

The Freethinker

Volume LXXXI—No. 7

Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

Price Sixpence

Mr. HAROLD GURDEN, M.P. for Selly Oak, Birmingham, is the man who went on record two years ago as saying, "No atheist, agnostic or non-believer should be allowed to teach in Britain's schools. By allowing this we are defeating the whole basis of education in this country . . . without the correct religious background for children in our schools we are helping to breed juvenile delinquency". (*The Observer*, 19/4/59).

He is the man who, when challenged to give evidence for his allegation, made no effort to do so. He made no apology either. He has now expressed his opposition to atheist teachers again, though—and perhaps we can take some consolation from this—in slightly milder terms. When we first wrote to Mr. Gurden (24/4/59) we said that, although figures were hard to come by, those available showed "atheists and agnostic juvenile delinquents to be very few in comparison to numbers; religious delinquents to be high". If he had any contrary figures, we told him, we should be interested to see them, otherwise we thought he ought to make it perfectly clear that he was "not only voicing a personal opinion unsupported by the facts, but one that is contrary to the facts".

More Temperate

Mr. Gurden's recent statement as reported by the *Sunday Mercury* (29/1/61) is noticeably more personal than the above. He hasn't changed his views, but at least his tone is more temperate and that is probably as much as we can expect from a Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Parliamentary Committee on Education. "There may be atheist teachers", he said. "The schools have told me of agnostics who are teachers. I feel it would be worth while not to have such teachers". And as the *Sunday Mercury* went on—"The only subject that must be statutorily—under the Education Act of 1944—taught in schools is religious knowledge, Mr. Gurden feels that it must be taught by men and women of Christian conviction and conscience".

The religious clause in the 1944 Act is, of course, at the base of all these absurdities and anomalies. As long as that clause remains, Mr. Gurden has some grounds for wanting religion to be taught by Christian teachers. But there's the rub. Where are those teachers to be found? Religious instruction, it must be remembered, usually includes the Old as well as the New Testament, and how many even nominal Christians can teach stories like the Creation and the Flood (as they are often called on to do) with conviction and in good conscience? The number must, we think, be quite small. The majority probably treat them as legendary. Religious instruction is, in fact, the most awkward subject on the school curriculum and the cause of most hypocrisy.

Yet most parents still think that their children benefit from it. The old identification of religion with morality persists. So it is that Mrs. I. A. Poole, mother of six

and an ex-teacher, told a *Sunday Mercury* reporter: "If teachers are free to hold certain views, it follows that parents are free to decide whether certain teachers should be responsible for their children's moral welfare". Mrs. Poole was one of nine people interviewed and photographed by the *Mercury*, the question being: "Should atheists be banned from teaching?"

The replies on the whole seemed to represent a fair cross-section of ordinary opinion. The Rev. Howard Marlow, Vicar of St. Aidan's, Bordesley, understandably "would prefer that there were no atheists", but conceded that freedom of religion "must include freedom to deny God". Atheists should not teach

religion or lead worship, he said, but he rightly pointed out that Church schools were available for those who wanted "to have their children educated under Christian influence". Mr. Leslie Moreby, Secretary of the Birmingham Federation of Boys' Clubs, agreed with religious instruction but did not approve of a religious test for teachers—not perhaps on principle but at any rate pragmatically—as "this could deprive the youngster of contact with many professionally able men and women". And why, he asked, should we "assume than an atheist is less able to teach religion objectively than a teacher who has a private conviction?" Alderman Jack Wood, Chairman of Birmingham Education Committee also regarded the "suggested witch-hunt against free-thinking teachers" as harmful to education. "How would Mr. Gurden impose it?" he asked and "Where will the process stop?" "The next demand would be that teachers undertake to support the present social order, the Conservative Party, and the Established Church".

For

Two people favoured a ban. Mrs. L. Eustace, whose qualification to speak on the subject—apart no doubt from a high IQ—was that she "comes into contact with children in a school canteen", declared: "To be able to teach you must believe in God". Mrs. Eustace would not have liked an atheist to teach her son. Not that she herself belongs to any Church. But she believes in God and has faith. For "Without faith there isn't any hope". Music-shop manager Mr. R. Woodward put the case even stronger. "Anyone professing to be an atheist should not be a teacher", he said, though—poor puzzled fellow!—he found it "difficult to believe anyone can be an atheist". Mr. Woodward was in no doubt, however, that an unbeliever "can't possibly understand children" and for this reason: "Somewhere in his make-up, at home or work, his ungodliness will show—probably in intolerance". In the banning of Christian teachers from the schools, no doubt!

Against

The "first impulse" of Miss L. A. Nash, Headmistress of Oldknow Secondary Modern School, Small Heath, was to agree with the banning (of atheist teachers, that is), but

— VIEWS and OPINIONS —

Mr. Gurden Again

By COLIN McCALL

fortunately she had second thoughts. And these, she said, "compel the admission that no such sweeping generalisation weighs all the factors". Ultimately, she added, the quality of a teacher depends on his "intellectual and spiritual integrity", and "A very fine personality having excellent and far-reaching influence, could be precluded from the profession under such a dogma". Another teacher, Mr. A. E. Ayto, Acting Head of Lea Village Boys' Secondary School, though not an atheist himself, suggested that "only a bigot would deny the sincerity of the atheist teacher". "There are good and bad teachers", he said, and "their value cannot be decided by the tag 'orthodox' or 'atheist'". "The sincere teacher", said Mr. Ayto, "knows that his duty is to make knowledge available, not to impose ideas".

No member of Birmingham Branch of the National Secular Society was interviewed, but the *Sunday Mercury* did seek out one atheist, Mrs. Mary Feely, a housewife of Yardley. And she sensibly argued against religious instruction for schoolchildren "so that they can form their own opinions". "An atheist is a rational person", she said, "and brings his rational outlook into the school-room". Her closing remarks (as reported) seemed unnecessarily defensive, and rather amusing. But they may have been directed at the Mrs. Pooles and Mrs. Eustaces.

Is This Blasphemy?

