

# The Freethinker

Volume LXXX—No. 36

Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

Price Sixpence

ON SEPTEMBER 3RD, 1658, there died one of the most dramatic and notable figures in English history, Oliver Cromwell, Lord High Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland and victorious leader of the English revolution against royal absolutism and priestly tyranny. As befitted the end of so spectacular a career; one that had overturned an entire social order in both Church and State and brought a King to the scaffold; Cromwell's exit was attended by strange omens and remarkable coincidences!

For September 3rd was the Protector's hitherto "lucky day"; the day upon which he had led his Ironsides to victory over the Scots at Dunbar (1650) and at Worcester (1651) where he had given the Royalist cause what then appeared to be its finally effective *coup de grâce*. Nor did the elements fail to join in celebrating the Protector's departure from the terrestrial stage, for a fearful storm swept over the land on the night that he died, and the Royalist foes of the revolutionary regime did not scruple to see an infernal conjunction in this natural concurrence. The Devil, declared a Royalist pamphlet of this era, had come in person to claim the soul of the regicide "Old Noll". Nor is it at all unlikely, as the French author Chateaubriand was later to declare, that Cromwell's own ardent admirer and poet laureate, John Milton, had this infernal conjunction in mind when, a little later, he sat down to write *Paradise Lost*. Satan, the infernal hero of this great epic, who would rather "reign in Hell than serve in Heaven" was in the French critic's opinion, an obvious reproduction of the great leader of the English Revolution.

**Cromwell and his Contemporaries**  
What sort of person was this 17th century revolutionary leader, who appears to have been in so many respects the prototype of the numerous revolutionary dictators of our own century? As a military leader Cromwell never lost a battle, and what better testimonial can any general receive that that? Perhaps though, his military career was on too restricted a scale, and against too amateurish opponents, to rank him outright as one of the great captains of history (military historians have doubted whether he could have repeated his spectacular victories at Marston Moor, Naseby, Dunbar and Worcester against the more experienced Continental generals and professional armies of this period). As a statesman, he has been variously judged, not least one may add, by the historians of the modern rationalist school. The Positivist, Frederick Harrison, definitely appeared to rank him as one of Britain's great statesmen as well as great soldiers, whereas the ever-sceptical John M. Robertson regarded him as a political failure, whom an opportune death alone rescued from final and irrevocable collapse. The enigma of Oliver Cromwell is, in fact, a problem of political history that appears explicitly set to test the ingenuity of later historians. The Chinese, an ancient people with much and varied political experience, have an apt proverb

very apposite to the case of Cromwell (as of his Roman prototype and fellow-dictator, Julius Caesar): "A dictator is one who rides on a tiger and who cannot dismount". In the case of Cromwell, the "tiger"—viz. the English Revolution of which he had been the successful military leader—appeared by the time of the Protector's death, to have taken the bit between its teeth and whether or no Cromwell could have reined it in and dismounted had he lived a few years longer seems historically very dubious. One thing is at least certain: Oliver Cromwell left no one capable of managing the unruly steed that he had mounted. On the day after his death his Secretary of State, John Thurloe, wrote these prophetic words: "Not his own strength, but our divisions will bring Charles Stuart back". And so it turned out, two years later, in May 1660.

**"The Most Famous Man of this Century"**  
It may be remarked with, I think, substantial accuracy, that it was the revolutionary regime of the mid-17th century that made England a great power in the full and authentic sense of the term. Even under Cromwell's robust predecessor, "that bright Occidental star", Queen Elizabeth, this cannot really be said. As the Anglo-French historian Robert Briffault has aptly commented, England under Elizabeth fought a defensive war against the Spanish world-empire; England remained in danger up to her last years and the eventual Peace Treaty concluded by James I finally favoured Spain. Under Cromwell, England went over to the offensive. The Ironsides appeared on Continental battlefields; the English fleet under Admiral Blake first entered the Mediterranean to lay the foundations of British sea power; and the contemporary English poet, Andrew Marvell, confidently called on Cromwell to assume the role of the leader of the European Protestant cause and to repeat on the soil of Europe, and at the expense of the Catholic counter-Reformation, the spectacular victories of Hannibal, Caesar and of Cromwell's own Protestant contemporary, the heroic King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus. Had he only survived until the proverbial three score years and ten, it appears probable that the great English general would have actually led a massive military intervention upon the Continent. Certainly his power and personality were such as to arouse the liveliest fears both at home and abroad. His bitter enemy, the Royalist leader and historian, Lord Clarendon (later to be Prime Minister to Charles II after the Restoration), testifies that he "knew the secrets of every court in Europe" and that he was equally feared and courted by them all. Whilst in a lengthy despatch—one of astonishing perspicacity—addressed to his government on the day after the Protector's death, Sagredo, the Venetian Ambassador, referred to the deceased ruler as one who "though not King in name, had more power than all the Kings of England who were before him"; adding that Cromwell was "by far the most famous man in this present century".

