

The Freethinker

Vol. LXXVI—No. 36

Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

Price Fivepence

THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER of *Rerum Novarum* is seen from its title (On New Matters), for, prior to 1891, when it saw the light, the Vatican had taken no notice, at least officially, of the existence of modern industry, of the capitalist order of society which crossed to Europe from England, where it had originated, and spread rapidly from country to country during the second half of the 19th century.

Prior to *Rerum Novarum* the Vatican had given no indication that it realised the existence of the Industrial Revolution or of its human products, the two great classes of industrial society, the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat. In the political field Rome had fiercely opposed the French Revolu-

tion and its continuation in the European upheavals in 1848, the "Year of Revolutions." The Church remained allied to the semi-feudal absolute monarchies, and Pius IX had officially and solemnly condemned Liberalism, Socialism, Communism and the field of progress as, all alike, subversive both of Christian and civil society. In a world moving at headlong speed into industrialism Rome had remained obstinately rooted in the stagnant atmosphere of the Middle Ages.

The Middle Ages End at Rome

As I have elsewhere phrased it, "With the appearance of the encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* the Middle Ages ended at Rome." This Vatican pronouncement, unlike its predecessors, officially recognised the Industrial Revolution as a *fait accompli* and took the current conditions of the capitalist system and modern industrialism as its starting point. *Rerum Novarum* was, and still remains, the first and the most complete official statement of the social policy of the R.C. Church face to face with the modern world, the central social feature of which lies in its industrial character and in the recurring conflicts between the rival social classes. For this reason *Rerum Novarum* is still one of the most important social documents of the present age. As continued and supplemented by its sequel, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) it still forms the theoretical basis of the world movement of Catholic Action, of which it forms the (as it were) Magna Carta.

Catholicism, Capitalism and Socialism

Disregarding the rather long-winded ecclesiastical jargon which habitually characterises documents from the Papal Chancery, and summarising the essentials, one can say that in *Rerum Novarum* the Vatican proclaimed itself as the "rejoicing third" in its contemporary European society. It sharply and impartially criticises both the dominant social and economic philosophies of the day; the *laissez faire* doctrine of bourgeois Liberalism, which then dominated the competitive capitalism of the period, and the socialist doctrines of economic determinism and class war, which then represented the revolt of the workers. Both, according to Pope Leo, were inimical to Christianity and

to a just society. As regards capitalism the Pope roundly declared that its inequalities were fantastic and its exploitation inhuman, implying a return to servile conditions, the abolition of which has been—it is the Pope who speaks—due to Christianity. "A few rich men have been able to lay upon the mass of the labouring poor a yoke little better than slavery itself." It is perhaps not surprising that *Rerum*

Novarum got a mixed reception; many Catholic employers refused to have it read in their factories.

Whilst, however, the novel social relations imposed by competitive capitalism resulted in shocking abuses and indeed in the virtual enslavement of the workers to their capitalist masters,

yet the proposed remedy of Socialism was actually worse than the disease. Leo repeats his predecessor's explicit condemnation of Socialism and Communism, then (1891) virtually synonymous terms; the second Socialist International had been founded in 1889 and an Italian Socialist Party already existed. Leo re-states the traditional Christian view that private property, the state, rich and poor, are natural and moral institutions created by God and expressly commended by him in the Bible, which assumes their validity; Socialism is based on irreligion, preaching hatred between class and class and a contempt for spiritual values. The remedy lies, not in Socialism, but in the application of Christian principles and in the reform of the terrible abuses which industrial capitalism introduces, and which Socialism would only accentuate with its irreligious philosophy.

In issuing *Rerum Novarum* the Papacy staked its claim to be the independent arbiter of contemporary society; it was no longer content with a seat in the wings, but wanted the centre of the stage, to become in effect the "Rejoicing Third."

A Summary of "Rerum Novarum"

What is the essence of Leo's social encyclicals and the policy of Catholic Action—a term subsequent to 1891—and the social policy which it embodies? "Construed against the widest historical perspectives, it signified for the Papacy, in the first place the acceptance of the capitalist world as the starting point of its public policy; it had abandoned connection with the vanished medieval world which the Popes of the Restoration had sought to restore. Secondly, by offering its services as mediator between capital and labour it advanced a claim to survive as the third great power in modern society, independent of the two great social classes whose conflicts dominated the new social era. Last, the Papacy appealed directly to the masses, advertised its own claim as a more efficacious protector of working class interests than were the Socialists, whose materialistic philosophy of history it denounced, and whose revolutionary plans it repudiated as superfluous and suicidal. In fact, Leo XIII officially adopted the ideas of Lamennais for an alliance between the Papacy and the

VIEWS and OPINIONS

Social

Catholicism - 2

By F. A. RIDLEY

masses. The essence of the new Catholic social policy, as conceived by Leo and practised by his successors, was that it seeks to establish a balance of power in European society." (cf. F. A. Ridley, *The Catholic Church and the Modern Age*, pp 11-12.)

The social policy first enunciated by Leo XIII has now taken effect in the modern world-wide movement of Catholic Action, founded by Pius XI, who also issued a detailed supplementary document to *Rerum Novarum* called *Quadragesimo Anno*, which likewise is a source document for Catholic Action, and more openly reactionary than its predecessor. Its denunciation of Socialism is sharper and elaborated more systematically. All forms of Socialism are explicitly condemned precisely on account of their underlying secular assumption that *this* life should be mankind's first concern. This is denounced as being inconsistent with Christianity. Here the Pope explicitly declares that no Socialist can be a Christian! " 'Religious Socialism,'

'Christian Socialism,' are a contradiction in terms. No one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist." Pius rashly makes no secret of his pro-Fascist sympathies and explicitly recommends Mussolini's Fascist "Corporate State," a passage, one imagines, very embarrassing to present day Catholic critics of, say, Communist "Totalitarianism."