By H. CUTNER

Sunday Pictorial (18/12/60) had the flaming headline "Where is God?" to an article, and the writer, who is "searching" for an answer to "the problem of religion", admits that his eldest son, studying to be a scientist, says "there isn't a God"; adding, "it's silly to say prayers because nobody is there to listen". For such a statement to get into a national journal enjoying many millions of circulation, is surely rather remarkable even in the Sixties. Some of us cannot help wondering what Mr. Justice Erskine, who gave Holyoake six months hard for saying the Deity should be put on half pay, or the Roman Catholic Judge North—with the full approval of Sir William Harcourt and nearly all Protestants in this country—who sentenced G. W. Foote to 12 months for poking a little fun at a non-existent God, and at some of the imbecilities which so distinguish Christianity, would have said if they had read this number of *Sunday Pictorial*.

Anyway, the writer, Norman Price, and his sons tried "to find God in church", and went there with "two per cent of the population", who were mostly "old—the people of yesterday", and whose smiles faded away when they discovered "they really didn't know us". Mr. Price went to see the vicar who naturally smiled benignly, and whose answer to the "infidel" statement that "Jesus is dead" was, "Ah, but in simple words, the Resurrection of Our Lord . . ." no doubt was, for a vicar, a devastating reply to the blasphemy of saying "Jesus is dead".

However, disillusioned Mr. Price had a shot at a real live Bishop, for the opportunity came to ask such a distinguished man of God, "What would you tell" the unbelieving boys? Perhaps Mr. Price was really greatly shocked to find the Bishop suddenly discover that he had an important telephone message to make, and disappear. Or perhaps he wasn't.

And then Mr. Price made the grand discovery that it took quite a few years before "people started claiming that Christ was God"—or, in other words, he appears never to have heard of Freethought, or its history. But

"I'm an atheist myself", she said, "I'm not demoralised—I've had only one husband in 36 years".

Well, there you have the collected reactions of nine inhabitants of Birmingham to the proposition that atheists be banned from teaching. Not particularly impressive perhaps, but for the most part, not so bad either. One may be thankful that Mrs. Poole has turned from teaching children to having them, and that Mrs. Eustace's influence doesn't extend beyond the bounds of a school canteen. While the only Faith likely to interest youngsters in Mr. Woodward's music shop is Adam!

Those more closely associated with education (the Chairman of Birmingham Education Committee, the Secretary of Birmingham Federation of Boys' Clubs and the two Heads—once the lady had had her second thoughts) were fairly reasonable, though one may criticise some of their statements. And the parson was fair. Indeed, for Mr. Gurden's benefit we may repeat Mr. Marlow's valid point that the "Church schools safeguard the right of Christian parents to have children educated under Christian influence". With reference to the State schools, as Mrs. Feely said, there should be no religious instruction. So here we are, back where we started, at the cause of all the trouble, the religious clause in the 1944 Education Act.

he does know, thank heaven, that there are in our galaxy 100,000 million suns, and that in the Universe there are "one thousand million such galaxies"; so that if there is a God, and he really sent his Son to earth, "it was like picking out a single grain of sand from all the beaches of the earth". Going on in this way, Mr. Price must have shocked the millions of *Pictorial* readers by letting them know what would be considered stale arguments against the existence of God for Freethinkers, but brand new ones for fervent believers—and as full of relevant juice as a Jaffa orange.

And afterwards? Well, he came to have a talk with the Rev. N. Stacey who was not "a bookish sparrow afraid of a man's world". And in two ticks, he made all Mr. Price's doubts fade away. Mr. Stacey had once held all Mr. Price's doubts, but a bout of praying whizzed them away, and there appears nothing whatever now that both Mr. Stacey and Mr. Price do not believe as heartily as any primitive Fundamentalist. In fact, Mr. Price seems to regret he has not even more "faith" than Mr. Stacey.

Lest any reader think that Mr. Price, who couldn't find God anywhere in order to refute his sons who claimed that the Lord didn't exist and that Jesus was dead, may still have doubts as to his return to "faith", let him ponder on this—"Jesus had the courage of His faith to die and thus be reborn in a myriad human hearts. And the Church too, should have as much guts". If this does not deserve being called "drivel" we don't know what does.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

55th ANNUAL DINNER

in honour of H. CUTNER'S 80th Birthday

Followed by Dancing

SATURDAY, MARCH 4th, 1961

at the PAVIOURS ARMS, Page Street, Westminster, S.W.1

RECEPTION 6 P.M. DINNER 6.30 P.M.

Vegetarians catered for

Evening Dress Optional

TICKETS 21/- from the Sec., 103 Borough High Street, S.E.1

Mumbo Jumbo Incorporated

By F. A. RIDLEY

ON JANUARY 9TH, 1961, the Dublin Barracks witnessed an impressive martial scene, for the 34th Battalion of the Irish army marched in ceremonial style on parade prior to embarking for the Congo under the political directive of the United Nations. According to our contemporary the *Irish Press* (10/1/61), the farewell ceremony was most imposing. At the end of the parade, the regiment with colours flying and bands playing, marched past the saluting base on which were some of the top brass, both civil and military in the Irish Republic. In particular was the Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Mr. Lemass, who took the salute escorted by the Minister of Defence, the Irish Chief of Staff and (*inter alia*), the British and American military attachés.

Amid a blare of bugles recalling Erin's heroic past, the Irish soldiers marched off to the trackless forests and crocodile-infested swamps of Africa. It was all very impressive: whether or not it represented a really useful contribution to the problem of the tortured Congo is a problem which depends upon other prerequisites, notably of the present role of the United Nations and the desirability or otherwise of its present intervention in Darkest Africa.

Such a martial scene is familiar enough in most civilised(?) lands, where the pomp and display of military circumstance co-exists so incongruously with the stark reality of modern atomic war. However, the *Irish Press* followed up its account of the farewell ceremony with a small but interesting item of news: not only were the departing warriors appropriately blessed by the chief chaplain to the Irish army—such a procedure has its counterparts in other non-Catholic lands—but every soldier received a rosary and was solemnly and officially enrolled in the "Miraculous Medal" dedicated to Our Lady the Blessed Virgin Mary. Yes, in this year of grace and space-travel, of which the Virgin in her capacity as celestial traveller, is no doubt the patron in Catholic lands!

