

The Freethinker

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ON AUGUST 11TH, 1890, John Henry Newman died at the advanced age of eighty nine. Prior to 1845 he had been the leading intellectual in the Church of England, since which date he had been a Roman Catholic and since 1879, a Cardinal. As a famous preacher, a master of English prose, a skilful, if not too scrupulous controversialist, and as a subtle, if not particularly erudite religious thinker, Newman had built up a reputation probably unequalled by any other English churchman of his day. Nor did his influence by any means cease at his death for it is now becoming increasingly evident that Newman's posthumous influence, in the first instance on the Roman Catholic Church and more indirectly on Modernist Christianity in general, has been quite outstanding. In particular, Newman's famous theory in *The Development of Christian Doctrine*, is the intellectual basis of modern Roman Catholic theology as well as the starting point of the widely influential movement usually described as "Modernism" in both the Catholic and Protestant Churches. One can perhaps describe Cardinal Newman as the last great name in the history of Christianity and in the evolution of Christian theology.

John Henry Newman 1801-1890

Newman's long life covered nearly the whole of the 19th century, but no one was a less characteristic Victorian than he, for the major contemporary movements most characteristic of Victorian life were entirely alien to him. In the age of unprecedented scientific and technological progress that stemmed from the Industrial Revolution, Newman remained apparently entirely indifferent to the scientific controversies that so agitated the Christian Churches in his lifetime. Though he spent his last years in industrial Birmingham, the whole technical revolution of his day passed him by and has left absolutely no trace in his voluminous writings. Nor did he ever employ his remarkable controversial skill in scientific controversy; the current storm over evolution seems to have missed him completely. As far as I can remember, he never referred to Darwin or Huxley, but reserved his polemical skill for the unfortunate Charles Kingsley whom he trounced (in the famous *Apologia*) with remarkable literary skill and a complete lack of what is rather peculiarly described as "Christian charity". Yet Newman must have been acutely aware of the growing contemporary menace represented by Rationalism, since after all, one of his brothers, Francis Newman (author of the sceptical *Phases of Faith*) was a leading Rationalist and a colleague of that militant Agnostic, T. H. Huxley, at that then anti-clerical stronghold, London University, and his brother Charles, Robert Newman, was an advanced Atheist and a contributor to the Freethinking press of his day. Yet the Cardinal, though the best-known Christian thinker in the English-speaking world, always remained curiously and completely aloof from the scientific controversies that were so vitally affecting the very foundations of traditional

Christian belief. One might have thought that this most skilful of theological disputants would have found in the ranks of contemporary Rationalism, foemen more worthy of his steel than the unfortunate Kingsley. Newman versus Huxley or Bradlaugh; that would indeed have represented an epic intellectual battle! Nor was Newman interested at all in Victorian politics, unlike his antagonist, the Anglican Christian Socialist, Kingsley, or his own co-religionist and fellow Cardinal, Manning, one of the pioneers of Christian (Catholic) Democracy within the Church of Rome. Conversely, Newman's whole life seems to have been spent in academic and ecclesiastical circles.

— VIEWS and OPINIONS —

Cardinal Newman and Modern Christianity

By F. A. RIDLEY

The Development of Christian Doctrine

It was in the technical domain of Christian theology that Newman's interests lay, and here also is to be found his permanent influence throughout the entire range of modern Christian religious thought. This lasting influence has been exercised mainly via the agency of his greatest (though not his best-known) book, *The Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845), written when Newman was still an Anglican. For here, it is hardly too much to say, that Newman transformed the whole character of Christian doctrine by his famous doctrine of "Development". Prior to Newman's *magnum opus*, the view of all orthodox Christian Churches (Catholic and Protestant alike), had been that, to be accepted as an authentic Christian dogma, a belief—any belief—had to have been held universally and since the earliest times: "always, everywhere, and by all"—so ran the classic theological formula (originally enunciated by a 5th century Gallic monk, Vincent of Lerins) accepted by all orthodox Churches as the unerring criterion of Christian truth. If, for example, it could be proved that Transubstantiation and Papal Infallibility had not been so accepted since the earliest Christian generations, they automatically failed to pass the test. Newman however, substituted an entirely new test of "Development" as expounded in his master-work. If a dogma can be shown to have existed in the earliest Christian times, even if not held universally or by everyone, it was permissible for the Church to "develop" it into a dogma at some later period. This was a point of vital urgency, in particular for the Church of Rome, many of whose current dogmas (e.g. Transubstantiation, the Cult of the Virgin, Papal Infallibility, etc.) had certainly—as their Protestant critics were never tired of pointing out—not been accepted "everywhere, always and by all" as the old criterion demanded. In fact Newman's novel theory of "Development" suited the Roman Catholic Church to perfection and has now become its theological sheet-anchor. All three fundamental dogmas proclaimed since the initial appearance of Newman's *Development*, viz. the Immaculate Conception (1854), Papal Infallibility (1870) and the Assumption of the Virgin (1951), would all have failed to qualify under the old pre-Newman rule, since none of them had been universally accepted in all earlier ages.

