

# The Freethinker

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THE FAMOUS DICTUM *Si fueris Romae, Romano vivito more* ("If you are in Rome, do as the Romans do"), is credited to Ambrose, 4th century Church father. The sainted bishop of Milan was not only realistic, he was also precise; for when he came to computing angels, he estimated their number "was to the number of men on earth as 99 is to 1".

The Greeks had a word for it: *angelos*. That word, however, had not the same connotation for the Greeks that it has for us. Their *daimon*, rather than their *angelos*, was the closest approximation to our notion of a heavenly messenger. Socrates often spoke of his *daimon*, a spirit that assumed protective guard-

ianship over him and, occasionally, as "an inner voice", counselled him. The Athenian sage, who questioned just about everything, did not concern himself, as far as we know, with the question of how many of these disembodied creatures were abroad in the world. But Aristotle did. According to the latter, there were 50 of the breed. Why 50? Well, it seems there were 50 movements of the celestial bodies, and each of these bodies required an overseer—an intelligence or angel—to keep it on its proper course.

In this matter, the 12th century Jewish scholar and physician, Maimonides, a great admirer of Aristotle, agreed with his Greek mentor. On the other hand, Al-Gazel (Ghazali), Islamic mystic, who preceded Maimonides by a century or so, was certain that there were only 10 angels, all of Arabic extraction or Arabic-speaking.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Cabalists, who reached the peak of their industry in the 13-14 centuries, bypassed or ignored the conclusions of Aristotle, Al-Gazel, and Maimonides, and fixed the number of extant angels at 301,655,712. This tally was arrived at, we are told, by the process of "calculating words into numbers and numbers into words".<sup>(2)</sup> Which may be as reliable a method as any. Other sources (*Apocalypse of Paul*, *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*, Revelation, etc.) give "myriads of myriads", "two hundred thousand thousands", "496,000 myriads", and other equally heroic figures. Rabbi Judah, whose firsthand knowledge of what goes on in heaven is detailed in *Zohar III*, assures us that "at the break of day a chorus of 1,550 myriads sing out hymns to God; at midday, 1,548 myriads; and 'between evenings' 1,590 myriads". Rabbi Yosé, Judah's vis-a-vis in hechaloth disputation, adds a colourful touch by informing the faithful that these doxological angels are called "Lords of Shouting". Pandemonium couldn't be noisier.

Another biblical exegete, Hillel ben Samuel of Verona of the 13th century, quoting the elder sages, claimed that "every blade of grass has an angel appointed over it". The same sages vouched for the fact that "with every breath of God an angel is born".<sup>(3)</sup>

Aquinas computed the heavenly hierarchs to exceed the number of all the varied species of life on earth. St. Gregory and St. Jerome maintained their number to be

"past counting". In the *Book of Roots*, Joseph Albo, Jewish dogmatist of the 15th century, declared the number of angels was infinite, Hebrews speaks of "an innumerable company of angels". In Matthew 26,53 the "twelve legions of angels" which God had in readiness for Jesus's use likewise indicates an innumerable host.

The multitude of lesser angels was also past counting, for among them are the guardian angels of whom it is

said one is assigned "to every human being who ever existed, exists, or will exist". A Talmudic authority speaks of every Jew being attended by 11,000 angels, day and night.<sup>(4)</sup> In the tract *Berachoth 62*, Rabbin Rev Huna, 4th century commentator, informs

his readers that "each of us has 1,000 demons on the left side of him and 10,000 angels on the right side". Huna was considered an expert in this field.<sup>(5)</sup>

In Moise Schwab's *Vocabulaire de l'angelologie*, a work which leans heavily on hechaloth texts, we learn that "at the promulgation of the Torah, God was accompanied by 60 myriads of angels, without counting 12,000 evil spirits commanded by Qemuel".<sup>(6)</sup> And, further, that there were "90,000 demons present at the Exodus".<sup>(7)</sup> According to the renowned 2nd century Rabbi Meir, "when God, blessed be He, appeared against the Egyptians at the time of the crossing of the Red Sea, He came surrounded by 9,000 myriads of Angels of Destruction, some of them Angels of Fright, some of them Angels of Fire". It should be noted here that these were not evil angels, however homicidal their mission.

Kokabiel (or Kochbiel), ruler of the planet Saturn and governor of the stars, was assisted at his planetary and stellar chores by "365,000 myriads of ministering angels" (presumably a 1,000 myriads for every day of the year). *Enoch III*, which gives the foregoing figures, states also that "each of the seven archangels was accompanied in his rounds by 496,000 myriads" of deputy hierarchs, and that "660,000 myriads of Angels of Glory stand over against the Divine Throne", along with a "division of flaming fire".<sup>(8)</sup> Uriel, one of the four great angels of the throne of God (ranked by Le Sage in the *Devil on Two Sticks* as the patron of third-rate thieves), had "a personal escort of 395 myriads of companies of angels, each provided with 365 rays of light".<sup>(9)</sup> This must have been before this "regent of the Sun", "flame of God", "prince of seraphim" and "destroyer of the hosts of Sennacherib" was reprobated by the Church.<sup>(10)</sup>

Every reader of the Old Testament will recall that Jacob, on the advice of his mother Rebekah, fled from the face of his twin-brother Esau. Solicitous for the safety of His favourite, God delegated two heavenly hosts to serve him as bodyguard. Each of these hosts, according to rabbinic legend, consisted of no less than 600,000 angels. Despite this formidable array of protecting spirits, Jacob was still fearful of the overtaking wrath of Esau, for when he (Jacob) tarried at the brook Jabbok, and saw 72 of his

VIEWS and OPINIONS

## The Hosts of Heaven

By GUSTAV DAVIDSON

father Isaac's retainers sent by Rebekah to help her son in his coming battle with her other son (Esau), "he (that is, Jacob) rejoiced at the height of these men and greeted them with these words: 'This is God's helping host'." (11)

What are we to make of this? The armour wherein Jacob trusted was not, clearly, the 1,200,000 angels provided by God, but the paltry 72 men sent by Rebekah. Surely the rabbis pulled a boner here!