I regret that, not being *au fait* with the state of Irish devotional life today, I am not quite clear whether the "Miraculous Medal" commemorates Our Lady's miraculous appearance to Bernadette at Lourdes, or at Fatima to Lucia des Santos, or to some local Irish manifestation unknown to a benighted infidel like myself. Anyway, it does not appear to matter very much, for it is neither to Lourdes nor to Fatima that the Miraculous Medalists were bound; it was to the service of the Virgin of the Congo.

Certainly, considered from a religious standpoint, the United Nations appears to be a very mixed grill. For within its comprehensive ranks, one at present finds officially Atheistic states like Russia, Secular states like India, Muslim theocracies like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, Chosen Races like Israel (and West Germany according to a recent declaration by Dr. Adenauer to Pope John), and last but not least, Catholic States and armies currently dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, Fatima and the Congo. Surely a veritable modern Tower of Babel, not only linguistically but theologically?

It is a commonplace to affirm that in normal political matters, people's memories are apt to be short. It appears that the same aphorism applies at least equally to peoples' religious memories. For one would have deemed it as obvious, even upon the most cursory view of the available evidence, that the present appalling state of the

Congolese Republic, was due almost entirely to a Catholic nation—the Belgians—and very largely at least, to the Catholic Church itself. For let us recall the elementary historical and cultural facts which concern the past evolution and present crisis of the Congo. When Africa was first opened up some eighty years back, the Congo commenced its autonomous political existence as the personal property of the then King of the Belgians, Leopold, "the-Unbeloved" as a biography of this most unsavoury monarch has aptly enough described him. The Congo had previously been opened up by H. M. Stanley who incidentally recorded that the newly-invented Maxim gun was "a splendid instrument for spreading Christianity and civilisation amongst the savage races of Africa".

Leopold amassed a colossal personal fortune by the ruthless exploitation of his African kingdom in which (according to such contemporary observers as E. D. Morel and Roger Casement), atrocities were committed against the unfortunate natives which recalled those of the Inquisition. Large areas in the Congo were almost depopulated. After a generation of this most Christian and Catholic monarch, the conscience (or what there was of it) of the civilised world was aroused at least to the extent of transferring the Congo from Leopold's personal rule to the collective jurisdiction of the Belgian state. But whilst this transfer seems to have succeeded in putting a stop to the more flagrant atrocities of Leopold's satellites, it seems in general to have made pretty heavy weather as regards its half century administration of the huge African province. This appears very obvious, if only in view of the deplorable state of things disclosed in the Congo since Belgium's ignominious scuttle out of Africa last Summer.

It is now common knowledge that not only did the Belgians leave behind (as became obvious immediately) an entirely ineffective Congolese civil administration and a mutinous army, but they had afforded virtually no opportunities to their Negro subjects to acquire any kind of technical or ethical education, as soon became apparent. And it must be added that, not only was this glaring failure that of a Catholic nation (actually the King of the Belgians is the sole remaining Catholic monarch left in Europe) but it was very largely the direct responsibility of the Catholic Church itself.

The Church was not only the biggest property owner in the Congo: for the past eighty years it has exercised, through its missionaries, a virtual cultural and educational monopoly. Certainly if nuns have been raped and missionaries murdered, it was the Church of Rome which sowed the seed and which is now reaping the whirlwind. One would have thought that the Congo was about the last place on earth to seek the celestial protection of the Virgin. It is now "enjoying" (if that is the right word) the fruits of eighty years of her peculiar protection.

An American poet, the late Vachel Lindsey, once wrote a fine poem on the Belgian Congo as the Holy Land of Mumbo Jumbo, the supreme Congolese fetish "who will voodoo you". And in some ways it might appear that he is doing so. However, since the arrival of the Irish Crusaders, Mumbo Jumbo may have to pull out all the Voodoo black magic he knows in order to compete with the potent rival magic of the Miraculous Medal dedicated to the white goddess. Or will he? For after all, we live in an age of increasing religious syncretism,

(Concluded on next page)

This Believing World

A lady writing to the "Daily Mail" (Feb. 3) seems piously perturbed about the fate of Evil Spirits after being expelled from human beings by a priest. We are sure that the problem must have been dealt with by theologians in their voluminous works, but at the moment we cannot recall what they say happens to them. It must be very trying for a Devil, and particularly a young one, safely ensconced; in a warm human habitation to be rudely kicked out by the magic of a few devout words.

★

What is a poor Devil to do? He can't get a job in a Welfare State and, even if he could, his tail would make him the laughing stock of his workmates. And his expulsion would not make him *persona grata* back in his own country—the Kingdom of Hell. He can't even commit suicide, for all Devils and Evil Spirits live on and on very cheaply as they don't require food. It is all very puzzling, and we hope that, whatever his fate, an expelled Devil will always be treated by Christians in the best of Christian tradition.

★

We are delighted to find that a couple of medical students are going into the question of "faith-healing" really seriously. According to *Psychic News* (January 28th) they were "impressed" by the claims of Mr. Harry Edwards and they want now to "investigate as fully as possible the medical evidence concerning the benefits of Spiritualist healing . . .". It should not be forgotten that, while nearly all healers have a "spirit" doctor in attendance, Mr. Edwards insists that he heals only through the power of Jesus Christ—or at least heals exactly as "our Lord" did nearly 2,000 years ago.

★

The real point to note is however that the two students want sick people who have been cured or who are getting cured to write to them with full particulars of their cases. But surely the medical students must know some *incurable* people, and many others desperately ill, together with their authenticated medical histories by fully qualified doctors? It is these people for whom they can vouch who ought to be given the chance of a cure whether by Jesus or by spirit doctors. If an incurable case of blindness or cancer vouched for as incurable by eminent specialists is cured in a jiffy by "faith-healing", then there is a case at last to be investigated. So far, do the students know of a single *incurable* case cured by Mr. Edwards or anybody else?

