

# The Freethinker

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Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

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UPON THE DEMISE of the reigning Pope of Rome, the senior official of the Roman court, the Camerlengo (or Chief Papal Chamberlain) takes over the duties of the deceased pontiff, which he then exercises—along with the College of Cardinals over which he presides—until the election of a new Pope. Pope Pius XII, as Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, held this office (along with that of the Secretary of State) prior to his election in March 1939. The interim tenure of office is, however, always short, for the existing Canon Law lays it down as an unvarying rule that within the prescribed number of days (15—18) the Cardinals must assemble in Rome and go into solemn conclave to elect a new Pope. When this conclave, which may be lengthy (and the meticulous regulations for which have often been described) has concluded by the election by a two-thirds majority (which must not nowadays include the successful candidate's own vote, for the infamous Borgia Pope, Alexander VI, secured his election by voting for himself!), its decision is announced from the Vatican in the traditional formula:

"I bring you tidings of great joy. We have a Pope—  
Habeamus Papam—the Lord Cardinal So-and-so."

Thereafter the new reign of the latest Successor to St. Peter has begun.

## Pius XII

The death of the most recent incumbent of the Vatican, Pius XII, 262nd successor of St. Peter, has, after a reign of nearly twenty years, brought this procedure—with the important political and ecclesiastical facts which it embodies—yet again to the front. The powerful contemporary role played by the Roman Catholic Church in international affairs is indicated even in a Protestant land like this by the space afforded to the late Pope's illness and decease in the non-Catholic press, a publicity which would once have provoked something like civil war. But times have changed since the anti-papist riots associated with the name of Lord George Gordon, and much water has flowed under the bridges of both the Thames and the Tiber since the last Papist was hanged at Tyburn amid the execrations of the Protestant mob. Nowadays, the Church of Rome is yet again an international power, a dominant position which it owes in no small degree to the astute fishing in the troubled waters of the post-war world by His Holiness Pope Pius XII, the former professional ecclesiastical diplomat, Eugenio Pacelli.

## Pius XII and the New Counter Revolution

The late Pope, who was a Roman aristocrat by birth, and by temperament and training a politician more than a theologian or a priest, was born in 1876 and spent his entire career in the cosmopolitan diplomatic service of the Vatican. He was, in particular, an expert in German affairs, where he was successively Papal Legate in Munich (a post which he held at the time of Hitler's first unsuccessful *coup d'état* in 1923, and where Pacelli Street is named after him) and Berlin. He was subsequently Secre-

tary of State, a post which he held from 1931—1939, a period which corresponded with the Fascist counter-revolution. Pacelli, like his master and eventual predecessor, Pius XI, strongly identified the current political activities of the Church with international Fascism, particularly in Spain during the Civil War. (Perhaps his most spectacular political success was his concordat with Franco, which restored medieval conditions in Spain.) It was this fact and, no doubt, his reputation as an expert on German affairs at a time when Hitler seemed likely to dominate Europe, that explains his election as Pope on March 2nd, 1939, his 63rd birthday—certainly a magnificent present—after one of the shortest conclaves in

### — VIEWS and OPINIONS —

## Vacancy in the Vatican

By F. A. RIDLEY

Papal history. It had not been usual for a Secretary of State to succeed as Pope, but in Rome, as elsewhere, "circumstances alter cases." And he has steered the Church through perhaps the stormiest period of its long and stormy history. Looking at the matter momentarily from the point of view of the interests he is supposed to represent, Pacelli has been a successful, perhaps a great, Pope. It would not be at all surprising if he were eventually canonised, even though his services have been political rather than theological. By playing skilfully on the fears of the conservative classes in Europe and America and, in particular, on the fear of Communism, the former Fascist Pope has managed to become the leader of a largely successful Catholic Counter Reformation, in some respects similar to that of the 16th century, which eventually saved Rome from the Reformation. Rome, in 1939 the ally and champion of Fascism, has managed, somehow or other, to transform itself into the major champion of Democracy and the "blue-eyed boy" of Wall Street. This represents a very remarkable political feat, and Pacelli may well go down to history as one of the most astute of the many astute politicians who have sat in the chair of Peter—or rather, the Roman Caesars, perhaps the real prototypes of the Papacy. Rome, like every other historic institution, has to cultivate the art of survival in a changing world.

### The Papal Conclave

"The Pope is dead: long live the Pope!" The precise person to be nominated to the exalted office must be left to his electors, the Sacred—and no doubt worldly wise!—College of Cardinals. It is impossible for an outsider to predict for, as a sapient French Freethinker remarked of the last Papal conclave, even Roman Catholic laymen know no more of the factions and intrigues that go on behind closed doors and actually determine the election (rather than the Holy Spirit who is supposed to be in charge of the proceedings) than do Tibetan laymen when a new Incarnation of Buddha is elected Dalai Lama in the recesses of the Potala Place in Lhasa. However, it is certain that the conclave will be an important one, and two issues are likely to predominate and perhaps determine the eventual choice. These are the nationality of the candidate, and the now increasingly important question of

Rome's current and future attitude towards "Atheistic Communism." The practice of electing only Italians, which was unknown before the Reformation but has been continuous since the early 16th century, has been increasingly challenged in recent years. In both 1914 and 1922, the American Cardinals all voted for the Belgian, Cardinal Mercier, and now America pays the piper to the tune of some 80 per cent. at the Vatican. Money speaks all languages, including Latin! Will we have an American Pope, U.S.A. brand? It is not impossible but, personally, I doubt it. Quite possibly a non-Italian, some European or even Latin American? But I doubt if Rome will put all her eggs in the U.S. basket. As for Communism, the Pacelli

policy of "war to the knife" and an eventual atomic Eastern crusade, has not paid dividends so far, and is even less likely to do so in the future. Rome survived a Dark Age, but could the Vatican, any more than the Kremlin, survive a universal holocaust? A new deal with Communism may possibly come out of the conclave.