As for demons. A 15th century writer Alphonsus da Spina, basing his count on New Testament authority that one-third of the angels fell, (12) computed the number of these heavenly apostates at 133,306,668. Another industrious theologian, Dr. Johannes Weir of Brabant (1515-1568), undertook to draw up an all-inclusive inventory of devils, "constituting the total operative population of hell". He put their number at only 7,405,926, "comprising 1,111 legions of 6,666 each, apart from errors of calculation". (13) This modest estimate, and the unlucky reservation that he might be in error, laid the herr doktor wide open to challenge. A group of Luther's followers, after calling in the best computing brains of the day, published a work entitled *Theatrum Diabolorum* wherein a new figure was announced: 2,665,866,746,664. Others, who thought it safer to report their findings in round numbers, came up with the grand total of "not less than 10,000 billions". (14)

The question of how many angels can dance on the point of a pin, posed reputedly by St. Thomas Aquinas, has never been satisfactorily answered. (15) Nor is it ever likely to be. Attempts to answer the question were made at the time, for in the Age of Faith in which the angelic doctor lived and wrote, no theologic problem was considered too exacting for idle wits or serious scholars. And no solution, however naive or absurd, but had its champions.

Multiplying angels and demons on an astronomical scale became the preoccupation of a horde of polymaths, mystics, ecstasies, thaumaturgists, etc. Furthermore, in this realm of fancy and sortilege, one guess was as good as another. To ask for reasonable proof occurred to few; indeed, in orthodox quarters, to presume to subject any religious pronouncement to logic or even plain common sense was regarded as a species of heresy, Satan's device for leading the faithful away from the true faith. The *ipse dixit* of the church remained sacrosanct and inviolable. (16)

Considering the fact that comparatively few angels (or demons) have been destroyed, and that new angels are being constantly "breathed into existence" (for God creates them, as we have seen, with every breath He draws), the final tally must be truly staggering. But maybe the law of diminishing returns applies to pure spirits as well as to rotating crops, so that actually there are not as many of the celestial or infernal hosts as angelologists and demonologists have led us to believe. (17)

## NOTES

- (1) See *A History of Jewish Philosophy* by Isaac Husik (New York, Meridian Books, 1960).
- (2) Christian von Rosenroth Knorr's *Kabbala Denudata*. In Daniel 7, 10 the angels who stood before the Lord came to "10,000 times 10,000", that is to say, 100 million. The Douay version is more generous: it gives "10,000 times 100,000", that is to say, a billion in American reckoning.
- (3) *Beresit Rabba* 10,6; *Tehillim* 104. Cf. Rabbi Jochanan's assertion in *Sanhedrin* 93a that "with every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God, an angel is created".
- (4) Pie-Raymond Regamey's *What Is An Angel?* (Hawthorn Books, New York, 1960).
- (5) See *Devils* by J. Charles Wall (Methuen & Co., London, 1904). An old Russian superstition has it that the good angels are on our right side, the demons on our left. Hence, Russians are cautioned not to spit on the right side, but on the left—by way of showing contempt for the demons and respect for the angels.
- (6) Qemuel (or Kemuel), Chief of Seraphim, who was later to be liquidated by God.
- (7) The Devil also had large retinues. In Weir's *Pseudo-Monarchy of Demons*, a popular work of the 16th century, we are informed that 60 legions of devils "obeyed the command of Buel, the greatest king below, whose lands are in the East". There were, it seems, many kings of hell (Mastema, Beliar, Dumah, Satan, Beelzebub, etc.). A "mistress of

sorceresses" Agrat Bat Mahlat, a dancing roof demon, had a train of 18 myriads of messengers of destruction". These were apparently civil. Dumah, "chief of demons", had 12,000 myriads of attendants.—See *Jewish Encyclopedia*, pp. 516 ff.