★

Our contemporary "Today" has fallen for "fortune-telling" in a big way, and perhaps it will not be long before we have revealed in its pages fortune-telling by tea leaves. *Today* is reavealing "the top people's secrets" as related by "Europe's top fortune teller". Who is Europe's top fortune teller? asks Mme. Delyane. Why, herself, she answers, and she ought to know. She also tells us that "the clairvoyant can see more deeply into the lives of others than into her own", so now we all know.

★

Needless to say she has been consulted by scores of famous people including even Sir Winston Churchill, though she does not record what she told them—that is, what the future had in store for them except in a few cases which naturally *cannot be checked*. This is the distinguishing feature of all clairvoyants, for they have no difficulty whatever in telling us what they foresaw *twenty or more years ago* all of which obviously must come true.

We are never told their failures. In both cases, people like Mme. Delyane cannot be checked. No wonder these "clairvoyants" build up flourishing businesses.

★

The question of flogging young thugs was vigorously discussed on ITV the other evening with Mr. J. Connell for it, and Mr. Jo Grimond against, and Dr. Thomas Bloomer, the Bishop of Carlisle, in the chair. The debate itself left the problem mostly as it was before, but we wondered exactly what would be the position of the Bishop? As it was, he took no side, and did not even mention "our Lord". There was a good reason for this.

★

Turn to John 2, 14-15, and you will read,

And (Jesus) found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves and the changers of money sitting; and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables . . . Thus "our Lord" thoroughly believed in flogging with a "scourge of small cords"—flogging not only the money-changers, but the unlucky animals as well. No wonder the Bishop discreetly left Jesus out of the problem!

Russell Lupins in Eden

WE WERE AT BREAKFAST. My landlady, an unshakable Fundamentalist but with no knowledge of horticulture, was admiring the riot of colour to be seen through the living-room window—a bed of Russell lupins which I had grown for her benefit.

"I don't know how you can look at such lovely flowers," she accused me, "and still say there is no God".

"But God didn't create them," I protested. "A gentleman named Mr. Russell did."

I winked at her husband, a "neutral" in religious controversy, then asked her, "Perhaps you think that Adam grew 'em and Eve admired 'em?"

"Either those, or flowers just as beautiful," she retorted. Just beyond the garden fence, on a piece of rough grass-land, already marked out into building plots, a clump of ragwort was growing.

"See those?" I grinned, pointing. "They are probably as good as or better than anything in Eden."

She looked her disgust; so I quoted to her the opinion of the "Garden of Eden country" of a soldier who slogged up the Tigris valley with General Sir Stanley Maude's forces in 1917:

And *this* is where old Adam lived,
Along o' mother Eve?
Well, I'm no Doubting Thomas, but
I'm darned if I'll believe
That they was *really* horrified
When told to pack and leave.

But all to no avail: she insisted on believing it all, including, for anything I know, that the tree of forbidden fruit was a Cox's Orange!

W.H.D.

MUMBO JUMBO INCORPORATED

(Concluded from page 51)

when the gods tend more and more to form a United Front against their common destroyer, Atheism. Perhaps the Miraculous Medal will actually prove to be capable of working a real miracle. It may even succeed in effecting an amalgamation between our (Irish) Lady and the Congo god with the Catholic Trinity thrown in for good measure. Shall we call the combination in deference to the American Catholic President who will probably have to find the money, Mumbo Jumbo Incorporated?

THE FREETHINKER

103 BOROUGH HIGH STREET, LONDON, S.E.1

TELEPHONE: HOP 2717

THE FREETHINKER can be obtained through any newsagent or will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates: One year, £1 15s.; half-year, 17s. 6d.; three months, 8s. 9d. (In U.S.A. and Canada: One year, \$5.00; half-year, \$2.50; three months, \$1.25.)

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 103 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1

Details of membership of the National Secular Society may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, S.E.1. Members and visitors are welcome during normal office hours. Inquiries regarding Secular Funeral Services should also be made to the General Secretary, N.S.S.

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. (Thursday lunchtimes, THE FREETHINKER on sale, Piccadilly, near Queen Victoria Statue.)

Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (Marble Arch).—Meetings every Sunday, from 4 p.m.; MESSRS. L. EBURY, J. W. BARKER, C. E. WOOD, D. TRIBE and J. P. MURACCIOLE.

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.

INDOOR

Conway Discussions (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1), Tuesday, February 21st, 7.15 p.m.: DR. JOHN LEWIS, "Communism as State Capitalism and Imperialism".

Harrow Young Humanists (22 Malpas Drive, Pinner), Sunday, February 19th, 8 p.m.: D. H. TRIBE, "The Case for Rationalism".

Leicester Secular Society (75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, February 19th, 6.30 p.m.: FILM, "The Rivers of Time".

Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (The Carpenters' Arms, Scymour Place, London, W.1), Sunday, February 19th, 7.15 p.m.: E. HILLMAN, "The Jewish Idea of the Messiah".

North Staffordshire Humanist Group (The Guildhall, High Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme), Friday, February 17th, 7.15 p.m.: A MEETING.

Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society (Co-operative Education Centre, Broad Street), Sunday, February 19th, 2.30 p.m.: SYDNEY IRVING, M.P., "The Case for Multi-Lateralism".

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1), Sunday, February 19th, 11 a.m.: PROFESSOR H. LEVY, D.Sc., "Arc We Moonstruck?"

Notes and News

WE SHOULD LIKE TO REMIND readers in the London area of the National Secular Society's intended picket of the offices of the British Transport Commission, 222 Marylebone Road, London, N.W.1, on Saturday, March 11th, at 11.30 a.m., as a protest against the banning from the London Underground of posters advertising the Family Planning Association. In this connection, the Views and Opinions article, "The Catholic Church v. The Planned Family" by Mrs. Margaret Mellroy (THE FREETHINKER, 20/1/61) has been reprinted in leaflet form and, together with advertising handbills and petition forms is available free of charge from 103 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1. We particularly ask members to step up the collecting of signatures on the petition forms (one Marble Arch Branch member got 50 names in one evening by going door-to-door) and to keep March 11th free.

PROFESSOR MARTIN RYLE'S claim to have disproved the "steady state" theory of the Universe was the signal for some most irresponsible journalism! Whether or not the

claim is justified (and here the wisest note would seem to be one of caution!) there is certainly no justification for claiming that Professor Ryle has "proved the truth" of Genesis. He, of course, never claimed anything of the sort, but the *Evening News*, *Evening Standard* and *Daily Express* did. In Views and Opinions next week, Jack Gordon will assess the various claims.

