

# The Freethinker

Vol. LXXV—No. 16

Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

Price Fourpence

THE German publicist, R. Fuelop-Miller, described his book on the "Society of Jesus" as, "The power and secret of the Jesuits." A Jesuit critic commented once in the hearing of the present writer, that really, the "secret" of the Jesuits was that they had never had any power. However, a careful perusal of the multifarious activities of the redoubtable "Company of Jesus," to bestow on it the name given to it by its Founder himself, does not at all confirm this too modest proposition.

The story of the foundation of the Jesuit "Company" has often been told: its founder, Ignatius Loyola (1490-1556) was a Spanish Knight originally destined for a military career in the Spanish Army, then the most powerful in Europe. Wounded severely in a frontier skirmish in the Pyrenees, Loyola was disqualified from following a military career. Like other military men both before and after him, Loyola "went religious," whilst recovering from the agonising operation, without anaesthetics, which made every hospital a torture chamber, the delirious Spaniard saw visions of the Virgin Mary, the Spanish goddess, and even of the Holy Trinity! Fully recovered, Loyola devoted the rest of his life and his formidable talents for organisation and propaganda to the service of the Roman Catholic Church. Historically, it was, perhaps, the most important conversion, as far as its ultimate effects on the Catholic Church were concerned, since the legendary conversion of Paul of Tarsus on the Damascus road.

## Loyola Against Mohammed!

Historically, the religious Order founded by Loyola, has been occupied largely with the struggle against the Protestant Reformation, which began about the same time as Loyola was invalidated out of the army. This, however, was not the Founder's original intention. For Loyola's first move after his recovery and resulting dedication to the service of Rome, was to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, then in the hands of the Turks. There appears to be no doubt that it was there, in the Holy City where Christianity was born, that the countryman of Don Quixote conceived the "Quixotic" idea of founding a new religious Order, *military in character*, with the immediate objective of launching a new crusade, in order to recover Jerusalem from the followers of Mohammed. Loyola intended from the start to found a great crusading Order initially to fight the enemies of Christ, the followers of Mohammed. One must not forget that Spain had only just completed her "Eight Hundred Years War" against the Moors, and every Spanish Catholic regarded Mohammed almost as a personal enemy! It also appears to be probable from the sequel that Loyola borrowed much useful knowledge from the rival religion. However, his stay in Palestine was brief: the hot-headed Spaniard soon made such a nuisance of himself that the Catholic authorities in Jerusalem were soon compelled to send him home!

## "The Company of Jesus"

Arrived back in Spain, Loyola soon got into trouble with the Spanish Inquisition, and found it advisable to emigrate to Paris. Here, at the University of Paris, Loyola made a number of recruits, among his countrymen in the University. The new Order originally consisted of seven men, all Spaniards, and was formally constituted in 1534

—six years later, 1540, the then Pope, Paul the Third, officially recognised the new Order, of which, naturally, Ignatius himself became the first general. Several original features distinguished the new Order from the beginning. We may note the more important of these: Loyola's

Order was not named after its founder, like earlier religious orders, but after Jesus himself, and it thus staked a claim to universality; it also had a *military* title, to indicate its special character of a *military* organisation. It was the "*Company of Jesus*"—the title "Company" ("Compania") denoting a *military* formation in the Spanish Army. Further, the new Order, universal and military in character, was further distinguished by a special oath of allegiance to the Pope, coupled with the obligation to go *anywhere* that the Vatican may enjoin. This special characteristic constituted the Jesuits—as the new Order soon came to be called—as the mobile shock troops of the Catholic Church, in which capacity they soon became known and feared by friend and foe alike.

## "The Spiritual Exercises"—The Jesuit "Mein Kampf"

Ignatius Loyola was not only the Founder of a famous religious Order, and a Canonised Saint of the Roman Catholic Church, he was, also, the author of a famous book, *The Spiritual Exercises*, which the present writer has elsewhere described as "The *permanent* general of the Jesuits"; a more conventional description of *The Spiritual Exercises* is, "the drill-book of the Jesuits." For the entire period—1540-1955—during which the Jesuits have flourished, their whole training has been, and is, based on Loyola's "Exercises." Like the great counter-revolutionary that he was, Loyola borrowed much from earlier sources; not only Christian, but, it would appear, Muslim as well. It was these latter borrowings, though, of course, quite unacknowledged, and the heretical outlook which they embodied that, probably, got him into trouble with Spanish Inquisition, which, as we have not forgotten, was originally founded to combat Muslim and Jewish heresies. For example, the famous motto of the "Company of Jesus," still to be seen emblazoned on every Jesuit church, *ad majorem dei gloriam*, is a literal translation from the *Arabic* motto of a *Muslim* Dervish (religious) Order. So, also, is Loyola's famous simile on obedience in his letter to the refractory Portuguese Jesuits, where he exhorted them to be, "like a corpse in the hands of the undertaker, like a stick in the hand of an old man." Prof. Hermann Muller—*Ignace, Lainez, et les origines de*

## —VIEWS and OPINIONS—

### "The Power and Secret of the Jesuits"

#### 1.—Origins and Characteristics

By F. A. RIDLEY



la Compagnie de Jesus, and the present writer's book—*The Jesuits, a study in counter revolution—The Spiritual Exercises*, may be termed as the "*Mein Kampf*" of the Jesuits. It represented a complete manual in which are embodied their fundamental aims.

