

The Freethinker

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Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

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WE ARE PRIVILEGED TO PRINT BELOW, by permission, the second and larger part of an address by Mr. Cyrus Eaton, Canadian-born Chairman of the Board, Steep Rock Iron Mines Limited and Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, at the 50th Annual Banquet of the Hippocratic Society, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada, on Friday, January 13th, 1961.

Mr. Eaton is the founder and sponsor of the Pugwash Thinkers Conferences to promote international understanding and stimulate renewal of intellectual life. Six Pugwash Conferences of international scientists have brought together 163 authorities from

23 nations of East and West to consider ways of diminishing the grave hazards of nuclear, biological and chemical warfare. The first and second Pugwash Conferences of nuclear scientists in mid-1957 and early 1958 have been acclaimed for paving the way for the official 1958 Geneva Conference of technical experts on detection of nuclear weapon tests, the first such official post-war deliberation to result in measurable agreement between East and West.—Ed.

I KNOW THAT the modern scientific doctor is thoroughly trained in the disciplines that deal with the human body. None of you needs any advice from me on that subject and, in any case, I would be incapable of giving it. I think I can counsel you a little, though, on your activities outside of what is strictly your vocation. You have a great deal to give to society by serving as philosopher and citizen, as well as physician, in the tradition of Sir William Osler and others of his school.

I should like to urge everyone to read some of Osler's non-medical writings, especially three of his speeches that have deeply affected my conclusions on life and on man's place in society and the universe. They are his Harvard address on "Science and Immortality", his Yale address on "A Way of Life", and his Edinburgh address on "Man's Redemption of Man". Like me, you may be led by a reference of Osler's to turn to John Tyndall's Belfast Address, on his inauguration as president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. I have read and re-read the Tyndall Address, and regard it as one of the best statements that has ever been made on the scientific intellect. Tyndall, in turn, may send you in search of Lange's *History of Materialism*, a monumental philosophical work that has made a lasting impression on me. From Osler, Tyndall and Lange, I gained a desire to make a more detailed study of Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, from whom your Society takes its name; his master, Democritus; Empedocles, another great pupil of Democritus; and Epicurus and Lucretius, two of his later followers.

Freeing Mankind

More than two thousand years ago, these philosophers set themselves the courageous and difficult task of freeing mankind from the myths and illusions which are so easy to accept and so difficult to remove from the path of scientific progress. Hippocrates, a man of the highest integrity and the purest morality, matched skill in science with zeal in opposing the superstitions that hold disease as the product of demons and see the cure in supernatural intervention. By pure reason, and without facilities for

observation and experiment, Democritus and Empedocles came close to elucidating the origin and structure of matter, whose secrets our advanced nuclear scientists of the Twentieth Century are only now gradually narrowing to the final point. This same pioneering pair thought through much of the theory of evolution and natural selection, which Darwin demonstrated and Huxley expounded in the modern scientific manner barely a century

ago. Huxley's surpassing ability as essayist and lecturer, as well as surgeon-scientist and philosopher, can be credited with accomplishing more than the work of anyone else in the English-speaking world to destroy the buttresses of superstition and to estab-

lish the importance of the scientific viewpoint.

That the mind of mankind can stand still is demonstrated by the long ages that passed between the postulations of Democritus and Empedocles and their modern scientific proofs. The frailty of the human mind, the weakness of the body and the sluggishness of the spirit all too often combine to persuade man to accept superficial explanations of life and to follow the course that calls for the least use of his intellect and energies. Superstition still persists, even in this age of scientific enlightenment, as was discovered when a public figure of the prominence of William Jennings Bryan, three times the nominee of his party for the Presidency of the United States, made himself the self-appointed prosecutor of the school teacher Scopes for teaching his classes the theory of evolution in the 1920's.

Physician-Authors

There are many others among the authors I have read with delight and profit whose names are household words to you. I cannot resist naming two or three more of my favourite physician-authors. Pasteur made lasting contributions to literature while revolutionising chemical and biological science and surgical practice. Von Helmholtz laid claim to profundity in his writings on philosophy as well as on science and medicine. The wit of Oliver Wendell Holmes is recognised as having done as much to relieve the austerity of New England and his medical practice did to alleviate illness and improve health.

I hope I have convinced you that I derive solid satisfaction from reading the doctors and the scientists. I also hope that many of you will learn to look to books as sources of entertainment and consolation, and not solely for information and education. Poetry, history, philosophy, all make great companions. If you need this layman's urging reinforced by a member of your own profession, consult Osler's injunction to let no day pass without contact with the world's best literature.

As a businessman, I should like to see the physicians become more active as directors of banks, railroads and industrial corporations. The doctor's scientific outlook and knowledge of human nature give him a fresh viewpoint that can be of inestimable benefit to the business

VIEWS and OPINIONS

The Physician as Philosopher and Citizen

BY CYRUS EATON

organisation with which he becomes associated. A bank president of my acquaintance told me that his doctor-director was the most valuable member of the board because his broad acquaintance and instinctive ability to appraise character made him a prime judge of would-be borrowers.