Whoever is elected, he will still, we may be sure, be Public Enemy Number One to international Freethought. Popes come and go, but Rome does not change in that respect.

[N.B.: An interesting account of past Papal elections will be found in *The Triple Crown*, by Valerie Pirie; Sidgwick and Jackson.]

## From Finland

By DAVE SHIPPER

MY CORRESPONDING FRIEND, V. H. Suutari, leader of the Finnish Freethought Union, in his latest report on the Finnish freethought situation, laments the shortage of the Union's active labour. This is particularly unfortunate at a time when they are pressing the Finnish Parliament for separation of Church and State, an investigation into ecclesiastical finances and Church/State relations. The Union in particular needs more intellectuals, but, says Mr. Suutari, although the educated classes have largely given up Church doctrines, they are too afraid of the pressure of the bigoted ecclesiastical authorities to take an open stand against the Church. In spite of this they *privately* support, and even encourage, the organised freethinkers in their anti-clerical struggle.

The freethinkers also suffer from restricted finances and could do with a fraction of the 7.5 milliards marks taxes the Church collects annually.

Political conditions at present can hardly raise much optimism among freethinkers. The workers are completely disunited, with many parties wooing their support. Each party is too frightened of incurring the condemnation of the Church to take a radical stand alongside the freethinkers. The freethinkers do not wish to be accused of political pragmatism and support no party in particular. But, nevertheless, they realise that only in Parliament can their battle be won and they must continue to approach the politicians. Mr. Suutari believes that the separation of Church and State will finally be achieved by the workers, especially those politically organised. Therefore the present proletarian disunity seriously weakens the power of the Union's potentially strongest support. The political confusion also hampers independent reasoning. The Church derives one advantage from this disorder, which is reflected in economic chaos. Their propaganda is cunningly contrived to show the Church as a force for progress and a supporter of better conditions for the workers. Clergymen have infiltrated the political parties and trade unions, they march with strikers and organise "hours of prayer" for the workers. Finnish labour has a history of anti-clericalism which was most prominent before the civil war in 1918. The executions of workers which took place after the war affected the anti-clerical feeling. Pre-1918 the Church was recognised as the workers' enemy but now it directs its main propaganda forces at the workers, realising that increased education is a threat to its power.

Among the educated classes they adopt a different technique. They are attempting to explain the conflict between biblical mythology and scientific fact. They understand that educated people, living in the Atomic Age, cannot be expected to assimilate fairy tales cradled in bygone days. They explain the God-idea more pantheistically than can

be allowed honestly from a Christian standpoint. Although they do not deny evolutionary theories, they limit this teaching to the Universities. In the Churches they are still preaching fundamentalism. This contradictory attitude has led to public allegations of theological hypocrisy and the matter is now being continually debated in the newspapers. Some are favouring the biblical story in Creation and claiming that man was created as related in Genesis. Opponents state that this represents the outdated naïvety of Jewish nomads and that Christians must "modernise their God."

An association of priests and lay preachers have asserted that they support the biblical story of Creation and have condemned opinion (including a bishop) which believes man to be a primate. The bishop has been quoted and supported in the "Student paper" and the writer states in unequivocal terms that if the Lutheran Church does not shed its dogmatism the intelligentsia will leave the Church and turn to Catholicism (less dogmatic in his opinion!). Naturally, this article led to heated controversy between people of various opinions, a controversy still continuing.

In the columns of *Free Word* some have postulated their theory that God is only "preserved" for the uneducated majority and educated men do not need God any more.

V. H. Suutari takes an opposing view. Many of the intelligentsia, rejecting orthodox beliefs, turn to mysticism and become obscurantists. The average worker is more realistic. He either hangs on to God, hoping to hold the door of Heaven open for emergency, or leaves God unconditionally, unconcerned with mystical explanations. The worker does not consider himself bound by the traditions and faith of his father.

However, the "shortage of enlightenment" means the Church still has possibilities to modernise its propaganda—and retain its stranglehold on Finland. Fortunately it is faced with worthy opponents in our fellow-freethinkers of the Finnish Freethought Union.

### ANY OFFERS?

The following advertisement appeared in a European edition of a New York newspaper:

"For Sale: Planet, slightly used, scarred and bloodstained, yet has supported life for a billion years. Rich in uranium, evolving man and teaching of God. Now used as proving ground for nuclear weapons, but guaranteed that the resulting annihilation to man will soon end that disturbance. Ownership not clear, though no human claimants expected after next war."

—NEXT WEEK—

ACCEPT THE TRIPLE CROWN

By F. A. RIDLEY

# The Knight—Weatherhead discussion

By G. H. TAYLOR

AS ANNOUNCED in these columns some weeks ago, the ATV discussion on Christianity in which Margaret Knight was opposed by the eminent nonconformist Rev. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, took place on Sunday evening, October 5th. Quite an important skull was added to Mrs. Knight's collection. In fact, starting from Mrs. Morton in January, 1955, Mrs. Knight's opponents have tended to increased stature accompanied by heavier falls. One recalls how the London University physicist went completely to pieces in her hands, and much the same was happening to Dr. Weatherhead when the curtain mercifully fell with the Chairman's words, "I'd better cut in there," which closed the proceedings. Beginning comfortably and with every assurance, Dr. Weatherhead's command over his case faded gradually in face of the shrewd thrusts of his opponent, and towards the end, at one point, with the camera trained on him for his reply, he could not find a single word, and the camera reverted to Mrs. Knight, who smartly took advantage of the situation. At the conclusion of the discussion, Dr. Weatherhead (always a most gentlemanly opponent, let us say that for him) resembled nothing so much as the boxer saved by the gong while taking the count.