★

THE "WEEK-END THOUGHT" for readers of the Coventry *Evening Telegraph* (28/1/61) was, "Does the Devil Exist?" Even an ordinary man, it was suggested, may feel himself forced to the conclusion that the evil in the world is "only explicable by fathering it upon a cosmic anarchist who is determined to cancel God's influence . . ." And readers were informed that the devil "is a creature, but has not accepted this fact". Whether anybody understood what that means, we don't know: we only know that it has us beaten. No doubt it was reassuring to some to know that "God acts with the serene calmness of eternity" while the devil "feverishly competes with clock and calendar, knowing that for him the sands have been running out" for two-thousand years now. The trouble is man can't wait for eternity: his sands are running out too.

★

THE *Times of Malta* (23/1/61) described the annual ceremony of blessing the animals, which had taken place the day before (the Feast of St. Anthony the Abbot) in front of the Church of Our Lady of Victories, Valetta. The Chaplain blessed every animal brought along and then, we are pompously told, "imparted Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament inside the Church"—whether to the pets as well as their owners was not explicitly stated. We did learn that a little boy barely three years old brought his baby tortoise "slightly larger than his hand", and two ponies were present "very much in their Sunday best". But the star of the ceremony was "Manwela", the donkey mascot of HMS Phoenicia, "brought along by two smartly turned out Maltese sailors", and a "cap tally bearing the name of HMS Phoenicia completed the donkey's smart turn-out". Our Maltese correspondent aptly comments that "Manwela" was by no means the only donkey at the ceremony.

★

A 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL absconded from a hotel managed by nuns because—she told Willesden Juvenile Court—"I can't stand nuns" (*West London Star Group*, 3/2/61). It was stated that the girl had "become a Roman Catholic some years ago"—presumably at a tender age—but that she no longer practised the faith. All the same, she was "led away sobbing to begin a period of training in an approved school—run by nuns". And the Chairman, Mrs. K. McFarlane, said that questions connected with the girl's religion "could be investigated after she arrived at the approved school". The Secretary of the National Secular Society is seeking further details.

★

"HOW DID I GET INTO ALL THIS? I'm a scientist, not a priest", said Professor Daniele Petrucci (*Newsweek*, 6/2/61), leader of the Bologna research team that recently fertilised a human ovum in a test tube (THE FREETHINKER, 3/2/61). Dr. Petrucci was attacked by the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*, by Vatican radio, by the US Jesuit weekly, *America*, and by the influential Jesuit fortnightly *Civiltà Cattolica*. The last-named invoked Infallibility itself in the person of Pope Pius XII. The experiment, it declared, was illicit because the late Pope "had spoken against fecundation *in vitro* (i.e., in a test tube)". And that, presumably, is the last word.

“Six Days or Forever?”

By GEORGE B. LESLIE

THE FILM, *Inherit the Wind*, has re-awakened public interest in the famous “Monkey Trial” at Dayton, Tennessee, and a “Signet” paperback reprint is now appropriately available of the book *Six Days or Forever?* by Ray Ginger (Frederick Muller Ltd., 4s.). This is a factual account of the trial and the events leading up to it, and it contains enlightening biographies of the main personalities involved. The author is an agnostic lecturer in American History at Brandeis University, and the book is very readable, yet accurate, and is a remarkably unbiased account of one of the most famous trials of this century.

In 1925, John Washington Butler, a Primitive Baptist farmer on the state legislature composed a bill prohibiting the teaching of Evolutionary Theory in all Universities, Normals, and public schools of Tennessee, supported wholly or in part by the State. On conviction anyone violating the act was to be fined not less than \$100 nor more than \$500.

The University of Tennessee did not oppose the bill since the legislature was considering an extra appropriation for the University. The Department of Education wanted a bill passed to make an 8-month compulsory school term instead of the usual 5 or 6 months so they could not afford to oppose the Butler bill either.

The Lower House passed the bill 71 to 6, and the Upper passed it 24 to 6, but it was not taken very seriously by many senators; they expected the governor to veto it. But the governor, Austin Peay, could not afford to offend the rural vote, so he signed it. The Butler Act thus became law, but it was more a gesture than an active statute and made little difference to the teaching of biology in the State.

Plans were made to test whether the law was constitutional by filing a bill challenging it in the Chancery court, but the proponents backed down for fear of the wrath of the Fundamentalists. Then the American Civil Liberties Union announced that they were willing to finance a test case if some teacher in Tennessee would agree to co-operate. A young biology teacher, John Thomas Scopes, was (somewhat reluctantly) persuaded to volunteer, and a warrant was sworn out for his arrest. William Jennings Bryan, ex-Secretary of State and three times unsuccessful Democratic presidential candidate, forthwith announced he would represent the prosecution on behalf of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association.

Bryan was a fundamentalist Presbyterian, who held very pragmatic views about truth. He believed in rule by the majority, and truth was what the majority believed it was. In his eyes all men were equally competent biologists, so if the majority said evolution was false, it was false. (This same logic induced Indiana to pass a bill making π equal 4.) After reading Leuba's *Belief in God and Immortality*, Bryan had “proof” that evolution was an invention of the Devil.

Clarence Darrow and Dudley Malone offered their services free to the chief defence counsel, John Neal and, despite some opposition from within the ACLU they were accepted. Malone was an ex-Catholic divorce lawyer; Clarence Darrow was, of course, an eminent criminal lawyer notorious for his freethinking views which he didn't hesitate to publicise. Some members of the ACLU would have preferred an orthodox Protestant lawyer to fight the case purely on the grounds that it was unconstitutional.

Darrow came from a freethinking family. He held very liberal and socialist views and achieved early fame

as an expert in labour law, but he was indicted in the McNamara case and financially ruined by it. When the indictment was eventually dropped he turned to criminal law, in which he made a practice of always representing the defence. He was an anti-prohibitionist and very unpopular in many circles for his outspoken criticisms of orthodoxy. He was well informed on evolution and was organiser of a Biology Club.