- (8) There were many differing lists of the Seven Archangels. The Hebrew *Book of Enoch* gives Mikael, Gabriel, Raphael, Shatqiel, Baradiel, Schachaqiel, and Sidriol or Pazriol. Other lists (Pseudo-Dionysius, *Ethiopic Enoch*, Gregory the Great, *Testament of Solomon*, etc.) include among the Seven the names of Adabiel, Haniel, Remiel, Jophiel, Pravuil, Sabrael, Zadkiel, etc.
- (9) See *Zohar* III, 232.
- (10) The creation of angels, by man, became in the Middle Ages such a thriving industry that the Church, in alarm, was constrained to put a stop to it. At a Council in Rome in 745, half a dozen angels were reprobated: these were, besides Uriel (sic), Raguel, Tubuel, Inias, Sabacc, Simiel (Semibel). At the same time, Bishop Adalbert and Bishop Clement, who taught the invocation of these spirits at the time, were suppressed. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes only three named angels: Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. All others, even where they have been "certified" by popes, are dismissed as inventions.
- (11) See Louis Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews*, 1, 377.
- (12) Rev. 12, 4. The passage reads "And his (i.e., the great red dragon's or devil's) tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth". It is generally agreed that by stars St. John meant angels. The great Hillel, 1st century Jewish sage, argued on the contrary that sinful angels were an impossibility.—See *Fallen Angels* by Bernard J. Bamberger (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1952).
- (13) The tally of 7,405,926 demons was also arrived at by multiplying the great Pythagorean number 1234321 by 6.—See *Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy* by Emile Grillot De Givry.
- (14) See Homer W. Smith's *Man and his Gods*, pp. 278, 293 (Little Brown & Co., 1952). If we accept this estimate of 10,000 billions of demons abroad in the world, all working for evil, and compare this horde with the 25,000 saints working for good (the actual number recognized by the Church, according to Rene Fulop-Miller's *Saints Who have Moved the World*), what chance, one may ask, has man to live an upright life? None—unless God sends reinforcements in the shape of angels. But angels, as we have seen in the case of Jacob, are no help.
- (15) In the opinion of the Dominican father Professor Bonaventure Crowley of Fordham University, the question of how many angels can dance on the point of a pin could never have been raised—not, in any event, by a spokesman of the faith—since angels are incorporeal. This, notwithstanding numerous descriptions of the physical aspect of angels in the O.T. and N.T., and the possession (as well as the public display) by the church of physical relics of angels (feathers, swords, bucklers, etc.).
- (16) *Certus est, quia impossibile est*. "It is certain because it is impossible" or *credibile quia ineptum est*. "It is believable because it is irrational". It was the way the great Church father Tertullian (c. 150-c.230) put it, in his *De Carne Christi*, in order to discredit reason. He also discredited women by calling them "the gateway to hell". Pope Gregory the Great (540-604), who provided one of the better known lists of Seven Archangels, went so far as to condemn "all literature and intellectual effort". See Homer W. Smith's *Man and his Gods*, p. 228.
- (17) Professor Bergen Evans in *Holiday* magazine (June, 1958) commenting on the "upsurge" of religion in our times, points out that we have with us a new species of heavenly intermediary, the "automatic-response angel", who prays for you on the dialling of a given number. The power of prayer is so much thought of in the purlieus of Hollywood that experiments of praying and singing over plants are being conducted by an outfit called the Religious Research Foundation Inc. of Los Angeles. The Foundation's Prayer Circle meets regularly "to radiate loving thoughts on corn, lima beans, radishes, cucumbers, etc. The Rev. Franklin Loehr, director of the Foundation, "is convinced that the prayed-for plants and vegetables, or those in happy homes within carshot of happy chatter, grow up to be much healthier specimens than plants and vegetables that grow up in orphanage-like surroundings".—See Leslie Lieber's article on the Plant Kingdom in *This Week*, June 26th, 1960.

## Religions of the Candidates

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS of the respective American Presidential candidates were given in *Church and State* (September, 1960), monthly paper of Protestants and Others United for Separation of Church and State. Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, though a Quaker who retains his membership at his native Whittier, California, attends the Memorial Methodist Church in Washington (his wife has attended the Methodist Church most of her life, but is not a member). Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge is a communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Senator John F. Kennedy is, of course, a Roman Catholic, and Senator Lyndon B. Johnson is a member of the Disciples of Christ Church, though his wife and daughters are Methodists. "The current nominees"—said *Church and State*—"thus perpetuate a long-standing tradition—that only church members obtain nomination of the major parties for the Presidency. There have been only a very few exceptions to this rule during American history".

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# The Presidential Election

By COLIN McCALL

I MAKE NO APOLOGIES for dealing with this subject again at some length. The office of President of the United States is, after all, among the most important in the world and, though we in Britain can have no direct say in electing him, we will certainly be influenced by the result and are therefore entitled to express our opinion of the candidates. And, as all readers know, Senator John F. Kennedy, the Democrat, is a Roman Catholic.

After giving a great deal of thought to the matter (since long before Kennedy was nominated or even officially announced his intention to stand for nomination) I have reached the conclusion that, were I an American, I should vote for Kennedy.

It may seem strange that a Freethinker and a strong opponent of Roman Catholicism should decide thus; it has apparently puzzled some FREETHINKER readers, though how many I don't know. I have had a few letters of criticism and had a few verbal arguments following my initialled item on July 8th and my unsigned Notes and News comment on September 23rd, but they have been few. They may express the thoughts of many. I can't say. I do know, on the other hand that quite a number of readers share my views.

However, let me deal with my latest critics. One (unprinted) letter says that "In supporting a Catholic candidate THE FREETHINKER has made a complete *volte face*". This is nonsense. It would be valid if the support were *because* Kennedy is a Catholic; whereas it is essentially in spite of his Catholicism. And other remarks in the letter (e.g. that Mr. G. I. Bennett is a Christian "fighting against Secularism with great skill and much scholarship . . . no priest could do the job more efficiently") reveal what I shall generously call a lack of balance on the part of the correspondent. Clearly he has not given any thought to my (or to Mr. Bennett's) arguments, but has preconceived ideas and the highly dangerous habit of seeing the world in black and white: a trait which has been conspicuous in Christianity but which should have been shed by Freethinkers.

Mr. G. H. Hey's arguments (September 30th) deserve more respect. But I think they rest upon a fallacy: that all Roman Catholics are "tools" of the Church. The Church would like this to be so, but it is far from the case, as I know from personal experience. But let me quote an authority, ex-Roman Catholic priest, Emmett McLoughlin. In his excellent new book, *American Culture and Catholic Schools* (which, as mentioned in Notes and News, I shall soon be reviewing), Mr. McLoughlin says that "Roman Catholic loyalty in America is confined to an unthinking minority and its alleged strength is purely a myth". In spite of the opposition of the local clergy, the Memorial Hospital in Phoenix, Arizona (of which Mr. McLoughlin is Superintendent) averages about 3,000 Roman Catholic patients a year. "Every new admission is asked if he will permit his clergyman to visit him. Only ten per cent of these self-proclaimed Catholics will permit a priest to see them. Ninety per cent refuse to see a priest. Only three per year, or .001 per cent ask for a priest".

Senator Kennedy comes, I suggest, in the category of liberal Catholics of whom Mr. McLoughlin says: "They preserve the external formality of Catholicism, such as attendance at Mass and occasional communion. However, they do not let the hierarchy influence them. They

think as they please, vote as they please and live as they please, particularly as concerns birth control".