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The principals began by defining their positions, and Dr. Weatherhead's Christianity was "not a body of creeds but a way of life" in the way that Peter gave up fishing and followed Jesus, who "rose from the dead, and convinced his followers of his resurrection, and that relationship goes on throughout life." Asked by the Chairman why she opposed Christianity, Mrs. Knight replied, "Primarily because it is not true," and she made instances of the doctrines of a personal God, life after death, "salvation" by belief, etc. It was quite inexcusable, she contended, to indoctrinate young children with such beliefs. "Jesus," replied Dr. Weatherhead, "never said you *must* believe. 'Believe' and 'must' do not go together." There was no question of coercion or an appeal to fear. Mrs. Knight immediately quoted Christ's words, "He that believeth not shall be damned." It was contemptible to tell people they would be punished with Hell if they were not credulous enough!

"I feel you've gone to the wrong Churches," interposed Dr. Weatherhead, to which Mrs. Knight replied by reminding him that the words were in the New Testament itself. If this and other doctrines were not true, then Christianity was false. But, rejoined her opponent, "We continually have to re-state our ideas in the light of modern knowledge." That, remarked Mrs. Knight, was only another way of admitting that Christianity had been to some extent civilised by Humanism. In its original state it was ferocious.

It was wrong, she persisted, to let children think that morality was tied up with religion. When religious beliefs were discovered to be fake—? But when we have lived as Christians and found it good, intervened her opponent, it is right that we should give that benefit to the child. I quote his next remark verbatim, and leave readers to sort it out for themselves, for I would hesitate to give it any meaning: "We must pass on that secret in the hope that he [the child] will find it out for himself." Truly a breathtaking gem of argument!

Jesus, he continued, "rose from the dead and turned eleven cowards into eleven missionaries." He spoke also of the psychological power for consolation which Chris-

tianity brought. "You use certain techniques of auto-suggestion," Mrs. Knight corrected, "which you then proceed to ascribe to Jesus"; this could be done with equal effect by Buddhism and other religions, and rested on a mistaken inference.

Asked whether he was prepared to judge Christianity by its record, Dr. Weatherhead saw the trap and took immediate evasive action. Judge by the record, yes, but "not where it was tyrannical" or where it was "distorted," he replied. Mrs. Knight pursued the point and gave a few examples of the horrible record of the Christian religion. Dr. Weatherhead's reply was on the lines of "We don't do it now," and he quoted a letter sent home by an American airman captured in the Far East to the effect: "These people haven't eaten me, like they would have done once. Give ten dollars to the missionaries." Our Hyde Park speakers would have enjoyed this one immensely! But time was short and the discussion turned to the character of gentle Jesus. To Dr. Weatherhead's tender and all-loving Saviour Mrs. Knight opposed such quotations as "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! How shall ye escape the damnation of Hell." Describing the Gospel Jesus as "a mixed character," she remarked on his vindictive attitude towards those who offended him, with his "lurid threats." Dr. Weatherhead said he "would have to read it again" but said we "should not concentrate" on that sort of thing, which may have been "coloured as it came through the lens of Matthew's mind." Mrs. Knight then accused him of trying to brush aside all the shocking things in the story. Christ, she said, was a firm believer in Hell, and continually used it as a threat to those who rejected his ideas. This, objected Dr. Weatherhead, was "based on the old-fashioned interpretation"; his opponent again insisted that it came straight from the N.T. When Christian apologians found these sayings intolerable they said, "He couldn't really have meant that!" But if Jesus did not mean these things why did he say them—especially if he was divine and could know the consequences?

Jesus, explained Dr. Weatherhead, really meant that if you sin against love, the consequences are very serious. "Either he was love incarnate or he was not. If he was, then he had a vital message."

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This was one of the most—perhaps *the* most—satisfying of the many public discussions in which Mrs. Knight has been engaged. As a minor point, it was perhaps unfortunate that she used the word "materialists" in the sense of people concerned only with material well-being. On the other hand, there is no alternative word, but then, such people are surely so few as scarcely to deserve any label.

Some freethinkers may deplore that Mrs. Knight usually treats Christ as an actual historical personage. However, if we *do* argue with the Christian on the basis that he existed and said the things attributed to him, then "So much the better to beat you with!" Inside half an hour's discussion it is disputable whether the introduction of the historicity issue would be *using* time or *losing* time.

That such a discussion could appear on ATV is a most welcome sign of the times. The promoters are not fools; the fundamental motive is to sell goods. Such programmes indicate that there are so many unbelievers around that it is a *paying commercial proposition to recognise their existence.*

## This Believing World

"**News Chronicle**" the other week gave a factual account of a "miracle" of healing—though without calling it a miracle. Had the case been recorded at Lourdes or by one of the many "spirit" healers we are honoured with, every doctor in the land would have been called on at once to explain it apart from a divinely-accorded miracle. The patient was 68 years old, paralysed from the waist downwards, and unable to hear without a hearing aid. "He was," says *News Chronicle*, "given up as hopeless by doctors."

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**And what then happened?** He was lying in bed "when he had a sudden great urge to get up and go for a walk." So he got up and walked, and found he could also hear without his hearing aid. He had had a fall six years previously and fractured his spine, and three years of operations and hospital treatment had failed. Yet in a trice he was completely cured—and not being "a religious man" (he said) he cannot explain his cure. It cannot be emphasised too often, in fact, that such cures often occur. A "miraculous" cure without "divine" healing, without a "spirit" doctor, without laying on of hands . . .!