No doubt Rome will "develop" many more such dogmas in the future. Cardinal Newman may, in fact, be described as the intellectual father of modern Roman Catholic theology, and the Pope would only show elementary gratitude if he "developed" Newman into a saint!

The influence of the great Cardinal upon modern religious thought has not been confined to his own Church. In Protestant circles, too, the theory of "Development" has been extensively employed, particularly in relation to Biblical criticism, sometimes with rather strange results. For Newman, if he can be accurately styled as the father of modern Catholicism, may equally be described as the step-father of Modernism both Catholic and Protestant. He himself was no Modernist; he lived and died an orthodox Catholic. But after his death, many of his theological followers pushed his "Development" theory much further than he had: e.g. Alfred Loisy and other Catholic

Modernists, ended up by finally stating that the whole Christian religion was a later "development" unforeseen by the historical Christ and his immediate followers. Newman certainly would not have endorsed this. Nor did the Vatican, which promptly threw the Modernists out of the Church! But, though some of Newman's followers eventually "developed" out of Christianity, there can be no doubt of his immense influence on the Church of Rome in the first place and upon Christianity in general. Apart from his still considerable purely literary reputation as a master of English prose, John Henry Newman must always remain an object of interest, in particular perhaps to Free-thinking critics, as perhaps the last original thinker to be produced by the Christian Church. One may add that to judge from current ecclesiastical pronouncements, the appearance of future Newmans at present seems somewhat unlikely.

The Mayor of Ucria

By D. JOSEPH

AMONG ROMAN CATHOLICS, the legend is sedulously cultivated that priests seldom secede, and that those who do are invariably actuated by such low motives as love of drink, or women, or some similar defect in moral fibre, the standard clerical gibe being that the cause of the "downfall" is either Punch or Judy! The idea that some might be influenced by intellectual disillusionment or moral disgust with the system is just too grotesque to consider. The faithful are reassured by their priests that the seceder never achieves happiness; that if he marries, his marriage inevitably breaks up (his bad conscience driving him to wife-beating); that if he joins the Protestants, they, despising the apostate in their hearts, cynically exploit him in furthering their satanic anti-Catholicism, and abandon him as useless when his moral degeneration is complete, shaking their heads and muttering that when the Church of Rome weeds her garden, she should not throw her weeds over *their* garden wall. Finally, the apostate priest meets his condign end, usually in a doss-house, screaming for that Absolution which he had derided and rejected, but of which now, in his awful final hour, he is deprived through the workings of that ever-loving and merciful, but also (and we must never forget it) infinitely just Providence.

Such fantasies may satisfy those of the faithful who worry about such things. At the Vatican, they know better. They are aware that in the US in spite of the increase in wealth and power, the number of secessions by priests is enormous. Emmett McLoughlin estimates in his *People's Padre*, that one in three of those ordained to the priesthood eventually abandons his orders, a fact confirmed by Dr. Hugh Farrel, an ex-priest turned Evangelical, who speaking in Dublin some time ago, said that about 1,000 of America's 54,000 priests seceded every year. He added that most of them lost all religious belief. The number of secessions in France and Italy in the present century, and especially since 1945 has caused a serious problem to the Vatican.