The scientists and the physicians have, as you probably know, been playing a prominent part in the Pugwash Conferences. Some of these gatherings bring scientists together from the major nations to exchange ideas on disarmament in the nuclear age. Other meetings are held at Pugwash to enable college presidents and deans and other scholars representing a wide variety of disciplines to reawaken one another's intellectual powers. The scientists become philosophers and the philosophers scientists. The goal is to preserve and strengthen all that is best in religion, art, literature and music, not only to add to the happiness of life, but also to encourage the sense of brotherhood that was exemplified by the Good Samaritan. Race, creed and colour know no differences at Pugwash.

My lifelong studies of science and philosophy, under the inspiration of the great physicians I have enumerated, provided much of the impetus for the Pugwash movement. I have been particularly happy to collaborate with such men as the grandsons of Darwin and Huxley in the work at Pugwash. The present Sir Charles Darwin and Sir Julian Huxley are also both frequent visitors in my home. Sir Julian claims not only Thomas Huxley for an ancestor, but also the Matthew Arnold family, a rare combination of science and the humanities.

This is a time of acute crisis in the world. Osler described the spirit of hatred and bitterness that prevailed everywhere in Great Britain against the Germans, at the end of World War I, as a paroxysm of delirium. Throughout the United States, and to some extent in Canada, public opinion is today animated with this same fear and hatred of communism, particularly as exemplified by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. Powerful minds and exceptional courage are required to make reason and common sense prevail. The dangers of this latter-day paroxysm of delirium far outstrip its earlier manifestations.

The tremendous scientific advances of the past twenty years have, for the first time in history, placed in mankind's hands the power to wipe itself out almost instantaneously and simultaneously to obliterate every other form of life on earth. Can man be prevented from misusing nuclear fission and fusion and missiles? After the glorious triumphs of science and medicine, is the human race going to destroy itself by the hydrogen bomb?

Here is where I believe the greatest obligation and opportunity of the physicians lie. The so-called pure scientists, who possess the full knowledge of the atom and its awful capacity for misuse, have not succeeded in persuading the public of the mortal peril in which we live. Nor have the preachers, who appeal to the noblest motives of their congregations, been able to slow the feverish preparations for nuclear conflict that will annihilate countless millions of defenseless women and children. Hopefully the physicians will take up the crusade for use of man's new control of the forces of nature for the common good instead of universal destruction.

I suggest this is a duty suited to the physicians because of the unique position of trust and respect that they occupy in the communities where they live and practice. They are recognised humanitarians, and they have the power to influence public opinion as no one else can. Mankind may have a chance if the medical profession will take up this greatest challenge in history.

Is Schweitzer a Christian?

A RECENT UNDATED cutting from the American *Saturday Review* contained an appraisal by Carl Hehmann Voss, Minister of the New England Congregational Church in Saratoga Springs, New York, of *Albert Schweitzer: A Study of His Philosophy of Life*, by a Norwegian psychiatrist, Gabriel Langfeldt, translated by Maurice Michael, and published in the USA by Brazillier at \$3. As the religious beliefs (or lack of them) of Dr. Schweitzer have been the subject of discussion in our columns from time to time, Mr. Voss's article may be of interest. I have not yet seen the book.

It seems that, in Norwegian magazines and newspapers, some Protestant clergymen have lately been accusing Schweitzer of heresy, and I would say that their accusation was perfectly justified. For Schweitzer, as the article admits, "does not believe in the traditional concept of God, the assured efficacy of prayer, the supremacy of faith over reason, the indisputable deity of Christ, the sacraments, the Virgin Birth, atonement, resurrection, or ascension". These are, surely, essential elements of Christianity.

Gabriel Langfeldt rallies to the defence, counter-accusing the clergy and congregational councils of "narrow-mindedness, intolerance, and slavish literalism", and Mr. Voss in turn calls Schweitzer "the noblest Christian of our time". But it just will not do. Consider the following brief summary of the Doctor's religious and ethical views:

(1) an ethical mysticism lying between pantheism and theism in accord with Spinoza's *Deus sine Natura*, for God is spirit, "that is to say that which cannot be apprehended."

(2) a belief in prayer as a "spiritual inner surrender to Infinite Being that gives my wretched existence meaning and riches".

(3) the view of the historical Jesus as not necessarily the Son of God but One unknown and nameless Who imbues men with a strong, passionate belief in the Kingdom of God, and for Whom "there is no name we can find that covers His personality", and

(4) Reverence for Life, a self-sacrificing ethic in accord with Jesus's word: "he who loseth his life . . . shall find it".

Christianity may have very different meanings for different people, but to have any validity at all it must at least embrace the belief in the divinity of Jesus.

Langfeldt's final section asks "Is Albert Schweitzer a Christian?" and answers not very satisfactorily, "What difference does it make?" It makes no difference to his achievements, I admit, but it is very important to our understanding. Meaningful speech involves restriction on word-usage: a word that can mean anything means nothing. And this is what happens in the present instance. We read that: "With a respect for other faiths, notably Buddhism, and by his own repudiation of orthodox Christianity, Dr. Schweitzer is no Christian, not in the conventional sense of the word; but he regards himself as a Christian, uses Christian terminology, and in his personality and life's work is 'a shining example of the true Christian spirit'. He must therefore be considered a Christian".

To appreciate the full absurdity of this, I suggest the substitution of "logical" for "conventional". This removes the depreciatory note upon which the argument depends for even its tiny semblance of sense. How Mr. Voss can call Langfeldt's case "logical enough", "quite persuasive", "admirable enough" and "successful", I do not know. Perhaps he wanted to be persuaded. C.McC.