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**Our warmest congratulations to Canon E. G. Burroughs** of Oxford for his courageous stand in favour of Demons and Evil Spirits. Not for him is a watered-down version of Christianity with its feeble attempts to "symbolise" Heaven and Hell as "places only within you." He is absolutely sure that Demons exist, and ridicules (just as Jesus did) that lunatics in general were mad because of a diseased brain. They were "possessed of Evil Spirits" just as "our Lord" insisted. Of course, dozens of eminent Churchmen are in full agreement—for example, the Dean of Windsor, who piously declared, "I would rather believe that Angels and Demons exist than they do not." Without Angels, Heaven, Devils, Demons, Evil Spirits, Hell and Miracles, where would true Christianity really be?

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**The way "vandals" desecrate** our holy churches has raised the ire of the Rev. I. Bulman of Cricklewood. Think of it, people actually insist on taking cine photos of wedding ceremonies! Worse than that, they even stand on pews to get better views. . . ! How "our Lord" would have lashed these blasphemers as he lashed the money changers in that memorable scene God recorded for us in his Precious Word! And let us not forget that even worse would follow. The cine photos would later be projected on a screen for all to see. Cannot the law step in and sternly forbid these blasphemous practices?

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**No fewer than 1,800 "Sunday Pictorial" readers** answered a man who said he was in search of God. There are hundreds of ways in which that elusive Deity can be found, the easiest being the one recommended by the Bishop of Rochester—you must first assume that there is a God, "and then put it to the test." Blatant unbelievers like ourselves cannot help wondering how you can put it to the test and, also supposing we found him, what can we do with the Lord when found? We don't want to go to Heaven (or "up there") where he resides, and he won't come down to us—so what? We do wish some fervent believer would answer the plain question—"What can one do with a God when found?"

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**ITV'S "About Religion"** the other week was a discussion between the very much publicised Rev. Leslie Weatherhead and Mrs. Margaret Knight on Christianity and Scientific Humanism. Poor Mr. Weatherhead! Fortified with

what he must have considered an unanswerable cliché, "Christianity meant the personal relation with the living Christ," he must have thought Mrs. Knight very easy to beat, and so suffered perhaps the most humiliating defeat of his life. Mrs. Knight rightly concentrated on the living Christ's attacks on his opponents—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell," and similar gems from gentle Jesus. Mr. Weatherhead collapsed like a pricked toy balloon. If ITV puts on another programme like this with a Humanist of the calibre of Mrs. Knight, it may lose millions of its Christian viewers—so look out, ITV!

## Leicester Log

The Youth Fellowship which has been started on the premises of the Leicester Secular Hall under the direction of Mr. C. T. Powell is now well under way and has about 35 members. The boys, who are all under 16, have their own committee, and have already taken certain disciplinary action to ensure the beneficial running of the club. A local rumour that there would be a colour bar was very quickly denied officially, but as yet there are no coloured members. Girl friends are allowed as visitors though, again, this privilege has not been taken advantage of.

There is no attempt to indoctrinate the boys with Atheism, but if the subject of religion arises, it is discussed freely. The lads are being encouraged to think but not told what to think. Mr. Powell previously ran a boys' club on church premises but complains that interference by parsons made his tenancies usually of short duration. The club is prepared to receive useful gifts or assistance from local sympathisers.

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As a result of an interview with the Secretary of the Leicester Secular Society, Mr. Hammersley, the *Leicester Chronicle* of September 19th carried an article entitled "The Church of the Godless," together with a photograph of this discussion group sitting round their table. Describing the members as "the Billy Grahams of Unbelief," the article says they belong to "the strangest Church in Leicester" and are "as fervent in their beliefs as any Christians," Mr. Hammersley being described as "the author of countless controversies and letters in the press." Naturally the writer makes great play on the fact of there being a bust of Jesus outside the Hall, but altogether the article is fine publicity for the Society, and Mr. Hammersley is quoted thus: "Whereas the discoveries of science have been of inestimable value to mankind, should we be any the poorer if religion were to vanish overnight?"

FOSSE.

## Wisdom Well

From *Men and Manners or Concentrated Wisdom*,  
by A. Hunter, M.D., F.R.S., York, 1808.

In ancient times the Bishop fed his flock, but now the flock is only kept to be shorn.

Credulity is the parent of quackery.

When a comet of an alarming magnitude and speedy approach makes its appearance, the churches are crowded and everyone wears a face of repentance, till the fiery meteor makes its exit.

Thunder is no more the voice of God than is an earthquake the heaving of the devil. They are both natural events and are not sent to us as punishments, though they have often been taken as such.

The parson may describe the beauties of Blenheim Palace, but he had better let the beauties of Heaven alone, as we have it on good authority that they are such as "the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard."

# THE FREETHINKER

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Details of membership of the National Secular Society may be obtained from the General Secretary, 41 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1. Members and visitors are welcome during normal office hours.

## Lecture Notices, Etc.

### OUTDOOR

- Edinburgh Branch N.S.S. (The Mound).—Every Sunday afternoon and evening: Messrs. CRONAN, MURRAY and SLEMEN.
- London (Marble Arch).—Meetings every Sunday from 5 p.m.: Messrs. L. EBURY, J. W. BARKER and C. E. WOOD.
- London (Tower Hill).—Thursday, 12-2 p.m.: Messrs. J. W. BARKER and L. EBURY.
- Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Deansgate Blitzed Site).—Every weekday, 1 p.m.: G. WOODCOCK. Sunday, 8 p.m.: Messrs. WOODCOCK, MILLS and WOOD.
- Merseyside Branch N.S.S. (Pierhead).—Every Wednesday, 1 p.m.; every Sunday, 7.30 p.m.: Various speakers.
- North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead).—Every Sunday, noon: Messrs. L. EBURY and A. ARTHUR.
- Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Friday, 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY. Sunday, 6.30 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

