

THE FREETHINKER

Founded 1881

Editor: F. A. RIDLEY

Vol. LXXII—No. 29

[REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL
POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER]

Price Fourpence

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

"Holy" Europe

SOME little time back, our French contemporary, *La Raison Militante*, the official organ of the Federation of Freethinkers in France and French Union (overseas French territories), printed a remarkable passage in a speech by M. Guy Mollet, General Secretary of the French Socialist Party (S.F.I.O.), later translated. Our contemporary has now reprinted this extract from M. Mollet's speech in bold type, so as to emphasize its outstanding importance. In order to refresh our readers' memories we will begin by quoting the passage in full. It was reprinted under the caption: *Towards a Holy Empire*.

"At Nice, before an International Conference of Socialist Students, Guy Mollet, General Secretary of the S.F.I.O., has regretted the obvious reluctance of the British and Scandinavians to take an effective part in constituting the European Community. What is the cause of this reluctance? According to the Socialist leader, the only real reason lies in the imperialist policy of the Vatican. For this last institution seeks to substitute for the creation of a genuine Europe a miniature Europe which would consist of six countries only: France, Italy, (Western) Germany, Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg. Thus the 'Holy Roman Empire of the German people,' formerly founded by Charlemagne, would be effectively re-established. It can easily be understood that Protestant nations would feel little inclination to assist in such a creation.

"A long time since, this journal warned its readers against the formation of a United Europe dominated by the Vatican, of a Carolinian Europe (that is, a Europe like that created by Charlemagne—Translator), as the European Federalist, Kalergi, has aptly described it. Anyone not completely blind must note what is the present policy now being put into operation by the present triumvirate, Schuman, De Gasperi, Adenauer. The creation of precisely such a Vatican-dominated Europe constitutes the most deadly danger which, in current circumstances, threatens our Western civilization." (Our translation.—F.A.R.)

The above situation, one in which the present creeping paralysis of clericalism is insidiously advancing across Europe and threatens to wipe out altogether, as it has already wiped out effectively south of the Pyrenees, everything that Europe and humanity have gained since the French Revolution first inaugurated the modern Liberal era of secularism, freethought and religious toleration, is already painfully familiar to anti-clericals on the European Continent. Here, so completely insular is British public opinion, the danger is hardly even realized. The narrow streak of water which cuts off the British Isles from the European Continent has effectively "insulated" Britain from the problems of the adjacent European Continent. For in these politically fortunate islands the pro-

blem of the Frontier, so pressing and urgent amongst all the nations of the ideologically-divided and war-ravaged European Continent, has ceased to operate since the *Act of Union* (1707) reduced England's northern frontier with Scotland to the level of a mere "geographical expression."

The above lack of a land frontier constitutes one major formative factor in the peculiar politics of this, in many respects, very peculiar isle. As the great French historian, Jules Michelet, tersely expressed it, "the (modern) history of England is the history of an island." If, however, the lack of a land frontier is one decisive formative factor in "our island story," the other equally decisive one is constituted by the lack of any rival ideology to the dominant Protestant ideology which has virtually monopolized this island since the days of Elizabeth and Cromwell. Conflicts of a fundamental character, whether for existence or of conflicting ideologies, have been unknown for three centuries in these fortunate islands. It is this fact which explains the exclusively empirical character of the politics of what Napoleon ironically termed "this nation of shopkeepers."

Upon the European Continent an entirely different state of things has always existed, and still exists at the present time. Upon the European Continent, both the Frontier and the bitter struggle for existence between rival religious ideologies have rarely been absent since the era of the Protestant Reformation witnessed the simultaneous creation of the nation-state and of the religious rivalry between the Vatican and the Protestant rebels against its universal sway over mediæval Europe. Since the French Revolution the more advanced ideology of Free-thought has succeeded and superseded Protestantism as the major enemy of the Church of Rome. In Latin lands, in France, in particular, what are virtually two hostile nations have existed since the French Revolution created modern Secularism.

The Vatican, however, "the Black International," as it has been aptly termed, has never accepted the defeats which it successively endured in the epochs of the Reformation and the French Revolution. Contrarily, it has fought back repeatedly and energetically. It has never forgotten its mediæval golden age, its "age of Canossa," when Europe and the secular power alike lay prostrate before the Papacy, and when "all roads led to Rome." To-day, as ever, it seeks to recapture the glories of that vanished age.

At the present moment it is actually meeting with startling success, particularly in the *political* field, where Rome is so particularly adroit and so traditionally experienced. For the danger stated above in our French contemporary is far from being a mythical one. For the Vatican has displayed feverish *political* activity since 1945. Despite its unsavoury record of collaboration with the Fascist régimes in pre-war days, Rome is now "collaborating" again, this time with democracy—a most peculiar "democracy." West of the so-called "iron

curtain" its political intrigues are ceaseless and have met with astonishing success. All the six lands mentioned above by M. Mollet are to-day ruled by Catholic régimes or by coalitions in which Catholic political parties predominate; in Austria, the same state of things exists; south of the Pyrenees, in the clerical-Fascist régimes of Franco and Salazar in Spain and Portugal, the Church is all-powerful. As M. Mollet indicated, the "big three" in present-day European politics—Adenauer, De Gasperi, Schuman—are all devout sons of Holy Church and recognized leaders of political Catholicism.