Catholic Action and Contemporary Freethought
We have already denounced Catholic Action as Public Enemy No. 1; it is certainly so to the international free-thought movement, a fact perhaps more clearly recognised abroad than here. Catholic Action here represents an underground movement whose devious ways are not always easy to follow, but its fundamental principles are to be found in the two documents briefly analysed above, the study of which, we suggest, is of first importance to Freethinkers.

An Early Rationalist

By R. READER

AN EARLY RATIONALIST of known history was the Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (later Ikhnaton). When he came to the throne (c. 1375 B.C.) the conquests of Thutmose III, consolidated by Amenhotep III, had welded Egypt into a single empire. She had also begun to evolve spiritually, but the traditional worship of Amon, the State god at Thebes, still flourished side by side with the cults of scores of other deities, all intensely parochial, mutually exclusive, and often existing in two or more alternative forms.

Intelligent far beyond his time, Amenhotep IV sought a new religion to neutralise both the rival sects and the parasitic priesthood of Amon, and at the same time to give expression to the infiltration of new ideas and the dawning consciousness of the universality of mankind. With unerring judgment, he chose the best in the new cult of Aton, the sun disc, and decreed it the official religion of all Egypt. For a time, at least, his strategy had all the appearance of success.

The city and palace of Akhetaton (now Tel-el-Amarna) were built 300 miles from Thebes. Here the "Hymn to Aton" was written — probably by Amenhotep himself. This work is a deeply reverential but non-mystical praise of nature in all its aspects, especially of the sun as "the source of all life and inspiration." (Who, in the light of modern science, can deny the basic soundness of Amenhotep's choice, or its infinite desirability to the foul religious neurosis now swaying a degenerate humanity?) Later critics have attempted to read into Amenhotep's religion a worship of an intangible god, forerunner of Christianity, coolly ignoring the whole material foundation of his ideas. The "Hymn to Aton" was universal, not national; it was the first intimation that mankind was indeed one species and owed allegiance only to the natural phenomena of its material existence. It later inspired, even if it did not actually furnish the material for the much-vaunted and inferior 104th Psalm of the Old Testament, and it was entirely free from the spiteful curse with which the latter ends.

Discarding both the 2,000 years old pomp of his ancestors and the masochisms of religious neuroses, Amenhotep lived simply and naturally, worshipping truth as few others have ever done. Above all true to himself, he changed his name of Amenhotep (= "in whom Amon is content") to Ikhnaton (= "Aton is satisfied") and caused all references to Amon, the former god, to be removed from existing tombs, even those of his own family.

Ikhnaton eventually failed, and his work was overthrown by later Amonite priesthoods. But the impact on the art of his period was immense. He instituted a freedom of portrayal and natural subjects and poses that conservative Egypt had never previously known. Two outstanding examples remain to us, both from the ruins of his palace at Tel-el-Amarna.

The first is the bust and head of Nefertite, Ikhnaton's young queen. After the endless array of self-conscious and godlike attitudes and representations, one comes upon her vital natural beauty with an almost shocked surprise. She is a living person, near to us for all the 3,300 years that have passed, in a way that Cheops, Chephren, and Zoser, for all their magnificent building, never are.

The second evidence of the mental and spiritual awakening of Ikhnaton's time is the painting of the palace gardens at Amarna. It breathes a passionate love of natural beauty. The flowers bask lazily in the Egyptian sun on that early morning of 3,300 years ago and the wildfowl proudly display their plumage. All is fresh and tender, as clear and limpid as Ikhnaton's lovely young queen who spent her happiest moments here.

And then the curtain falls on that brief but poignantly beautiful vision of the unsullied early world. A century later, the old dogmas and spites are back again, the old tormenting preoccupations with a hereafter, the old spectacle of priests using next worlds to gain their ends in this, the old religious deifications of the "I".

All history is dotted with such moments when it seemed that humanity would climb out of its daydream to stand on its own feet at last. But always the foul influence of the religious neurotic thwarts and strangles its best intentions. Today it is too late. Everywhere truth and beauty are being perverted to serve the ends of degenerates. The consolation — a poor one admittedly — is that immense forces are carrying things swiftly to an end that assuredly cannot be far.

—NEXT WEEK—

ALFRED KINSEY — AN APPRECIATION
By G. H. TAYLOR
GENEVA REPORT
from F. A. RIDLEY

The Church and Mammon

By SEAMUS

POSSIBLY very few Freethinkers have taken any interest in the recent controversy between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the late secretary of his Historic Churches Preservation Trust. The fundamental issue was simple. The secretary wished to use money collected from the public at large for the preservation of buildings of historical worth as such, whilst the Archbishop only wanted those maintained which could still be utilised as centres of his religious propaganda. As the money had been collected from people of all beliefs and none, justice would seem to lie on the side of the secretary.

In some areas, the old parish church embodies in its stones and ornaments the only surviving history of the area, and its preservation may be a matter which is of concern to many others than those who accept the particular theological tenets of the Church of England. But the controversy also calls attention to the number of Church of England churches which are disappearing in the larger cities owing to redundancy; London provides an example after example spread over its length and breadth. These disappearances raise certain very practical questions for the ordinary citizen which he is apt to overlook.