## —VIEWS and OPINIONS—

### Oliver Cromwell

By F. A. RIDLEY



### The Forerunner of Civil and Religious Liberty

From the general standpoint of English history, it will be evident from the above testimonials that the English 17th century leader whose passing we shall be commemorating on September 3rd, was a very great man indeed. Taken all round: as soldier, statesman and as leader of that great social upheaval, the English Revolution of the mid-17th century from which the whole modern history of Britain derives, Oliver Cromwell was indubitably one of the greatest figures in our Island Story. However, over and beyond his more general historical reputation, Cromwell has a more particular claim on the gratitude of all British radicals in both Church and State. The Protector was actually the first English ruler to protect to any appreciable degree, civil and religious liberty. Both political and religious toleration, as a viable State policy, first emerged under the regime that arose from the bitter struggle against the royal and clerical absolutism of Charles I and of Archbishop Laud. (According to Sagredo, there were 192 Protestant sects in Cromwellian

England.) Nor, despite the partial reaction after the Restoration, was this notable Cromwellian legacy ever entirely undone. As I once remarked elsewhere, "The Restoration found it easier to dispose of Cromwell's body than of his ideas". (cf. *The Revolutionary Tradition in England* by F. A. Ridley). The world still moved after Cromwell as after his great contemporary, Galileo. After the Restoration, the Royalist, Clarendon, pronounced the leader of the fallen regime to have been "one of those for whom hellfire is specially prepared"; and his final summary of Cromwell was, a "brave bad man". But the Clarendons of this world, like all such reactionaries everywhere, soon pass and are forgotten with their biased opinions. Three centuries later, as September 3rd recurs, we may recall that it is to Oliver Cromwell, above all others, that we owe it that Britain is no longer a totalitarian and persecuting State, and that he was, if not the father, at least the forerunner of our civil and religious liberty.

## The Rest is Silence

By COLIN McCALL

THERE HAS BEEN quite a lot of correspondence in THE FREETHINKER lately on the fear of old age and death. I don't wish to enter that controversy, but I couldn't help thinking of it when reading an attractively-produced little book by "K.S.", *Reflections at the End of Life* (George Ronald, London, 10s.). Not that K.S. resembles the "Scientific Materialist", whose alleged inadequacy in stilling those fears started the correspondence. On the contrary. Although there is some inconsistency among the just short of three-hundred printed meditations, they tend towards the mystical.

There is intellectual inconsistency, yes, and a love of paradox that blurs and sometimes mars meaning, but little or no inconsistency of tone is detectable. There is certainly no fear of death here, though K.S. must be fairly advanced in years. "Fear ignorance"—he says—"bear death". "The thought of death ought not to interrupt but to prolong the thought of life". Of course this may be a cover. *Reflections at the End of Life* may only be a facade; K.S.'s serenity may be all lies. Rousseau would have thought so, but I don't. And I particularly recommend our Rousseau-following readers (whose existence, I confess, was something of a surprise to me) to get the book.

Spinozans, who give little thought to death and don't generally need comforting on the subject, will find stimulation—and plenty to argue. Little to disagree with in number one: "What is the end of man but to look through the eye of his reason at the wonder of things"; but the last is provocative: "Like a rest in Music—Silence". Silence, yes, but a rest? Will the music start again for us after death? My Scientific Materialism sees this as impossible, but for K.S., birth turns one page and death another—presumably not the last one. Death is "a breaking forth from the walls of this world".

It is irrational, of course, to expect rationality from a mystic—at least during his mystical periods—and there is a lot of meaninglessness here. "The perfect mystic spirit loses every sight of God that is not God's own seeing of Himself", I read and I can't dispute it. I don't understand it. Nor can I follow K.S. when he leaves his starting point, "The Infinity of Nature—boundless", and moves, via "the Infinity of God—Completeness" (note the

capital C), to: "Each—a Stillness". I fail, in fact, to apprehend K.S.'s concept of God. From this last example, God is apparently a stillness, even a Complete Stillness; on another occasion he (if I may drop the capital) is "Beauty not to be seen", which may not be very much different from the aforesaid Stillness, both are as near nothing as makes no odds! For long, K.S. tells us, he imagined that he "had no better than a distant thought for God", and this doesn't surprise me. Now, however, he feels his "thought" of God and his "experience" of God "to be one and the same". He was "like a thing knocking disconsolately at an open door". (Can a thing knock disconsolately at either an open or a closed door, by the way?) "God is not an appendix to the world"—we read elsewhere—"but the world a preface to God". And we are counselled: "Rid yourself of every thought but that of God, and at once God appears to you".

It is not, I maintain, wise counsel. Nor is: "To complain of the world is as useless as to pay it a compliment". Precision of language is needed here. If K.S. had said: "To complain to the world is as useless as to pay it a compliment", I would agree and, indeed, that is what he should have said. But it is reasonable to complain of the world. Reasonable, and desirable, because complaint is the prelude to action. Complain, then, of the world, and set about changing it. We shall all be still and silent eventually, but there is much to be done meantime, so let us not contemplate our navels.

### NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

IN A LETTER TO *The Guardian* (16/8/60), Bertrand Russell put the case for nuclear disarmament with his usual logic. Of course, he agreed, "international problems presented by nuclear weapons cannot be solved by any unilateral action on the part of Britain". What such unilateral action can do, he said, "is, first, to diminish the risk of unilateral action by Russia against Britain, and second, to set an example of wise statesmanship". No policy is free from risk, Lord Russell added. "The best that can be done is to weigh the risks of various policies and to choose the policy in which the risk is least". Lord Russell sees nuclear disarmament as essential to human survival, let alone, human progress, and we do too. Incidentally, freethinkers who support the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament are asked to send their names and addresses to Mr. W. J. McIlroy, c/o this office.