### "The End Justifies the Means"

It is hardly possible to discuss, even in a summary as this of "the power and secret of the Jesuits" without making a brief reference to the celebrated formula so often alleged against the spiritual sons of Loyola, viz., that, "the end justifies the means." Much controversy has raged on this point, but it would, as far as this writer's knowledge goes, be difficult to pin down any particular statement of this nature in the voluminous *corpus* of Jesuitical literature. The Jesuits, of course, as specialists in casuistry and in "moral" theology, often dealt with the ever-recurring problem of "ends and means." Their general principles were unexceptional: thus, if a mad dog attacks a child, and a bystander shoots the dog, the "means," shooting, is "justified" by the "end," the protection of the helpless child, conversely, if a cutpurse waylays a bank messenger, shoots him, and steals his cash, then the same "means," shooting, is not justified by the "end," robbery with violence. More than such elementary commonplaces no reputable theologian, Jesuit or any other, ever appears to have promulgated as a *general* psychological principle! The proposition, "*any end justifies any means*" is too psychologically self-contradictory to have been argued anywhere outside a madhouse. Where the Jesuits—or, at least, *some* Jesuits—did go "over the borderline," was where it came to *particular* instances. For example, eminent Jesuit scholars, authors of standard text books, undoubtedly gave a very wide interpretation to the phrase,

"self defence," where the killing of notorious enemies of the church, for example, Protestant monarchs, was sometimes explicitly permitted. To take a particular instance, Guy Fawkes, a pupil of the Jesuits, undoubtedly believed that his "means," the simultaneous blowing up of the (Protestant) King, Lords, and Commons, was "justified" by his "end," the restoration of England to the "True (Catholic) Church." He found, probably, justification for this point of view in current Jesuitic theology. Here, Mohammedan influences may, perhaps, be traced. Religious assassination was, and is, a Muslim practice dating from the original *Assassins*, the mediæval followers of "The Old Man of the Mountains."

### "The Counter Revolution!"

In a succeeding article we will trace some activities of the famous "Company." Here, we are more concerned with the "secret" of Jesuitism than with its "power"! In general, one can define the Jesuits as the great strategists of modern Catholicism. They have "adapted"—key-word of Jesuitism—the Roman Catholic Church to the needs of *modern* society and of the *modern* age. Some of their "means" which ensured this "end" will be described in a succeeding article. Essentially, the Jesuits represent the genius of *counter-revolution*. Modern movements of counter-revolution have learned much from the Order. A century ago, the brilliant free-thinking French historian, Jules Michelet, tersely summarised the historical role of the sons of Loyola throughout their long, active and varied history.

Michelet wrote: "Take any man-in-the-street, the first passer-by, and ask him, 'What are the Jesuits?' He will answer without hesitation, '*The counter-revolution.*'"

(To be concluded)

## Still More on Hybrids

By COLIN McCALL

MR. PAUL VARNEY warns freethinkers of the danger of "reading the theories of modern biologists, for many of them," he says, "are religiously fundamentalists." (*The Freethinker*, March 25, 1955.) For the benefit of those same freethinkers I must repeat Pope's warning of the danger of a little learning, because Mr. Varney exemplifies it to an alarming degree.

It is obvious that he is unacquainted with the basic elements of classification. Otherwise he would not write about "species of either animals, birds or plants." Birds *are* animals. Animals are divided into Invertebrates and Vertebrates and one class of Vertebrates is Aves or Birds. To write of "animals or plants" would be in order: to write of "animals, *birds* or plants" is nonsense. Instead of railing against some unnamed biologists who "for the sake of big sales and future knighthoods, put forth their subjective nonsense about the 'Great Architect,'" Mr. Varney might more profitably refer to the three works I cited, the authors of which are concerned merely with the furtherance of biological study.

Clearly Mr. Varney has not understood the quotations I gave him; clearly, too, he has not checked them—as the first word in his article indicates. "If Dr. A. W. Haupt states . . ." he begins. I gave him the reference so that he could read exactly what Dr. Haupt "states." But he prefers "to take the ruling of the greatest biologist that the world has ever produced, Charles Darwin" (I wonder how many others he has read?). It is not my intention to decry Darwin. But, great though he was, Darwin was limited by his times, and his works are not scriptures providing the last words on biology. If Mr. Varney regards

them as such, it is he who is fundamentalist and helping to "bring about sterilisation of the intellect and stagnancy to beneficial scientific progress."

Whether he likes it or not, the term "hybrid" is used, by biologists, to denote a cross between varieties of the same species as well as between different species. These two types of hybrid are termed respectively, intra-specific and inter-specific, as I previously said. It is notably in the former that heterosis or hybrid vigour is discerned, and it was with the intra-specific human hybrids that my original article dealt. The position was stated plainly by Dr. C. H. Waddington, viz.: "In crosses between animal varieties, hybrid vigour is usually found and advantage is often taken of it in raising beef cattle for instance. A similar enhancement of vigour is sometimes found in wider crosses, between different species . . ." (*An Introduction to Modern Genetics*, George Allen & Unwin, 1939, p.318).

I suggest that Mr. Varney consults this and other modern biological works before he asserts that a recognised expert (Dr. Haupt) is "wrong." The plain truth is that Mr. Varney is wrong. And, incidentally, he might check up on his English, too. The third paragraph from the end of his article does not make sense; there are also bad errors in the preceding paragraphs.

—NEXT WEEK—

ROBERT BURNS  
By COLIN McCALL



# Religious Life in the Soviet Union

By GEORGES ORY

(Translated from the French by Valentina Manoussou)

THIS communication is perforce very incomplete, for documentary sources are rare and unprecise. It takes the form of only a simple sketch, not aiming to give a picture of the religious life in Soviet Russia, but to give only a description of the organisation of the Churches. Although all the great religions, with the exception of Hindooism, are represented on the territory of the Union, we shall limit the analysis to the position of Christianity and particularly the Christianity of the Orthodox Church.

## PRESENT-DAY ORGANISATION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

(1) *Facts*: In 1914, the Orthodox Church in Russia was officially computed to be 98,500,000 of her population, approximately 65 per cent. of the population of the realm; the bulk of these Orthodox is composed of the "Russians" spread all over the immense area of this State.