To-day the union of Europe is on the order of the day. From Winston Churchill and the late M. Trotsky to M. Mollet and MM. Adenauer, De Gasperi, Schuman, all leading European statesmen advocate European unity. But what kind of Europe is it to be? The Catholic Church, at least, has no doubts: it is to be a "Holy Europe," a revived and, it is no doubt hoped at Rome, a more docile "Holy Roman Empire" which will not, this time, need a "Canossa" to tame it: a Catholic Europe, perhaps beginning, as M. Mollet suggested, with lands already won by political Catholicism, going on to embrace the pious Franco and Salazar, and then spreading its tentacles over the rest of Europe.

As we have so often before indicated in this column, Rome is, to-day, playing for all she is worth upon the fear of Communism. Catholicism now aspires to be the ideological cement of an anti-Communist Europe and as such, demands and receives her share of American dollars for "services rendered." Freethinkers everywhere, and not least in these islands where Rome has been merely a name since the Reformation, owe a debt of gratitude to M. Mollet. They will do well to suspend their silly secular quarrels in face of the dark shadow of clericalism now again creeping over Europe, and recall the inspired dictum of M. Mollet's great countryman, Gambetta: "Clericalism, that's our enemy."

F. A. RIDLEY.

SOME RELIGIOUS ARGUMENTS EXAMINED

(4) The Universe has a Why

IN this series criticising religionists I have each time pinpointed the opponents who have occupied the position I have attacked. The Christian who attacks freethought usually has quite a different method. He deals, not with actual freethinkers, past or present, but with an imaginary infidel who will conveniently stick his head in a frame for the Christian to punch. The average broadcaster who adopts this method may, for instance, introduce to his hearers a "doubting Thomas," who is an "earnest inquirer" with "open-minded reverence," whatever that is, and who will faithfully recite all that has been prepared for him so that the believer shall have the better of the argument. Or we may hear something after this fashion: "The other day I met an acquaintance of mine who shall be called Smith. He has been an atheist for many years. He said. . . ." Then of course as the argument proceeds Smith ends up in the horizontal position, completely floored by his Christian antagonist. And Smith's arguments invariably show that he has never been an atheist at all, if indeed he exists outside his opponent's imagination.

One can only suppose that after searching in vain for some freethinker who has said or written exactly what the Christian would like him to say, the Christian has been forced to set up an Aunt Sally for himself. It is the same in many publications by religionists; the materialist position is usually set up in a position convenient for knocking it down, and in my *Can Materialism Explain Mind?* I have

listed some of these attempts to foist on to the materialist the position which the religionist thinks he ought to defend.

There is no need for the freethinker to set up a dummy Christian who will oblige by saying something silly. Actual instances abound. I am now selecting one who was considered one of the leading Christian apologists of the present century, Archbishop Temple.

The postulate of a grand Why behind nature, a sort of overriding cosmic purpose in things, represents clearly the gulf between two approaches, the religious and the scientific. According to Temple:—

"Whenever you trace any event or observed fact to the action of intelligent purpose you have explained it. . . . Throughout the whole realm of scientific inquiry you ask the question Why, and to the answer you ask Why again, and that is how science goes on." (*Christian Faith and Life.*)

And that is how science goes on. Let us hope not. Let us hope it is only how a Churchman goes on about science. Let the scientist speak for himself:—

"Evolution is efficient at the price of extreme slowness and cruelty, but it is blind and mechanical. Accordingly its products are just as likely to be morally or intellectually repulsive to us. . . . Any purpose we find manifested in evolution is only an apparent purpose. It is we who read purpose into evolution." (Prof. Julian Huxley, *Proceedings, Brit. Association*, '36.)

Huxley endorses this elsewhere:—

"When we men act so that a desirable result is produced it is usually the result of a mental process which we call purposive activity. But to argue that all processes which are similar in result must therefore be purposive is really so puerile a piece of logic that we can only be amazed that the contention is still so widely made. . . . It was precisely this which Darwin once and for all disproved." (*Essays in Popular Science.*)

Now let us suppose that the Archbishop is right and Huxley is wrong. Let us suppose that a person who has never done five minutes' laboratory work in his life is a greater authority about "how science goes on" than one who has brought his outstanding abilities to scientific work to which he has devoted his whole life. If the Christian is right and the scientist wrong we get this result: Evolution being the work of a purposeful Evolver, we can only judge His character from the methods He uses and the results obtained. What do we find? Disease, cruelty, filth, wastefulness and all forms of evil meet our gaze. We are confronted with error, repeated error, the refusal to profit from error, the useless proliferation of futile forms of life foredoomed to extinction, some of them inimical and parasitic to other forms; waste, colossal waste, injustice, monstrous and irremediable, and the setting of such harsh conditions of survival that the Evolver diminishes in prestige till we are left with a blundering ignoramus whose crowning crime is that He has compelled man to worship Him.

To put it briefly, if Temple is right, the Divine Purpose is the work of a being who is either a malignant devil or a first class nit-wit.

We are saved from such a conclusion by the fact that there is a basis on which to decide when it is valid to ask Why.

The question Why means, for what purpose? Purpose implies intelligence and foresight. These are mental phenomena. They require a brain. A brain involves the organism of which it is part. Therefore purpose is indissolubly connected with complex organisms with highly

developed brains. That is, purpose appears during the evolutionary process and as a product of it.

The materialist position may briefly be stated thus: Purpose is the offspring of evolution and not its parent.

To say Purpose causes the process is to invoke the final cause, the "vestal virgin who bears no fruit" (Bacon). Purpose is what science shows it to be, an evolved product, existing only where its carriers (man and some higher animals) exist. It is a term for behaviour involving prospective reference. It is relative to that which is non-purposive, and to make it cover everything, as Temple does, is to eradicate from the language the word "purpose," since it would then lose its special distinction and become meaningless. The materialist contends that the question Why has a limited application; that is, purpose is not omnipresent but pertains to a certain type of evolved behaviour. The question "Why has evolution taken place?" should more properly be "How has it taken place?"—and for the answer we may consult scientific works like J. B. S. Haldane's *Causes of Evolution*.

