropped out of sight eventually for a rest. Dusty Miller, who rarely initiated talk of God, Adam, or Eve, sat down against a mound. He soon jumped up, calling upon a holy name, for he had sat against many ants. Some of these were swarming inside his shorts. He was obliged to make himself naked to get rid of them. He did not praise their creator.

(The late) J. G. LUPTON

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