Now let us turn to Mr. Kennedy's own words, which bear me out. He recently declared his position unambiguously when he said in Houston (*Time*, 26/9/60): "I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute—where no Catholic prelate would tell the President, should he be a Catholic, how to act, and no Protestant minister would tell his parishioners for whom to vote". He asked to be judged "on the basis of my record of 14 years in Congress—on my declared stands against an Ambassador to the Vatican, against unconstitutional aid to parochial schools and against any boycott of the public schools, which I have attended myself . . . I do not speak for my church on public matters—and the church does not speak for me".

More specifically regarding clerical pressure of which Mr. Hey is afraid, Senator Kennedy said:

Whatever issue may come before me as President, if I should be elected—on birth control, divorce, censorship, gambling, or any other subject—I will make my decisions in accordance with these views, in accordance with what my conscience tells me to be in the national interest, and without regard to outside religious pressure or dictates. And no power or threat of punishment could cause me to decide otherwise. But if the time should ever come—and I do not concede any conflict to be even remotely possible—when my office would require me to either violate my conscience or violate the national interest, then I would resign from office, and I hope any conscientious public servant would do the same.

That, it will be agreed, is plain enough. Whether Kennedy will be able to stand up to his principles remains to be seen, but I repeat my own opinion that, in addition to my belief in the Senator's integrity, at the lowest possible assessment, it would mean political suicide to go back on his word. And there will be another Presidential election in four years' time.

It has been remarked, of course, that whereas Nixon stands for the Dollar, Kennedy stands for the Dollar and the Vatican, but I regard this as a serious oversimplification. It is true that Kennedy is a millionaire, but his record is comparatively liberal by contrast with Nixon's, as Mr. Walter Arnstein (an American lecturer in History) showed in THE FREETHINKER of May 20th. Anyway, it is a mistake to equate politics with economics.

And, while I am as aware as anyone that the Roman Catholic Church (as an institution) represents the greatest danger to freedom of thought in the Western World, I feel I must warn some Freethinkers against the error of thinking it the only danger. The Bible Belt ("Inherit the Wind") mentality is quite as intolerant, and in many ways more primitive, though fortunately not so world-wide-spread. I should also remind Mr. Hey that John Foster Dulles (who, in my—and probably in Mr. Hey's—view brought us nearer to war than any other recent American statesman) was not a Roman Catholic but a Presbyterian. I could add that it was under the present American President (also a Presbyterian) that, in 1956, the US government made a gift of nearly a million dollars to repair the Pope's summer palace. The U2 flight also took place under the Eisenhower Presidency and Nixon Vice-Presidency. Mr. Kennedy deplored it.

—NEXT WEEK—

POPULATION AND HENRY GEORGE

By H. CUTNER

## This Believing World

If it were possible to keep track of astrological "predictions", it would certainly add to our gaiety. For example, a lady, Miss Dorothy Adams, who is making a big splash with astrology not only in *Psychic News* but in *Today*, told us on September 10th in the latter that the "one bright light" in the horoscope of Mr. Donald Campbell (the famous "speed recorder" and son of a famous father) was September 12th last which would, "astrologically" speaking, be "as good as almost any other day of the year". Although Mr. Campbell was born with the Sun in Aries and "the Moon conjunction Saturn in Virgo"—whatever that means—we all know what happened to him. He very narrowly escaped death.

★

If there were any truth whatever in "the stars", and if they could foretell anything at all, bookmakers and pools promoters would get out of business in double quick time. Stock exchanges all over the world would just disappear. But get a fully-believing astrologer to explain why they can't foretell "luck" for anybody, and you will understand why Christians can't explain why the "second advent" of Jesus has never been correctly foretold. Anyway, try and get an astrologer to say *now* if there will ever be a third World War—and when?

★

Another—more or less—violent religious controversy has broken out at All Hallows, West Bridgford, Notts. It is whether church bells can be canonically replaced by a tape recording? Everybody these days thinks that church bells were originally meant to call the faithful to worship which is no doubt the case today. But the *original* use of them was to frighten away devils, evil spirits, and the like, from the sacred ground occupied by the House of God, by making a devilish and most unholy noise. Church bells often do that anyway.

★

At all events, the particular bells to be replaced were without doubt (as *News Chronicle* reports) "a tin-pot affair"; and the various parsons concerned had most reluctantly to agree to the recorded version so long as the bells were tolled for funerals. The Rev. Mr. Ennis pointed out in the pious discussion about them, that "there were the same objections to organs when first invented", and insisted that "the Church must progress and use modern methods of calling people to worship". And what in Heaven can beat a tape recorder?

★

In the meantime, there is bound to be some devout wailing among Fundamentalists that the much advertised hunt for those dead cities of sin, Sodom and Gomorrah, has had to be given up. The divers who went down to explore the Dead Sea found no traces whatever of them—and no wonder. The original writings which compose our Bible were mostly never meant to be taken literally at all. They took myths, legends, and even a few historical stories, and with them *personified* ideas, things, and ethical qualities. The two cities never had any real existence—they were literary creations invented to make the conception of sexual sin more clear. How true this is can be seen in the way the story has subsisted for over 2,000 years.

★

Methodists have nearly always strenuously declaimed against perpetuating such sins as card-playing, theatre-going, pub-crawling and so on, so we must not blame them too harshly now they have discovered another sin—eating sweets which contain a spot of whisky or liqueur. Just think of it, cried the Rev. A. H. Bird, speaking at the

September Synod at Exeter recently, "Children can become quite tippy eating these sweets". This touching care for the welfare of children made the Chairman remark that the licensed trade "would not approve of the sale of such sweets" which is perhaps true. The only place for a drink should be in a pub. And, alas, even Methodists go to pubs. But what a pity the Government does not forbid the sale of all sweets containing luscious liqueurs, and stop their sale by severe laws!

## Ask at your Library

*Sexual Pleasure In Marriage* by Jerome and Julia Rainer. Published by The Souvenir Press, 34 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1. Price 21s.

A new book, published this year by The Souvenir Press, has the endorsement of some of America's leading physicians.