Among the non-Slav populations belonging to the Orthodox Faith, one can cite the majority of the Finnish population (4 millions), some of the Caucasians (2½ millions), without counting the Yakouts of Siberia, the Tartars of Kazan, the Koreans, the Samoyedes, etc.

It seems that between 1914 and 1947 the number of the Churches fell from 54,000 to 25,000, the number of chapels from 26,000 to 3,500; the officiating priests from 57,000 to 33,000; the number of bishops from 149 to 66; monasteries from 1,025 to 80, and Theological Academies from four to two.

It must be noted that these figures have not been verified, and that one must bear in mind the following facts:—

(a) The population between 1914 and 1947 has increased about 50 millions for the whole of U.S.S.R.

(b) The figures noted here were not related to the same extent of territory.

(c) The renewal of the clerical life between 1941 and 1944 is due to the annexation of the former Imperial possessions, and to the German and Rumanian occupation in the south of Russia.

To give an idea of the division of the Churches in the large towns, one can cite the following figures: Moscow: 55 churches, instead of 657 before 1917; Leningrad: 10 churches, against 155 in 1929.

In 1914, the Orthodox Church had in Russia 1,025 monasteries, with 94,600 monks or novices, etc. To-day, this figure has fluctuated between 90 and 100, according to some sources; according to others it is 70.

The greater part was to be found in the territories that have been attached to the U.S.S.R. after the second world war.

(2) *Theological Education*: At the beginning of the Revolution there were four ecclesiastical academies in Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev and Kazan), having 1,000 pupils, 58 seminaries with 19,000 pupils and 185 clerical schools with 29,000 pupils. All these institutions were closed at the beginning of the Revolution.

Between 1944 and 1947, two academies (in Moscow and in Leningrad), as well as eight seminaries, were re-established.

The library of the Institution of the Moscow Academy, rebuilt from nothing, now has 30,000 volumes.

These academies have no set programme of education; the teaching assumes, as in the past, a character of individual research.

Education is free. The students receive monthly payments. They must be no younger than 18 years and no older than 49.

(3) *Publications*: The Moscow patriarchate publishes a monthly review: "The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate," containing 80 pages. Also it publishes works in many languages, as: "The Truth about Religion in U.S.S.R.," "The Orthodox Church and the War"; and also liturgical books.

(4) *The Financial Position of the Church*: The Orthodox Church in Russia does not possess any landed or other property; she has only the use of vestments, chalices, etc., used in the services of the cult.

In spite of being deprived of State aid, the Church participates actively in different loan enterprises of the civic authorities. During the last war a whole column of tanks—the Dmitri Donskoi Column—was built by the funds collected by the Church.

These funds are almost entirely constituted by the offertories organised during the hours of services, as well by the sale of the prosporas (a kind of consecrated bread used in the communion) and the Church candles.

The dioceses possess factories for the making of candles and workshops or photographic laboratories where the icons are reproduced.

The clergy is relatively comfortable, at least in the large cities. The monthly stipend of the Patriarch is 50,000 roubles; a Metropolitan, 30,000; an Archbishop, 20,000; a bishop, 12,000; a priest, 4,000 to 5,000 roubles.

Priests who can no longer officiate, and the widows of the priests, are assisted materially by the Church.

(5) *The Administration of the Church*: The Russian Orthodox Church is directed by the Patriarch of Moscow jointly with the Holy Synod. The Patriarch is the Bishop of the Moscow diocese; aided by a junior bishop. He is in constant touch with the Financial Council of the Orthodox Church, working in connection with the Council of the Commissars of the People.

The Holy Synod is composed of six members (diocesan bishops) under the presidency of the Patriarch.

The Metropolitans of Kiev, Leningrad and Krutitzky are permanent members the temporary members are chosen from the list of the bishops according to seniority and length of service since consecration.

The Catholic Church that in 1921 had in Russia about 1,600,000 worshippers, has practically ceased to exist since 1934. The Churches in the former Polish territories now attached to the U.S.S.R. have apparently been closed and the priests dispersed.

As to the Churches in the Baltic lands and the Sub-Carpathian Ukraine (Ruthenia), it can be considered, despite absence of information, that these Catholic Churches have disappeared, or their congregations have joined the Orthodox Faith.

The Protestant Churches have had their activities much reduced and they no longer possess seminaries to educate new pastors.

Russian religious sects which existed before the Revolution still continue in the confines of legality, and yet other sects have been born. On the eve of the war of 1939 in the Ukraine alone, one could find at least twelve newly-formed sects; the last born now dating from 1949.

All these sects are distinguished by their anti-governmental character and by their apocalyptic nature.

(To be concluded)



## This Believing World

Every now and then some influential journal notices the existence of *The Freethinker*—and, what is more important, what it stands for. As an example, in a recent issue of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, Mr. J. V. McAree devoted nearly two columns to our paper, and he considered it “a great thing that its publication should be permitted” to go on “its blasphemous way.” Mr. McAree thinks that if we were prosecuted for blasphemy the Chapman Cohen Fund would be doubled in a month. Much more likely that it would be doubled in a week. Whatever their faults, the British people still believe in free speech—though not, of course, in every kind of free speech.

Before coming to Britain this year, the Rev. B. Graham predicted that we were “about to undergo the greatest spiritual awakening that we have seen in two decades.” He also predicted—according to the *Miami Herald*—that New York “is bound to face ultimate disaster if it continues its sinful ways” quoting “the Wages of Sin is Death”—the favourite aphorism of all evangelists in church or on a race course. Still, he has to indulge in some prophecies, the prerogative of all Divine Men of God. Even, as is almost always the case, subsequent events prove the prophecies completely wrong.