— NEXT WEEK —

ANTI-CLERICALISM IN CANADA

By JOSEPH LA RIVIERE

King Leopold and Lumumba

By FRANK MAITLAND

THE CIVIL WAR that has been raging in the Congo between various factions in that vast country, a Negro maelstrom which has been industriously stirred by Belgian, American, British and other interests, has produced headline after headline about Congo atrocities, culminating with the murder of the Congo political leader, Patrice Lumumba and a number of his ministers. Not only have these events exposed to the world the utter incapacity of the United Nations, when powerful interests are involved, but they have shown that many decades of rule by Belgian capitalism and the Catholic Church, which was in complete control of Congo education and morals, have failed to yield a Congo in which the Negro peoples could work out their political destiny in an atmosphere of human dignity and kindness.

To those who remember the Belgian atrocities in the Congo, this is not surprising. The murder of Lumumba is not unconnected with the greed and cruelty of King Leopold, whose rapacity horrified the peoples of the world at the beginning of this century. No one did more to expose King Leopold and his slavers than E. D. Morel, whose great work received honourable mention by Mr. F. A. Ridley in a recent article on the Congo.

Morel founded his work on evidence produced by a number of missionaries who dared to defy the silence imposed by the Missionary Societies. Let Morel tell this in his own words:

There had been accumulating in the decade 1892-1902 in some of the Protestant mission stations of the Upper Congo, records of a comprehensive and appalling character. Enough information was available to have stormed every religious platform in this country. The Home Executives of the missionary societies took no public action, however, and for many years one Congo missionary, and one only, dared to confront, with the righteous indignation of a spirit stung to passionate anger by the fearful evidence of his own eyes, King Leopold's agents in Africa, and King Leopold himself in Europe. He was a Swede. His name was Sjoblom, and he stands out an apostolic figure of those earlier days.

After mentioning other missionaries, Morel goes on to say:

With those three exceptions no missionary appears to have given expression to his experiences in a form available to the general public, until October, 1903, when Mr. J. H. Weeks . . . sent me the first of his powerful communications.

Morel continues:

From the end of 1903 when the testimony of British and American missionaries became continuous, detailed, and insistent, the organs of the Roman Catholic Missions—and the Roman Catholic religious press, generally—attacked the former with great bitterness. This attitude was dictated by the Vatican direct . . .

Morel adds that when he went to the United States in 1904 to present a memorial to President Theodore Roosevelt, he found himself opposed by Cardinal Gibbons, head of the Roman Catholic Church in that country. Yet it is to be remembered that not only the Roman Catholic Church, but the Protestant Societies, the British Government and many philanthropic (!) bodies gave King Leopold their blessing and received various benefits in return.

The record of the atrocities reads like a nightmare. They foreshadow the Nazi regime in Europe, and all was larded over with laws, taxes, official orders and requisitions, and all the modern bureaucratic paper screen to cover brutality.

The white officer at Kamambare has commissioned several chiefs to make raids on the country of the Warua and bring him slaves . . . the soldiers steal everything on the plantations and in the houses. If the rightful owners object they are

beaten, the women taken by force . . . In stations in charge of white men, Government officers, one sees strings of poor, emaciated old women, some of them mere skeletons, working from ten to six, tramping about in gangs with a rope around their necks and connected by a rope one and a half yards apart. They are "prisoners of war".

War has been waged all through the district of the Equator and thousands of people have been killed and homes destroyed . . . Many women and children were taken, and 21 heads were brought to Stanley Falls and have been used by Captain Rom as a decoration round a flower-bed in front of his house . . . Most white officers out in the Congo are averse to the india-rubber policy of the State, but the laws command it.

The soldiers had the habit of bringing in, as evidence of their devotion to duty, the hands of the Negroes they killed.

"I saw the dead bodies floating on the lake with the right hand cut off, and the officer told me when I came back why they had been killed. It was for the rubber."

"When I crossed the stream I saw some dead bodies hanging down from the branches in the water. As I turned away my face at the horrible sight one of the native corporals who was following us down said, 'Oh, that is nothing, a few days ago I returned from a fight, and I brought the white man 160 hands and they were thrown into the river.'"

—(Sjoblom's evidence).

This was the civilising mission of King Leopold and the Belgians. If the tax of rubber was not collected, then the soldiers were encouraged to use the utmost savagery. Morel gives page after page of evidence—evidence which had been carefully hidden from the world by the three agencies most concerned with the welfare of the Congo peoples—the Belgian King and Government, the rubber and other capitalists and the Churches.

The Congolese of today heard from their mothers and fathers the frightful tales of these crimes carried out by their white masters. Is it any wonder that the sins against the fathers have produced such a crop of fresh crimes among the children?

E. D. Morel's book, *Red Rubber*, stands as a monument to a great humanist. His name, like those of Sjoblom, John Weeks and Roger Casement, the British consul, will rank high when the real history of the Congo comes to be written. Today, the Congo needs Negro leaders who can throw away the cant and humbug of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches and stand out for a fresh, free confederation of peoples who will carve out a new and happy destiny in their rich and beautiful land. Throughout the world, the Congo needs friends who will do their utmost to understand and help the Negro, who realise deeply that the Negro must be free to face his own future—free, above all, from the rotten religions, the hypocritical morals, dictating by making money at all costs, which fester in white societies. If the Negroes proceed to freedom by taking a leaf out of the white man's Bible (with the words of Christ on one side and a double-entry account on the other), if they take power and wealth, might and swindling as their methods, if they simply become Christians and capitalists with black faces—as is certainly happening now in some cases—they will doom the Negro race to further slavery.