The trial opened in a blaze of publicity; on Friday, July 10th, journalists, preachers, fanatics, and nitwits descended on Dayton. Scopes had expected a quiet local affair! It was the first trial to be broadcast over the radio. Messages of support for Scopes poured in from all over the world, from men like Einstein, Shaw, Huxley and Wells.

After morning prayers in court, the defence submitted that the Butler Act was unconstitutional since it infringed the laws of freedom of speech and worship. On the second day (Monday), Darrow objected to opening with prayers, but was overruled by the judge. In the afternoon, Hays, for the defence, presented a petition by Rabbis and Unitarian and other ministers demanding that other denominations should be asked for prayers. On the Tuesday morning the prayers were read by a Unitarian minister much to the disgust of the fundamentalists present. The judge refused to quash the case on the grounds that the law was unconstitutional and the jury was sworn in.

The first defence witness was the President of the Zoological Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Maynard Metcalf. He caused consternation when he casually mentioned that life had existed 600,000,000 BC. More gasps were caused when another defence witness told the jury that there was more than one version of the Bible.

On the Friday the judge stopped the defence calling expert witnesses on evolution, thus making defence almost impossible, and Darrow was provoked into taunting and insulting the judge.

On the Monday Darrow was ordered by the judge to appear on Tuesday to show cause why he should not be punished for contempt. This order was withdrawn after Darrow had apologised. And it was on the afternoon of that day that Bryan made the greatest mistake of his career. He agreed to go in the witness box. Darrow, annoyed at the way the trial was going, revenged himself on Bryan, who was interrogated on his religious beliefs for an hour and a half and was forced to admit that the Bible was not all literally true.

“Do you think the world was made in six days?”

“Not six days of 24 hours.”

Horrified gasps from the fundamentalists in court.

After some questions on Adam and Eve.

“Do you believe that is why the serpent is compelled to crawl on its belly?”

“I believe that.”

“Have you any idea how he went before that?”

“No sir.”

“Do you know whether he walked on his tail?”

Laughter.

Bryan was crushed and broken. His colleagues had tried to stop Darrow's merciless questioning and Bryan was finally forbidden by the chief prosecution lawyer to go back in the witness box. It was too humiliating to see the man subjected to such ridicule.

In his final summing up, Darrow asked the jury to find Scopes guilty rather than have a divided verdict so the

case could go to the Appellate Tribunal. This verdict was returned and the judge fined Scopes \$100.

The following week Bryan died of apoplexy.

After the trial ended there was much discussion in the ACLU on whether Darrow should be allowed to continue the case since his conduct had offended Christians. The Union had difficulty in obtaining finance for the trial, but an appeal to the American Association for the Advancement of Science brought in a substantial surplus. If the Christians didn't like Darrow, the Scientists did. Sir Arthur Keith called him a great defender of liberty.

The Appeal Court affirmed that the act was constitutional but ruled that Judge Raulston should not have set the fine. This should have been done by the jury. On this ground the judgment was reversed and the Attorney-General was instructed to enter a *Nolle Prosequi*. Scopes's lawyers were powerless to continue further.

So the notorious Butler Act remains on the statute books to this day—a monument to ignorance and bigotry. Though, it should be added, no attempts have been made to enforce it.

Thomas Scopes did well out of the trial. His further education was paid for and he qualified as a geologist. But this, and many other interesting sidelights, as well as the important essentials, may be read in Mr. Ginger's *Six Days or Forever?* an excellent four-shillings' worth.

CORRESPONDENCE

VACCINATION AND INOCULATION

As I seem to be the person initially responsible for causing Dr. Duhig's outburst in this and previous issues of THE FREETHINKER, may I be afforded the opportunity of the comment—that his opinion of myself or others who think as I do is unimportant; what matters is that all are *allowed* to have opinions. The dogmatic and rather infantile attitude towards controversial issues is too frequently found in government circles, civil and military, although frequently in the higher positions of authority a more enlightened opinion prevails.

Dr. Duhig mentions Brisbane and Queensland in his recent article, it so happens that I too am from Queensland and am at present selling that glorious state to all who care to listen. It is important to make known that generally the Australian is very tolerant and on the particular issue mentioned the Federal Minister of Health showed a most courteous and considerate attitude when I made representation to him; provision for objection was framed in recent legislation.

In conclusion I would say I still think my experiences rather unique. They only resulted from a refusal to betray honest convictions as also was my official religion "none". I certainly hope that governments, as the Doctor says, "don't put fools in charge of their civil or military medical services", but then talking of governments, some parliaments start with prayers, premiers pray for rain, for sunshine, for victory—enough said!

ADRIAN J. HELLIER.

I should like to quote one official British Government statement which should settle all Dr. Duhig's statistics, namely:

"In the 21 years ended December, 1958, only a little more than one third of the children born in England and Wales were vaccinated for smallpox, yet only 2 children aged under 5 years died of smallpox, but of the *one third vaccinated*, 91 were killed by vaccination." This statement was given in replies by the Minister of Health in Parliament and Ministry of Health reports. And in the Doctor's own words, governments do not put fools in charge of their civil and military medical services.

CHAS DENNING.

Your correspondent, Dr. J. V. Duhig, author of "Vaccination and Inoculation" (3/2/61), is, by the impression he conveys in his writing on this subject anyway, in quite the same category as he places anti-vivisectionists, etc., viz. "callous, ignorant and pompous fanatics", or else he is carrying on a big joke at the expense of valuable space in THE FREETHINKER. Yet can Dr. Duhig, or any other more learned doctor, tell us anything about what eventual effect the introduction of vaccines, etc., may have on the vital organs? Although the final result may take a long time to appear what doctor would be brave (or foolish!) enough to state that inoculation or vaccination has definitely nothing whatever to do with the terrible incidence of cancer or heart disease?

Disease can only develop in systems where toxic matter and

other putrefaction dirt has accumulated. If the intestines contain such matter then the diseases mentioned by Dr. Duhig can, and do, rapidly develop. When doctors introduce unnatural agents into the blood stream there are specific reactions on certain of the organs, and the whole balance in those organs is upset.