When the known factors and conditions are sufficient to account for a process there is nothing gained by adding another agency, which is what you are doing when you ask Why in a field where purpose has no application. We have then to ask another Why to account for the purposive Agency and so start on the path of a continuous succession of Whys. In this way we solve nothing but on the contrary create more and more insoluble problems, entirely of our own making because they have no warrant from fact or logic. They are meaningless. This is what Huxley speaks of as the "puerile logic." It is what the logician calls violating the law of parsimony.

G. H. TAYLOR.

REVIEW

"*The Illusion of Immortality*," 10s. 6d.; "*Humanism as a Philosophy*," 10s. 6d.; both by Corliss Lamont (Watts).

WHEN sheep, cattle, or other gregarious animals are happily grazing or in any other way in harmony with their environment, each is relatively self-contained; when they are frightened or insecure each rushes to bury itself in the herd. We, too, are gregarious animals, and seek relief from insecurity in infallible systems and omnipotent Gods.

During the "Enlightenment," when the world for the aristocracy was secure, religion was for the masses only—the fear of hell acted as a useful whip to keep them in order, and the prospect of Heaven a cheap opium dream to reconcile them with their lot on earth. After the Gordon Riots, a Judge sentencing a batch of prisoners to death told them: "Some of you may have been unjustly convicted; if so, do not worry over it now. If any wrong has been done you here, it will be rectified in the next world."

As the solid eighteenth century ruling class began to crumble before the movement leading to the French Revolution, there was a big development of eccentric cults and quackery. The very scepticism of the enlightened ones made them credulous. In England, for instance, within a few years of each other, Cagliostro, St. Germain, Casanova (with his tongue in his cheek), were selling Elixirs of Life, Rejuvenation Fluids, secrets of immortality; and at the same time James Graham (later to become a Methodist) was charging a hundred guineas a night for the use of his Celestial Electric Bed, children begotten on which were healthier, wiser, and more handsome than ordinary mortals; and the pleasure of begetting them was correspondingly multiplied n-fold.

It is possible that some Chinese "Gibbon," writing of our epoch, will draw a parallel between what Sidney Hook calls "The Failure of Nerve" of our own time, with a consequent retreat back to Catholicism or losing the self allegedly Oriental mumbo-jumbo and similar phenomena towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Also he will hardly be able to ignore the fact that when Western civilisation became ascendant, Christ, an Oriental, in all art took on the features of a fair Nordic; but last year, in an exhibition of Christian art at Rome, Negro, Chinese, Japanese, etc., Holy Families were exhibited in large numbers. The white man's prestige has gone down so much that rebellious subject races prefer Gods of their own nationality; and the Catholic Church is prepared to accommodate them.

Further, when the frightened sheep is impelled to rush into the shelter of the flock, he is so indiscriminating as to mistake anything remotely like the flock for that entity. We see the same phenomenon in people rushing into political or spiritual salvation. For instance, both Mussolini's original programme and Hitler's celebrated 25 points were full of contradictions—planks cancelling each other out, etc.—but the believers saw only those items they desired to see and ignored the rest. Perhaps it would be possible to show, too, that a number of the notable converts to the Church in recent years see only what panders to their own disguised egoism. A recent woman convert, daughter of an Oxford don, and herself an ex-University teacher, describes herself as "pursued by God all her life, and at last caught," adding that "God waited with the patience of a cat at a mousehole for her to come out and surrender. . . ." If the reader develops the simile he may produce a boomerang effect. The Trappist, Father Merton, whose autobiography was a recent best seller, uses similarly the idea that God pursued him until He caught him. Nietzsche saw in St. Paul's conversion, and Alfred Adler in Dostoevsky's a perverted Will to Power. Do these other conversions follow the same pattern?

These two works are an antidote to "The Failure of Nerve." In the first the author examines the concept of immortality among primitive peoples; the vagaries of Christian doctrines about the future state; and, after showing the scientific difficulties of such a belief, shows that it is rapidly losing favour among intellectuals. There is an introduction by the late John Dewey, probably the most influential of all American philosophers. This is a revised version of a work originally published in 1934. In the latter work he traces the growth of naturalism among early Greek thinkers, through such figures as Spinoza to Santayana, Dewey, Russell, etc. He shows that there is strong evidence that such figures as Confucius were uncertain about the existence of gods and preferred one world a a time, to use Thoreau's expression when, dying, he was asked if he was prepared to face the future life. Mr. Lamont also emphasises: "There can be no true and complete humanism unless it is a full-fledged democratic humanism."

J. S. BARWELL, M.A.

HEAT WAVE

How lovely are the lilies by the pool,
How fair the dryads in the willow trees;
This is the very spot for keeping cool;
Across the water creeps a gentle breeze:
Down on your marrow-bones, ungrateful fool,
And thank the gods for magic gifts like these!

B. S.

ACID DROPS

We always understood that the remarkable "faith-healing" cures of completely incurable diseases now performed in thousands by Spiritualists in all parts of the world were due, either to doctors in the Spirit World, or to Spirits with remarkable healing powers. We now find that this is all wrong. According to a Spirit Guide called White Ray—a name like this obviously gives people more confidence than plain Martha Juggins or Liza Blobbs—the "work is done by rays, not by Spirit Healers." All this talk then about the marvellous doctors in Spiritland (or Summerland) which has filled our Spirit journals with columns of appreciation is therefore "just my eye and Betty Martin." Or is it?