If the Negroes are going to take their place as a great people before the world, they can only do so under the banner of free thought and by the method of human dignity. The slavers of King Leopold of Belgium cut off the right hands of the Congo peoples. Let the Congolese to-day hold out to the world the right hands of the free and genuine Negro.

This Believing World

The "Sunday Express" (5/2/61) is running into terrible trouble. It has the audacity to attack an "undercover Roman Catholic organisation" working in Oxford. It exposes this organisation's delightful attempt to "exert international influence by infiltrating its members into responsible positions in the Government, and the professions". The cream of the joke is, however, the naive way with which the writer of the article, Gerald Kemmet, appears blissfully to be unaware that the Roman Church has *always* done its best to "infiltrate" everywhere and anywhere. With its agents in "key positions", particularly on national newspapers and in Government posts, the Church can advance.

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This particular organisation operates in 46 countries, is directed from Rome, and is called "Opus Dei"—that is, "God's business". And a Dr. Masia recently arrived in Oxford to form the new "cell". Unfortunately, Oxford did not take kindly to his activities, and he was not allowed to begin any. Needless to add, some of the Roman Catholics in Oxford claim that they are glad Dr. Masia did not succeed in establishing himself. We wonder what they would have said if the "cell" had become firmly established?

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Already "heretic" Jews are appearing in and out of Israel, one of them being a Frenchman called Thibout who helped in running a "kibbutz" (collective farm) in Israel, and is now trying to introduce a similar one with a number of followers near Nimes in France. But these all deny that they are Jews or even Jewish sympathisers though they "accept some and reject other aspects of Judaism". They accept the separation of men and women in services in a synagogue, but, says one of the priests, they occupy "a no man's land between Christianity and Judaism". But is it not a fact that almost all religions have to contend with "heretics"?

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Our heart really bleeds for a correspondent to the *Daily Mail* (16/2/61) who complains bitterly that just because he committed the mortal sin of marrying a lady who was the innocent party in a divorce, the Church won't let him take Holy Communion. Moreover, though it employs him as a church organist, it denies him the Sacraments. In fact, it regards him as a "social outcast".

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Some of us in the face of this typical Christian treatment might well think that the gentleman and his wife ought to ponder on the whole problem of Christianity. Supposing a little investigation introduced them to the intellectual freedom of Freethought, to the way that Freethought proves that Christianity is not *true*—what then? After all, quite a lot of people get on perfectly well without Holy Communion, or the Sacraments, or even without a white wedding. Though it may be blasphemy to say so, we can even dispense with "our Lord", his Father, and their attendant Devils and Angels. We simply don't want these primitive Oriental beliefs.

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The new English version of the Bible which is due for publication on March 14th, will have, we are assured, a guaranteed sale of 1,000,000 copies. We do not doubt it—but surely the question should be, will the lucky possessors *read* it? Do Bible buyers of any edition read it now? We are quite sure that a few chapters may be read—the Virgin Birth of Jesus, the story of the Deluge, or even that of Joseph and his brethren; but who weighs

through the boring pages of Leviticus or Jeremiah or most of Paul's epistles? Who cares tuppence these days about the terrible things God's Chosen People will suffer unless they keep *all* the Commandments of God?

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However, Mr. Macmillan assures us he will still prefer the now out-of-date Authorised version for its simplicity and beautiful English and he will continue to prefer it to any new version. Of course; as far as *truth* is concerned, it's still a case of Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

"Dignity and Impudence"

MRS. MARTINO (THE FREETHINKER, 27/1/61) considers that my little book *Freedom's Foe, the Vatican* should have, in your shop-window, a more dignified companion than *The Culture of the Abdomen* (misnamed by her, *The Cultivation of the Abdomen*). In contrast, I am flattered that it should be placed alongside such a beneficial volume as Mr. F. A. Hornibrook's, which has gone through 18 editions and has led thousands of people to happiness and to the sane way of living. It is among the most valuable health books of this century. However, I take this opportunity of disillusioning Mrs. Martino about the two Italian pontiffs for whom she professes "great regard".

Pius XII (of "acknowledged saintliness", as Mrs. Martino puts it), was, in reality, one of the most sinister of the many ignoble politicians who have disgraced our 20th century.

Ordained in 1899, he spent a mere two years on parish work and then transferred to the political side of the Vatican, becoming the Papal Secretary of State in 1930 and "His Holiness" in 1939. He exhibited his pro-Axis tendencies by showering honours upon such contemptible creatures as Franco, Petain and Laval; also upon the traitors Fr. Tiso, S.J., of Czechoslovakia and the regicide, Pavelic, and Stepinac (the Primate of Yugo Slavia) who deserted to the Axis when his country was invaded in 1941.

I publicly ask Mrs. Martino a question: Does she consider that these awards by Pius XII can be related to "saintliness"?