# Did Henry George Talk Nonsense?

By W. HARTLEY BOLTON

WHEN, IN THE FREETHINKER, July 8th, 1960, I invited readers to comment on Book X of *Progress and Poverty*, where Henry George deals with the problem of Civilisation and Decay, I did not anticipate that Mr. Cutner would side-step the question and drag in what smacks of a red-herring, namely: that Henry George "refused to acknowledge the pressure of population on the world food supply". It is strange how the ghost of Malthus still haunts so many of us and befogs clear thinking.

Henry George's case is briefly:

- (1) That all subsistence is the product of the two factors: land and labour, as he defines them.
- (2) That every normal human being is a potential producer of at least his own subsistence.
- (3) That the whole globe sets the limit to the production of subsistence.
- (4) That the limit of subsistence in any particular place is not the physical limit of that place, but the physical limit of the globe.
- (5) That the power of any population to produce the necessities of life is not measured by the necessities of life actually produced but by the expenditure of power in all modes of production (e.g., to-day, we are expending incalculable productive power in the armed forces and on weapons of destruction which could be diverted to the production of necessary subsistence for many millions of people).
- (6) That the danger that the human race may increase beyond the possibility of finding elbow room is so far off as to have no more practical interest than the recurrence of the glacial period or the final extinguishment of the sun.
- (7) That every atom of food, and of all other things produced by man, and of man himself, will inevitably return to the earth.

Mr. Cutner states that Henry George "foresaw only a Utopia in which it would be easy to feed unlimited populations". Where, may I ask does Henry George use the word "unlimited"? I fancy Mr. Cutner has been context jumping.

Mr. Cutner quotes Henry George as saying "there was so much food in the world that if London—the City of London, be it noted, not the County—could house 1,000 millions of people, they could easily be fed". I suggest that Mr. Cutner should re-read that passage from which he quotes and he will find that Henry George does not say "there was so much food in the world"; what he does say is "subsistence increases as population increases". Mr. Cutner has missed the point. Henry George was referring to a potentiality not an actuality of subsistence and his purpose was to show that the people living on fifty square miles of London were in an entirely different position "so far as the limit of subsistence is concerned" from a smaller number of people who lived on fifty square miles of soil which could, if subsistence were drawn from within its own boundaries and in the then state of the productive arts, yield subsistence for only some thousands of people. The people of London draw for their subsistence upon the whole globe, and the limit which subsistence sets to the growth of the London population is the limit of the globe to furnish food for its inhabitants. As to the seemingly fantastic figure 1,000 millions, from a point of view of logic it is perfectly valid if we take note that Henry George confines his argument to the condition "so far as the limit of subsistence is concerned" and that he is not then dealing with the question of housing or elbow-room. Every scientist is entitled to, and indeed must, abstract elements of his problem for special consideration and draw conclusions, provided that he relates these conclusions later to the other qualifying conclusions drawn from other ele-

ments of the same problem and this Henry George does in the rest of the context.

But Henry George's main point, which Mr. Cutner seems to have missed, is that before it can be accepted that an increase in population is the cause of poverty, it must be shown that there is no other cause to account for it and that every human being is not a potential producer of his own subsistence. Now, Henry George claims that every normal human being is a potential producer and that the only reason why some cannot produce subsistence is that they are not allowed free access to the natural resources, and this, he says, is the cause of poverty. Remove the cause which prevents potential workers from using the natural resources and you will solve your subsistence problem and, if you solve the subsistence problem, it can be no longer said that large families are the cause of poverty since each producer will be producing his own subsistence or its equivalent in exchange. Further, we need not be afraid that there will be no elbow-room on the earth because of such an eventuality. The opening up of all the world's resources by the single tax (which apparently has Mr. Cutner's blessing) will open up other vistas besides that of subsistence. Man, having become secure in this respect, will not only want to, but will, satisfy his other frustrated desires: he will want quality and culture. His lower instincts will diminish in strength and his higher develop, and families will become smaller. Henry George rightly says: "That besides the positive and prudential checks of Malthus, there is a third check which comes into play with the elevation of the standard of comfort and the development of the intellect, as is pointed to by many well known facts. The proportion of births is notoriously greater in new settlements, where the struggle with nature leaves little opportunity for intellectual life, and among the poverty bound classes of older countries, who in the midst of wealth are deprived of all its advantages, and reduced to all but an animal existence, than it is among the classes to whom the increase of wealth has brought independence, leisure, comfort, and a fuller and more varied life. This fact, long ago recognised in the homely adage, 'a rich man for luck, and a poor man for children', was noted by Adam Smith, who says it is not uncommon to find a poor, half-starved Highland woman has been mother of twenty-three or twenty-four children, and is everywhere so clearly perceptible that it is only necessary to allude to it".

In conclusion, since the time of Henry George, science and technology have developed more than in the whole of previous history and man no longer scratches the earth with his nails for subsistence. He has at his command the techniques resulting from the splitting of the atom, the know-how to increase and preserve crops, the biology of animal multiplication, the results of the laboratory work on the synthesis of sugar, the basis of life, which I personally, have seen demonstrated, the accumulating results from the exploration of the oceans, and countless mechanisms which can bring subsistence to him thousands or millions of times more easily than ever before. Who will dare to forecast the limit?

But, perhaps Mr. Cutner knows the exact amount of subsistence that may be produced and the exact number of the final population it will sustain? If he does, he will, no doubt, inform us and then we shall know whether what Henry George said was really unlimited nonsense.