We are not surprised to learn that long-playing records can be put to other uses than merely playing complete symphonies or operas. The National Presbyterian Church in Washington has been presented with two albums by President Eisenhower containing the complete New Testament and the Psalms. What have the people who complain of the misuse of scientific discoveries to say of that? Could anything be more dreadful than to listen to some parsonic voice reeling off the complete New Testament on a gramophone?

On the Radio, the B.B.C. obligingly beguiled us during Lent with an account of the “Holy” Land called a Lenten Journey which consisted more of long extracts from the Gospels read in that “reverent” voice always assumed when dealing with the Precious Word than in descriptions of the towns and places visited. It was unadulterated boredom. Yet the secular activities in the towns and farms in Israel should surely provide some splendid material for graphic illustration infinitely more interesting than tracing the “footsteps” of a myth.

The Bishop of Grantham objects very much to people coughing and sneezing in church—no sergeant-major allows them on parade, he declared the other day, so why should they occur in church? Well, why not try a spot of Divine Healing? Sternly drag the culprits to the Altar, pour a jugful of olive oil over them, utter the Holy Words as piously as possible, see that the Laying-on of Hands is as if this came from Jesus Himself—and hey, presto! the coughs and the sneezes will disappear. Or they should.

We always thought that “Teddy” boys were so called because they wore (or hoped they wore) the styles prevailing in good Edward VII's day. This is all wrong. According to a Mr. Bill Wigmore, of Bristol, who is seventy-six, and is as evangelical as Billy Graham, “Teddy boys wear the garb of the Devil.” Query—were King Edward's contemporaries therefore wearing the garb of the Devil? If not—why do these evangelists talk such undisguised bosh?

Every now and then, according to our psychic journals, we are told how easily mediums “confound” celebrated

conjurers. The latest example is one reported in a recent number of *Psychic News* detailing how the well-known American medium, Frank Decker, completely confounded the famous magicians Dunninger and Blackstone, both members of the Magicians' Society. Needless to add, no authority was given for the story, and it reads suspiciously like other stories connected with Decker in which he appears always to “confound” famous magicians, when subsequent investigation proves his stories are, to put it mildly, utterly untrue.

It can be proved that Decker completely “failed in two seances to produce phenomena” in a test case organised by *Science and Invention*, but he is always boasting how he “confounds” various magicians according to psychic journals, a “confounding” for which there is nothing but his bare word reported. Actually, magicians all over the world ridicule Spiritualist claims—though there are a few puzzled at a trick they haven't fathomed, fall for spook explanations. And they are laughed at by their fellow conjurers.

## Review

*Human Society in Ethics and Politics*, by Bertrand Russell; (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1954)

SOME may disagree with Russell in certain of his opinions but nevertheless it is a new addition, and a very interesting one, to the many books already written by this great philosopher to promote freethinking and humanism.

In this book, Bertrand Russell analyses the development of Ethics in society, trying first to come to a universal definition of “good” and “bad,” as these two words have variable and often contradictory meanings in space and time, and even inside of specific society. He then studies Man in relation to society, analysing the various impulses and external influences which govern our moral life, and especially the effect of passions on society and politics.

In the course of this, Bertrand Russell once more demolishes the claim of religion as a moral guide and the often heard favourite idea of our religious people who say that more religion will make the world a better place to live in.

He says, for example:

“It is completely mysterious to me that there are apparently sane people who think that a belief in Christianity might prevent war. Such people seem totally unable to learn anything from history . . . and so the upholders of ancient systems complain of materialism and say that science is forgetting spiritual values. Those who speak in this way are compelled to overlook what myth has done for mankind—the long ages of human sacrifice, of cruel rites, of burnings at the stake, and punishment of those who sought knowledge. They have to forget the cruelty which men have attributed to their gods through making their gods in their own image. . . . They have to forget that, in so far as the world of myth has been purged of its cruelty, this has happened in reluctant response to science. Knowledge has been the liberator by destroying the mythical excuses for cruelty.”

He also points out the seriousness of the present world situation but nevertheless remains quite optimistic about the future of man. We can but agree with his conclusion that:

“The future of man is at stake, and if enough men become aware of this his future is assured. Those who are to lead the world out of its troubles will need courage, hope and love. Whether they will prevail, I do not know; but beyond all reason, I am unconquerably persuaded that they will.”

Let us hope that it will be so, and make every effort in that direction relentlessly and without getting discouraged by the multiple difficulties we meet in our path.

J. TOUDIC.

CAN MATERIALISM EXPLAIN MIND? By G. H. Taylor.  
Price 4s.; postage 3d.



# THE FREETHINKER

41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.  
Telephone: Holborn 2601.

THE FREETHINKER will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates (Home and Abroad): One year, £1 4s. (in U.S.A., \$3.50); half-year, 12s.; three months, 6s. Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

## To Correspondents

Correspondents may like to note that when their letters are not printed, or when they are abbreviated, the material in them may still be of use to "This Believing World," or to our spoken propaganda.

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

Mr. F. A. RIDLEY writes: Perhaps Mr. Wright will be good enough to explain how the substitution of a small r for a capital letter alters the meaning of the word "rationalist" in the case of Mr. Cohen or of anyone else. If for example, one spells "god" with a small g does this bring a deity to life?

## Lecture Notices, Etc.

### OUTDOOR

Blackburn Branch N.S.S. (Market Place).—Every Sunday, 7 p.m.: F. ROTHWELL.

Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Deansgate Blitzed Site).—Every weekday, 1 p.m.: G. A. WOODCOCK.

North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, April 24, noon: L. EBURY and H. ARTHUR.

Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Every Friday at 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

West London Branch N.S.S.—Every Sunday at the Marble Arch from 4 p.m.: Messrs. RIDLEY, EBURY and WOOD. *The Freethinker* on sale outside Hyde Park.

### INDOOR

Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Mechanics Institute).—Sunday, April 24, 6-45 p.m.: H. NEWTON, "Communism and its Critics."