The Church of England is a heavily endowed corporation which has inherited tithes and land. In many cases, these endowments belong to the individual parish and were left or given for this specific purpose and not for general church purposes. Quite clearly, the land upon which a particular church stands is a part of this specific and particular endowment. The time arrives when the church becomes redundant. The building is pulled down, as have been several recently in central London and the site is sold. In some cases, these have been purchased for very large sums. Report has it that one central London site was sold for £100,000, whilst another fetched no less than £160,000. There have also been a large number of others sold besides the two particular ones to which reference is made here. The ordinary citizen will want to know what has become of the money. He has a right to know if only because it is part of an endowment which has belonged to a specific parish. If the church is no longer needed, it could, for example, be applied to the secular and social well-being of the parish at large as were some of the surplus endowments of the Welsh Church at its disestablishment.

On the contrary, a very different policy seems to have been followed. The money is reported somewhat vaguely to have gone to the diocese. It is difficult to believe, in most cases, that the number of new churches built is equal financially to the sums realised by sale. Writing in the *Manchester Guardian* for July 26th, 1956, a clerical author asked this question and was vouchsafed no sort of reply. His letter hinted that these sums go to swell the diocesan financial pool. If this be so, a serious question is brought to light. An individual endowment is taken away from its original beneficiary even to the extent of alienating it from the district to which it was given. It is then applied to some entirely different church purpose. If this is not a case of moral misapplication, we simply do not know what would be one! In the same way, we suspect that sums of this kind are used from time to time to balance deficient budgets. There is, we believe, a capitalising of assets to back up a failing business. But this is a risky game.

Any student of the Church of England as it is will know that it has become obsessed with evangelisation of a semi-Billy Graham type. Falling numbers are to be met by a

rush to make converts. It has also become obsessed, as a sequel to this policy, with making money, the sure sign of a failing business! Learning and scholarship have gone by the board. We could name more than one diocese where the bishop is elderly, entirely lacking in culture or scholarship, falling back upon a somewhat unctuous piety, and directing a business concerned with the raising of ready money at all costs. In one such case, he is assisted by an ex-stockbroker, now the wearer of a dog collar, whose main spiritual purpose in life seems to be to show his fellow-parsons "how it's done"! Every means by which money can be raised will be tried out. Appeals for money to save historic churches will be made by the score so long as the money can be diverted in the long run for theological propaganda. Sites may be sold and the money placed in a common pool which, again in the long run, is going to be used to finance this propaganda. It is a policy which is impossible to justify morally simply because it cuts across the whole meaning of endowment and trust funds; a site is as good as tied up by a trust-deed or a conveyancing deed. It is not an attempted endowment, a prospective endowment, an endowment fund which has not been tied up. It is an endowment pure and simple and should not be alienated from the district to which it was given. Likewise, if the Church of England has reached a stage where it is forced to capitalise its assets, it should say so openly and its balance sheets should disclose the stringencies in current finance under which it is working. Reserve funds are a risky business and belong more to the portals of the Stock Exchange than to those of the temple of the Lord! It is not a little curious to watch those who are over-anxious for the morrow and are busy rendering unto Caesar the whole of the available assets! Not a few of the elderly prelates to whom we have referred are rabid upholders of the *status quo* in politics. We wonder how they square this sort of thing with their strong support for hereditary land-holding, the historic means by which they have got their seats in the House of Lords!

The matter affects those who are concerned with local history. They should not allow theological designs to rob them of buildings which reflect the rise and growth of local culture because they are no longer needed for worship. But it also concerns the ordinary citizen for it cuts at the whole root of security of endowment and tenure. Clearly, in the question of the sale of sites, there is a matter to be examined and the ordinary citizen might do worse than to take pen, drop a line to any of the more active Members of Parliament, and get them to look into the whole question. Indeed, then, what is heard in the ear may well be shouted on the house-top.

AN F. A. RIDLEY QUIZ

(Based on articles by F. A. Ridley in our last six issues.)

1. In what year did the Pope claim spiritual infallibility?
2. "The Koran of international Socialism." Who thus described which book by whom?
3. What are the five busts outside the Secular Hall, Leicester?
4. What is the first stage of being canonised (made a saint)?
5. Who are the two Popes now destined to become saints?
6. In what book did Schweitzer devastate the belief in the divinity of Christ?
7. The Company of Jesus (Jesuits) was formed initially to fight what enemy?

(Answers on page 292)

This Believing World

The late G. W. Foote used to make great play with some of our clergy who, following a Deity and preaching his Gospel of "Blessed be the poor," so often left many thousands of pounds behind them. Here we now have the late Archbishop of York leaving such a nice little nest egg as £36,000, and no one is surprised. We wonder what exactly he did to earn this money? For producing something himself, or getting others to do the producing, urged on by holy inspirational "advice" from himself? But let us hand it to him—at least he was brave enough to ignore his Master's trenchant teaching, "Take no thought for the morrow"!

★

We note that the Rev. J. S. Yorke of Bridge Green has been trying to convert a "sun worshipper," Mr. G. Harbour, to Christianity, "but without success." According to Mr. Yorke, Mr. Harbour is "a kind, good-living man," but he is quite wrong in "worshipping the sun." But why? What is it that Mr. Yorke himself worships? Is it not "the Light of the World"? After all, as Mr. Harbour insists, "without the sun there is no life, no health, and no light," and he has found if he is out of work a prayer to the sun brings him a job at once. Sun worship "keeps him happy" and what can Mr. Yorke give him more than that?

★

The difficulties brought about by the Suez crisis and, indeed, by any other difficulties this country of ours is immersed in, can easily and effectively be cured. All that is needed is for our bishops to open the world famous Black Box left by Joanna Southcott when that Divine Lady, who expected to bring forth, virgin-like, the Messiah again, unluckily died of dropsy. Her faithful followers, who expected a Messiah, had to be content with a Black Box, and they have faithfully hidden it until our bishops come to their senses and agree to open it.