## This Believing World

An Archbishop and a Bishop graced ITV's religion the other week—they were Dr. Heenan and Dr. Dwyer of Liverpool and Leeds respectively, and though they were questioned pretty severely by Kenneth Harris of *The Observer* and by Malcolm Muggeridge, both from an "unbelieving" angle, they both stuck to their most primitive Fundamentalist guns without batting an eyelid. Sufficient was it that the "Church"—that is the Roman Church—said something or other, or laid down the "truth" from God's "Revelation", and it has never budged since.

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Mr. Muggeridge believed neither in the Resurrection nor in Hell, but agreed that he believed in many of the events described in the New Testament. On this, Dr. Dwyer retorted—quite rightly—that the evidence for what he believed was exactly the same kind of evidence given for what he did not believe, and this point was not answered. As for Hell, Dr. Dwyer claimed that it was not the Church which "invented" it—it was there and always was there before there was a Christian Church. Both Archbishop Heenan and Bishop Dwyer were allowed the very best publicity for their Church, and no wonder. The really relevant arguments appeared quite unknown to both Mr. Harris and Mr. Muggeridge. What a pity they did not take up a course of Freethought before venturing to meet these astute "defenders of the faith".

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From America comes the sad news that 100 members of the Full Gospel Assembly came out of their shelter underground where they had congregated for 43 days waiting for the nuclear war to begin. According to the *Daily Express*, their leader was the Rev. Mrs. Weimer, and the fact that the expected war had not materialised did not shake her faith in the least—no doubt because it was all based on Biblical calculations. The Full Gospellers spent their time reading the Bible, a feat which, for some of us, looks like one of our now abolished prison sentences—hard labour.

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In Canada, that land of supreme faith (mostly the Roman version) the Rev. B. Graham answers questions in one of the newspapers, and one of these was—"Why have Christians almost lost the meaning of Christmas these days?" The Rev. Billy answered by telling the story of a professor of psychology asking his class to put down the first meaning of the word that came to their minds. In all the answers which, in general, consisted of "tree", "holly", "turkey", etc., there was not one which mentioned the birth of Jesus. And this in Canada! However, Mr. Graham spoke up for those people who still looked upon Jesus as their Saviour—they can say "with the angels, 'This day is born a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.'" But surely even these never forget the turkey!

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That great protagonist of a Flat Earth, Mr. Samuel Shanton, with his wife, wants a mere bagatelle of one million pounds for "a Flat Earth Expedition" designed to confound every scientist, past and present, who persists in deluding the public that this Earth of ours is round. He wants to hike—according to the *Sunday Pictorial*—across Antarctic wastes where he knows he will find, joined to us, another world, "as green and as verdant as our own". This will prove that "there are thousands of earths in it [the Universe] like our own".

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The reason why these "earths" like our own have not yet

been discovered is because "we have all accepted the scientists' theories without question". In fact, explorers "are tricked by the mirage of their own false theories". Only Mr. Shenton, his wife, and the 150 members of the Flat Earth Society, in the whole world, have not been taken in by the nonsense taught by leading scientists and astronomers about a spherical Earth. The Flat Earth theory (or is it, fact?) is, we need hardly add, sponsored by the Bible. What a pity that the Precious Word can't sponsor the £1,000,000 as well!

## Perpetuating Superstition

FOR AT LEAST the thousandth time, we were treated recently to another article dealing with the awful misfortunes which follow people who insist on wearing well-known but "ill-starred" jewels like the Hope Diamond, or the famous Koh-i-noor. The last one—the subject will be written up at least another thousand times—appeared in the *Sunday Graphic* (7/8/60) and was written by Miss Ursula Bloom. It deserves mention because the one thing which this distinguished writer has missed giving us is evidence.

It is a long article, packed with statements all proving that there was a "Jewel that Killed Seven Kings", the title of Miss Bloom's article. This Jewel was the Koh-i-noor, but it appears that, though it was worn by Queens, it never did them a ha'p'worth of harm. Only the Seven Kings were destroyed.

The curious thing is that you had to be a King before it killed you. For example, the Earl of Dalhousie who brought the Koh-i-noor to England from India kept it in his waistcoat pocket and escaped unscathed. Queen Victoria wore it and she lived for 81 years; and in turn, Queen Alexandra, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth II, have all worn it, and it certainly did not kill them. But the unfortunate original owners in India had a heck of a rotten time, all due to the malevolent jewel! I don't believe a word of it.

It appears also that there is a Russian ill-luck diamond called the Orloff, and we are told that "it killed off those who wore it" which Miss Bloom immediately denies; for she says that Prince Orloff who bought it gave it to the Empress Catherine. Well, Orloff lived till he was 72, and Catherine died at 67, neither of them "killed" as Miss Bloom so pathetically asserts.

But it was Queen Marie-Antoinette who wore another diamond and of course she died on the scaffold. We always understood that it was not because she wore the diamond that she died, but because of what might have been the beginning of a great epoch, the French Revolution: a movement which got out of hand. To "prove" her case Miss Bloom quotes "a soothsayer"! She naturally gives us no names, no dates, and no authority whatever. But I am sure that the readers of the *Sunday Graphic*—following of course the Editor who is responsible for the article—will find in "the soothsayer" a sufficiently reliable witness that it was not the guillotine which killed the poor Queen but wearing the Regent Diamond. It was so terribly unlucky!

Is it any wonder that our national journals publish idiotic astrological prophecies, read avidly by their millions of readers who would be astonished if told that all that these and similar superstitions had literally nothing to do with life? Don't they know that all such superstitions are mere relics of our primeval ancestors?



# THE FREETHINKER

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## Lecture Notices, Etc.