### INDOOR

- Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Mechanics Institute).—Sunday, October 19th, 7 p.m.: K. SAGAR, "The Religion of D. H. Lawrence."
- Central London Branch N.S.S. (The Lourie Arms, Crawford Place (Edgware Road, W.1)).—Sunday, October 19th, 7.15 p.m.: W. WIGHAM (General Secretary, I.L.P.), "The Future of Trades Unionism."
- Conway Discussions (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Tuesday, October 21st: J. W. LESLIE (British Esperanto Association), "Are we Serious?"
- Conway Junior Discussion Group (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Friday, October 17th, 7.45 p.m.: P. F. MOORE (N.S.S.), "Machiavelli and the Moral Order."
- Leicester Secular Society (75 Humberstone Gate).—Sunday, October 19th, 6.30 p.m.: A. J. SMITH, D.O., M.R.O., "Osteopathy."
- Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society (Co-operative Hall, Upper Parliament Street).—Sunday, October 19th, 2.30 p.m.: G. PEFKOS, "Cyprus."
- Oxford Humanist Group (Taylor Institute).—Monday, October 20th, 8.15 p.m.: F. A. RIDLEY, "The Irrelevance of Christianity."
- South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, October 19th, 11 a.m.: H. L. BEALES, M.A., "Colonialism and Imperialism Today."

## Notes and News

THE POPE is dead! There was a limit to the length of time that Dr. Paul Niehans's cell-rejuvenation process could keep the dying body alive, and the prayers of the faithful proved ineffective. Indeed, the whole absurdity of the call to prayer must have impressed many people. Approaching the question solely from the Christian standpoint, we find two enormous inconsistencies. Heaven is the glorious goal of life, the most desirable state imaginable. Why, then, try to keep Pius XII from going there? But, even more absurd, if God had decided to call His Holiness to eternal bliss, what possible difference could prayers make? This, in fact,

is the great inconsistency in the concept of prayer. Will Omniscience change its mind?

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AMONG the last announcements of the late Papal "champion of democracy," we note, was a letter to a social congress at Bari, Italy, on September 20th. The Catholic Church, he said, was in favour of different classes in society; they are "guarantee of an order that is not static but dynamic." Mind you, Pius XII was referring only to class differences "really founded on and sanctioned by the will of the Creator." No doubt his own aristocratic family fell within this category, but as a definition it leaves a lot to be desired.

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WHO could fail to be moved by the *Sunday Pictorial's* "Heartcry to Soapbox" on September 21st? If only I could believe in God, wrote Mr. Patrick H. McLoughlin, of Stevenage, I feel sure I would be a happier man. But he cannot; he believes that the world and ourselves are "pure accidents" and he can "only look forward to oblivion." Is he less discerning than his fellows? he asks; or is he "ripe for the looney-bin"? He is convinced that there is no purpose in life and he doesn't want to hear any sermons. But he does want to believe; to find the faith he has been searching for for more than thirty years. We don't know Mr. McLoughlin's age or circumstances, but we are surprised that all he can look forward to is oblivion. Has he never thought of putting a purpose into his life; of living to the full, here and now. Oblivion must come, yes, but let us—in Fitzgerald's words—"make the most of what we yet may spend."

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THE West Ham and District Branch of the National Secular Society held an informal and rather novel meeting in September at the delightful home of Mrs. Florence Hayhow. Mrs. Hayhow had also invited a number of Christians to tea and to listen to a short talk by the Branch President, Mrs. E. Venton. The subject was the Aims and Objects of the N.S.S., and it proved most stimulating. The discussion was on a high level and always friendly, and the Branch intends to repeat this successful experiment.

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THE same issue of this paper called Mrs. Maureen Pearse, leader of the religious sect of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, a "silly abbess" for putting her faith in an ex-jailbird to run her chapel at Cusworth, Yorkshire. "I've just been unfortunate with priests. . . I've had a bunch of no-goods," said Mrs. Pearse, and she thought the latest, "Doctor" Charles Brearley, was a "sincere penitent" who had "paid his debt to society and . . . put his evil ways behind." Anyway, he was—she said—the best she could get for the job, because "Decent priests are hard to find these days."

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TAKING the Bible literally can bring immense complications, as retired dairy farmer Mr. Robert H. Rusby, of Tranquility, New Jersey, U.S.A., well knows. Learning and believing that "the earth is the Lord's," he consigned his entire estate to God in a notarised deed. Unfortunately, God "does not yet have a clear title" and the local county authorities have ruled that Mr. Rusby must deliver the deed in person. He might well hope to do that some day, but, meanwhile, more immediate problems beset him. His wife has left him after arguing in vain that their sons were more entitled to the farm than God, while neighbours fear an increase in their share of local taxes if Mr. Rusby's land becomes exempt as a religious institution. Frustrated on all sides, this Christian farmer has finally had to offer his land free of charge to anyone who will settle on it.

# The Churches and Integration

By COLIN McCALL

WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE of the Christian Churches to the problem of integration in America? A difficult question, I know, because there are many Churches with varying opinions inside them all. But here, surely, is an opportunity for them to give a clear lead. If all men—and, more especially, all children—are brothers in Christ, as we are led to believe, their course should be plain and they should be united in following it. No doubt we shall be told with great emphasis of every little stand taken by a parson or priest in this vitally important matter. Rightly, we shall praise him. But what of his calling as a whole? Thanks to that indiscreet weekly, *Time* (September 5th, 1958), we have some interesting information that reflects rather badly on the clerical company.