★

Of course, they did agree once and the Box was opened. In it was — we are quoting from memory — a rabbit's foot and a couple of naughty French novels, neither of which seemed of much use in the crisis then. But the Heads of the Panacea Society of Bedford deny that this was the genuine Box, which is now in their possession. So what about it? Incidentally, the advertisement about the Box appeared in the *Daily Mail*, and one of its slogans is "Truth in Advertising." Does the *Daily Mail* really believe in Joanna Southcott and her precious Black Box?

★

Cross Keys in Monmouthshire gave its Christian population a horrid jolt the other day. To raise money for old folks at Christmas, one of its councillors organised a "Lady Godiva" ride through the streets, and one young lady was courageous enough to do it in "the altogether" except for a wig. This was too much for parsons like the Rev. W. Mercy, head of a Pentecostal sect, who promptly ordered his flock to pray for rain — a deluge if possible — to spoil the show. Needless to add, God Almighty obligingly consented, and Lady Godiva had to go through with it in torrents of rain as well as in a gale.

★

This proves two things — first, the wonderful efficacy of prayer, and, second, that miracles are not only possible but can be supplied straight from Heaven if reverently prayed for. It also proves that even God himself could never stand the spectacle of any properly brought up young lady riding in the nude on a horse. We hope that both TV and the cinema will give us a picture of the ride, and so inculcate

in us a hatred for the things which displease so mightily the Christian conscience, the Rev. W. Mercy and his flock, and even the Lord himself. It should prove a salutary lesson for us all.

A Marxist View on Literature

By VICTOR E. NEUBURG

IT IS A GOOD MANY YEARS since the first appearance of Ralph Fox's *The Novel and the People*, an excellent introduction to the scope and range of Marxist literary criticism. There is a tendency in England to equate Marxism with politics and to disregard or underestimate it as a philosophy which can be applied to the study of history, literature, anthropology, and other fields of study. Even so, Marxist scholarship in both history and anthropology is a good deal better known and less rare than comparable literary studies. The appearance therefore of a work of criticism dealing with contemporary literature from this point of view is something of an event.

Jack Lindsay's book *After the 'Thirties* (Lawrence and Wishart, 15s.), in some sense complementary to Ralph Fox's, is provocative and readable, and provides a comprehensive view of the contemporary novel as seen by a Marxist. The crisis in literature has been discussed at great length during the last few years. There is much agreement as to the existence of such a crisis, but very little as to its precise extent, and what has caused it. The decay of "Western values," the crumbling of "Christian civilisation," unpropitious times, and a sense of rootlessness, are all blamed in varying degree. Lindsay comes more directly to what he considers the heart of the matter: "the integrity of an author's work can only be maintained if he aligns himself with the basic struggle of the people."

His first chapter is devoted to analysing the problem. There is need, he claims, for writers to clarify their ideas about the nature and function of art, and also their ideas about the society in which we live. The chapters which follow discuss the writers of the twenties and thirties. Three writers typify the retreat from the struggle. They are George Orwell, Stephen Spender and Arthur Koestler, all of whom were actively concerned with the first fight against Fascism during the Spanish Civil War. Lindsay gives an analysis of their work, in which he sees each one as "projecting on to socialism the constrictions, distortions and regimentations which he has reacted against in capitalism."

The writer who typifies this process most clearly is the poet, T. S. Eliot, from whose work some highly illuminating quotations are given. From his long poem, *The Waste Land*, there has been a steady progress — or regression — to despair in humanity, and the doctrine that only by saving one's own soul can one live. It will be seen that this is the sharpest possible antithesis to the Marxist doctrine of involvement in the class struggle, and the gap between the divergent views is so wide that it seems hardly possible that it will ever be bridged.

It is precisely this cleavage that accounts, in Lindsay's view, for the malaise which affects so much creative writing today. For Graham Greene, in *The Heart of the Matter*, the issues of colonial administration are of less importance than the adultery of a police officer. Further examples are given in this book, and it is impossible to disregard its thesis. It demands an answer; therein lies another problem. For the Catholic writer like Greene the matter is simple. Human salvation is of more importance than colonial administration. What does injustice matter so long as souls are saved? For the humanist or Freethinker, the matter is not so easily resolved, and a good deal of hard thinking is required.

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 10s. (in U.S.A., \$4.25); half-year, 15s.; three months, 7s. 6d. 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.

Lecture Notices, Etc.

OUTDOOR

- Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Broadway Car Park).—Sunday, 7.30 p.m.: Messrs. DAY, NEWTON and SHEPPARD.
- Kingston Branch N.S.S. (Castle Street, Kingston-on-Thames).—Every Sunday, 8 p.m.: J. W. BARKER and E. MILLS.
- Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Deansgate Blitzed Site).—Every weekday, 1 p.m.: Messrs. WOODCOCK, SMITH and FINKEL. Sundays, 7.45 p.m.: Messrs. MILLS, WOODCOCK, SMITH and FINKEL. Platt Fields, 3 p.m.: Messrs. WOODCOCK, MILLS and others.
- Merseyside Branch N.S.S. (Pierhead).—Meetings most evenings of the week (often afternoons): Messrs. THOMPSON, SALISBURY, HOGAN, PARRY, HENRY and others.
- North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead).—Every Sunday, noon: L. EBURY and A. ARTHUR.
- Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Friday, 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY and R. POWE. Sunday, 11 a.m.: R. MORRELL and R. POWE.
- Wales and Western Branch N.S.S. (Bristol Downs).—Every Sunday, 6.30 p.m.: DAVE SHIPPER.
- West London Branch N.S.S.—Every Sunday at the Marble Arch from 4 p.m.: Messrs. ARTHUR, EBURY and others.
- West Ham Branch N.S.S. (Victoria Park).—Every Sunday, 7 p.m.: J. L. SHEPHERD and others.