### OUTDOOR

- Edinburgh Branch N.S.S. (The Mound).—Sunday afternoon and evening: Messrs. CRONAN, MCRAE and MURRAY.
- London (Tower Hill).—Every Thursday, 12—2 p.m.; Messrs. J. W. BARKER and L. EBURY.
- Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Platt Fields).—Every Sunday, 3 p.m.: MESSRS. MILLS and WOODCOCK. (Thursday lunchtimes, THE FREETHINKER on sale, Piccadilly, near Queen Victoria statue.)
- Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (Marble Arch). — Meetings every Sunday, from 5 p.m.: Messrs. L. EBURY, J. W. BARKER, C. E. WOOD and D. TRIBE.
- Merseyside Branch N.S.S. (Pierhead).—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.; Sundays, 7.30 p.m.
- 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, Nottingham).—Every Friday, 1 p.m., Every Sunday, 6.30 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.
- Sussex Branch N.S.S. (Peace Statue, opposite Embassy Court, Brighton). Sundays, 3 p.m.: Messrs. BARKER, EBURY, MILLS, and TRIBE.

## Notes and News

THE RESPONSE TO THE National Secular Society Building Fund appeal has been very encouraging. One lady, whose father used to attend the old Hall of Science, made a splendid donation of £100 and, though she wishes to remain anonymous, we should like to thank her here, as well as those many others who have given so generously. We might mention, too, that the North London Branch N.S.S. intends to make regular donations and the first, of £5, has been received, while Marble Arch Branch will give the collection from one of its winter meetings. Purchase of 103 Borough High Street and heavy decorating costs have dug heavily into the N.S.S. capital, with consequent reduction of annual income. It is hoped that the Building Fund will help to make up this loss of revenue. Donations are being acknowledged individually.

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“YOU MAY NOT KNOW”—said a slip of paper through our letter box recently—“that in the last four months of 1959, 889 prostitutes were gaoled under the Street Offences’ Act, yet in the entire twelve months since the Act came into law not one kerb-crawling male motorist has been summoned by the police”. We did not know. Yet members of the League of Militant Anti-Puritanism, who issue the slip—claim to have “seen men soliciting women from cars” in Seymour Street, Battersea Park, Shaftesbury

## The Freethinker Sustentation Fund

PREVIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED £153 5s. 9d. C. H. Norman, £1 5s.; Miss D. G. Davies, £1 1s.; H. G. Blewett, 5s.; W.L.S., 2s. 6d.; F.S., 5s.; H.W.G., 5s.; Pius John. 23, £1 13s. 6d.; J. Wilson, £2; C. W. Schwab, £1 15s.; J. D. Evans, 2s. 6d. Total to date, August 26th, 1960. £162 0s. 3d.

Avenue, Bayswater Road, Tavistock Crescent and Chepstow Road, since September 1959, and they suggest that “the police are deliberately discriminating between male kerb-crawlers and women, under orders from those responsible for the Street Offences’ Act”. They call for the repeal of the Act, which they regard as “humbuggery”.

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THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE, *Liberty* (August 1950) began a series of articles by Hugh Garner on “How the Canadian clergymen meddle with your entertainment”. The Baptists are against Sunday sport, said Mr. Garner. “The Presbyterians are dead against ‘pornographic plays’. And the extremists all join with spokesmen from the United Church, who can’t make up their minds whether the world is going to hell through gambling or beer. The Catholic clergy shows a tolerance of bingo, but hates ‘obscene’ literature and moving pictures—especially books and movies that contain such obscenities as divorce, birth control and anti-clericalism”. As for evangelistic preachers; they are “even seemingly against happiness”. But they ignore “salacious” literature, “pornographic” plays and “blue” movies, for, said Mr. Garner, “none of their followers go to movies or to the theatre, and few of them, apparently, can read”.

★  
REVIEWING THE Rev. Brian Hession’s latest book, *Pinnacle of Faith* (Peter Davies, 16s.) the *Bournemouth Echo* (19/7/60) quoted the following passage: “It has often been said that the Americans have a great deal to learn about ethics when it comes to business. Despite the fact that they are a 60 per cent churchgoing nation, when it comes to doing a business deal with them, you have to realise that for many of them religion does not penetrate one iota into their business transactions. Some of them will cut your throat and hack you to the ground to get across a successful business deal”. Allowing for the hyperbole in the last sentence, this is doubtless true. But it is by no means peculiar to Americans. What it really boils down to is that ethics and big business rarely mix; ethics and religion only incidentally.

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“YOU AND WE perceive with great concern what dark clouds of danger hover over mankind and how heavily the peace of nations is threatened. Therefore let us pray together and with great fervour that Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace illumine the spirits of the leaders of the states” (*Time*, 15/8/60). Thus, Pope John XXIII in a sweetly-sounding radio message to the 37th Eucharistic Congress in Munich (attended by Dr. Adenauer). Cardinal Spellman of New York also saw the danger, but sounded less sweet. In Munich Cathedral before a congregation of 15,000, Spellman indulged a bitter diatribe against Communism, which he designated, “a wild beast of the forest”.