Thomas F. Pettigrew, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Harvard, has made known the results of a survey he had carried out in Little Rock, Arkansas, during the integration crisis last year. After interviewing about 100 Protestant clergymen and Jewish rabbis, Pettigrew found that they could be divided into what he called "pushers, powers and passives." "Pushers" for integration numbered only eight, including the town's two rabbis; their average age was 36, and their average length of service at Little Rock was four years. Their chances of exceeding the average period seem to have dropped considerably since the survey, because two of the Protestants have already been "transferred to rural regions"; another is "out of a job"; and a fourth is "about to be fired."

The "powers" were the most important ministers in Little Rock: seven men whose average age was 50, and whose average congregation numbers 2,800 (as against 400 for the "pushers"). Men, in other words, who could influence the opinions and, possibly, conduct of a sizeable section of Little Rock society—for good or ill. Most of them, said Pettigrew, were "privately for integration but justified their public silence on the subject on the ground that their duty was to hold the Church together."

The remaining 85 or so were "passives," whom Pettigrew described as "older men who favour integration but have a prudent eye cocked on retirement." And he added caustically that their speciality was "praying for guidance," which is "how to say something without being heard."

Hardly, then, a commendation of the clergymen of Little Rock, Pettigrew's report has been disputed by Dr. Dale Cowling, a Baptist minister, who claims that "The ministers in the main churches exhibited a strong kind of courage during the crisis." Yet Pettigrew seems to have no bias against Christianity. True, his last quoted remark (that praying is a way of saying "something without being heard") could be interpreted atheistically, but I take it to be a social, not a philosophical, statement. And *Time* tells us that "despite the paucity of pushers in Little Rock, Pettigrew holds that 'the Christian ministry in the South is the only significant group throughout the area willing to stand up for integration.'" If this be so, it is strange that half of the six Protestant "pushers" should have been "removed" by one method or another, with a fourth about to follow. But perhaps my logic is too simple. Perhaps you show willingness to "stand up for integration" by expelling those who stand up for it most strongly. Perhaps Dr. Cowling has the explanation: perhaps the "powers" were showing "a strong kind of courage" by eliminating the "pushers." God moves in a mysterious way; his ambassadors should be granted a little licence too.

But the Protestants must not have all the publicity. What of the Roman Catholics? Here, we might expect from our reading in the Catholic press, all was strength and harmony—for integration, of course. Yet—says *Time*—"as the battle grows hotter, militant partisans of integration are troubled by signs that the Catholic position may be weakening." Ominous words! I have nothing but admiration (on this matter) for the Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, Raymond P. Hillinger, who said that those who do not accept the Church's stand for full racial equality "simply are not Catholic, and there are no two ways about it." But, on investigation, the Roman Church's "stand" doesn't seem much stronger than the Protestants'. Certainly nothing like so strong as the Bishop would have us believe. The fifty or so priests in Little Rock refused to participate in Pettigrew's survey. Why, if the Church's position is unequivocally for "full racial equality"? The Race Relations Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference was abolished in 1955; allegedly, it is true, for lack of funds, but this is scarcely credible. Surely the money could have been found at this crucial time. And the Catholic Committee of the South, founded in 1939 specially to work on Southern social and economic problems, "was quietly eliminated by the Southern bishops" at the annual meeting of the hierarchy in 1956. So quietly, in fact, that it is still listed in the 1958 *National Catholic Almanac*. Again, the plan for desegregation in New Orleans Roman Catholic schools has been "indefinitely postponed"; and of the five Catholic Interracial Centres (called Friendship Houses), "only two remain within the national organisation," and they are in Chicago and New York, not in the South. That powerful lay organisation, Knights of Columbus, needless to say, is strongly anti-Negro.

The concern shown by the "militant partisans of integration" has some justification then. And, after all, it remains a fact that many Roman Catholic hospitals practise either segregation or complete exclusion of Negroes. Those who have read his sincere and honest autobiography, *People's Padre*, will recall Emmett McLoughlin's experience of segregation in Catholic teaching and healing establishments. As McLoughlin says, "A few words cabled from the Pope to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, and on to the American hierarchy, could, within twenty-four hours, abolish all racial segregation in every Catholic university, school and nursing school in the land." Those words remain uncabled.

McLoughlin found that no Negro student was admitted to St. Louis University; that there was segregation in Catholic parochial schools even where it was non-existent in the public (state) schools; that sisters' hospitals refused to teach nursing to white and Negro girls together. He discovered that priests who did useful social work were often moved; his Provincial Council tried to move him.

But Memorial Hospital, Phoenix, Arizona—formerly St. Monica's Hospital, though never run by the Church—stands as a tribute to Emmett McLoughlin's splendid struggle for "a hospital that would care for the poor and prove to the world that people of all races could study, work, and live together." One man of integrity, a priest who found he couldn't endure the Roman Catholic Church's dishonesty and hypocrisy, and who left it for a free, honest, and more useful life; that one man set a far better example than most of the clergymen of the South seem to be setting now, when—as *Time* again tells us

(October 6th, 1958)—“Most of the pro-integration work of the Southern clergy of whatever denomination is so quiet as to be almost clandestine.” Dr. Cowling should read *People's Padre* and learn what real courage is. And those who work for integration must, I fear, learn the old, old lesson that it is useless to depend on the Christian Churches in the struggle for human progress.

## Satan and Billy Graham

By H. CUTNER

A CANADIAN READER sent me recently a copy of the *Star Weekly Magazine* with a front page photograph of the renowned Billy laying down God's law from the Authorised Version of the Bible, and the title of his article inside, “Why I believe in the Devil.” The editorial blurb accompanying this says, “Forthright evangelist Billy Graham gives his non-nonsense views on why he believes Satan is a real force.”

Whether the Rev. gentleman is or is not forthright, or what he believes about the Devil, is actually a matter of small moment, for nobody in his senses could possibly mistake him for an “authority,” and certainly not on the Devil—or on God, for that matter. He has never met either. All he could possibly say on both Deities must be pure speculation.