Throughout the ages the greatest opponents of sex knowledge have been the Christian Churches. They have helped to degrade a perfectly natural function by opposing bitterly all attempts to educate people on the subject; and they have striven to maintain sex as a sin for which people who will not accept their so-called moral code should be punished in this world and damned in the next. They frowned on the introduction of chloroform by Simpson as being opposed to Holy Writ. They have fought against the knowledge of how to combat VD and also against measures of Birth Control and sex instruction in schools.

Dr. Walter C. Alvarez of the world-renowned Mayo Clinic, speaking of this book said, "Excellent! Haven't seen anything better. They have discussed things very frankly and in a dignified way".

Another well-known American, Dr. Howard Haggard, in his book *Devils, Drugs and Doctors* said, "The word 'moral' has been corrupted from its proper meaning. It was originally the knowledge of right and wrong. It has come now to signify only right and wrong in the conventions applied to sex".

It was Dr. Kinsey, another American, in his books *The Sex Habits of the American Male* and *The Habits of the Female* who made the civilised world realise that all was not well, and that the sex habits of men and women were not all that they were made out to be. The reactionaries screamed that Kinsey was a criminal and that his report should not be published, but Kinsey and his followers won out. They threw a searchlight into the dark corners of ignorance and piety, and showed that ignorance was not innocence.

*Sexual Pleasure In Marriage* will probably arouse the so-called moralists to indulge in another storm of abuse, but this time their opposition will be feeble, because this book will be of advantage to thousands of married people who subconsciously still have to fight the lack of knowledge and taboos placed upon them in their early days.

Dr. Harold T. Hyman who has written an introduction to this book says "*Sexual Pleasure In Marriage* is a unique book, approved by doctors, which offers a sensible way to achieve maximum sexual satisfaction throughout all the years of marriage. This is a book for the established married couples who have problems they have barely confessed to themselves, let alone to a counsellor or doctor. It covers the whole subject to sexual pleasure and its psychological significance, its physical techniques, its inhibitions through unfounded fears and mistaken knowledge. Of additional value is the encyclopedia of sex guidance and information which the authors have included at the end of the book".

F. A. HORNIBROOK.

# THE FREETHINKER

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## Lecture Notices, Etc.

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Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (Marble Arch). — Meetings every Sunday, from 5 p.m.: Messrs. L. EBURY, J. W. BARKER, C. E. WOOD, D. TRIBE and J. P. MURACCIOLE.

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Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square, Nottingham).—Every Friday, 1 p.m., Every Sunday, 6.30 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

### INDOOR

Birmingham Branch N.S.S. (Midland Institute Cinema, Paradise Street), Sunday, October 9th, 6.45 p.m.: M. BOWEN, "Public Ownership".

Conway Discussions (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1), Tuesday, October 11th, 7.15 p.m.: C. OGWURIKE, "The New State of Nigeria".

Leicester Secular Society (75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, October 9th, 6.30 p.m.: F. J. CORINA, "Bradlaugh's Parliamentary Struggle".

Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (The Carpenters' Arms, Seymour Place, Edgware Road, W.1), Sunday, October 9th, 7.15 p.m.: F. A. RIDLEY, "The Current Crisis of Religion".

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1), Sunday, October 9th, 11 a.m.: Prof. T. H. PEAR, M.A., "Humanists, Psychologists and the Individual".

## Notes and News

DURING THE WINTER, a series of lectures will be held at the Carpenters' Arms, Seymour Place, London, W.1, under the auspices of the Marble Arch Branch of the National Secular Society. The first will be on Sunday, October 9th, when the N.S.S. President, Mr. F. A. Ridley, will speak on "The Current Crisis of Religion". Future speakers will include Christopher Brunel, Peter Cotes, Denis Joseph and Adrian Pigott. Mr. F. A. Hornibrook will be Chairman. The meetings will commence at 7.15 p.m. and will be followed by an informal social hour. The Carpenters' Arms is three minutes from Marble Arch station and Hyde Park.

GUSTAV DAVIDSON, author of our erudite Views and Opinions this week, is a New Yorker, and is Secretary of the Poetry Society of America, of which Robert Frost is the Honorary President. As readers already know from his two-part article, "The Tongue of Angels", in June of this year, Mr. Davidson may be said to be well versed in the ways of the Heavenly hosts, but he tells us that his "pursuit of angels has been temporarily halted" by a spell in hospital (undergoing treatment and surgery). However, he is now convalescing and we are delighted to hear that the surgeon gives him every hope "that I shall be

'right as rain' again in a month or so". Then, no doubt, he will be hot on the trail again. We hope so. We hope, too, that he will once more share the pleasures of the chase with us.

★  
ONE OF OUR Yorkshire readers, Mr. W. R. Grant, kept an October 1954 cutting from the *Nottingham Evening News* which reads rather ironically in the light of the recent hurricane havoc in Florida. "Donna," as the hurricane was called, "left a trail of devastation and floods" and "Casualties were reported from Tavernier, Marathon and Islamorada" (*Sunday Times*, 11/9/60). And Mr. Grant's cutting? It reads as follows:—"Florida's Hurricane Prevention Group—which meets to pray that the State will be spared whenever a hurricane forms—has reported complete success in this year's hurricane season which normally ends in October. The group recommended that residents of north-eastern States, where tropical storms have hit three times, should form groups for the same purpose". But that was in 1954.

★  
FIVE ANGLICAN CLERGYMEN signed a letter of protest against Jehovah's Witnesses and Latter Day Saints and their door-to-door canvassing in Harlow New Town (*Harlow Citizen*, 2/9/60). We find—they said—that some people are confused through thinking that these visitors are connected with the Christian Church. But neither of these groups believe in Jesus Christ as truly God. And the Free Church Federal Council supported the letter. The following week, Richard Sothcott came to the defence of the Witnesses and the Mormons. "Are we to take it then, that the alleged supernatural capabilities of Joseph Smith . . . for instance, are any less of a likelihood than bodily assumptions, and the reincarnation on one day of several hundred thousand million bodies. From an objective point of view, surely no one impossibility is any less impossible than another". Mr. Sothcott's letter tailed off a bit after that, with talk of "this evil household of Atheism", but he had made his point.