### WITHOUT COMMENT DIES AT LOURDES

Three days after reaching Lourdes on a pilgrimage, 62-years-old Miss Ann M - - - - of - - - -, Ashton-in-Makerfield, has died.  
—*Liverpool Echo* (5/8/60)

### —NEXT WEEK—

## ROMAN CATHOLIC PROSPECTS IN BRITAIN

By F. A. RIDLEY



## On Contraversial Questions—2

By H. CUTNER

AS READERS may perhaps remember, I once pointed out that almost every generation of Freethinkers has to be, so to speak, "re-educated". The fact that I dealt with some particular problem in these columns say, 30 years ago, does not mean that a new reader knows all about it. He may never have heard of the question at all until lately, and may know nothing about it either pro or con. He then rushes in to us with a letter almost breathlessly asking—what about it?

For example, a reader from America wrote to me a short while ago about a "Letter" written by a Roman who met some people who had witnessed the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, a letter reproduced in Hendrik Van Loon's *Story of Mankind*. He had read my book, *Jesus—God, Man or Myth?* and was suitably impressed; but this particular letter troubled him no end. How did I explain it? Now, as readers know, many of my articles have always insisted that no other religion has ever forged and frauded quite as much as Christianity. This is admitted by Christians themselves—for instance, Mosheim—and my book dealt in detail with these wholesale frauds. It never occurred to my correspondent, in spite of this, that Van Loon, instead of merely copying what Christians have said about the Crucifixion, *made up* his own version—though whether he believes the story as given in the Gospels I do not know. The letter was a *fake*, of course, quite as much as the dozens of letters all describing Jesus or his Crucifixion or his Resurrection which are forgeries of the silliest kind, but which went the round of the Churches for centuries as Gospel truth. No doubt they are still believed in by many Christians. But in Van Loon's very extensive Bibliography there is only one book on "our Lord"—*A Child's Life of Christ* by Mabel Dearmer. Obviously, Van Loon thought that only children could really believe in the "life".

Or we get an old reader who ignored us for 15 years, and reading THE FREETHINKER again, was shocked to find that I was still actually believing Jesus was a myth. How could he be a myth with Tacitus referring to him? The question of Tacitus has been dealt with in nearly all the books on the Myth Theory—say by J. M. Robertson, Prof. W. B. Smith, and Prof. Arthur Drews, to say nothing of C. F. Dupuis as far back as 1794; but it turns up with surprising regularity as if it had never been dealt with anywhere and, in this particular case, I am supposed either to agree it is unanswerable, or go over and over again the same old ground. (Incidentally, I devoted 15 pages to Tacitus in my book on Jesus—but I cannot expect my "old" reader to bother about them. He is so very cocksure.)

However, it may be worth while once again in these columns to deal with that wonderful modern discovery, or the reality of, Extra Sensory Perception as it is called. To read about it in scores of books and journals, one would think that it has been proven up to the hilt. I heard a lady on the radio the other day talking about the way ESP or Telepathy can literally be proven if you like over 100 miles—that people can be found who can tell us what is drawn on a card by other people wafting a thought across the whole of that space. And no doubt whatever millions of people actually believe it!

Well, it has always been a contention of mine that the easiest people to be bamboozled in these things—as in "testing" Spiritualists mediums—are most, if not all,

"Professors" of something or other. Not being able to explain even the simplest conjuring trick, they are, or seem to be, ready to accept the Spiritualistic journals constantly giving us portraits of celebrated Professors all of whom have swallowed the Spirit theory without a qualm. They couldn't explain the "phenomena", therefore these must be the work of spirits from the mighty deep.

It need hardly be said that if any of our all-believing Professors were faced with such a brilliant performer as Koran or Chan Canastra (who both insisted that it was all done *without* the aid of spirits) they would, *toute suite*, become Spiritualists. Nothing else could explain the "phenomena".

While it may be true, however, that even conjurers have fallen for Spiritualism, the great ones, Houdini, Maskelyne and many others, are quite agreed that however the "phenomena" may be explained, "spirit intercourse" is not and cannot be the explanation. Some of my favourite reading has always been books by conjurers, and the latest one is *The Amazing World of John Scarne* which I most strongly advise all who are interested in the way we can be fooled in all sorts of ways, to buy or borrow.

Scarne is one of the greatest "wizards" with cards, if not the greatest, who ever lived, and some of his chapters debunking professors, mediums, etc., are particularly entertaining. Long before World War II he began reading about the wonderful experiments of Prof. J. B. Rhine who is even now spoken of with almost bated breath as having proved ESP; and it is almost impossible to get reputable journals to admit that the proper word for Rhine's experiments is "humbug". "Extra-sensory perception" says Scarne (page 242), "and psychokinesis are strictly humbug".

Scarne goes into the question in great detail, too long to deal with here. But as an example of what a professor can do, let us take a little of the story of a horse named "Lady" and stated by Professor W. McDougall and Professor J. B. Rhine to be "psychic". It was "a mind-reading" horse. It could spell out—with its nose—on some small, lettered blocks of wood an answer to a question posed in an enquirer's mind. In answer to Scarne's question "How did I get here?" the horse touched three blocks spelling the word CAR. Lady also answered a written question seen by his owner (a Mrs. Fonda) "Where do I live?" by spelling out NEW YORK—though here something went wrong for Scarne lived in New Jersey. He later discovered how it was all done, and he adds, "the only clever thing about Mrs. Fonda and her mind-reading horse Lady, was Mrs. Fonda's salesmanship in duping the professors from Duke University"—(McDougall and Rhine). Scarne divulges the secret of Lady's wonderful "mind-reading" in his book. And if any reader wants still further particulars he can find them in "The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology", Vol. 23 (1929), for there, he can read, "An Investigation of a Mind-reading Horse" by J. B. Rhine and Louisa E. Rhine, Ph.D., of Duke University. They took six days employing their "great telepathic techniques on the horse", and then Rhine and McDougall spent a year investigating their experiments. And the result? Here it is:

There is left then, only the telepathic explanation, the transference of mental influence by an unknown process. Nothing was discovered that failed to accord with it, and no other hypothesis proposed seems tenable in view of the results. That is, says Scarne, Professor Rhine and Professor



McDougall state in print that "Mrs. Fonda's horse, Lady, can read a persons' mind". This is bad enough, but Scarne gives particulars of a bank robbery when a tough looking police captain asked Lady to tell him where he could find the robbers? Lady spelled out only CHI for Chicago because, it was explained, that she could not spell C twice; after which the police captain solemnly thanked the horse, saying, "Thank you, Lady. You have

been a great help to me". He really thought the horse understood him!

But alas, no responsible national journal would help to "debunk" Rhine. There simply must be something in telepathy because he says so. And the surprising thing is that spiritualists use telepathy to prove the existence of the "spirit world!"

## Catholic Crime—Who Pays the Bill?

By Dr. J. V. DUHIG  
(Concluded from page 276)

In the Delinquency field the same or even a worse picture is revealed. In THE FREETHINKER of 17/6/60, Mr. McCall analyses the shocking position in Liverpool and makes a point never properly made before, namely that the plea by Catholic authorities that such a horrible social mess, as Catholic children are making of their lives, is due to poverty. Mr. McCall's authority explodes that fallacy. In one district where conditions of all scholars were comparable, the Catholic children showed a delinquency rate almost exactly 60 times that of the Council School children. Taking the global figures for Britain as set out by Mrs. Margaret Knight, Catholics are 8 per cent of the population but their children are 26 per cent and 23 per cent respectively of the delinquents for Catholic girls and boys, and on this I have calculated that for one official year there were about 4,000 children before the courts who would not have had been in trouble if they had not been brought up Catholics.

This kind of evidence can be duplicated over and over with figures from all over the world: wherever there is a Catholic community, there is invariably Crime and Delinquency.

And for Atheists and non-religious people generally there are no crime statistics because they do not commit crime; they are the best behaved and the best and most intelligent citizens. Catholicism stunts, corrupts and darkens the mind and ruins the moral integrity. It is a curse.

Now let us do a little accountancy. The value of the lives destroyed ruthlessly and maliciously, simply because the victims could not agree with the fake Christian mythology, running into millions is incalculable; but that of those destroyed by Hitler as a result of the Pacelli-von Papen pact, valued conservatively on the basis of the amounts paid in compensation courts, would easily run into £20,000 million, apart from the property stolen from the victims by Hitler & Co. Whether the Catholic Hierarchy in Jugoslavia were compelled to pay compensation for the murder by Stepinac & Co. of tens of thousands of Serbs, I do not know, but they should have been.

However abstract justice of this kind is apparently impossible, or so difficult that it has to be abandoned.

Let us then confine our accounting to individual or local crime, including in that word the frauds and swindles of the clergy. In my State of Queensland, the Catholic clergy pay no income tax, and I have no clue as to how this racket is worked, but it remains that an act for which an ordinary person would be heavily fined is condoned in a priest. And the Catholic Church pays no municipal rates and no Land Tax on its properties, the exemption being operable not only in the traditional way, in respect of places of worship, but also of the homes of the clergy. The three episcopal residences in Brisbane, the city where I live, are worth a saleable value of £100,000. The Imitation of Christ does not include for these gentry, sleeping under trees in paddocks, the rateable value of these sumptuous residences being at least £10,000, on which not a penny is paid. In the local paper recently, an old female pensioner living alone wrote that, after she paid rates on her home, she did not have enough to buy food. But three drones living in luxury paid nothing, in rates or land tax. The economic loss to the community in this way alone must amount to hundreds of thousands, and the concession from a corrupt politician to a corrupt hierarchy was in my opinion a barefaced and callous swindle.

Now for the estimate of cost of lay crime and delinquency.

The Catholic American gangsters must drain off many millions of dollars from the community for their routine of murder, mayhem, blackmail, narcotics, prostitution, gambling, white-slave traffic, "protection" money, police bribery, trade union corruption, kidnapping, purchase of crook politicians, etc. The description of the sumptuous funeral ceremonies at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, of a prominent gangster reads like that of a first night at the Metropolitan Opera House. And this all costs money. U.S.A. is now reputed to be the most religious nation on earth, but it still retains its proud title of the most criminal. It is obvious that, if Catholics provide twice and three times the number of criminals, and that number and more of delinquents, the cost of the administration of Law and Justice must also be greatly increased to meet this demand. In every prison, there must be reserved, not at most 10 cells in every 100, to which Catholics would be entitled on their quota in the population, but 30 or 40. And for delinquent children there must be a similar expansion of the correctional supervisory staff for the children who had the misfortune to have been given a Catholic training. All branches of the law enforcement apparatus, police, courts, prisons, borstals, probation staff, must be increased out of proportion to what they should be in a reasonably well-behaved law-abiding community. I do not think governments are fully aware of the drain these things represent, or of the corresponding amounts of which the community must be deprived to supply the needs of Catholic criminality.

So that in any community, Catholic immorality is responsible for the loss of Income Tax unpaid by Catholic priests, loss of municipal rates and Land Tax unpaid by the Catholic Church, cash subsidy to Catholic schools which breed delinquency on the part of the Catholic young, and crime in later life, and the unnecessarily high cost of law enforcement. In the end the whole community pays, and is thus deprived of revenue which could provide libraries, swimming pools, playgrounds, etc.