As regards her "homely" Pope John, his "act" differs from the display of spurious piety of Pius, who used his ascetic appearance for producing his desired effects. The present Pontiff "cashes in" on his corpulence. With the aid of skilful photography, he contrives to present to the world a benevolent exterior of geniality. He has managed to fool not only thousands of Mrs. Martinos, but also the Primate of All England. However—and this is important—beneath his benign exterior he is a crafty master of intrigue. His first public statement stirred up hatred against Russia; he does not check the religious intolerances now existing in Spain and Colombia; while in Sicily hundreds of thousands live in degradation and suffer from lack of food. "His Homeliness" does not seem to suffer in this respect!

ADRIAN PIGOTT.

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
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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, March 7th, 7.15 p.m.: MRS. JUDITH HENDERSON, "White Britons and Coloured Immigrants".

Leicester Secular Society (75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, March 5th, 6.30 p.m.: 80TH ANNIVERSARY; Speaker F. J. CORINA (Bradford); Musical Items.

Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (The Carpenters' Arms, Scymour Place, W.1), Sunday, March 5th, 7.15 p.m.: F. H. AMPHLETT

MICKLEWRIGHT, M.A., "Education or Indoctrination?"

Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society (Co-operative Education Centre, Broad Street), Sunday, March 5th, 2.30 p.m.: FRED JAMES, "The Path for Humanity".

Nottingham Mechanics Institution (Reference Library), Wednesday, March 8th, 7.15 p.m.: DEBATE, "That One Can Be Moral Without Religion". For: T. M. MOSLEY (N.S.S.); Against:

REV. R. P. C. HANSON (University of Nottingham).

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1), Sunday, March 5th, 11 a.m.: E. ROYSTON PIKE, J.P., "The Mind of Eden Phillpotts".

Swanwick Grammar School, Derbyshire, Tuesday, March 7th, 4.15 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY, "Atheism and Agnosticism".

Notes and News

THIS SATURDAY, in the Pavours Arms, Page Street, Westminster, the National Secular Society honours the 80th birthday of one of its best known and best loved members and certainly our most provocative writer, Herbert Cutner. The occasion is, of course, the 55th Annual Dinner of the Society, and the President and Vice-President, Mr. F. A. Ridley and Mr. L. Ebury, will move and second the toast to Mr. Cutner, who will respond. Then the Secretary, Mr. Colin McCall, will toast "Our overseas Branches and Members", and the response will be by Indian member Mr. G. N. Deodhekar. The Dinner will be followed by dancing, and Mr. W. Griffiths will be M.C. Tickets are 21s.

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THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY, March 11th, is the date of the National Secular Society's picket of the offices of the British Transport Commission, 222 Marylebone Road, London, N.W.1, in protest against the Commission's banning of posters advertising the Family Planning Association. Handbills, leaflets ("The Catholic Church v. The

Planned Family") and petition forms may be obtained from 103 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1, and the petitions should be returned to that address no later than Wednesday, March 8th.

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THE JANUARY ISSUE OF *Secular Subjects*, journal of the Rationalist Society of St. Louis, reported a recent speech by Paul Blanshard, Special Counsel to Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, in which he called for "watchful co-operation" with President Kennedy, "so long as he fulfils his magnificent pledges to support the absolute separation of Church and State". The primary issue, said Mr. Blanshard, is not the religion of the man in the White House, but whether the separation of Church and State will continue to be the prevalent policy on Capitol Hill, in State capitals and in every hamlet in America.

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ON FEBRUARY 20th, President Kennedy sent a special message on education to Congress, outlining his programme of assistance to public (state), elementary and secondary schools, grants to universities and provisions for many new scholarships. And in keeping with his election pledges and his voting as a Senator, he excluded all aid to parochial schools. In accordance with the clear prohibition of the Constitution, went the message, "no elementary or secondary school funds are allocated for constructing Church schools or paying Church school teachers' salaries; and thus non-public school children are rightfully not counted in determining the funds each state will receive for its public schools". (*The Guardian*, 21/2/61).

★

A COUPLE OF LETTERS in *Tit-Bits* (11/2/61) must surely serve to dispel all doubt about immortality from even the most sceptical mind. Not only for human beings but for animals too. "Your reader, Mr. Pittuck, will most certainly see his old pal again", wrote Miss Decima Leach of Lancing, whose dead dog returned after a few weeks and pushed open the lounge door as of old. Miss Leach and her mother, "who loved him", were "privileged" to see Raff; two friends merely heard him. Mrs. M. McMullen of Uckfield (is there something especially psychic about Sussex?) was even more authoritative than Miss Leach. Indeed there was something almost pontifical about her letter. "As a member of the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain", she wrote, "I would like to say that every knowledgeable spiritualist knows that pet animals survive death".

★

"IN THE PAST TWO DECADES little has developed to lessen the alienation of the workers from the Church in most of the provinces of Spain—an alienation that was accentuated by the cruelties of the Spanish Civil War." This was the frank admission of the American liberal Catholic paper, *Commonweal* (20/1/61). Lack of church attendance, it continued, "serves as a rough index of the vast disaffection of the Spanish masses from what should be their cherished heritage". But now that the Franco regime nears its end, the Church is forced to look beyond and is even making a few token protests that workers do not enjoy "authentic" representation.

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AMONG FREETHINKER articles recently reprinted in the USA are, "The Tragedy of Spain" by G. Coca (December 9th, 1960) in the aforementioned *Secular Subjects* (January, 1961) and "Freethought and the Schools in Berlin" by Walter Steinhardt (November 25th, 1960) in *Progressive World* (February, 1961).