Your correspondent has gone to a lot of trouble to quote figures to support his case. But figures, as is well known, can be bandied about to help "prove" almost anything. There is certainly a lot more to it than simply saying that so many troops were inoculated against a certain disease, and only this, or that, number of them died as a result of the disease. One is left to wonder how many of the inoculated troops survived to die of real old age! Not a very big percentage I fear. If Dr. Duhig had access to the records of their causes of death he would be able to tell us of cancer, blood and heart diseases, etc., being responsible for their demise in the vast majority of cases. And what brought on these diseases? Were they the result of natural, clean living, or did what Dr. Duhig advocates have anything to do with it? Who knows! But no doubt the Doctor will be able to unearth more "facts and figures" to support his disgraceful stand for the case of vivisection.

If Dr. Duhig and any of his profession who read THE FREETHINKER are really freethinkers my advice to them is that they should investigate the field of curing by natural methods. Next time they have a patient who is suffering from one of the fevers for the cure of which they have been taught to inject, instead of employing their witches' brews on this occasion I suggest that they call in a competent naturopath. He will show them how to treat disease until it is eradicated, along simple, natural lines, and without having to resort to the exploitation of the sub-humans by the carrying out of countless, and useless, ghoulish experiments.

Should the medical profession persist in carrying on with vivisection, then they should practise it by all means, but only on consenting human beings, who, no doubt, will be found from amongst the ranks of Dr. Duhig's colleagues. Incidentally, I value as great friends several medical doctors who hold no brief for inoculation or vaccination, and certainly none for vivisection.

A very large percentage of the population of Britain die of either blood or heart troubles, and many more die as the result of some disease or other which medical men like to term "natural causes". If the inoculations and vaccinations, drugs, pills and medicines which Dr. Duhig & Co. would have us believe are our salvation, then disease and all ill health should have been wiped out years ago! But nothing could be further from the truth. In fact the opposite is the case—why in my native Belfast, with a population of less than 500,000 ($\frac{1}{2}$ a million), there is an ever increasing waiting list of thousands for our overworked hospitals.

No, Dr. Duhig, the answer to man's illnesses does not lie in your field of orthodox medicine. Everywhere there is incurable disease and all you have to offer is something to deaden the symptom, instead of teaching the suffering to live cleanly not only outwardly, but inwardly too. By living naturally on natural foods, in hygienic surroundings man will one day be able to look back on the medicos of today who employ vaccines and other obnoxious methods, as we of this century look back on the witch doctors who prescribed "chalk licks" for their cannibal patients who were suffering from "Missionary Indigestion"!

JACK McCLELLAND,

(Hon. Secretary, Ulster Vegetarian Society).

Dr. Duhig's article, "Vaccination and Inoculation", is full of fallacies. Because I do not answer all the points raised I hope readers will not think I am unable to do so. His opening remarks on typhoid seem to indicate that he is easy to convince on the value of inoculation, but I would like to see the story substantiated! It is on all fours with "an Army circular" in his first letter which readers will note has been quietly dropped in order to admit that the figure I quoted was correct! (Correction—I should have said "in the British Army in France alone there were 7,400 cases.")

In *A Short Treatise on Anti-Typhoid Inoculation*, Sir A. Wright states that 400,000 doses of his vaccine were sent for the use of troops. Professor J. W. H. Eyre, a strong supporter of A-TI affirmed in the *Medical World* (14/2/1936 p. 798) that our South African forces were thoroughly "protected" against typhoid. Dr. Melville, late civil surgeon to the Natal Field Force says the fatality among his inoculated patients was 6.69%, uninoculated 1.39%. Further, "Complications among the inoculated soldiers were more numerous, the duration of fever longer, and the death rate higher".

The point of alleged wrongly prepared vaccine (together with a hundred other shuffles of I-quackery) does not escape the Newtons. All doses are "effective" provided the subject does

not contract the disease in question. If he does then the advocate falls back on one or more of these excuses—but not until!

Due to the failure in the Boer War A-I was suspended in 1902 on the advice of a sub-committee. Only after two further committees had sat at the inventor's (Sir A. Wright's) request (on the second of which he sat!) was A-I restored in 1904.

A-I in the U.S. Army:

1898, 1899, 1900, 1910, 1911, 1912 } House of Commons
88.56 10.85 5.62 2.32 .85 .31 } answer 8/2/1915

A-I was not introduced till 1911—comment is unnecessary and the same applies to figures for World Wars 1 and 2.

Official war histories are notoriously erratic where inoculation is concerned. Drs. Upjohn and Martin admitted in the medical press in 1917 that when 325 cases of clinical typhoid were examined by them, "When a case came before us from an inoculated man, we viewed it with suspicion". They contrived to reduce the whole 325 cases to 25! (*B.M.J.* 2/9/1916, pp. 313-314). Dr. Garrod (late Captain R.A.M.C. and a believer in I) says in the *Lancet* 30/10/1920: "The inclusion of a large number of cases of trench fever, malaria, dysentery and other diseases as 'enteric' (i.e. typhoid) "will raise the apparent incidence of enteric amongst the inoculated and lower its fatality". Another medical man (Lt.-Col. Donegan) confesses to a similar transformation by order, lest I should fall into disrepute! So the least said about the value of official I statistics the better!

On sanitation Sir M. Morris declared in a Chadwick lecture 7/12/1921: "In the main the armies on the Western Front in the late war were preserved from the ravages of dysentery, diarrhoea, typhoid, typhus and cholera by good sanitation carried out on Chadwick's principle of providing a wholesome environment".

Captain J. S. Arthur in a lecture on 19/11/1921 said that chlorine gas had "solved the problem of a pure water supply on a large scale for the troops, and accounted for the fact that throughout the war there was no epidemic of typhoid or other water borne disease, which caused such havoc in the South African War".

When Dr. Duhig says he cannot accept my "French figures, they are too crude", he really means that they prove the failure of A-I but lacks the courage to say so! It only remains for me to substantiate them.