It appears that Mr. Harry Edwards, who is curing incurable patients by the dozen every day, recently went to the "White Ray Circle" and had to listen to a long sermon on "linking together the different spheres and the different planes" so that everybody alive in spirit or flesh could work harmoniously together. It appears also (according to *Psychic News*) that we, who are alive, don't appreciate the fact that our bodies "are a passing phase." All White Ray wants is that we should "forget our pride," and obviously shut our eyes and believe the incredible nonsense he (or she) pours out every week.

In this connection some of our Bishops have been asked by the *Daily Express* to give their views on "spiritual healing"—as if any Bishop would praise a rival organisation which, according to Spirit journals, is constantly delivering the goods, while the Church itself knows perfectly well that "the laying on of hands" by the "elders" is just unmitigated moonshine when it comes to curing incurable cases. The Bishop of Rochester, in fact, looks upon the Spirit cures actually as "the practice of magic." The Bishop naturally puts the "miracles" of healing in the New Testament in "a quite different category."

Of course, the Bishop simply dare not throw overboard his New Testament, so there must be "divine healing" with "the body, mind, and spirit—all three." If Dr. Chavasse knows what he is talking about, well and good—but we would gladly bet a copy of our *Bible Handbook* against a copy of his sermons that nobody else does.

We hope that we are not pressing Spiritualism too hard—though we appear to be the only journal in the country doing so; but a word must be said about the 250 "psychic photos" now on exhibition by one of the Spiritualist societies in London. They are by one of the biggest frauds the movement ever raised—William Hope. He was exposed over and over again, but you can't keep a thorough fraud down. Like the Fox sisters who are constantly produced as immaculate little angels when they themselves confessed to having bamboozled everybody for forty years. Hope is constantly brought back from Summerland as if no charges were ever or could ever be brought against him. Readers can rest assured that no spirit photographs have ever been produced anywhere at anytime.

It is rather strange that that fascinating religion, Buddhism, which began in India, appears to have flourished everywhere else but in India. There is a special brand in Tibet, and Prince Peter, who is a cousin of the Duke of Edinburgh, and an anthropologist, has been studying the Tibetans to see the wonderful benefits Buddhism has

brought them. The commonest injury everywhere is "torn ears" which are violently wrenched or wrenched off in the good Tibetan squabbles. Venereal disease tops all other diseases, and stabbing cases come next. Buddhism, which is always boosted as a "non-violence" religion, appears to have missed the bus in Tibet.

After putting in a plea for "easier divorce," our doctors' leaders are doing their utmost to withdraw what they said before the Royal Commission now sitting to discuss the problem. This happened at the British Medical Association's Conference in—yes, in *Dublin*. One can imagine the horror stirred up in such a stronghold of Roman Catholicism at the mere suggestion of divorce, let alone easier divorce. Divorce, we were pontifically told, made "a mockery of marriage." Needless to add, the words "Roman Catholicism" are not mentioned in the *Daily Express* report but it was there all the same—and how!

THEATRE

"The Happy Time." By Samuel Taylor. Recently at St. James's Theatre.

WHEN should a small boy—or for that much a boy entering his teens—learn the facts of life? This is a highly amusing and interesting comedy touching on this subject, the boy's chief source of education seeming to be *La Vie Parisienne*.

Of course, his mother objects, but she is overruled by a father who loves the truth, a grandfather who loves philandering, and Uncle Louis who loves drinking and an Uncle Desmonde who just loves.

This is really a delightfully light play about a charming, happy family and the manner in which they cope with that very special side of Bibi's (the boy's) education. It is cleverly written, subtle, clean and refreshingly humorous.

Andrew Ray (the young son of Ted Ray, the comedian) takes the longest juvenile part I have seen. He should have something of a future if he advances carefully. Ronald Squire literally sparkles as the grandfather. Peter Finch as the father, Rachel Kempson as the mother, Peter Dyneley as Uncle Desmonde and George Devine as Uncle Louis all give notably fine performances. There are also good performances in smaller parts from Genevieve Page, Geoffrey Bayldon, Michael Redington and Aubrey Dexter. Another juvenile part was played by Patricia Fryer as Bibi's girl friend. I did not feel that Ann Wilton, as an aunt, was well cast. This is regrettable, for she can do well in the right part.

The play owes much to George Devine's truly brilliant direction.

RAYMOND DOUGLAS.

EPITAPHE

Que l'on se montre ou se cache,
Que l'on soit faible ou fort;
Le Destin nous arrache,
Et nous livre à la Mort.

EPITAPH

Whether one parades or hides,
Whether one is weak or strong;
Fate takes care that none abides,
And to Death bears all along.

Inscription on the Tomb of Marie Duplessis (the original of "La Dame aux Camélias" by Dumas, fils, in the Cimetière Montmartre, Paris.

Copied on the spot and translated into English by
D. L. WEBSTER.

"THE FREETHINKER"

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

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

MICHAEL J. BARNES.—Thank you for your contribution. We shall hope to use it as soon as our limited space permits.

THE FREETHINKER will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates (Home and Abroad): One year, £1 4s.; half-year, 12s.; three months, 6s.

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 Secretary of the N.S.S. at this Office by Friday morning.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS

Under the challenging title: *Have we too many bishops?* a remarkably frank article appeared in our contemporary, *The Evening Standard* (June 28, 1952). The article in question, by Evelyn Irons, quoted the now widely-quoted preface to Crockford, the Anglican Clerical Directory, which stated categorically: "Bishops are too numerous and too expensive. The majority bring meagre intellectual gifts to adorn their office." A charge which is reinforced by a further quotation from a High Anglican vicar in Wolverhampton, who, after giving a sarcastic description of the bustling, but largely purposeless, activities of the average modern Bishop, adds: "Few of them are men of distinction and learning." To which *The Evening Standard* writer adds: "Brilliant bishops are rare indeed. How many can you even name?" The article only mentions four, of whom only one, the far from orthodox Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, appears to have any real claim to brilliance or scholarship.