INDOOR

- Birmingham Branch N.S.S. (Satis Café, 40 Cannon Street).—Sunday, September 9th, 7 p.m.: T. MOSLEY, "Christianity and Progress."
- Central London N.S.S.—Holborn Hall (Room 6) Tuesday September 11, 8 p.m. Discussion following Branch Business.

Notes and News

RECENTLY the Spanish Bishop de Vizcarra complained of "an anti-Catholic offensive which is bold and tenacious." In the Catholic journal *Ecclesia* he writes:

Numerous heretical books are being distributed free. One Catholic journal has collected 524 different samples of this literature.

In six years 54 new Protestant chapels and meeting places have been opened in Spain without any official authorisation. During the summer of 1955 seven congresses or international gatherings were held by the various Protestant sects.

Yet the Catholics are the first to squeal if their own freedom of action seems likely to be threatened in non-Catholic countries. The Catholic morality appears to be: "On your principles we demand freedom for ourselves. On our principles we deny freedom to you." And they justify this by their arrogant claim to be the One True Church.

★

THE Spanish Government, as Catholic as any in Spain's history, recently seized 30,000 Bibles, prayer books and

tracts from the Madrid headquarters of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Yet the Bishop, with his Catholic mentality, can talk of the bold offensive against Catholicism!

★

AN Australian journalist, Mr. H. G. Kippax, following his visit to Russia, has exploded the notion (which has comforted religious devotees for so long) that there is a revival of religion in the U.S.S.R. Examining the often made claim that in Russia the churches are packed, he says: "Of course they are. Moscow, when it had a population of three million, had 300 churches; now, with eight million people, it has 30. Leningrad, with four millions, has only 11 churches and two synagogues. Of course they are packed. . . They are packed with old people. I went to church in five Russian cities from Leningrad to the Caucasus and found them all packed, but I doubt if I saw more than a score of people under 30 in all of them together."

★

ARTICLE 124 of the Soviet Constitution provides that "Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens." This means, as compared with this country, the removal of special religious privileges. Religion has to take its fair chance in the struggle of ideas. What happens? Is there a religious revival? Not in the least, reports Mr. Kippax. On the contrary, he writes, religion "is dying. The State no longer needs to bother about it or its adherents—old grandmas who sneak their baby grandchildren off to be baptised." And as Mr. Kippax is far from being anti-Christian himself, his testimony may be regarded as unbiased.

★

A RELIGIOUS service was recently held in the Domesday flour mill at Botley (Hants), in which the rector, the Rev. M. Carey, blessed the mill's produce. Work in the mill was stopped while this Divine Event was taking place. The blessing will, of course, immeasurably improve the product. It will even turn wholemeal into holymeal. If the rector is to continue such quixotic practices we must now expect to see him tilt at the Domesday windmill.

★

AMONG the current local press controversies in which our freethought supporters are participating two deserve special mention. At Barnsley the Rev. S. Rose has revived the old Christian lie about a "challenge to Bradlaugh" by the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, and offers to bring to the platform a hundred Christians testifying to the benefits of a Christian "conversion." When counter-challenged to engage in debate with an N.S.S. representative he did not accept because it would be "pointless." However, the *Barnsley Chronicle* does not usually protect Christians from freethought criticism, and at the moment Mr. Rose and his supporters are getting thoroughly belaboured by their townsman, Mr. H. Irving, one of our most experienced press controversialists.

★

In the West Riding a controversy has arisen out of a prophecy made by the Archdeacon of Halifax, to the effect that England will be a Catholic country by the end of the century. A correspondent, Mr. Dove, has advanced the view that the greater probability is that by the end of the century "the majority will be agnostics or even atheists," and further, that the Roman Catholics will be the only organised Christian body in the country.

Other Religions in Korea

By D. SHIPPER

ALTERNATELY with Buddhism, Confucianism has greatly influenced religious life in Korea. Its introduction from China preceded the era of the Three Kingdoms, and from 969 A.D. to 1036 A.D. gained the upper hand at court but then gave way to Buddhism.

The latter declined after the Mongol invasion of the 12th century and by the 15th century the political influence of the Confucians began to reach its peak, and retained this hold on affairs right up to the time of growing Western contacts.

Confucius, like Buddha, was practical, and stressed the importance of ethics, with emphasis on gentleness and compassion, but Confucius was silent about the hereafter. In contrast, the Korean type of Buddhism included dogmatic teaching about a future life with heavens and hells.

Koreans regarded Confucianism as educational rather than religious, and it remained unchanged in outlook for hundreds of years. The *Korean Handbook* for 1955 tells us that "Its results were to produce cultured and urbane agnostics with a stoic background and a great insistence on the repression of all emotions." Even today this trait is seen in the Korean character, very often over-polite and sometimes expressionless.

Chondokyo (the Sect of the Heavenly Way) is another important religion, although it is less than a century old. It started in South Korea as a Messianic cult (in 1859). Its founder was a man born in Kyongju (Kyongsang Pukto province) in 1824. He had rejected Catholicism and claimed that in a state of religious ecstasy he received divine guidance for establishing a new religion. It was called (at that time) Tonghak (Eastern Sect) as a contrast to Sohak (Western Sect, as Catholicism was then called).

Chondokyo was growing rapidly in any case, but gained strength when its founder was made a martyr in 1865. Because of his monotheism he was suspected of Christian affiliations and caught in the general persecution of Christians. His new cult was spreading among the people as a secret religion, like the also new Catholicism.