True to her nature as a parasite who tries to ensure her own survival and interest whatever the cost in terms of human sanity and happiness, the Church, far from leaving the punishment of these apostates to "Gawd and their own consciences", pursues them with her characteristic venom. According to the Italian Jesuit *Civiltà Cattolica* (March, 1950), "Apostate and censured priests are garbage". In England and the US, the economic hounding of the ex-priests must be, of necessity by backstairs

intrigue, examples of which are given in *People's Padre* and McLoughlin's other work, *American Culture and Catholic Schools*. But in Catholic countries, where pretense is unnecessary, the pressure is naked and brutal. In the notorious Lateran Treaty of 1929, concluded between Mussolini ("the man sent by God") on one side and on the other Pius XI and Cardinal Pacelli (later the "beloved Pope of Peace"), in addition to ensuring exclusive rights over religious education in Italy and the allotment of separate prisons for priestly convicts, the Holy See insisted in Article 5, which is worth citing in full:

No priest under censure or apostate can be appointed or kept in a teaching post, in an office or an employment in which they are in immediate contact with the public. The result was to ensure the dismissal of all ex-priests in the teaching profession, and from the civil service.

An interesting case has been reported recently from Italy (*Newsweek*, 31/7/61) which promises to produce "the most explosive church-state case in years".

The centre of the storm is Sr. Francesco Paulo Niosi, who left the priesthood about four years ago, and returned to his native village of Ucria, in Sicily. After six months, he married, taught for some time and then entered politics. Last December, he was elected as the town's Socialist mayor. In February he received a letter from the Regional Assessor, who cited Article 5, and denied his legal right to hold elected office. A hastily-convened meeting of the left-wing town council decided to fight, and the issue has been referred to Italy's Constitutional Court.

This will be the first examination of the Concordat by the Constitutional Court, and says *Newsweek*, it "could have far-reaching consequences for Italy's 7,000 apostate priests, many of whom are wandering around Italy unemployed". The decision can hardly be expected for several months.

Sr. Niosi, obviously a man of courage, is no fire-brand. He did not pick the fight, but he is determined to see it through. His main crime in the eyes of the Vatican is that, on leaving the priesthood, he did not seek anonymity in some large city, but instead stood his ground, married and lived a useful life. The message will not be lost on the priests of Italy.

— NEXT WEEK —

CRIME, RELIGION AND SOCIETY

By F. A. RIDLEY

The Old Testament and Archaeology

By H. CUTNER

IT HAPPENS THAT I AM almost a complete sceptic of Old Testament history, that is, I believe that, except for a few bits of history connected with the kings of Israel and Judah, almost everything else in it was "made up" to give the Jews living in Palestine a "history" somewhat in the manner of Egypt and Assyria. By this I do not wish to infer that the narratives were *invented*. Many of the events occurring in ancient records were written down by scribes or illustrated on bas reliefs, and were thus perpetuated. What the Jewish scribes did was—in my opinion, of course—"adapt" some of the stories of other nations to themselves and thus they could show that they also had a glorious past. And so successful were they, that the Old Testament part of the Bible has had no stouter defenders than Christians, and still has, for they are at work in giving us a new translation which will make its "truth" still more obvious.

In *Archaeology and the Old Testament* by James B. Pritchard (1958) will be found some of the very latest results of digging in Palestine to substantiate Bible truths. No better writer could be chosen for he is a Professor in Old Testament Literature in California, the author of several books on the Old Testament, and an archaeologist himself. I could not help wondering how much digging in Palestine would bring us proof, not of course of such Old Testament heroes as Noah or Moses, but of David and Solomon and, of course, the later prophets. I was also wondering what archaeology would find in Palestine of the Hebrew language which all Jews and Christians—as well as many Humanists—actually believe was once spoken by Israelites. As some readers may remember, I have often said in these columns that it was a "made up" language like, let us say, Esperanto, but with the difference that many of its words and numbers enshrine some occult significance. Mr. Pritchard's book gives no answer to these problems. For him, the Old Testament is just straightforward narrative, mostly quite true but with some parallels to the Creation and Flood stories in the "histories" of other nations from whom the "sacred" Jewish scribes no doubt borrowed a little.