But he is always so cocksure that it amuses me a little to take him up on one or two points. He says “We know from the story of Adam and Eve that Satan was already present on earth before God made the first man.” Well, we know nothing of the kind. There is not a line about Satan in the story of Adam and Eve. The first mention of Satan in the A.V. (I think I am right in saying) is in 1 Chronicles 1, 1, when he “provoked” David to number Israel. But, of course, the Hebrew letters which make up the name STN appear in the Hebrew before this—for instance, STN is translated “adversary” in Numbers 22, 22, 32, and in other places “an angel of the Lord.” In fact, so hopelessly confused is the Bible on the word that in 2 Samuel 24, 1, it was “the Lord” who “moved” David to number Israel and Judah—which, if this means anything at all, makes God and Satan identical! And to make confusion worse, it was Jesus himself—that is, God Almighty—who actually called Peter, “Satan.”

Of course, all Christians have invariably called the Serpent, the Devil or Satan, who spoke perfect Hebrew, and was easily understood by Eve. But the Hebrew word here is NCHSH and not STN; and the only way the Rev. Billy can support his silly statement is by throwing overboard the Precious Word, and insist that NCHSH is STN, and therefore the Hebrew writer didn't know what he was writing about.

Few Bible commentators, however, are prepared to say that the Serpent was actually the Devil. Most say it was the Devil which took possession of the Serpent, but there is nothing in the story to support this. No one has produced a scrap of evidence that the Devil chose the role of a Serpent to tempt Eve. In other words, the Rev. Billy was talking nonsense. If he had known anything of the extent of Serpent worship in the ancient world, he could never have identified the Serpent in Genesis with “Satan.”

One of the Rev. Billy's crushing arguments in favour of Satan was that “the Bible plainly says he exists.” But then the Bible says dozens of things which are utterly absurd. Did Methuselah really live 969 years? Did an “angel of the Lord” really appear to Joseph in a dream? How did the angel manage that? Was Jonah “in the belly of the fish three days and three nights”? Did Jesus really

walk on the sea? Do “devils also believe and tremble”? There are hundreds of similar “Bible absurdities,” as G. W. Foote called them.

Not only the Bible, according to the Rev. Billy, tells us all about the Devil or Satan, but he has “evidence from everyday life.” The world is packed with “crime, lust, and carnage,” and it is all due to Satan. Like God, Satan is everywhere. Carlyle (he tells us) took Emerson through the “dark streets of London,” and then asked his friend, “Do you believe in the Devil now?” You need not go to London streets, however. You can find the Devil in “crumbling beams and sagging floors.” You can't see him, of course, but you can't see the wind—yet it does destroy property. How can Freethinkers get out of that devastating argument?

I was glad to see that the Rev. Billy has found out that if you “breathe a lie unto the air, unleash a slanderous tongue . . . the words are carried by magic to the farthest regions.” He should have added that this was particularly the case with a good old-fashioned *Christian* lie—it is almost impossible ever to catch up with it. But a *Christian* lie must be, not the work of the Devil, but of God—surely?

The Rev. Billy's third argument comes from Paul, who is described as “one of the greatest Christian scholars who ever lived”—though most of his theology, where it is understood—a rare occurrence—is as dead as the proverbial dodo. Paul appears to be always wrestling “not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” If Paul was not wrestling “against flesh and blood,” how in the world, then, was he wrestling “against the rulers of this world”? But it really doesn't matter what Paul said or meant. For the Rev. Billy, all this absurd rigmarole means Satan or the Devil; and in any case, not only did Jesus and all his Apostles believe in the Devil, but so did Calvin, Wesley, Luther and lots more Christian heroes. That proves beyond any doubt whatever that the Devil must exist, that like God himself he is immortal, and the only way to get him out of your life is to believe the Fundamentalist hocus-pocus of the Rev. B. Graham, or similar “evangelists.”

What Mr. Graham is looking for—with joy—is that one day “the Devil that deceived them” would be “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and . . . be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” The “for ever and ever” bit must be particularly pleasant to a true believer.

An evangelist with the reputation of Mr. B. Graham never has any difficulty in getting articles in defence of his primitive beliefs in almost any newspaper or journal in the world. Even when he writes the most ignorant drivel about the Devil, in it will go so long as the various editors feel it is boosting up Christianity. Any attempt to analyse these articles from a reasonable standpoint would never be allowed. Journals like the *Star Weekly Magazine* would lose thousands of its readers if the slightest suspicion of heresy were permitted in its immaculate Christian columns; and as for allowing a criticism of Mr. Graham, that would be intolerable. That is why this very popular evangelist can get away with such hopelessly primitive trash—trash which must even make any educated Christian squirm.

But Christianity must be upheld at all costs, especially at the cost of reason.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### FREEMASONRY

I was very interested in Mr. Cutner's article on Freemasonry in THE FREETHINKER of September 26th. The information given is accurate, and it is true that there are no secrets of any importance.

When I became a member of the N.S.S., I resigned from my Lodge and renounced Freemasonry, with its belief in a “Great

Architect and Grand Geometrician of the Universe." This step on my part led to the most unexpected reactions on the part of the Brethren. Several admitted that they did not fully understand, others that they did not really believe in, the tenets of the Order, but that they were "on a good thing" socially. Certainly Freemasons give generously to Masonic Charities, but as the largest proportion are prosperous business men it is no great sacrifice.

No one could understand why I should be so foolish as to commit professional suicide. Resignations from a Masonic Lodge are practically unheard of, I understand.

One might ask why I became initiated in the first place. My sole reason was curiosity, and I imagined that I should discover some deep secrets. But I was disappointed, and soon became critical of the childish ceremonies.