This religion being Korean in origin, a strong nationalism was soon blended with it, and it became a factor to be reckoned with as opposition to all foreign influences — but particularly by the Japanese.

In 1893 the Tonghak rose in strength and drove the Japs out of Korea. However, the resulting instability led to Chinese troops becoming an occupying power and this, in turn, produced the Sino-Japanese War of 1894.

With greater outside impact on Korea, religious toleration appeared, Tonghak grew and took the name of "Chondokyo" in 1915. Its principal leader died in a Japanese prison (in 1919) as an Independence Movement martyr (this followed the compulsory annexation of Korea by Japan) and this martyrdom again led to a growing strength in numbers.

During 1930 an outside source made an estimate of two million communicants. Ministry of Education figures for 1955 give us a total (in South Korea) of 87 Chondokyo churches with 268 preachers and one and a half million believers.

Catholic missionaries first appeared in Korea in 1592, but at that time Christianity did not gain a hold. Its fundamentals became popular with some young Koreans after Christian books were brought from Peking in 1603-4. In the latter half of the 18th century Christianity was spreading, and in 1791 Korean representatives visited Peking to invite Christian preachers and import their religious publications. After the closing years of the 18th century Chris-

tianity grew in strength and numbers, and inevitably there were conflicts between the new religion and the traditional beliefs.

Organised Protestant mission work began in 1884 with the American Presbyterian Mission, followed by others from Australia, England and Canada. By 1931 Christian Churches were claiming 381,000 adherents (110,000 by Catholics). Among those active were the Methodists, Seventh Day Adventists and Salvation Army.

When hostilities between Japan and China intensified in 1937 the Japanese, trying to assimilate the population, requested all scholars in Christian schools, as well as other schools, to attend ceremonies at Japanese Shinto shrines.

By 1940 most of the Protestant missionaries had left Korea, the relations between U.S.A. and Japan having deteriorated. At the end of the Second World War came a period of re-settlement, but when the Korean War broke out in 1950 this was a blow to many churches who had their headquarters in the South and most of their property in the North (or vice versa). Sixty per cent. (estimated) of the Christian strength was rooted in the North and the Northern Government was antipathetic to the largely western-financed Churches who had worked in close co-operation with the Americans. Today the Christian Church wields an influence in South Korea out of all proportion to its numbers.

In 1955 the National Assembly had a Christian President and Vice-President and approximately 20% of the Assembly seats were held by Christians. As, in spite of the strong indoctrination attempted by the various Christian sects, only 3% of the population profess Christian beliefs, Christian representation would, to the impartial observer, seem to be unduly large.

To substantiate this allegation a study of the *Handbook of Korea* for 1955 (issued by the South Korean Office of Public Information and probably edited by Hongkec Karl, the Korean Goebbels) would prove enlightening.

In the "Religion and Culture" section, 29 pages are given to religion, 16 to cover the whole cultural field! Of the 29 pages, only 10 are shared by the other religions and 19 given to Christian propaganda.

It would seem then, that one of the most potent factors in shaping public opinion — namely, the Government propaganda organisation — is Christian-controlled, and as they undoubtedly have an exceedingly strong hold on Korean educational policy, I believe Christianity will gain in strength and numbers.

PROOF POSITIVE

THE REV. LESLIE NEWMAN has discoursed on the kind of Displaced Persons who once attended church, but now do not. He advances the theory that they are not really lost: they still believe it all, and would not like to lose their faith, but inevitably *will* do unless association with other absorbers of the creed is maintained. He tells how he proved his point to such a D.P. in his sitting room. Leslie transferred a burning coal from the fire to the hearth, and transfixed, the silent pair witnessed it cease to burn, cease to smoke, and cease altogether to be a component of a glowing, genial association of coals. "I see your point!" cried the "beleslied" D.P., who now regularly darkens the church steps on Sunday. Dr. Newman should try to explain such live coals as Voltaire, Paine, Bradlaugh, McCabe, etc., who, more in isolation than association, burned and smoked for years, and years!

Fundamentalist and Modernist

By COLIN McCALL

SPEAKING at the Modern Churchmen's Union Conference at Oxford on July 23rd, the President, Sir Henry Self, strongly criticised the Billy Graham crusades which, he said, had set back the development of "thinking religion" in Britain. Whilst not doubting Dr. Graham's personal charm and sincerity, Sir Henry regretted the appeal to fundamentalistic acceptance of the Bible and a form of Christian doctrine which had long been outgrown. The prospects of getting a thinking religion accepted, he continued, had been set back seriously in deference to an emotionalist appeal having purely ephemeral results, however seemingly successful at the time.

In Minneapolis, the following Saturday, Dr. Graham replied to this criticism. The purely "rationalistic, intellectual" approach to religion was responsible for emptying the churches of England, he said (according to the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, 29/7/56). "The cold, ritualistic approach will not attract modern man either in Britain or America. What is needed is a warm, vibrant, sincere religion." But he stressed that an emotional appeal — or what he preferred to call "authoritative" — is not necessarily opposed to an "intellectual" approach. "I don't believe you can have faith without intellectual appeal," he added, but "emotion is involved in everything we do." And he claimed that his rallies were conducted without "emotional outbursts."

Sir Henry Self did not — so far as I can discover from the Press reports — refer to any "emotional outbursts." It is true that, compared to many other evangelistic campaigns, the Billy Graham affairs were fairly free from "outbursts"; but this does not mean that they did not depend upon an "emotional appeal." That is the phrase Sir Henry used, and it is the correct one. Indeed, Dr. Graham virtually admits as much in his defence. As opposed to a "cold" approach, he calls for a "warm, vibrant, sincere religion." "Warm" and "vibrant" are emotionally-charged words. In fact, all Graham's language is highly emotionally-charged.