He rather reluctantly allows that Palestine has not given us many answers to the events described in the Bible, and also admits that "one of the surprises of archaeological discovery has been that the peripheral lands of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Syria, and Anatolia have added to biblical knowledge". This is just what some of us expected—without any surprise. It was these countries which provided the Jews with their "history".

The only example of unearthing something in the Hebrew language given by Professor Pritchard is that,

On March 13th, 1935, there was cabled from Palestine a news report announcing the remarkable discovery by J. L. Starkey at Tell ed-Duweir of a dozen letters written in good biblical Hebrew. They were written with iron-carbon ink on potsherds and were dated from the time of the prophet Jeremiah.

This is all the more intriguing because "no such correspondence", says Professor Pritchard, "had ever turned up before in scores of excavations in Palestine". Moreover,

with the exception of a Hebrew inscription cut into the wall of the Siloam tunnel and some scattered ostraca, mostly containing proper names, there was in existence no ancient Hebrew outside of the Bible, and the Bible was known only from manuscripts written hundreds of years after the events described . . . the file of correspondence came from an exceed-

ingly important and interesting period in the history of the kingdom of Judah, the conquest of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, which resulted in the exile.

The history of these Lachish Letters (as they are called) has formed the subject of a number of books and until I have read a little more than given by Professor Pritchard, I must suspend any judgment. He gives a facsimile of a potsherd with the Hebrew written on it certainly unlike modern Hebrew, biblical or not. What is the proof that they were written in the time of Jeremiah—about 600 AD?

Why these discoveries of Hebrew about this date should be carefully examined—and questioned if necessary—can be seen when we read *modern* articles on the Moabite Stone (as it is called). The date given for the inscription is about the year 900 BC, and of course it is always quoted as proving the substantial accuracy of the historical narratives in the Old Testament.

The Moabite Stone was discovered by the Rev. F. Klein in 1868 and, like the Siloam inscription, is written in Phoenician characters, the language being Hebrew. Its authenticity was vigorously questioned by Samuel Sharpe last century who claimed that it was a forgery of the second century BC; and also by a learned Jew, Dr. A. Loewy, who published his monograph, *A Critical Examination of the so-called Moabite Inscription* in 1903. Loewy analyses each sentence and insists that "the forger . . . overlooked the grammatical requirements of the Hebrew idiom"; and he asks, "Were there not at all times skilful artificers who wilfully or blindly lent themselves as tools for the fabrication of untrustworthy records?"

The Encyclopedia Biblica has a long and, more or less, confused article dealing with it in detail, and it is quite amusing to find that it admits how at least one authority put into his "facsimile", letters "which are not really to be seen on the stone or on the squeeze". But the literature on this Mesha Inscription is far too big to discuss in a short article. As far as I have read some of the learned theses dealing with it, I am bound to agree with Dr. Loewy; and I refer to the Moabite Stone only to show how missionaries and pious archaeologists will move heaven and earth to prove that the Old Testament is a record of genuine history.

Naturally, Professor Pritchard looks upon the Moabite Stone as genuine, but he quotes one passage as being "the only mention of Israel's God, Yahweh, ever found outside Palestine proper". And he adds, "only in one other place outside the pages of the Bible itself is Yahweh mentioned"—in the Lachish Letters. If the story of Israel and Judah as given in the Bible was actually true, it seems incredible that the Jewish God Jehovah, the Father of Jesus himself, should have been referred to only twice outside Palestine and the Bible. This receives no explanation from the Professor.

For the rest he has—perhaps sadly—to admit that "El" the other name of Jehovah (or Yahweh) was really an old Canaanitish God taken over by the Israelitish conquerors, with lots of (what must be pagan) religious rituals, and reproduced triumphantly by the later Jews as their own. He admits that the Creation and Flood stories come from Assyria and Babylon and gives solid proofs. But his final paragraph is quite amusing considering his book was designed to prove how thoroughly credible and authen-

(Concluded on next page)

This Believing World

Two pointers recently set before TV viewers show how gradually Roman Catholicism is becoming the premier form of the Christian religion in Protestant England. In ITV's "About Religion" (July 30th), we were given the first of three talks on "The Church in Parliament" and of course No. 1 dealt with Roman Catholics. Three MPs and one Marquess, all Catholics, took part. No Catholic would be surprised at having his religion put *first*, for of course it is first, even in England.