On Controversial Questions — 7

By H. CUTNER

WHEN THE "Flying Saucers" craze was at its height a few years ago, the inevitable book appeared which "proved"—as its titled indicated—*Flying Saucers Have Landed* by Desmond Leslie and George Adamski. It had, too, a number of illustrations of actual Flying Saucers which showed them in action, as well as a realistic drawing by a lady of the visiting spaceman whom she reputedly saw through binoculars. The book sold in thousands, Mr. Leslie gave a number of lectures as did Mr. Adamski. The facts and visual proofs were so strong that only a fool could deny them. Or that is what the authors thought.

Yet an obstinate public, who swallow without a qualm the story of Elijah and his fiery chariot flying to Heaven, to say nothing of the Ascension of Jesus into space, and the Assumption of Mary to join Jesus and God Almighty—that is, if they are not the same—also in Heaven, appear more and more to doubt both Mr. Leslie and Mr. Adamski. Or perhaps it is because Flying Saucers themselves are no longer curious about this old earth of ours, and are exploring Pluto or the Rings of Saturn.

Mr. Leslie's part in the book is to detail his own explorations into the Occult of which at first he appeared to know very little. And I must admit that I found his recital very interesting if only to see how much or how little he knew. Naturally, he has swallowed Theosophy in all its details, particularly almost everything coming from that land of secret lore, India. Let me give two examples. Mr. Leslie tells us Hindu writers might be poetical but "there is nothing allegorical or symbolical about the ancient vimanas. The writers make a strict distinction between travel on land and travel in the air, viz: 'Cukra proceeded to Militha on foot, though he was able to fly through the skies of the whole earth and over the sea'. And where does Mr. Leslie find this? In a book by P. Chandra entitled *Samsaptakabhadha*. We know now that 'Cukra was able to fly!

The other example is the *authority* for this statement: "Venus is the 'Home of the Gods'. From Venus in the year BC 18617841 came the first vehicle out of space to alight on our planet. I suppose I had better repeat that date. It is BC eighteen million, six hundred and seventeen thousand, eight hundred and forty-one, to be precise". Nothing could make the number more precise than that odd "one". And what is the authority for this precise statement? "According to the Brahmin tables" says Mr. Leslie. I am sure that, like the New Testament, the "tables" are Gospel truth.

We are also told that *precisely* on June 24th, 1947, somebody called Kenneth Arnold saw "a fleet of ten shining circular disks whizzing along at a thousand miles per hour, darting in and out of peaks around Mount Rainier, state of Washington", a story which certainly helped to create interest in Flying Saucers; just as, when a number of Spanish children saw the sun dancing about the sky one day, all the Catholics in the world at once believed the "visions" the children saw of Mary at Fatima. Both stories have exactly the same veracity.

Space however does not permit me to go into the "occult" testimony of the "ancient wisdom" Mr. Leslie has gathered—mostly from books like Mme. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. This lady, who made such a violent impression on Mrs. Besant, had the great gift of explaining the "occult" in such dazzling terms that few people have the least idea of what she was talking about; and Mr.

Leslie naturally finds such a guide invaluable in proving that Venus and Mars have sent us many visitors. As just one more example how it is impossible to be deceived, take the following:

The one wheel turns. One turn alone is made and every sphere, and suns of all degrees, follow its course. The night of time is lost in it and aeons measure less than seconds in the little day of man. Then million aeons pass and twice ten million Brahmic Cycles (811,400,000,000,000 years equals one Brahmic Cycle, or Great Aeon), and yet one hour of cosmic time is not completed. Within the Wheel forming that Wheel are the lesser wheels from the first to the tenth dimension. These in their cycle turn hold in their spheres of force other and lesser wheels (planets, etc.). Yet many suns compose the cosmic ones.

And now we know.

However let us now turn to Mr. George Adamski introduced to us as an astronomer as well as a philosopher with a photo showing him with a 6-inch telescope on Mr. Palomar, California. He has a 15-inch one also, and between these and his "naked eyes", he has seen not only "a gigantic space craft hovering high above" Mt. Palomar (in 1946), but later he saw "a bright light object" and "then another"—in fact, he saw 184 similar objects in the sky. Of course, these didn't land then, but Mr. Adamski managed to get photos of Flying Saucers quite easily, some of which are reproduced in the book. He even got a "cigar shaped space craft" releasing a number of Flying Saucers. If photos prove anything, then believers in Flying Saucers have enough proof for their beliefs to satisfy the most confirmed sceptic.

But Mr. Adamski overwhelms us with "proof". At last, on November 20th, 1952, he managed not only to see a spaceman but to have a long conversation with him. We now know what "a human being from another world" looks like, how he is dressed, and we are even told he has long hair. Also the way in which "the beauty of his form surpassed anything I had ever seen"—which may or may not amount to much anyway.