Let us take the opening paragraph from one of his recent contributions to *Woman's Own* — for which he used to write every week:

All transgression begins with sinful thinking. You who have come to Christ for a pure heart, guard against the pictures of lewdness and sensuality which Satan flashes upon the screen of your imagination.

That emotional offering for the "spiritual" improvement of British womanhood supports Sir Henry's contention that Graham's outlook is fundamentalist and long outgrown by thinking persons. The outlook is quite primitive and, consequently, unrealistic. "Get a pure heart, and you can be supremely happy — no matter what the circumstances!" (my italics), and "You can commit immorality while reading unclean books and looking at unclean pictures" (his italics) are other prime pickings from this Tree of Knowledge.

It is emotional people who respond to his appeal — as I had cause to note in a "debate" a few weeks ago (reported in *THE FREETHINKER*, 17/8/56), when my opponent — a self-styled "ex-atheist" — opened with an exhortation to prayer: and when I was subsequently surrounded by a group of highly-strung maidens who urged me to read what the Bible had to say. Whether Dr. Graham or his feminine followers have read the Bible from cover to cover, or whether they have skipped those parts which might cause them to "commit immorality while reading," I cannot say. Do they know that a poor fellow who suffers a certain type

of injury "shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord" (Deut. XXIII, 1)? If so, how do they reconcile the passage with Matthew XIX, 12?

These are questions which Freethinkers have been putting to Christians for years. It is these and similar questions — reasoned, "intellectual" questions about the Bible and about Christianity — that have emptied the churches. And Dr. Billy Graham — or a hundred Billy Grahams — cannot fill them again. He may fill a vast stadium with admirers from all parts of Britain after a colossal advance-publicity campaign, with a nation-wide organisation of transportation, and no expense spared. He filled the Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, after weeks of neon-signs in the city centre calling on Glaswegians to "Hear Billy Graham," posters all over, and extensive planning. But have the church congregations in Scotland or England noticeably increased since his crusades? Of course not. Sir Henry is right again: the results were "purely ephemeral."

Yet, whilst Sir Henry Self's criticisms of Dr. Graham are valid, is his own position really sound? Or, in other words, is it possible to combine Christianity and a modern outlook? The answer is surely, no! Either Christianity is a supernatural religion, involving belief in miracles and other absurdities, or it is nothing. Without, at the very least, an almighty God; creation of the world, animals and man; a virgin-born saviour, crucified and resurrected; and a future-life; it is futile. With them it is puerile. It so happens that puerility is a prominent feature of Billy Graham's outlook; he is reported to have studied anthropology at one time, yet he still believes in Adam and Eve. Such childish acceptance of fairy-tales is impossible in Sir Henry's case. He should realise that the rest of Christianity is impossible too. Instead of clinging to the vestigial remains, he should drop them. Civilised thought has outgrown them all.

Quetzalcoatl and the Book of Mormon

By C. T. SALISBURY

THE BOOK OF MORMON contains the story of the visit of Jesus Christ to the early inhabitants of Central America, and when people began to question this remarkable statement and ask for evidence to substantiate it, the Latter Day Saints produced Quetzalcoatl, the "Bearded White God" of the Aztecs and Mayas.

When Don Hernando Cortes and his *conquistadores* arrived in Mexico, they did indeed find a tradition of a white, miracle-working teacher and they did see gigantic temples erected to this deity. This was all that the Mormons needed and, picking out the words of the old Aztec historian Ixlixihochtli, who said that Quetzalcoatl had visited America "at the time of the incarnation of Our Lord," they pronounced that Quetzalcoatl, whose name means Plumed Serpent, was only another name for the Saviour of the World. But they did not stop at this. Jesus was supposed to have been crucified and to have risen from the dead and so the Saints invented a similar tradition about the Mexican god and it is, of course, piously swallowed by the followers of Joseph Smith.

But what are the true facts relating to Quetzalcoatl. In reality he was an Aztec version of the Mayan god Kukulcan, and it is from the Quiché book, the *Codex Popul Vuh*, that we obtain the original tradition. It should be remembered that the Mayan race provided the Aztecs with

their culture and traditions, for when the latter arrived in Mexico, they were little more than savages. The *Popul Vuh* tells us that Kukulkan arrived in Yucatan when the earth was very young, landing on the coast from a magic ship. He told the primeval natives that he had come from Hue Hue Tlapalan—the Old Old Red Land—and commenced to teach them the arts of civilisation, wisdom, agriculture and freedom from disease. After he had spent some time at this task he departed, again by means of his magic ship, saying that he was returning to Hue Hue Tlapalan, but would revisit them in a year which would be called Ce Atatl.

Such a legend is very similar to the stories of the "Culture Heroes" which are gleaned from both hemispheres, and they appear to be nothing more than mythical accounts of the origin of civilisation. We have, for example, Osiris and Thoth of Egypt, credited respectively with bringing civilisation and writing to Egypt. Berosus, the old Babylonian historian, tells us of Oannes, the civiliser of Sumeria, whilst the Incas had the memory of the Ayars who had come from the East and civilised Peru, and so we could go on.