Junior Discussion Group (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Friday, April 22: R. E. PRENTICE, B.Sc., "The Budget."

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, April 24, 11 a.m.: A. ROBERTSON, M.A., "The Struggle for Survival."

## Atheist or Rationalist?

By H. IRVING

NO one who knew him ever had cause to complain that Chapman Cohen, either in speech or in his writings, was ambiguous or obscure. He was crystal clear. He styled himself an Atheist because that word admitted of no compromise. When, therefore, in response to my protest against labelling Cohen a "Rationalist," Mr. F. A. Ridley counteracts by asking if I "will give chapter and verse where Mr. Cohen declares he is an 'irrationalist'?" I am left wondering whether Mr. Ridley has ever bestowed more than a fleeting glance on the writings of that gifted freethinker.

I cannot give "chapter and verse where Chapman Cohen declares he is an 'irrationalist'"; nor can I perform the same miracle in respect of any living person. For who would declare himself an Irrationalist? Such a phenomenon might rank as No. 1 exhibit in a freak show. Wisdom and foolishness are alike buttressed by reasons.

If we fall for such a question-begging proposal, it naturally follows that Cohen was a Rationalist, and by the same token everybody else is included in that category.

If the N.S.S. and *The Freethinker* subscribe to such a quixotic notion, then indeed they are flogging a dead mule to make it go to nowhere in particular.

Chapman Cohen, with characteristic insight, brings the blurred image into focus when he says: "The attempt

## The Chapman Cohen Memorial Fund

Previously acknowledged, £826 9s. 4d.; J. Arkell, 10s.; L. Sanderson, 5s.; W. H. D., 5s.; F. Ford, 5s.; Mr. Nicholls, 2s. 6d.; D. J. Crowle, 5s.; A. Hancock, 1s.; F. Allman, 3s. Total: £828 5s. 10d.

Will subscribers please indicate "second contribution," "third," "weekly," etc., and it will then be acknowledged as such. The purpose of the Fund is to keep "The Freethinker" in existence.

Donations should be sent to "The Chapman Cohen Memorial Fund" and cheques made out accordingly.

to divide people into 'Rationalists' and 'Irrationalists' is quite fallacious and is philosophically absurd." Reason is the prerogative of neither: both reason.

"The only ultimate distinctions are those of religionist and non-religionist, supernaturalist and non-supernaturalist, Theist or Atheist. All else are mere matters of compromise, exhibitions of timidity, or illustrations of that confused thinking which itself gives rise to religion in all its forms."

In all conscience this is clear enough to show that Cohen repudiated the title of "Rationalist," but if more than this is demanded for proof, it can be found in his essay on "Atheism—English and French," where he contrasts the attitude of the French and the English to "Atheism"—to the greater glory of the French.

"In France," he says, "the man who doesn't believe in God calls himself an Atheist, but in England he can disguise himself under half a dozen aliases, Agnostic, Rationalist, a believer in 'Ethical Religion,' or more commonly he may say nothing at all about it.

"He will defend the use of these aliases on the grounds that people do not like such a term as Atheism, or they consider it offensive and therefore some other term must be found that is acceptable. He does not realise, apparently, that it is his duty not to give people what they like, but to teach them to like the right kind of things; and that by *pandering* to the religious world in this manner he is helping to perpetuate the very mental faults he should be most anxious to destroy."

Cohen scorned the use of any of these aliases; and there are still numbers of old freethinkers of the Bradlaugh-Foote-Cohen tradition who believe that if the word "Atheism" is unpopular, then the more necessary the fight to make it popular.

Speaking for these freethinkers we deem it a slur on the reputation and integrity of our late distinguished leader to dub him "Rationalist."

Bradlaugh's *National Reformer* used to head the front page with apt quotations. One of them may appropriately close this article.

"Let us speak plain: there is more force in names than most men dream of, and a lie may keep its throne a whole age longer, if it skulk behind the shield of some fair-seeming name."

## Chapman Cohen Said—

Orthodoxy would have nothing but man's past before him.

Those who argue for religion on the ground that it brings comfort are not looking for truth but seeking a narcotic. They take a drug when they need a stimulant,

Wherever you find a God look for a savage.

It is well that Kings and Queens should insist on the maintenance of forms, otherwise it might be discovered that they were no more than a mere ceremony.



## Notes on a New Gospel—2

By H. CUTNER

IT would be impossible for any writer "restoring" the Gospels to their original condition and boosting up Jesus again, not to notice Josephus.

In my own experience, I have only to mention that there is no evidence whatever that Jesus Christ was an historical personage when Josephus is hurled at me. Even Jews, who are taught to look upon Josephus as thoroughly untrustworthy and a Quisling, and are ready to question any quotation from his works never, never, question the reference to Jesus printed in our English translations. And it is no use, of course, to point out that numerous Christian scholars have long since given up the passage. No Jew these days is going to give up Jesus, the greatest of all Jews, so long as Christians worship him as a God, and who better than Josephus as an almost contemporary witness?

But however unpalatable it may be, even Messrs. Graves and Podro in *The Nazarene Gospel Restored* have to admit that the passage in Josephus describing Jesus as "a wise man" is a forgery; though the blow is softened by telling their readers, "This passage has evidently been substituted for another . . ." in which the operative word is "evidently." "Evidently" to whom? Certainly not to those of us who are convinced that Jesus is a myth. There is not a scrap of evidence that the forged passage has been substituted for another. It is pure speculation.