However, the current position disclosed in our contemporary's article, goes far deeper than the mere failure of the Church of England to find brilliant individuals for its bishoprics. It goes on to quote the present Dean of Winchester, Dr. Selwyn, who declares that there are too many bishoprics. "In the past 50 years," continues the article, "17 new dioceses have been created, making a total of 43 for the provinces of Canterbury and York, yet in that time the numbers of ordinary parsons have declined by some ten thousand. Most of these parsons, 12,242 in all, are very poor. Seven thousand of them have less than £9 a week to live on. Bishops average £3,000 a year." However, their lordships complain that their expenses are heavy, they live in "vast out-dated palaces," and "most of us have overdrafts." It is the picture of an institution in full decay. The collapse and final demise of Anglicanism within the present century would appear an eminently probable speculation.

In the current issue of our Australian contemporary, *The Rationalist*, a moving tribute by Mr. Glenville Cook, Secretary of the Australian Rationalist Association, appears to our late President, R. H. Rosetti, and to our

late General Secretary, John Seibert. Mr. Cook, who visited this country some three years back and met both men personally, emphasises their conspicuous service to the cause of secularism in Britain, as well as their sterling human qualities. He emphasises the double tragedy that befell the N.S.S. in losing two such outstanding figures almost simultaneously. However, individuals pass, but movements continue. One can say, indeed, that it is the test of a really vital movement to survive even its most eminent leaders. The N.S.S. will not fail in this exacting test.

"THE FREETHINKER" FUND

Donations for June, 1952:—

A. Hancock, 1s.; C. P. Mugele, 10s.; G. H. Taylor, £5 5s.; Mr. McKee (Coventry), 5s. 8d.; B. M. Heckford, £3 3s.; Bayard Simmons (Third Instalment) £6 10s.; A. Hancock, 1s.; A. W. Coleman, 18s.; A. Allman, 10s. 6d.; A. Hancock, 2s.; Ernesto M. d'Espiney, £2; P. Turner, 10s.; A. Brooks (Forest Gate) 2s. 6d.; V. B. Adams, 16s.; Mrs. Grant, £1; W. J. Howard, 10s.; A. Hancock, 1s.; Anfyddiwr, £1; E. C. R., 10s.; E. H. Bass, 10s.; E. Pankhurst and Mrs. M. Quinton, 10s.

Total for period: £24 15s. 8d.

Total received to 30th June, 1952: £582 11s. 5d.

The above-mentioned Fund is now closed.

REVIEW

The Next Million Years. By Charles Galton Darwin. (Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1952.) 210 pp. 15s. net.

OVER thirty years ago, when I first started writing for this journal, I took up the Malthusian position—following, very humbly, those great Freethinkers, Bradlaugh, Ingersoll, Foote and John M. Robertson. Present-day readers of *The Freethinker* would be possibly shocked if they could see the letters of abuse I received; and I was obliged to curtail my Malthusian arguments as much as possible—or, better still, never use them.

But to use a well-worn aphorism, time has its revenges, and there are few first-class economists who are not in full agreement with Malthus these days. War, disease, poverty, plagues and epidemics, floods, lack of sanitation, and ignorant treatment of children, kept populations down to a subsistence level in the past. The great advances in science and medicine, in transport, in the building of dams, and in irrigation scheme, during the past hundred years, and the opening up of new and fertile lands, made people talk of the Malthusian "bogy" and turn their attention rather to the "materialist conception of history" and to the momentous discovery that there was a "surplus value" in "the commodity," both of which would save mankind and enable them to laugh at Malthus. Plenty of food brought with it a rise in population, and now—well, we Malthusians can sit back and smile. India, China, and Japan are all increasing their populations far faster than they can find food, and the problem posed by Malthus 150 years ago is with us again.

Sir Charles G. Darwin is the distinguished grandson of the great Charles Darwin, and his book *The Next Million Years* is a small masterpiece which all readers of this journal who are fighting for man's political and social progress should read and study forthwith. Sir Charles considers that it takes a million years for a species to develop on this earth, and he tries in his book to forecast something of the difficulties man will have to face to survive that amount of time. We are using up our store of oil and coal, the principal sources of the energy and power which we need more and more, as well as our stores of metals like copper, iron, lead, tin and

zinc, at an alarming rate. The chapters he devotes to discussing this and kindred problems must make us "furiously" to think.

But as man's principal study is man, the real problem for us is *population*, and Sir Charles points out that "the central guiding theme that must run through all consideration of history is the question of population . . ." and "therefore the first thing that must be asked for about future man is whether he will be alive, and will know how to keep alive . . ."; and if he is right when he insists that "man must always be outrunning his food supplies," the prospect of survival with a high standard of living looks pretty bleak.

We might well be able to increase our food production to twice or even three times its present level, but can anyone envisage it with our present methods of agriculture giving us ten times as much? In any case, Sir Charles is willing to grant this and more, but he adds that if our population were able to double itself in a century, in 350 years it would be ten times its present numbers. And in ten centuries—a period quite insignificant in history—our population would have increased a thousandfold; and in two thousand years it would increase a millionfold—"and so at the end of two thousand years there would be need of the enormous quantity of food of a million times the present amount. It is evident that no increase of food production, however fantastically imagined, could cope with the natural increase of mankind for more than a very small fraction of a million years."