★  
"MORE THAN 100,000 people in all parts of Australia have signed a petition asking the Queen to disallow the federal uniform Divorce Bill which is due to become law next January," said a *Sunday Express* (25/9/60) report from Melbourne. The objection to the Bill rests on a clause allowing five years' separation as a ground for divorce, which they call "a clear denial of elementary justice and basic human rights of the innocent spouse who may be divorced in the interest and for the convenience of the guilty party". In fact, it would seem that their objection to the clause is religious but that they shroud it in libertarian language. At any rate, the petition is organised by Mr. John Dynon, of the Association for the Defence of the Family—"a body made up of lay members of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches".

★  
ACCORDING TO Dr. Donald N. Barrett of the University of Notre Dame, there are now an estimated 43,650,000 Roman Catholics in the United States, their numbers having increased by 35.8% in the decade 1950-59, while the total US population increased by only 16.6% (*Time*, 12/9/60). The figure is, of course, inflated, taking no account of lapses and losses, and being part of the calculated Catholic scheme of intimidation by threats of the "Catholic vote" etc. Mr. Emmett McLoughlin (ex-Franciscan priest) in his new book *American Culture and Catholic Schools*, which we shall be reviewing soon, calls the idea of 40,000,000 devout Catholics an "illusion". There are not more than twenty million in the U.S., he says, "and only a fraction of them are devout".

# Progress in Animal Welfare

By FLORENCE BARKER, B.A.

WORLD DAY FOR ANIMALS, October 4th, affords a fitting moment for an annual stock-taking of the Animal Welfare movement, which has recently suffered severe loss in the passing of Miss E. Ford, A.R.A.M., Editor of *The Animals' Champion* and Founder of the League Against Vivisection and for the Protection of Animals, who inaugurated World Day for Animals 28 years ago.

The position is bewildering, presenting two opposing trends in the Man-Creature question. On the assets side we have:

1. The first working meeting of the directors of the International Society for the Protection of Animals taking place in Boston, Massachusetts, last May, one of whose principles is that there exists "a moral obligation that all animals, whether domesticated or wild, be protected from cruelty on the part of Man".

2. Again a Scandinavian country is leading the way, and Sweden has drastically and comprehensively tightened up its regulations governing all animal shows, including film production and zoos, exporting, etc. (A similar Act in Britain is long overdue.)

3. Singapore has banned the export of animals by sea following the death of half the cargo of 1,000 monkeys shipped to London for medical purposes. The RSPCA is urging the Home Secretary to prohibit the import of monkeys by sea from any country.

4. France has recently raised penalties for cruelties to animals.

5. A monster petition against Horse Traffic from Eire to the Continent has been presented to the Eire Government.

6. History has been made this year when, only twelve days after the Abandonment of Animals Act received the royal assent, the first prosecution under the Act occurred, and Leicester magistrates imposed a fine of £3 and £2 4s. costs upon a farm worker who abandoned kittens.

7. A Bill to prohibit the hunting of Wild Deer has come before Parliament, but it has little chance of success this year owing to lack of time, and will have to be re-introduced.

8. A campaign has been started against introducing the Bull Fight into Britain. It is said that even many young Spaniards are forsaking bull-fighting for football, and it is the tourist which makes bull-fighting pay.

9. Described as "a step forward" is the recent founding of the Vegetarian Nutrition Research Centre at Stanborough Park (Watford). Writes Cyril V. Pink, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. in the *Anti-Vivisectionist*:

The new research centre is only just starting work, and is not yet self-supporting and so therefore dependent on subscriptions. The committees invite all who are interested in furthering the work to become members at a minimum subscription of £1 per annum, or to make a donation . . .

It seems to me that this is something very positive we can do to further the cause of science along lines which are innocent of hurt to any living creature. (Address: Dr. Frank Wokes, Stanborough School, Garston, Watford, Herts.)

10. Growth is reported in Dog Psychology, and cures of canine delinquency are being effected at the National Canine Defence League's "School". According to one authority, there are no naturally "bad" dogs they are made so by Man.

11. During the recent hurricane in the USA, many persons refused to leave their cats, dogs, and other animals, and seek safety for themselves.

So much for some of the assets, but there is no reason for complacency or cessation of watchfulness and effort.

We have the challenge of modern farming methods, including the battery system of hen-keeping and broiler-houses. (Denmark I understand, is ahead of us in prohibiting the battery system.) It has been authoritatively affirmed that "the ventilator-fans of a big broiler-house passing out millions of virus particles through its extractor fans, may become a serious hazard to poultry over a wide area". Why deem an enquiry into the causes of fowl pest necessary when hens are subjected to such unnatural, unhygienic and inhumane conditions? The even more recent methods—copied from Holland—of calf-rearing have raised strong protest in Parliament and Press. "They don't look very inviting" remarked the Queen Mother when she inspected what have been described as "modern penitentiaries for animals" at the Royal Show.

Many slaughter-houses still fall far short of the requirements of the Act of Parliament which seeks to reduce substantially the cruelty attending actual slaughter—although suffering inseparable from the animals-for-food trade—transport, cattle-markets, and so forth—leading up to the final scene, cannot be avoided in this product of man's lust for flesh food.

The American Bill s3570, largely based on the deplorable British one, which seeks to "regularise" Vivisection, must be fought by all who have the creatures' welfare at heart. It would make things easier for the vivisector rather than help his victims.

A true perspective of the population and food question is still lacking and the public needs enlightenment as to the facts. The production of flesh food is a most expensive policy. According to good, authoritative calculation, nine times more people can be fed on vegetarian food from the same acreage. Why take nourishment through the secondhand, wasteful medium of animals' dead bodies, when we may receive it direct from the land?