Mr. Graves is a very well known and accomplished novelist, so naturally he has no difficulty in "inventing" what Josephus should or may have written—"The original may well have run as follows:" he blandly tells his readers. I have no intention of quoting and discussing this blatant piece of nonsense. What I can point out however is this—that if there had been a Jesus, Josephus would have known all about him for his father was a man of distinction who lived right through the supposed ministry of Jesus, and must have told his son all about the marvellous Teacher and Founder of the new sect which was attracting so many Jewish converts. Josephus himself must have known all about Peter, Paul, Stephen, and the wonderful Acts of the Apostles, with their regular preaching in the synagogue and in particular the conversion of Paul and his peregrinations and his quarrels with Barnabas, as well as his famous Epistles. Yet there is not a line in his works that he knew anything whatever about any of these, and I submit that invalidates completely the "testimony" of Josephus. It is damning to people like Messrs. G. and P.

Fifty years after the death of Josephus, we get the testimony of another Jew, Trypho, as reported by the Christian Justin Martyr. He bluntly told Justin that Christians had "invented" the story of Jesus—and that it is *they* who say Jesus was crucified. Now, how could Trypho talk like this if there really had been a Jesus and a Crucifixion? The truth is that the Jews of the second century (and there could not have been many left after the numbers killed at the fall of Jerusalem and the Bar Cochba rebellion) knew nothing whatever about a person called Jesus Christ. This is proved by the fact that in the earlier part of the Talmud, the Mishna, he is not mentioned except once, while in the later part, the Gemara, the most fantastic rubbish about him is reported with the same kind of glib comments added by various rabbis which they were in the habit of pouring out on all sorts of other subjects with exactly the same "authority."

Messrs. G. and P. (or perhaps it is only Mr. Podro) drag in the Talmud as if outsiders ought to believe statements therein exactly as Jews have always done in their ghettos.

And all of them object to outsiders criticising it. It is a "holy" book, and what it says is, if not exactly divinely inspired, very nearly so. Well, I am quite certain that the Pentateuch is not inspired but is the work of some clever literary men—like Mr. Graves himself—with the gift of writing fiction or working up stories derived from other sources and claiming it all came from God. As for the Talmud, which is a kind of repository of talks by a number of rabbis over the centuries put down—as far as we can judge—by their pupils, and "edited" or compiled from all sorts of notes and manuscripts about the sixth century, it is mostly a huge compendium of supernatural explanations and ideas many worth practically nothing these days. A number of shrewd observations can, of course, be cited from it, but the world would not be much worse off if the Talmud were completely to disappear.

What a lot of more or less stupid rabbis said centuries after the supposed events about Jesus and Mary and a Roman soldier called Pandera or the Panther is just drivel. They had no means whatever of gathering evidence or even understanding evidence; and while some of them, no doubt, were by no means sure of the supernatural, it would never have done to tell their pupils so. It was their job to hold the remnants of believers in the Old Testament together, and they did it with their rituals—just as Christianity is still followed by people going obediently to church and sticking to *its* ritual.

Some of the things said about the "Founder" of the rival religion were too much for the Christians of the Middle Ages who proceeded promptly to destroy all the copies of the Talmud they could get on the grounds of "blasphemy"; and Jews tearfully protested that the Jesus in the Talmud was not Jesus Christ but another Jesus who lived a century or so before. And with the aid of what some Jew told Celsus about Jesus Christ when that pagan philosopher was attacking Christianity as a conglomeration of myth and nonsense, the Jews produced a "life" of Jesus of which two versions have come down to us. (One of them, the *Sepher Toldeth Jeshu*, was, by the way, published by G. W. Foote with learned notes by J. M. Wheeler.)

The truth is, of course, that the way Christianity expanded made it necessary for the rabbis who wished to keep their flock together, to invent a host of yarns about the rival religion so silly that even Mr. Podro is obliged to admit that some are unintelligible. Yet he produces them in *The Nazarene Gospel Restored* as if there was not the slightest doubt of their authenticity—so anxious is he to find Jewish testimony to his hero. There is *no* Jewish testimony. Between them, Josephus and Justin Martyr have shattered that dream to smithereens.

It must not be thought that, though Messrs. G. and P. have "restored" the original Gospel, this means that they disagree altogether with the present one. By no means. Whenever they want to prove something and can go to the Authorised Version for "evidence," they do so; it is only when they do not agree with the A.V. that overboard it goes. In some cases, it is true, they discuss the rejected quotation, but in many cases they tell us what Jesus said as if there is not the slightest doubt whatever that he said it. The story of the Woman Taken in Adultery is absolutely genuine—though it is rejected by the Revised Version; it must be true because it is so *like* the real Jesus. The story that Jesus told his followers to hate their parents simply cannot be true, it is so *unlike* Jesus. Therefore it is "a gross forgery"—a pious mystery *not* solved by our two authors.



# The Clerical Caste

By MIMNERMUS SECUNDUS

The services of the clergy are imaginary, and their payment should be of the same description.—G. W. FOOTE.

THE inimitable Bishop Ingram, in one of his numerous appeals for cash, described the professional workers in the Lord's vineyard as belonging to "a rotten profession." This very plain statement upset some of the Bishop's own admirers, and the right reverend prelate was constrained to explain later that he was thinking only of the financial point of view, and was not at that moment concerned with other, and, perhaps, graver aspects of the case.

From a purely material point of view the calling of a clergyman cannot fairly be described as "a rotten profession." The enormous financial resources of this Church of England run into millions of money, and include such lucrative sources of revenue as agricultural tithe, coal royalties, ground-rents, and ancient endowments, formerly belonging to their predecessors, the Romish Church. It is, however, a sorry trade when judged by ethical and intellectual standards. The State-aided Church of England subscribes to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, which, written centuries ago, make the most curious and interesting reading in the year 1955. They include the belief that Christ went bodily to hell; that a spirit can be at the same time a father and a son, and all proceed from itself as a ghost; that Adam was the first man, and that he ate forbidden fruit, in consequence of which countless millions are damned to everlasting torture; that the Roman Catholic religion is a vain invention; that the Christian Bible is the actual Word of God; and that Elizabeth the Second is the head of the real Church of Christ.