Even if it took a thousand years for us to double our population, the argument put forward so trenchantly by Sir Charles would hardly be affected. Instead of two thousand years it might take twenty thousand years for population to multiply itself by a million—and what is twenty thousand years when we are considering a million? And we must never forget that there is, there must be, a limit to the amount of food the earth can produce—though we are constantly told that science will step in and soon there may be no difficulties left in food production, no matter what the population is. Sir Charles gives an instance of science stepping in—into the province of Sind. It was mainly a desert, as there was no rainfall. But the great engineering feat of the Sukkur barrage spread the waters of the Indus over a very wide area "and turned much of the desert into a garden." It made possible the feeding of large numbers of people who had always been on the verge of starvation—and what happened then? "After a few years," comments Sir Charles, "the effect was only to have a large number of people on the verge of starvation instead of a small number." Was it a good thing, then, to have the Sukkur barrage? Was it a good thing to bring more people into the overpopulated country of India, always on the verge of starvation?

In the past, according to Sir Charles, there have been four revolutions which have contributed to man's progress on earth. The first was the discovery of fire, which enabled him to cook his food and helped to support bigger numbers. Then agriculture was discovered, helping people to remain for some time in one place and not roam about so much hunting for food. The third revolution was "the invention of living in cities," bringing with it "the division of labour and establishment of food stores." We are still in the fourth revolution—the Scientific Revolution—"the discovery that nature can be controlled. . . ." And the fifth will be forced on us when there will be no more coal or oil, and may come within

a thousand years. Sir Charles does not see much hope in harnessing atomic power for domestic use, and his analysis of what may happen to mankind if our sources of power and energy are exhausted can only be described as most depressing.

He thinks man—*homo sapiens*—is a "wild" animal who cannot be tamed without great injury, and is therefore an opponent of ideologies which are bent on making man everywhere "equal." Will man, all the same, become *homo sapientior*? Will man survive in a million years and, if so, will he be white, or will he approximate a darker colour through inter-marriage?

Sir Charles thinks "creeds" have an enormous influence in shaping our future—though he himself appears to be without religion. And he thinks that "our procreative instincts are not very strong." He is by no means sure that artificial contraception will solve the problems of population, and seems rather afraid that, what with one thing and another, our best stocks may be sterilised.

But "the central future of human history must always be the pressure of population. Man, the wild animal, will obey the law of life and will tend to multiply until he is limited by the means of subsistence. This is the normal condition of the world, and it carries the consequence that the final check on population is by starvation." This is what Malthus foresaw, and it is the considered opinion of a great modern scientist. Malthus's remedy—late marriage—must be dismissed as of little or of no value. Are the artificial contraceptive methods favoured by our neo-Malthusians any remedy? I must confess I thought so once, but, faced with such rising populations as are in India and China, I feel bound to say birth control may be swamped by numbers.

But for a full discussion the reader must go to *The Next Million Years*. It gives the Malthusian position in the face of our tremendous progress since Malthus wrote—and proves his Population Theory is still unanswerable.

H. CUTNER.

POLITICS AND THE NOVEL

NOT many people appear to have noticed that the most highly characteristic novel of our day—or at any rate the characteristic novel from a writer with any kind of political interest—is almost invariably a novel of disgust. In the last year or two we have had Mr. Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One*, Mr. Aldous Huxley's *Ape and Essence*, Mr. Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, and—perhaps most characteristic of all—the book which has turned out to be George Orwell's melancholy testament to the world, *1984*.

George Orwell, indeed, was, in spite of his constant refusal to toe the line of any party, perhaps the most typical of the more politically-minded artists in words. For make no mistake—he was an artist, who used words with a single-minded devotion such as few of the more slapdash writers of our era can ever have apprehended. From those days in the now far-off 'thirties when he burst upon the view of many readers with that brilliant book, *Burmese Days*, he was unpredictable, and while it was only with *Animal Farm*, that Swiftian satire on the more unpleasant aspects of the Stalinist system, that he first achieved a mass public, he had always secured the admiration of those with a feeling for an incisive style.

With *1984*, however, he placed himself at one bound in the ranks of the greatest satirists of the past. One always hesitates to rank a contemporary with those who have,

through the centuries, acquired great reputations; but the comparison with Swift is quite inevitable when one considers Orwell. There is the same annoyance with the political charlatans of the time, the same disgust with the more ignoble aspects of human nature, the same dislike of those who trade on the weaknesses of others.

The reader will no doubt have observed my use, when discussing George Orwell, of the words "disgust," "dislike," "annoyance." That is what made Orwell at once noteworthy and characteristic. And that, I think, is what marks out his type of novel from the political novel of even twenty or thirty years ago.

Perhaps I should give a brief description of the background of 1984, in order that a reader who has not so far come across this brilliant book shall be able to understand the argument that I am trying to bring forward. The story concerns one Winston Smith (presumably born during the war of 1939-45), and of his reactions to the power politics of his adult life in the year 1984. By that time something far more advanced in its totalitarianism than any power State of the 'thirties or 'forties has taken control of the earth. The whole of the world is divided into three States, roughly corresponding to Europe (minus the British Isles), the U.S.A. (plus the British Isles, then known as "Airstrip One"), and China. These three States are perpetually at war, usually over some part of Africa, where their respective territories meet. And every individual among what we should call the upper and middle classes is under the whole-time supervision of the political police. Only the so-called "proles"—the working class—are more or less free from this supervision, and then only because they have no thoughts beyond gambling, the cinema, and synthetic love-songs of the sentimental jazz type.