Mr. Adamski spoke to him in English, but it was a language the space man did not immediately understand; so Mr. Adamski made a circle with his finger and pointed to the sky thus indicating the Sun, and then did some more circling the second time hitting the target so perfectly that the space-man knew Venus was meant; and a third time which the space man at once recognised as the Earth. Of course when Mr. Adamski said "Venus", the space man immediately knew what planet he meant—the planet he came from, obviously. After that, our Venusian hadn't the slightest difficulty in carrying on a long conversation, with cosmic rays, radio active clouds, atom bombs, mental telepathy, magnetism, and similar subjects, all being thoroughly understood and discussed. The speculations of a Jules Verne or H. G. Wells are infantile in comparison.

Naturally, there were witnesses of this marvellous interview especially the lady who made a vivid sketch of the spaceman through binoculars. So it is no wonder that Mr. Leslie, and quite possibly thousands of people in America at least, believe every word Mr. Adamski has written. My own "scepticism" need not be stressed too much. I have read a good deal of space fiction, and very little of it comes up to Mr. Adamski's disclosures as equally imaginative by a long way.

In the meantime, while the Flying Saucer craze has died down, the great success by Russia and the USA in sending

up rocket missiles with immense speeds has made us see the vastness of the Universe more than ever. And believers in the "creation" of the world as described in Genesis should ponder on what Prof. Lovell calls "the most fantastic discovery in space" (*Daily Mail*, 13/12/60)—"a faint and tiny dot of light in the middle of a scattering of stars", located by the radio telescope at Cambridge and at Jodrell Bank. It is the light from something 6,000,000,000 light years away, and it has taken that time to reach us. "You are looking back" said the Professor, "6,000,000,000 light years into the past". And he is certain that this and similar discoveries in the near future will

at last tell us something which all astronomers want to know—which is the theory which best explains the origin of the Universe?

And this is so vast a subject that one must study it in our scientific journals more than in such an article as this. But if Professor Lovell is right, where exactly does God Almighty come in? If there was no "creation" as described in Genesis, no Fall of Man due to a Hebrew-speaking serpent—how could there be a Fall of Man with Jesus, the Son of God, as the "Saviour"? In other words, Man's excursions into the mysteries of space have annihilated the pretensions of Christianity.

From Jewish Messianism to the Christian Church

By PROSPER ALFARIC

(Translated by J. V. DUHIG)

THE FOLLOWING IS A TRANSLATION of Chapter XI, the final chapter of the late Professor Prosper Alfaric's *Origines Sociales du Christianisme*, the third of three volumes which purport to complete Ernest Renan's work on the subject. Professor Alfaric was formerly a Catholic priest but, like Renan, Loisy and Turmel, he found the historical, as well as other, evidence fatal to further adhesion to the religion in which he was born. At the end of his life he was Professor of the History of Religions at Strasbourg, a post in which he acquired great distinction and a reputation for profound scholarship. The work as a whole is so cogent that a belief in a historic Jesus is quite impossible. Much of the evidence is summarised in the last chapter of the work now translated into English for the first time. His disbelief in a historic Jesus earned him major excommunication.

Mlle. Jacqueline Marchand, who edited the work after Professor Alfaric's death, writes to me as follows:—

"I would very much like you to indicate to your readers—of whom some would perhaps like to read the whole work in French—that Prosper Alfaric died before being able to put the finishing touches to his book and that certain imperfections of the work, certain passages which 'date', are due to his untimely death."

J.V.D.

CHRISTIANITY comes in a direct line from Judaism; its name says so. Everybody knows that the word Christ which comes from the Greek Christos is simply the translation of the Hebrew Messiah which means, "anointed". It transmits an idea fundamentally Jewish. The kings of Judah and Israel were consecrated with a holy oil which was supposed to communicate to them the spirit of Jahveh. When the Kingdom of Jerusalem, after that of Samaria, had fallen, the pious Jews hoped and prayed with growing ardour, for the rise of an ideal chief who would restore the ancient rule and govern the Chosen People with equal power and wisdom.

In the beginning of our era, this expectation was at its height and it attracted more and more converts outside the Jewish world, not only in Palestine, but in Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, Greece and even Rome. Wherever there were synagogues there were compact groups of the circumcised and uncircumcised awaiting the impending advent of the heralded Saviour. In this context, they interpreted a large number of supposedly prophetic texts from which they constructed the figure of the expected Messiah. All the people were Christians, as it were, by anticipation. It was amongst them the Church was

formed; it was from them that it emerged.

How did the transition occur from these circles of Jews or "God-fearers", who thought the Christ was soon to appear, to the communities indoctrinated by Paul, who considered he had already come? Therein lies the problem of the origin of Christianity.

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To tell the truth, in the view of believers, this problem does not exist. For them Jesus has, by his words and acts, proved that he really was the expected Messiah. Such is already the thesis of the Gospels; it was to establish this that they were written. To all of them might be applied what we read towards the end of the fourth: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name" (John, 20, 31). But a careful perusal of their contents suffices to show how fragile is the proof. Among the numerous statements and speeches which pretend to validate the Messiahship of Jesus, there is not one which can be held to be historical. All have a character fundamentally mythical. If they are closely scrutinised, one quickly perceives that they do not arise out of memories of things lived or from controlled testimony, but from very various texts borrowed from the Jewish Bible and considered as adumbrations of the Christ. They present as already realised what was only predicted, because their authors do not doubt that each prediction must have been verified. Hence the emphasis on certain scenes and the incoherence manifest in many of them. Onto the ground of facts the evangelists transposed the visions of the prophets, their minds filled with similar imagery but, equally scrappy and disjointed. Their apparent precision fails to fill the startling gaps, and their chronology is as inconsistent as their geography. An air of unreality covers all.