To these Thirty-nine Articles of Faith, among others, every Church of England priest, from the youngest curate to the Archbishop of Canterbury, subscribes. If they cannot believe in them, or observe them; then they are engaged in taking money by false pretences. Their main reason for remaining in this State Church are "purple, palaces, patronage, profit, and power," as a former cheerful Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral happily expressed it.

The first dozen Articles are aimed at Nonconformists, and all but one ends with a curse, a distinguishing mark of vertebrate Christianity of the Ages of Faith. If you deny the Royal supremacy in Church affairs you are cursed. If you deny that this Parliamentary-made Church teaches the doctrines of Jesus Christ you are cursed. If you say that the official Prayer Book of this State Church is out of harmony with the Christian Bible you are cursed. And so on, and so forth, in the true spirit of Christian charity which used to send men and women to the torture chamber and to death by fire for a mere difference of opinion on theology. But that the law of the land overrides these ecclesiastical canons, everybody who refused to attend parish churches would have been cursed, and the names read out in churches.

It is a grievous and a bitter thing that boys and girls and ignorant people should be taught such mischievous nonsense in language which leads them to believe that millions of fellow-citizens are outcast in this world, and will be damned in the next. It is an affront to the spirit of Democracy. For no one can be a loyal Churchman without renouncing his mental and moral freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of a priest. These priests, from the greenest curate to the most gorgeously appressed archbishop, claim to be sacred persons, and members of a caste apart from their fellows. Unless a man accepts them and their hocus-pocus, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. That is State Church teaching for the

masses, tempered with polite reservations for the classes. Is it not "a rotten profession?"

So far, the State-aided Church of England. Let not the Free Church ministers of the Gospel lay the flattering unction to their souls that they are made of finer clay. They are just as much priests as their trade rivals of the Anglican Church. Does not Milton remind us that presbyter is but priest writ large? These Nonconformist ministers are engaged in precisely similar work to the Church of England priests; and both bear a very marked resemblance to the coloured medicine-men in savage nations. They tell us of gods who get angry with us; of a dreadful devil who must be guarded against; of angels who fly from heaven to earth. Thousands of men are engaged in this business in this country. And their profession is as honest as fortunetelling, but not more so. Many a poor, old woman has been sent to prison for taking money from a servant-girl, after promising her a handsome husband and four fine children; but these Christian ministers are allowed to take large sums of money for promises of good fortune in an alleged "beautiful land above." Is it not a sorry trade?

There is nothing in all this holy hocus-pocus which entitles its professors to be revered, except the extreme simplicity of their devotees. What entitles them to be addressed as "Reverend"? In what way are they so far superior to other tradesmen, or ordinary men who are simply "Misters." These are questions which are worth the consideration of those who do more than pay lip service to the cause of Democracy.

Seeing that precious little merit attaches to the clerical profession, are we to assume that reverence is due to the exemplary lives led by those belonging to this specially favoured class of the community? Divorce Court proceedings and Police Court records show that the clerical character in no wise differs from that of any other class. They may retort that there are black sheep in every fold. That is quite true, but people who are not professional religionists do not make the slightest pretension to being a sacred class apart. They do not ask, they do not even dream of asking, to be known as "reverend," or by any other title implying special respect. It is precisely because the ministers of the State Church, and the fancy religions, expect us to look up to them that we are compelled to compare their behaviour with their boasting. When they decide to come down from their sacred pedestals, and discard their haloes, we will make the same allowance for them that we make for business men who do not need a dog-collar to announce their peculiar sanctity.

Naturally and inevitably we are progressing beyond the reach of old-world Oriental ideals. They voice views which men have outgrown, and to which we cannot respond. They come like "the horns of Elfland, faintly blowing," and we realise that they were meant for other ears than ours, and are but an echo from the far-off days of bigotry and ignorance. The conscience of the race is rising above old-world dogmas, but we shall never emerge from the aftermath of Feudalism whilst we continue to support tens of thousands of priests in our midst, whose life-work is the perpetuation of the outworn ideals of the bad old days of Kingcraft and Priestcraft.

**SPECIAL.**—The coming of the General Election (May 26) offers Freethinkers the chance of questioning candidates on matters relevant to the secularist position. We hope, in a forthcoming issue, to suggest possible lines of questioning.



# Correspondence

## ATHEISM

Atheism, as I understand it, is the assertion that Gods do not exist and moreover, cannot exist.

Correspondent J.F.K. writes, "Atheism is true by process of reason, the only true guide amid all the distractions of the ego." He next says: "Gods are now seen to be home-made, each for its own market, though no one *knows* that they don't exist."

Now this involves self-contradiction. If there is even a shadow of a doubt that Gods do not exist, then obviously Atheism, as I have defined it, cannot be "true" in the sense that the proposition "Two plus two equals four" is true.

What J.F.K. is really saying amounts to this: "I have not come across any evidence which suggests to me that any Gods exist, and therefore have no reason to believe that there are any." This is a perfectly sensible and consistent position to adopt. But there is all the difference in the world between saying: "I know of no God," and categorically asserting: "There cannot be a God; the existence of such a being is an impossibility."

A consistent Atheist must adopt the latter position.

If someone is setting out to demonstrate that Atheism is true, he must not assume that the point is "proved" when he says that *he* has no belief in any God.

S. W. BROOKS.

## THE WOLF IN SHEPHERD'S CLOTHING

The clergy are very fond of likening themselves to shepherds and their congregations to sheep and how apt is the comparison which is symbolised by the bishop's pastoral staff.

The shepherd protects his sheep from the devouring wolf not for their sake but for his own profit. After carefully pulling the wool over their eyes, he shears away their nice warm coats every spring and when they grow too old to produce wool they end their lives in his slaughter house to provide mutton for the butchers and cash for the shepherd.—Yours, etc..