There remains unsolved the problem of the chained or shut-up-alone dog. Admittedly, dogs should not be allowed to run loose in traffic, but there are ways of overcoming this difficulty without making the creatures' lives wretched. It has been usefully suggested that safeguards against this widespread form of cruelty might be incorporated in a signed undertaking before a dog-licence be granted.

Protests from various quarters against poisonous sprays and fertilisers are making themselves felt. Wrote Wentworth Day in a recent *Daily Telegraph* article:

I know one man who farms 8,000 acres, partly in the Black Fen, partly on the high light lands of north Norfolk. He uses no crop sprays whatever. Yet he is one of the most prosperous farmers in England, probably the greatest grower of carrots and one of the biggest men in corn production and celery growing. If he can do it, others can.

The public is thoroughly alarmed at the increasing use of poisons in agriculture. The medical correspondent of the *News Chronicle* says: "Food is now one of the most potent causes of disease to which civilised man is exposed".

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But perhaps the greatest evil of all is Vivisection and the use of animals in space experiments. This ruthless exploitation of beings in our power is growing to astronomical proportions to the hurt of both Man and his fellow-creatures. We seem to have got our values mixed. It used to be considered "cowardly" for the strong to ill-

treat the weak, and compassion ranked high in human virtues. To quote Miss Nina Hosali, M.Sc.:

There is a tremendous amount of disease which is man-made and being propagated in animals today, and I do not believe that human happiness can possibly be based on the infliction of the most appalling suffering and misery to those millions of animals.

## Marcus Aurelius and the Stoics

By F. A. RIDLEY

MR. G. I. BENNETT appears to hold rather out-of-date views about the Emperor Marcus Aurelius personally and the Stoic philosophy in general, the latter particularly in relation to religion.

In point of fact, Marcus Aurelius was a competent, rather than a great Emperor besides being—as a modern authority has stated—one of the saddest men who ever put his thoughts on paper. As a progressive legislator, he does not compare remotely with his predecessor, Hadrian, the author of a Roman "New Deal" which, if it did not abolish chattel slavery, at least greatly mitigated it by doing away with its more repellent features.

Nor is it true, as Mr. Bennett appears to imply, that Marcus Aurelius was 100 or even 90 per cent a rationalist and a humanist. This Emperor granted a record sum for the upkeep of the brutal gladiatorial games in Rome, besides, in the course of his frontier campaigns, ordering two lions to be cast alive into the Danube in order to appease the flood—hardly the action of a convinced Rationalist.

In any case, the whole personal philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, like that of the Stoic school to which he adhered, was one of a profound pessimism and hopeless resignation, and was anchored in the fatalistic doctrine (which the Stoics themselves had inherited from their Eleatic predecessors) of "eternal recurrence", which converts the Universe into an ever-recurring treadmill from which no escape was possible, and from which any condition of human progress was forever banished.

The conception of Aurelius as a prototype of a modern progressive Humanist is really absurd, and it is high time that it was discarded. Even Marcus's Christian contemporaries took a more hopeful view of the future of humanity than did this Stoic Emperor (e.g. Tertullian and Minucius Felix).

In essence, the philosophy of Aurelius was that of the falling leaf and the dying year, historically of the then commencing decline and fall of the Roman Empire, which this Emperor contemplated with a hopeless and pathetic resignation.

Referring more generally to the Stoics, it is of course, true that they had their points but a complete Rationalism (as your correspondent appears to imagine) was never one of them; e.g. When Aristarchus of Samos (c.250 B.C.) first advanced the heliocentric theory (1,800 years before Copernicus) it was the Stoic philosopher Cleanthes who denounced him for sacrilegiously disturbing the "Hearth of the Universe" by displacing the earth from its central position, a criticism strikingly anticipatory of the attitude of the Christian Holy Office towards Galileo 19 centuries later. (Cleanthes was also the author of a mystical hymn to Zeus which is profoundly religious in tone and has even been described as the ancient equivalent of "Lead Kindly Light", Cardinal Newman's famous hymn.) So religious in fact was the tone in the philosophical writings of Seneca (1st century A.D.), the most famous of the Roman Stoics next to Marcus Aurelius himself, that the Christians even

claimed him as one of themselves, and a fictitious correspondence between Seneca and St. Paul was long circulated as genuine in Christian circles. Incidentally, Seneca, like Brutus, Caesar's killer, also a Stoic, was a ruthless and oppressive financier, a typical example of Roman Imperialism and Big Business, whose money-lending exactions in Britain represented one of the causes of Boadicea's rising in A.D. 64.

Actually there was no school of philosophy in antiquity which was completely Humanistic in the modern sense, since, as Professor J. B. Bury demonstrated in his book *The Idea of Progress*, the essential idea of modern Humanism, the belief in progress, was hardly known to any school of thought in antiquity and, in its modern form at any rate does not go back beyond the 17th century A.D. Be that as it may, if there was any ancient school of thought that can be described as Rationalistic, it was the Epicureans who incidentally have been grossly misrepresented by their Stoic rivals: Epicurus, 3rd century B.C., taught moderation in all things and the Epicureans did *not* say, "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die". The Stoics invented this calumny and the Christians (Paul *et al*) quoted and have gone on repeating it about Epicureans and more modern materialists. The Epicureans were, it is true, not entirely free from superstition (they had gods of a sort), and Epicurus taught the extraordinary delusion that every celestial object is exactly the same size as one sees it; a view already denounced as absurd by Aristotle. However, if there was any school of classical philosophy entitled to the designation of "Rationalists", it was certainly the Epicureans, not Mr. Bennett's sadly over praised Stoics, the quasi-religionist Cleanthes, the millionaire preacher of the simple life, Seneca, nor even the hopeless pessimist, Marcus Aurelius. It was the Epicureans who produced the great Lucretius (1st century B.C.) with his magnificent (and in many ways still unsurpassed) critique of religion in superb poetry.