If the theologians persist in denying this, the historians, unclouded by religious prejudices, are finding themselves more and more in agreement in affirming it. Some conclude that the Christ is pure myth. Others persist in the judgment that he must have existed despite the obscurity surrounding his life. But the latter are not so far from the former as they might believe or actually think themselves. After all it matters little that an unknown Jew, at an uncertain period, was invested with the Messianic mask and provided with a legend appropriate to a fictitious role. For a historian, all that counts is that his individuality should emerge from this legend and be visible under the mask. The most subtle researches have been in vain in determined efforts to grasp it. When we believe it is

caught, it vanishes. It is like a mirage which when approached is immediately dissipated.

We must then decide to explore the origins of Christianity without the intervention of the person of the Christ. What then remains? The idea of the Christ itself arose from the ancient Jews. We find it more actual and living than ever through the most ancient ecclesiastical texts. It is sufficient to enable us to understand their primitive origin. *(To be continued)*

Frauds and Forgeries

THE CURRENT EXHIBITION at the British Museum devoted to frauds and forgeries has particular interest for secularists. Among the items on view are some that have been made with the express purpose of enhancing the stature or prestige of the Roman Church and also to fill some of the gaps in the historical record of Christianity, in particular to the person of its alleged founder. In these cases though, it is not the originals that are on show, but early copies of the documents. Whether or not the writers, in the case of manuscripts or authors in the case of printed material, were aware that they were dealing with tainted material is hard to say. In at least one instance the author, having noticed a major error, has headed his material in a way which suggests that he held it suspect.

Material on view includes a letter from one L. Lentulus, Roman Governor of Jerusalem, relating to Jesus. At the time this document is supposed to have been written there was no such person as a Governor of Jerusalem, Roman or otherwise. There is also the notorious letter regarding Jesus supposed to be sent by Pontius Pilate to Rome. Apart from being written in a style peculiar to Byzantium, this document is also addressed to the wrong people. We can see copies of the Donation of Constantine and the forged Decretals, false documents so dear to the hearts of the early Roman Church. These should remind us of how much of the Church's power was founded on fraud. In recent months I have seen the Pilate and Lentulus letters referred to in Christian journals and letters to the press as evidence for the historicity of Jesus. Will Christians never learn?

A little more up to date is some material drawn from copies of a Christian Science journal published some years ago. This relates to some "Sayings of Jesus" contained in a manuscript in the British Museum that supported some of Mrs. Eddy's (the founder of Christian Science) doctrines. During and shortly after the last war, the Museum authorities received a number of queries regarding this MS and have flatly denied its existence. On the other hand they have pointed out that the "Sayings" are similar to those in a manuscript that they do possess and that this was only published after the article in the Christian Science paper had appeared. The Museum authorities suggest that someone had access to the notes of the scholar working on the manuscript, but the Christian Science authorities deny having any hand in this matter. The exhibition is well worth a visit, and the material displayed is supported by well written notes giving all relevant details.

R. W. MORRELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

GOOD HEALTH AND INOCULATIONS

One curious fact about vaccination and inoculation is that the societies engaged in cancer research and the Ministry of Health will not countenance any inquiries to discover whether the cancer increase and poliomyelitis have any relation to inoculations of various kinds from vaccinations downwards.

Yet it would seem logical that injecting a poison into a presumably healthy body would be bound in the long run to have some deleterious effects on that body. It seems to be admitted by the medical profession that none of these sera are harmless in themselves, which would tend to support the current idea that some ill-health is created by their use. C. H. NORMAN.

H. G. WELLS SOCIETY

An H. G. Wells Society has recently been founded, composed of admirers of this distinguished writer and persons interested in his life and works, who are anxious to encourage a wider interest in his writings and ideas. I would be most grateful if any of your readers who may be interested in joining such a society would kindly write to the undersigned, from whom fuller details can be obtained. J. R. HAMMOND,

(39 Rugby Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham).

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, February 15th, 1961. Present: Messrs. F. A. Ridley (Chair), Arthur, Barker, Cleaver, Corstorphine, Ebury, Hornibrook, Johnson, McIlroy, Mills, Mrs. Ebury, Mrs. Trask, Mrs. Venton, the Treasurer (Mr. Griffiths) and the Secretary. A new branch of the Society, the Manchester College of Science and Technology Branch, was officially approved, and new members were also admitted into Marble Arch, North London and Sussex Branches which, with 6 Individual Members, made 20 in all. Kingston Branch financial statement was presented, and £5 donations to both the Building and Benevolent Funds were gratefully received from the Branch. Mr. Ebury handed over the usual £5 from North London Branch to the Building Fund. Requests for speakers from Birmingham Branch and Romford and District Humanist Group were dealt with. Good reports were received of Mr. Ridley's debate at Queen's University, Belfast, and Mr. Tribe's lecture at the University of North Staffordshire. World Union of Freethinkers' Conference (September) and N.S.S. Annual Dinner (March 4th) items were agreed. Mr. McIlroy reported progress and plans for the British Transport Commission protest. A discussion ensued on future propaganda and at Mr. Ebury's request, it was decided to make such discussions a regular feature of Executive meetings. The next meeting was fixed for Wednesday, March 15th, 1961.

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