BARNUM.

## "A UNIVERSAL SECULAR SOCIETY"

May I take advantage of D. Macdonald's remarks on the re-arming of Germany, to point out that in my freethinking on the question of world peace I have reached a point at which I absolutely reject the possibility of "securing the promotion of peace between nations and the substitution of Arbitration for war in the settlement of international disputes." The crux of the matter lies in the fact that "international law" is an actual attempt to combine two irreconcilable principles. On the one hand we have an assumption that the nations will remain sovereign powers (which means that they will bow to no superior authority), whereas on the other hand we have the idea of world law coming in (which means that all political authorities in the world will bow to one over-all authority).

In accordance with the terms of the purpose of "promoting world peace," I would therefore suggest that we must reject one or other of these conflicting principles. The one I reject is, of course, the principle of parts of the world (i.e., nation-states) having sovereignty. In that principle lies the peril of humanity. Sovereignty means supreme power, and in practice this means a claim on the lives of all citizens. Now when rival national groups exercise this power, as is clearly the case in the world at the present time, we have the very basis of the possibility of international war. The alternative is, of course, to adopt a world-consciousness to replace the many national-consciousnesses which now inspire the people in the world.

To this end we must reform education in every country. Perhaps the N.S.S. could lead the way by re-naming itself "The Universal Secular Society."—Yours, etc..

E. G. MACFARLANE.

## IF CHRIST CAME BACK!

One of the papers that was foremost in vituperation of Mrs. Margaret Knight and the B.B.C. was the *Daily Sketch*. That journal has since been printing special articles and letters on "If Christ Came Back!" Although all readers of the paper were invited to contribute, only one set of views has been expounded, which shows how low journalism has sunk when the subject is religion. I ventured to send the following letter, as I thought the question gave some scope for imagination, even for Secularists.

My letter was acknowledged with thanks, but not printed. It ran as follows:—

"Suppose you went home to-night and found Christ sitting in the chair opposite you?

"I should ask him to be good enough to use his miraculous powers and heal the incurables at home and in hospitals, and to return the sanity of all those that are mentally ill—something

which they cannot do for themselves. I should also ask Christ to prevent disease germs from coming into existence; and to make health catching instead of disease.

"In view of the great mysteries which have puzzled mankind for centuries, here are a few more questions which I should be moved to ask Christ—

"(a) What is the true story of Creation and, assuming that God created the world, how did He come into existence in order to perform the act of creation?

"(b) Where is heaven and hell actually situated; how many millions of people dwell in each of these spheres?

"(c) Are the adherents of other religions and philosophies disqualified from reaching the Christian heaven and hell?"

The *Sunday Observer* is also printing articles and letters on religion and morals. There was a very good article by Bertrand Russell, and there have been several letters from Freethinkers and Rationalists. So full marks to the *Observer*.—Yours, etc..

ALFRED CORRICK.

## SECULARISM AND MORALITY

"Secularism affirms that this life is the only one of which we have any knowledge, and that human effort should be wholly devoted towards its improvement. . . . Secularism affirms that morality is social in origin and application and aims at promoting the happiness and well-being of mankind."

Accepting the above N.S.S. principles, Secularists also imply the acceptance of a certain code of behaviour. True, it is not morality in the generally accepted sense of the word, but if we agree that happiness is attainable and desire mankind to be happy, this becomes our criterion, and it behoves us to act accordingly.

Good behaviour then becomes that which is conducive to this end. "Right" in this sense means right for some particular set purpose. In other words Secularists adopt a pragmatic view of behaviour, and base their motives on expediency.

In the generally-accepted sense "ought" implies duty, and does not countenance the word "can't." For Secularism "ought" implies "can," and is really a form of advice, not an appeal to duty. "Ought" here means "It would be better to," or "If I were you I would."

Goodness in this strictly Secular sense means doing what you can, and what you want to do for the happiness and well-being of mankind. Accepting this as a criterion, Secularists establish not a system of morality or ethics as generally understood, but a system of behaviour which is consciously directed towards the attainment of desired ends.

Secular standards are based on the observation of human behaviour. It is seen that certain things are conducive to human happiness, and it then becomes possible to judge human behaviour on this criterion. There is also the practical advantage which this viewpoint gives to Secularists. It enables them to speak the same language. They may disagree sometimes about means, but cannot disagree about the end.—Yours, etc..

G. L. DICKINSON.

## RATIONALISM

In his *Rationalist Encyclopedia* (page 480), Joseph McCabe defined Rationalism as: The principle that all questions relating to religion or religious creeds must be settled by reason or by the individual critical examination of arguments and evidences, not by revelation, authority, tradition, emotion, instinct, or intuition.

I fancy that Chapman Cohen would have fully subscribed to this definition by McCabe, who was as much an Atheist as he himself was.—Yours, etc..

F. A. RIDLEY.

## N.S.S. Executive Committee, 6th April

Present: Mr. Ridley (in the Chair), Mrs. Venton, Messrs. Hornibrook, Cleaver, Tiley, Barker, Johnson, Ebury, Arthur, Taylor and the Secretary.

It was agreed that an application to form a new Branch at Dagenham be granted. 18 new members were admitted to the Parent, Glasgow, Bradford and Dagenham Branches. The Secretary was instructed to proceed with Conference arrangements. Mr. F. A. Ridley was chosen to be nominated by the Executive Committee at the Conference as President for the ensuing year, and Messrs. Griffiths and Barker were appointed delegates to represent the Parent Branch.

The Annual Report and Accounts of the North London Branch were submitted, and the Branch was congratulated on its continued success.

The gift by a member, Mrs. V. V. Fowler, of a portrait of Charles Bradlaugh from the painting by the Hon. John Collier was reported, and the Secretary was instructed to send the Committee's warm thanks.

P. VICTOR MORRIS, *Secretary*.