It will be seen from this brief description of the general background of George Orwell's last book that what he really did in it was to take some of the more dislikeable tendencies of our own time, and to follow them out to their logical conclusions. Hence the disgust which was so characteristic of his later writings. It should, however, be noticed that this was a completely different kind of disgust from that contempt for human nature, and particularly for the sexual side of human nature, which marked Mr. Aldous Huxley's *Ape and Essence*.

JOHN ROWLAND.

(To be Concluded)

CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—I have a copy of André Lorulot's *La Bible Comique Illustrée*, 264 pages, well illustrated. Demy 8vo. Pages clean and complete. Cover rather torn—paper cover.

Would this interest readers and what would they care to offer for it?

Awaiting your kind reply.—Yours, etc.,

A. E. TILLEY.

RUSSIA AND WAR

SIR,—The suggestion of your correspondent, Grace Matson, in your issue of June 29, that there are no Russian soldiers fighting outside Russia, is in the same blood group as the notorious Roman Catholic contention that the Church never put heretics to death. Fabricated by the unscrupulous to impose on the unthinking, they both cover a good deal of misrepresentation with a veneer of technical "truth." The fact is, of course, that all the Communist Parties are composed of Russian soldiers fighting outside Russia, i.e., men and women who although they may not wear Red Army uniform—yet—are nevertheless members under discipline of organisations controlled from Russia which exist to promote the interests of Russia and to act against the interests of the countries of which their members are nationals. It is possible to give the names of some of the more illustrious, as, for instance, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces in France, M. Thorez, at present at G.H.Q. in Russia; General Togliatti, now supervising the campaign in Italy, and Corporal Pollitt, head of the squad here in England. Then we have, or had, Nunn May, Klaus Fuchs, Bruno Pontecorvo,

Alger Hiss, Hewlett Johnson, etc. The difficulty is to point to any place outside Russia where "Russian soldiers" are not fighting.

In the circumstances, the advice to Freethinkers not to allow *their* minds to be dulled by dope is misplaced. The spectacle of a fifth column of Stalin-toxicated Stigginses, full to the eyes with ideological rum and water, staggering on their dialectical legs and accusing the rest of us of being drunk is hardly likely to impress genuine Freethinkers, however much it might appeal to the intellectually underprivileged at the factory gates.—Yours, etc.,

W. E. NICHOLSON.

"GOD'S MOTHERLAND"

SIR,—Why omit England, which to Brithwald, the monk, was "God's own kingdom," centuries before there was any U.S.A. Milton claimed that "when God wishes anything difficult to be done, He gets His Englishmen to do it." Dr. Goldwin Smith considered that "the English are the favourites of heaven"; and Kingsley, in puffing up the "most noble German" nation, said as an English historian, "the hosts of our (German) forefathers were the hosts of God." So on with others I need not mention.—Yours, etc.,

GEORGE ROSS.

[Most countries have claimed to be "God's own" at some time. But Portugal is the only one, we believe, to claim a visit from God's mother in recent years. Hence our title, *God's Motherland*.—EDITOR.]

"THE DEATH OF THE GODS"

SIR,—The *Freethinker* of May 18, in an article on Leonardo da Vinci, mentions Merejkovsky, the Russian novelist.

That reminds me and passes time back to the year 1906. At that time I was a corporal in the Scots Guards. I may say, incidentally, that the "Jocks" accept Sassenachs, Irish and Welsh as well as the braw Scots, or did. Anyway, for a time, I was in charge of the library that lent out books for the Guards to read. From time to time, as directed by an officer who was, as it were, a patron of the library, I put a placard, blank, of course, on which men could suggest some book or other to be added to the collection already made. One soldier wrote on the placard *The Death of the Gods*, by Merejkovsky. The lieutenant looked dubious. It seemed to him, as it appeared to me, hazardous, the suggestion that the Gods were mortal. I said the principal character in that book was Julian, the Apostate, and being a historical novel, it was innocuous. Shortly after *The Forerunner* was added. Both were granted admittance. There is a third, *Anti-Christ*, making, as it were, a trilogy. I think the protagonist in that is Peter the Great. As you see, they make a potent trio.

By the way, after all is said and done, it seems to me that Petrograd is to be preferred to "Leningrad." Peter was the founder of that city! What the deuce has Lenin to do with reference to a city so intimately connected with Peter?—Yours, etc.,

GEORGE F. LAWS.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

OUTDOOR

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

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

Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Plattfields).—Every Sunday, 3 p.m.: (St. Mary's Gate, Blitzed Site), every Sunday, 8 p.m.; (Alexandra Park Gate), every Wednesday, 8 p.m.

North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, 12 noon: J. M. ALEXANDER; (Highbury Corner), Sunday, 7-30 p.m., J. M. ALEXANDER.

Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Saturday, July 19, 7 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

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

Streatham Debating Society (White Lion Hotel, Streatham High Road, S.W.).—Friday, July 25, 7-45 p.m.: Discussion between Mrs. MURIEL HANKEY (London Spiritualist Alliance) and Mr. H. CUTNER (N.S.S.). Subject: "That this House Agrees with Spiritualism."

South London and Lewisham Branch N.S.S. (Brockwell Park).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: L. EBURY.

West London Branch N.S.S. (Hyde Park, Marble Arch).—Sunday, 4 p.m.: Messrs. WOOD and F. A. RIDLEY.

INDOOR

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, July 13, 11 a.m.: "What Social Psychologists Should Study."