Whether these myths relate to an early colonisation is, of course, a moot point, but to equate any one of them with Jesus Christ is, of course, farcical. Even assuming that Jesus was an historical character, we can immediately see that in the genuine native legend of Quetzalcoatl there is no mention of crucifixions or ascendings; these are, as we have said, a Mormon fabrication in order to substantiate an implausible story. Moreover, the Book of Mormon tells us of the migration of the Nephites in 600 B.C., and also of the Jaredites who left the Middle East c. 2000 B.C., and it was these peoples (according to the Saints) who founded the civilisations of the Americas. Therefore, how could Quetzalcoatl, the legendary founder of occidental culture, be the same as Jesus, who arrived when the Nephite civilisation was at its zenith?

It is amazing how religious bodies will twist facts in order to give "proof" of their claims, but what is even more amazing is the fact that people with eyes to read with and a brain to reason with will believe such evidence without troubling to subject it to scrutiny.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. 1870. 2. The Catholic historian Lord Acton thus described *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx. 3. Busts of Socrates, Voltaire, Owen, Paine and Jesus. 4. The subject is beatified, and thereafter termed Blessed. 5. Innocent XI (1676-89) and Pius X (1846-78). 6. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1906). 7. The Koran (Mohammedan Bible).

G.H.T.

CORRESPONDENCE

PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN

I congratulate F. A. Ridley upon his excellent discussion of Protestant theology (August 24th). He raises some important and far-reaching points. As he suggests, the vital weakness of Protestantism as a coherent system is that it has its roots in protest. As a result, it exists as a criticism upon the system which it attacked. Historic Protestantism therefore lacked any intrinsic cultural standards of its own; it had no specific valuation of assessment and of discrimination which it could claim to be Protestant as such. Its more liberalised forms drew upon the culture of the Renaissance of the 16th century and developed a semi-humanist outlook, whilst its more Biblical side was content to fall back upon the Calvinistic stress which has accompanied it ever since.

The result has been that Unitarianism has become an unsatisfactory halfway house, seeking to combine an ineffectual liberality of thought with a rigid Puritanism in outlook, whilst the more orthodox versions have lacked any vital integration with cultural life. It is not accidental that Protestantism has produced no great art save to bring a secularising influence to bear at the Reforma-

tion which carried art over into the age of the new capitalism and the subjects for painting which it suggested. It did not produce from itself any great man of letters between John Bunyan and "Mark Rutherford," whilst "Mark Rutherford" was himself a severe semi-agnostic critic of the Protestant system. Its influence upon music has been negligible and a strictly Protestant outlook applied to historical or antiquarian studies has merely evoked distortion.

The strong point about Roman Catholicism lies in the fact that it has an intrinsic culture of its own. It presents the enquirer with a tight system of a theological culture which he can either accept or reject. Amidst a clash of opinion, it claims to know its own mind with the certainty of the dogmatist. The would-be intellectual suicide is faced with a sure haven within which he can take refuge. At the same time, it will cater for him upon the emotional side. One of the greatest weaknesses of Protestantism lies in its lack of coherent or appealing symbolism.

The Church of England has attempted to combine the two points of view and clearly falls between them. Much of its present futility and weakness may be found to have its roots in this fact. Certainly there can be little future for a body which seeks largely to meet its specific cultural lack by providing a drop scene of thought and symbol for the more reactionary social opinions of the time.

The issues are important and they raise the question whether orthodox Protestantism is not doomed within a scientific culture simply because there is no satisfactory compromise between the Catholic position and one which permits freedom of thought to lead it in an increasingly humanistic direction however many theological legacies may remain embedded within its essential humanism.

SEAMUS.

RELIGION AND THE SUEZ

No one has the right to persecute or oppress the Jews but were there neither Jewish nor Christian religion, then this question of persecution or oppression would not arise. The so-called Jews appear to have imposed Christianity upon the Christians.

There is no such thing as a true Jewish race but only the interbreeding of a section of people, who also indulge in the mutilation of their sons to oblige a ridiculous belief. Some of these so-called Jews have set up a new religious state, willing to believe that they are creating a stand for themselves, when actually all they have done is to foment more wars and dissensions. After all, as a result of the establishment of the small state of Israeli, many people, both Jewish and Arabs, have been killed and injured, yet these people were and are just as important as those not affected.

It now appears that most of the Jews are prepared to throw over any human or political convictions if these clash with what they think are their material religious beliefs, the Suez Canal having brought it to a head.

The Jews, like the English, cannot view the Suez Canal question impartially, because of material religion and because of desire for power.

H. MANTON.

AN ATHEIST'S APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY.

A survey of positions by Chapman Cohen.

Price 1/6; postage 3d.

CHALLENGE TO RELIGION.

A re-issue of four lectures by Chapman Cohen.

Price 1/6; postage 3d.

MARRIAGE SACERDOTAL OR SECULAR?

By C. G. L. Du Cann.

Price 1/-; postage 3d.

MATERIALISM RESTATED

(Third edition). By Chapman Cohen.

Price 5/6; postage 6d.

PAMPHLETS FOR THE PEOPLE.

18 of Chapman Cohen's celebrated pamphlets bound in one volume. Indispensable for the Freethinker.

Price 5/6; postage 6d.

Or at 2d. each, postage 2d. Comprising: Did Jesus Christ Exist? Morality without God. What is the use of Prayer? Woman and Christianity. Must we have a Religion? The Devil. What is Freethought? Gods and their Makers. Giving 'em Hell. The Church's Fight for the Child. Deity and Design. What is the use of a future Life? Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to Live. Freethought and the Child. Agnosticism or...? Atheism. Christianity and Slavery. Christianity and Ethics.

WILL YOU RISE FROM THE DEAD?

By C. G. L. Du Cann.

Price 1/-; postage 2d.

FRIENDLY informal international house. Plentiful food, company. Moderate terms.—Chris & Stella Rankin, 43 West Park, Eltham, S.E.9. Tel.: ELT 1761.