I realise that I do not stand the remotest chance of any promotion in the teaching profession, particularly after my experience in the last school, which you may recall was reported in THE FREETHINKER. However, I am quite happy in technical education, and feel that I have acted in the way I believe to be right and honest, although I may be a social outcast.

K. R. WOOTTON.

I am not a Freemason and although Mr. Cutner says he is not, he is obviously favouring them with his excuses and suppositions. Their only use for Freethought is to oppose the Catholics, whose object is also complete control of everything political and civil. The High Court Judge who rejected their plea for exemption from rates of the Connaught Rooms said they were just a Preference Society. There are many other societies who do more good and the Freemasons' "Charities" are only a "Friendly Society" with some benefits for a select few. They are ashamed to reveal their customs and objects. They cannot be any more inclined to Freethought than to Catholicism.

R. JONES.

I cannot as a freethinker cast a benign look on Freemasons, as our otherwise excellent contributor appears to do. For a man to be able to get preference in a public appointment by giving secret signs would be quite disgusting. Let us beware of this "state within a state." By the way, on the Marble Arch speaking site I have sometimes heard a speaker claiming to be an ex-Mason of an exalted degree giving the whole "low-down."

N. FIELD.

#### THE POPE WHO WAS A MASON

There is a widely held belief in Scotland that ever since its inception Freemasonry has been a purely non-Catholic organisation. *Roman Catholicism and Freemasonry*, by Dudley Wright, plays havoc with such nonsense.

At least, one head of the Catholic Church was able to tell the age of his granny, and here is the proof, from page 174 of this book: "A man named Mastai Ferretti, who received the baptism of Freemasonry, and solemnly pledged his love and fellowship, and who afterwards was crowned Pope and King, under the title of Pio Nino, has now cursed his former Brethren and excommunicated all members of the Order of Freemasons. Therefore, the said Mastai Ferretti is herewith, by degree of the Grand Lodge of the Orient, Palermo, expelled from the Order for perjury."

WILLIAM MOFFAT.

#### FROM A CHURCH MEMBER

I HAVE been taking THE FREETHINKER for some time now and have enjoyed its contents although not always in agreement with all of it. This week's article on Freethought and Freemasonry, however, has frankly disappointed and disgusted me. Having read the article by Mr. Cutner, it appears that he has no quarrel with Freemasons in spite of their mysterious initiations, etc., because, as he states, 'modern Freemasonry is much more interested in the doing of good works than in bothering about the reasons for their beliefs.'

Much the same could be said about the majority of Church-goers—certainly Anglican and Nonconformist. They also are "mostly men of integrity always ready to help their brothers when necessary." They have also "excellent schools and hospitals supported by themselves." Also, haven't the Catholics the same?

As a Nonconformist and Church member, your attitude puzzles me, to say the least. Is your criticism, then, directed at only one facet of "mystery," and is it only the rites performed by the Churches which you so much decry?

I know a few Freemasons and their good works, etc., are reserved entirely for "their own," and why, if Freemasonry is such a noble thing, is there need for so much secrecy about it. It is also well known that by their "secret" signs, etc., they recognise each other and so favour each other when seeking posts, letting contracts, etc.

I would describe the ones I know as very poor specimens of humanity.

ELIZABETH ELIAS.

#### N.S.S. EXECUTIVE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 1958.—Present: Messrs. F. A. Ridley (Chair), Alexander, Arthur, Barker, Corstorphine, Ebury, Gordon, Hornbrook, Johnson, Moore, Taylor, Mrs. Trask, Mrs. Venton,

the Treasurer (Mr. Griffiths) and the Secretary. New members were admitted to Central London, Merseyside, North London and Wales and Western Branches which, with individual members, made 17 in all. Abortion Law Reform Association and Central Board for Conscientious Objectors reports were before the meeting. It was agreed to reprint with certain alterations 1,000 copies of J. Solomons' FREETHINKER article, "Israel through a Jewish Looking Glass" for circulation in Jewish circles. Mr. A. R. Williams had not attended the Robert Owen commemoration at Newtown but had sent messages to be read out. Likely increase in rent in 12 months and possibility of new premises were discussed and the Secretary asked to make further inquiries. Glasgow Secular Society's request for two speakers was approved. Letters from K. Lidaks, G. von Hilsheimer, D. B. de Haan, J. Radford and S. Salter were dealt with. Mrs. Venton reported a West Ham Branch informal meeting between Freethinkers and Christians.

#### OBITUARY

Dr. MARIE STOPES.

With the death of Dr. Stopes at the age of 78 goes perhaps the most picturesque figure in the modern Birth Control Movement—now known better perhaps as "Family Planning." It was in the early part of the war that she managed to have published her most famous work, *Married Love*, with the help, it should be added, of the late Dr. Binnie Dunlop, then active in the Malthusian League—and soon she was in the thick of the fight to give if possible practical advice to all women who wanted it on a subject when even long after the famous Bradlaugh-Besant trial of 1877, was still considered strictly taboo among "decent" people. She founded the first clinic for Birth Control and, immensely industrious, wrote perhaps the best book on Contraception in the language, as well as many other books which she thought would help to promote happy marriage as far as humanly possible.

Dr. Stopes was very touchy about her work and never hesitated to enter into a controversy, and was even ready at a moment to go to law if she felt like it. Her *bête noir* was Roman Catholicism because of its intense opposition to Birth Control—but she had at the same time no use or very little for Freethought. I heard her lecture against Bradlaugh and his Atheism, which she declared did the Birth Control movement positive harm. One cannot help, however, admiring the great courage with which she faced all who opposed her, and Family Planning may never have had its modern publicity if it had not been for her vigorous campaigns.

H.C.

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