I suggest that the matter be referred to the United Nations, with the proposal that every effort should be made to abolish that wicked anachronism, the Holy Roman Apostolic Catholic Church, the most dangerous force for evil in the world today, the traditional fomentor of hatred, war and massacre.



## CORRESPONDENCE

## TAKE AN ANSWER, MISS SMITH...

Dear Miss Smith, about ventriloquism,  
Illogical am I, unversed in syllogism:  
Socrates' midwifery I practise—no cheap abortionist,  
—Wait, Thought's delivered, God's a contortionist!  
It's in the Book, the words are dread,  
God came and sat on his own fine head.  
He patted his back with a holy sign,  
And said "Oh what a good boy am I".

"A Heretic."

## A REJOINDER

Dear Father Paris,

Your letter both amazed and shocked me. With all the powers of reasoning you possess, you attempt to establish a vague deity, yet faced with Catholic doctrine on the nature of this deity, you write, "the questions you mentioned on Virgin Births, etc., belong to Theology and must not be dealt with when arguing with materialists".

Is Theology then incapable of reasonable proof? Can it only be supported by excommunication, persecution and extermination? How many millions have suffered, in the name of the abstruse doctrine of the Trinity alone, defies computation; Donatists, Marcionites, Arians, Huguenots, Waldenses, Albigenesés, Anabaptists, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc. Is yours a Church that refuses to argue its doctrine with its opponents, and yet, in support of these very doctrines will torture, burn and imprison?

EVA EBURY.

Father Paris (19/8/60) seems unaware, that to argue from "design", it is necessary to produce evidence of intention. The result must then be compared with the intention. Only then can we see if the design has been fulfilled. What was the intention of the Catholic God five minutes before creation?

Father Paris states that Science and Philosophy "must lead us" to a God which, by revelation, is "Three Persons in One". The Scientific method is one of verification by experiment. What possible experiment can verify the real existence of a trinity of gods?

L. MURRAY.

## SIMMER DOWN

I have great sympathy with Mr. Snook's views of royalty; in fact, his exasperation corresponds exactly with my own. However, I do not subscribe to THE FREETHINKER to read other people's emotional tirades whether I am in sympathy with them or not. There are, I agree, things which must be said as publicly and forcibly as possible, about our society, but if they are being uttered in the name of reason, the language of reason should be used. THE FREETHINKER has three justifiable tasks: to inform its regular readers, to assist them in formulating their views and to persuade others that a thorough-going rationalism offers the best solution to all problems. None of these objectives is served by Mr. Snook's kind of article and the last mentioned is positively hindered by it.

THE FREETHINKER would do well to put an end to printing this kind of verbal tantrum and Mr. Snook would do well to simmer down and then to treat his subject with the calm rationalism he so much and so rightly admires.

G. M. JONES.

## FEAR OF DEATH

As I expected, Dr. Duhig needed no tips from anyone on how to deal with Mr. Bennett's impertinence, but may I again point out that no one could serve the Churches better than this self-styled "thorough-paced heretic"? "Don't offend the poor dear Christians", Muzzle all outspoken atheists". Does the Editor share his views? If so there has been a radical departure from those of the founders. It is easy to believe that your correspondent is no adorer of "Father Science".

Even as rephrased, Dr. Smith's sentence is still nonsense, but Christians will never realise it. Their priests frighten them with tales of an All-Terrible Judge before whom they must all stand. It is part of their trade. They sell post-dated cheques on the Bank of Heaven, the biggest fraud ever conceived in the mind of man! Most old people not steeped in religion face death with equanimity; aged atheists are completely indifferent to its approach.

W. E. HUXLEY.

## JESUS AND CHRIST

You refer to a Canadian Evangelist called John Jesus (issue of June 24th). At one time there were a number of people in this city with the surname of Jesus, but I find none now in any of the boroughs. They were not evangelists. Probably Jews.

There are still 25 listings under the name of Christ, however, in our phone books—hospitals—churches—and lawyers who, I imagine, are also probably Jews. Some are funeral directors, and one says "tavern".

(Dr.) IDA M. MELLEN (New York).

## CORRECTION

Your contributor, Mr. F. A. Ridley has dropped a brick in his article "The Olympic Games v. Christianity". The Games were not celebrated beneath the shadow (or in the shade) of Mount Olympus, as he states, but at Olympia, in Elis, one of the states of the Peloponnese.

Mount Olympus is on the borders of Thessaly and Macedonia and a long way from Olympia.

P. D. SANDERS.

[Mr. Ridley thanks Mr. Sanders for his correction and begs the forgiveness of ancient Gods and modern readers.—ED.]

## CATHOLICISM AND THE CONGO

In connection with the informative article published in the current issue, many references are given to the close connection between Catholicism and crime. Perhaps Dr. Duhig wrote before the recent outrages in the Congo, but surely these fit very neatly into his thesis. For it is, I believe, a demonstrable fact that such education as existed during the 80 years of Belgian rule was entirely in the hands of the Catholic Church and particularly of the Jesuits. The bestial actions perpetrated in recent weeks by their former pupils surely afford a glaring indication of what follows from a long monopoly of Catholic-controlled religious education. The unhappy Belgian victims of rape and manhandling ultimately represent the nemesis of the teaching of the Catholic Church.

F. A. RIDLEY.

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