TOTALITARIANISM AND SCIENCE

IN recent B.B.C. broadcasts, Prof. J. Z. Young, a biologist, dealing with doubt and certainty in science, said that seeing is not believing; we see what we believe—thus echoing the arguments of psychologists. What has become of our world of indubitable fact? Science, it seems, is open to scepticism, involved in argument in a world of opinion. With scepticism concerning psychology, Frank Kenyon, in his books, *The Myth of the Mind* and *Psycho-Analysis: a Modern Delusion*, has put over some sceptical criticism of the Freudian argument; and in an article in *The Freethinker*, "A Modern Delusion," gave examples to show that the Freudian case is "heads I win, tails you lose," and goes on to argue that it cuts both ways; if it applies to the critics of psycho-analysis it also applies to the psycho-analyst himself.

Now, I am not concerned to defend the psycho-analyst; maybe my own criticism goes deeper. But there is a peculiar point of vital importance in this argument that seems to have escaped Kenyon's notice, which not only concerns argument and science, but also religion; and the trouble here centres in the fact that we are concerned with psychology. It may be that this argument would be effective in any other sphere, but in psychology it is different. Perhaps I might put my point deductively and begin with a proposition with which Frank Kenyon will probably agree. The aim of science is to find a generalisation of the highest degree, as a scientific law. For instance, Newton's law of gravitation applied throughout the whole of physical science; it applied in each and every instance.

Now here we are concerned with what is claimed as a scientific psychology, and a generalisation as a scientific law should apply to each and every instance in that sphere; and as this controversy concerns psychology it should apply in this case; and if psychology as a science concerns ourselves, each and every one of us, it should apply to each of the disputants. A 50 per cent. one-way argument could not be a scientific generalisation, which should apply to both the critic and the psycho-analyst. The argument that the argument cuts both ways does not hold; it might even be taken as corroboration. For to assert that the argument has 100 per cent. application is no disproof; it may even be a demonstration.

Many writers, including reputed psychologists, have said that Freudian doctrine has religious characteristics; the Christian says we are born in sin, and the Freudian goes back to birth in the "trauma of birth"; and, regarding sex, Freud himself said that if it be argued that he had a sex obsession he would not deny it. The sectarianism of the Viennese school is well seen in Edward Glover's *Freud or Jung*, in which Jung, Rank and others are charged with "heresy." But here again it cuts both ways; many supporters have claimed Freudian doctrine as materialistic, and on the other side, as in Rudolf Allers's *Successful Error*, which, with many of the same arguments as Kenyon's, condemns it as materialistic and dangerous.

This "heads I win, tails you lose" "cuts both ways" characteristic is typical of Christianity: playing with words according to expediency, claiming what is deemed good, condemning what is deemed evil. If a scientific law applies to and covers each and all, then the divine law of the theologian is also claimed as universal. His condemnation of worldliness, the seven deadly sins, and declamation against the mammon of unrighteousness, involves him himself; the condemnation of selfishness is self-condemnation and self-denial. But he acclaims him-

self a miserable sinner. In this duplicity it is no 50 per cent. one-way argument. Without a 100 per cent. scientific explanation, God can be brought in as a fillgap, but in any case it must include him himself; must apply to and convince him himself.

Whether it is universal scientific law, or belief in God, it concerns the believer himself; and so also with a Catholic or Universal Church, it must include each and every one. There can be no 50 per cent. one-way argument; it must cover and convince all. In this duplicity the Church must find some way to include all shades of opinion, from the crudely superstitious to the highly sophisticated; it must find the generally accepted method of self-justification. So the Church, like St. Paul, is all things to all men, and has a finger in every pie and a systematic co-ordination. It is precisely this "cuts both ways" characteristic that enables the Church to adapt itself, supporting the Fascist regime at one time and claiming to be democratic at another, even claiming to be authoritarian and democratic at the same time.

The Church adapted itself in the intellectual and moral decline in the political collapse of the Empire, in the conflicts of the Middle Ages, and seems to have done so in the scientific industrial revolution of modern times. The three theological giants, Augustine, Aquinas and Loyola, are as distinctive as these historical periods and exemplify the "cuts both ways" characteristic. Augustine's work is odd jottings over a period of about ten years, but that of Aquinas is said to be one of the most sustained intellectual efforts ever known. Augustine challenged the logic of the ancient philosophers with personal appeal in rhetorical eloquence, but Aquinas turned the tables in cumbersome logic, a return to the basis of philosophic opinion. But Loyola leaves logic in return to personal appeal.

If Augustine and Aquinas were theoretical or philosophical, the enigmatic Loyola, with the advent of modern science, became more practical as well as personal. If logic is called the science of reason, casuistry is only called the study of conscience, but with its "cuts both ways" argument it is as much a scientific psychology as any other so-called; for here the method of scientific study and experiment is applied, and the subtle art of turning one's opponent's argument back on him becomes a matter of scientific study. And, as the word "exercises" in the *Spiritual Exercises* implies, it involves personal feeling in the actual exercises of passion. Whatever the theory of argumentation may be, in actual practice the mysticism of Loyola is a matter of empirical fact, and it is as pragmatic as modern psychology with its "scientific myths."

Many enigmas involve modern science in argument, as Kenyon is aware, but Freud made his scientific psychology a matter of doctrinaire metaphysical argument, an esoteric prerogative of a special class, not as usable by the patient to enable him to cure himself; and the Jesuit may well retort, "Physician, heal thyself." But casuistry and the discipline of the "spiritual exercises" come within the modern idea of methodology and, as a mysticism, can be applied to all and by each, whether in orders or lay brother, or anyone else; can be used by the individual himself, and concerns how the individual thinks of himself. It throws the individual back upon himself and exemplifies the Christian "cuts both ways" characteristic *in excelsis*. There are two sides to every question, and if science is carried to extremes with a universe and a self in metaphysical argument it becomes a mystical self-contradiction.

H. H. PREECE.