The *B.M.J.* (28/2/1920) admits the French Army had 95,809 cases of typhoid to the end of October 1915. The figures I gave were quoted by the "terrible and unanswerable Hadwen" (as G. B. Shaw called him) in the course of a controversy in *Truth* (April/May, 1922) with A. G. Shera, M.D. (author of *Vaccines and Sera*). Neither he nor anyone else disproved Dr. Hadwen's statement. It is rather late in the day for Dr. Duhig to say he "cannot accept them!" Dr. Hutchinson in the Chadwick lecture 31/10/1917, claimed that the French had "had 150,000 cases with a high death rate" up to that date. *Médecin Inspecteur Mignon in Health Services in the F. A. during the War*, Vol. IV states 127,000 and 12,139 deaths, fatality 9.5%.

Obviously the French Authorities believed in the vaccine they used—and so would Dr. Duhig if good sanitation and practically no typhoid had prevailed.

Even if diphtheria anti-toxin were a remedy, to say that it has saved millions of children's lives is exaggerated nonsense. Why did he not give us statistics? e.g. the Metropolitan Asylums Board 1895 to 1910:

With anti-toxin 73,310 cases, 10,095 deaths=13.2%

Without anti-toxin 13,135 cases, 742 deaths=5.6%
or diphtheria and croup death rate per million

1861-70, 1871-80, 1881-90, 1891-1900, 1901-10
390 261 286 314 192

What produced the drop from 390 to 261 and why did it rise to 314 when anti-toxin came into use in 1894?

During 1901-10 there was a drop in other zymotic diseases, e.g. scarlet fever (1891-1900) 158; (1901-10) 106.

Smallpox. Obviously Dr. Duhig has not read Dr. Hadwen's speech in the Gloucester epidemic, 1896, or his reply to Dr. Coupland's Report. If he had he would not have made the silly statement in his first sentence. Deaths from vaccination have occurred throughout its history. They did not commence with encephalitis.

Dr. Duhig must be the original of the story of the schoolboy who said "Buttons are things which when they are not sewn on, make breeches fall down". (Substitute vaccination for buttons, smallpox for breeches.) He cannot grasp the fact that there is a positive cause, in the case of smallpox—bad sanitation. In the absence of the latter a smallpox epidemic cannot occur. Thirty years ago the pro-vaccination *Medical Officer* (I think it was), deplored the habit of raising the cry of "Wolf" when there was no wolf.

Tetanus: As there are other factors governing tetanus his table from the *Official (British) War History* is quite unscientific. Anti-toxin serum is derived from the blood of an animal that has been poisoned with the disease in question and therefore in popular parlance, the anti-toxin serum is "filthy". Mr. Denning is right and the Doctor—dare I say it?—is wrong. Also the Ministry of Health refuse to sterilise smallpox vaccine.

Had Dr. Duhig concluded his article by saying that governments put people in charge of the medical services who, for the most part, follow the medical fashions of the day and do not think for themselves he would have been both correct and courteous.

S. NEWTON.

FROM SPAIN

I must congratulate you on your latest contribution (*THE FREETHINKER*, 20/1/61) to the liberty of my beloved Spain. My people know your efforts and will be grateful to English Freethinkers. I know the pain of prison because I was once a prisoner of the Vatican reaction that dictates today in Spain. You must work along this line: To visit the prison, to speak with the prisoners, to get the truth about the prisons direct from the prisoners.

As you know I fear to give my name at the foot because if it is discovered I shall find myself in prison—after a beating.

SPANISH TEACHER.

THE WEATHERSFIELD MARCH

A group of young humanists intend to march in support of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament under a Humanist banner. We shall assemble at 9.30 a.m. on Easter Monday April 3rd, at Stratford, London, E.15 for the last day of the eastern "prong" of the march, arriving in Trafalgar Square at about 2.30 p.m.

If any of your readers care to join us on that day they will be most welcome. Further information can be obtained from the Young Humanists, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1, or alternatively by calling any Monday evening after 7.30 p.m.

G. E. RICHARDSON.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SEX WORSHIP. By H. Cutner. Price 2/6; postage 6d.

THE DOLLAR AND THE VATICAN: Its Character, Methods and Aims. By Avro Manhattan. 3rd. Edition—Revised and Enlarged. Price 21/-; postage 1/3.

ESSAYS IN FREETHINKING. By Chapman Cohen. Series 1, 2, 3, 4. Cloth bound. Price 7/6 each series; postage 7d. each.

PRIMITIVE SURVIVALS IN MODERN THOUGHT. By Chapman Cohen. Price 3/- (specially reduced price); postage 5d.

FRANCO'S PRISONERS SPEAK (from Burgos Central Prison). Price 1/6; postage 4d.

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK (10th Edition). By G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball. Price 4/6; postage 6d.

AGE OF REASON. Thomas Paine's masterpiece with 40-pages introduction by Chapman Cohen. Cloth 4/-; postage 7d.

THE THINKER'S HANDBOOK By Hector Hawton. Price 5/-; postage 7d.

HUMANITY'S GAIN FROM UNBELIEF. By Charles Bradlaugh. Price 2/6; postage 5d.

IS SPIRITUALISM TRUE? By C. E. Ratcliffe. Price 1/-; postage 2d.

ROBERT TAYLOR—THE DEVIL'S CHAPLAIN. By H. Cutner. Price 1/6; postage 4d.

PAMPHLETS FOR THE PEOPLE. 18 of Chapman Cohen's celebrated pamphlets bound in one Volume. Indispensable for the Freethinker. Price 5/6; postage 8d.

CATHOLIC IMPERIALISM AND WORLD FREEDOM. By Avro Manhattan, 528 pages, paper cover. Price 20/-; postage 1/3.

LECTURES AND ESSAYS. By R. G. Ingersoll. Paper covers, 5/-; Cloth bound, 8/6; postage 10d.

FAMILY PROBLEMS AND THE LAW. By Robert S. W. Pollard. Price 2/6; postage 6d.

MATERIALISM RESTATED (Third edition). By Chapman Cohen. Price 5/6; postage 7d.

MEN WITHOUT GODS. By Hector Hawton. Price 2/6; postage 5d.

JESUS, MYTH OR HISTORY? By Archibald Robertson. Price 2/6; postage 5d.