The Christians at least, knew who their enemies were, even if modern neo-Stoics like Mr. Bennett, do not. For, writing either under, or very soon after, the reign of the Stoic Emperor, Aurelius, the Christian Father, Clement of Alexandria, explicitly declared, "When the Apostle Paul condemned the philosophers, it was *only* [my italics], the Epicureans that he had in mind". *cf.* Paul Nizan, *Les Materialistes de l'antiquité*. The Epicureans, *not* the Stoics, Mr. Bennett.

### REPRESSION IN FRANCE

The recent action of the French Government in pretending that over 140 of her top actors, writers and intellectuals—who signed a manifesto in support of the Algerian people and those French conscripts who decline to "serve" in that theatre—do not exist, is the most dramatic in a long series of repressive measures since the new Constitution came into force. Even quotations from their works are to be banned from all Government-sponsored or subsidised media, though most of them have not yet been charged with any offence.

Surely all fair-minded people throughout the world, whether themselves interested in the arts or education, will be shocked at this development.

## CORRESPONDENCE

## DR. DUHIG REPLIES

To any competent scientist, my original article on Scientific Materialism would, in fact, be platitudinous: it is an integral part of the belief of modern scientists. It is the only valid approach to the problem of life. It was shown by Sherrington, e.g. that any attempt to explain the functions of the spinal cord had to await a knowledge of its structure. I had thought that the article made this clear; to any intelligent person it would. Having contributed freely for over 40 years to the medical and scientific press on a level usual in this field, that is, that of trained university graduates, I would normally have ignored Mr. Smith's rather pathetic original letter but, purely as a matter of courtesy, I replied. Mr. Smith's letter was badly worded and really outside the scope of my article. In reply to his question about what Scientific Materialism, that is, in effect, Science and the Scientific Method, could do for human happiness, I replied, quite simply, *everything*, and quoted simple examples. I further indicated that it could do the same for the problems of Old Age. To any person, an intelligent schoolboy, for instance this surely should have been sufficient reply. But *no*, Mr. Smith after flagrantly altering the wording of his original letter, kept harping on Old Age. Mr. Smith seemed to think Science had done him a dirty trick in not providing him with the means of evading an inevitable process. What does a serious scientist do with impossible people like this? I further pointed out that if Mr. Smith really feared the social consequences of Old Age, the NHS could help. In any case the problems of Old Age were being studied scientifically and that this was the only valid approach.

I thought Mr. Smith's second letter quite muddled and quite unworthy of a dignified rational man and, giving him the benefit of any doubt, I attributed his deplorable defeatism to mental illness rather than wholly irrational cowardice. By this time Mr. Smith had got himself into a completely impossible position mainly because, of course, he does not have either the mental or intellectual capacity for scientific ideas or the training necessary to grasp them. I hate to talk in this frank way, but as a former University professor, a former President of the Royal Society of Queensland, the highest scientific position in the State, etc., I really must insist on some basic foundation of knowledge both educational and scientific in those I debate with. My original article to a scientist was actually elementary. I eventually felt that Mr. Smith in his incoherent thinking and his deplorable lack of scientific training had shown himself in his persistent arrogance as a would-be thinker unworthy of the hospitality of a journal of high intellectual calibre and believing himself competent in a field in which obviously he had absolutely no standing, needed a stern rebuke. This I administered. There is a simple test: to have a letter published in *Nature* hallmarks a man; I have had one published, will Mr. Smith try and let me know the result? Mr. Smith should do a short simple course in Science.

I am afraid I can have nothing whatever to do with G. I. Bennett. He has simply changed what started as a discussion of Scientific Materialism, which is an integral part of the intellectual equipment of every reputable scientist and of most philosophers, into a dreary, unseemly and fruitless personal quarrel into which I cannot enter. In the process Mr. Bennett has contributed nothing of any value and thus needs no reply.

(Dr.) J. V. DUHIG.

[This correspondence is now closed.—ED.]

## CLERICAL MUNICH

Although I support and agree with F. A. Ridley's criticism of the Catholic Church in his "Views and Opinions" article, "A Clerical Munich", I certainly do not follow him in concurring with Archibald Robertson that the primary dilemma before Rationalists in 1960, is no longer the controversy of Science v. Religion which is now subordinate to the problem of co-existence, etc.

THE FREETHINKER and the Freethought movement have always made a clear issue of anti-religion as their aim and object. They have used the expression in its most general sense of opposing every species of spookology and superstition known to the human mind. To my mind, the Freethinker has quite enough on his plate to continue his traditional path; that is, the path laid down by Paine, Bradlaugh, Foote and Chapman Cohen.

Archibald Robertson is a communist and as such can scarcely be in agreement with a policy of free expression of opinion in this or any country. A paper such as ours would not have been tolerated in Russia, and some of our well known contributors would undoubtedly have suffered a much worse fate than Pasternak.

No, I do not agree with F. A. Ridley in bringing to pride of place what he calls "*co-existence*", we have quite enough to do in the attack upon Religion in all its forms, in fact I would have thought the new form of state dictatorship, hagridden as it is with fear, bigotry and intolerance of opinion has its roots well established in the religion of the past. I knew Chapman Cohen for many years and I feel his policy is still the correct one and sincerely trust no changes in policy of a political character will be considered.

ROBERT I. TURNEY.

[We assure Mr. Turney that no change in policy of a political character is contemplated.—ED.]

## SCARE TACTICS

A large sign has been put up on the Warwick Road (one of the main thoroughfares in Birmingham) which reads as follows: "City Temple—Signs of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ—and great earthquakes shall be in divers places and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall be there from Heaven".

In putting this up, does not the Christian Church hail Jesus Christ as a mass murderer? Is this the Saviour they worship? If he appears on earth is he to slaughter hundreds of thousands of human beings?

M. D. SILAS.

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