★
Then in "TV Times" (July 30th) two pages are given for a discussion on the "Churches and Parliament, Two Vital Questions", and the MP selected to write about it *first* was naturally, a Catholic, Mr. Charles Curran—though in fairness to him, it must be said Mr. Curran has always been tolerant and broadminded. The Bishop of Guildford, Dr. Reindorp, was chosen to represent his Church's point of view and he must be congratulated on discovering that to say "You can't mix religion and politics" is to utter "one of the most blasphemous sentences" he had ever heard. But surely what the law still considers "blasphemy" is something quite different?

★
The fact is that "blasphemy" in law means simply poking a little fun at Bible and Christian nonsense; and for doing just this, people have been given long sentences or tortured or even burnt at the stake; and there are still outdated Blasphemy Laws on our statute books. Both sides of the House of Commons have resolutely refused to expunge them—and it is a fair question to ask the Bishop if he would do his best these days to oppose them?

★
Mr. Curran, however, is strongly against Parliament taking orders "from the Churches", though he insists that "Christians, as well as non-Christians have a right to speak up and speak out". But surely, as a Catholic, he knows how his own Church suppressed free speech from unbelievers for many centuries while giving Catholics not only the right to speak out, but the right to murder, torture, and imprison all who differed from it. Even now he knows that only very rarely are Freethinkers allowed to speak on the radio and TV, while Christians have an open house. Still, he does insist that Parliament must remember that there are Christians *and* non-Christians in Britain; and if we are to survive we must practise tolerance.

★
Our lively contemporary, "The People" (July 23), calls our increasing Jehovah's Witnesses "doorstep bores" as well as "the most persistent pedlars in the world"; but after all, are they not doing exactly what Jesus himself told his sheep to do, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . ." They are not ashamed of being bores either. Perhaps true Christianity itself is a bore when sold by illiterate Christians on the doorstep. Or a bore anyway.

★
The Vicar of Richmond, the Rev. E. Landreth, wants other Christians to tell Witnesses that they "preach a cruel and unreasonable God"; but when all is said and done, this God is the famous Father of Jesus, and Jesus didn't think his Dad was so bad for he proudly declared that he and "his Father" (that is, Jehovah) are "one", that "his Father" was "greater" than himself, that "his Father" had sent him, that "his Father" had taught him, and so on. There are dozens of similar beautiful expressions made expressly by Jesus to show how he revered his Father Jehovah. Mr. Landreth and *The People* should think again.

A Few Words on Kant

THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274)—the central pillar of the Roman Church—explained that there can be no real conflict between faith and reason; they both stem from God and if sometimes human reason stands in opposition to faith, this is but proof of the shortcomings of human reasoning.

Kant, the "Sage of Koenigsberg", made it the task of his life to prove the superiority of reason over faith. In his pamphlet *Religion within the Limits of Pure Reason* (1793) he demolished all evidence for the existence of God piecemeal, and summed up: "He is not something existing outside myself, he is my conception". The powers-that-be were utterly shocked, and on October 1st, 1794, King Frederick Wilhelm II of Prussia sent a *Kabinettsorder* with a grave warning to Kant, then a septuagenarian, not to "misuse" his philosophy and teaching permission in this way. The year after, all universities in Prussia put a strict ban on Kant's religious philosophy, prohibiting its teaching "once and for all times". Needless to say all his works were included in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*.

Rationalism—wrote Kant—puts an end to man's self-imposed state of minority. "Minority" is incapacity to use one's reason without guidance by somebody else. "Self-imposed," I call this minority complex when it is not the result of a mental deficiency, but a deficiency in courage and resolve to operate one's reason without tutelage. *Sapere aude*—have the courage to use your own reason! This is the motto of Rationalism.

Long ago we freed ourselves from Nature's apron strings. Laziness and cowardice are the causes why such a big proportion of mankind still prefer to remain in the infant state, mentally, and to accept, during all their lives, the tutelage of others who offer them their guidance. It's so easy and convenient never to come of age!

Translated from *Der Kirchenfreie*, Graz (Austria), Waltendorfer Hauptstr. 61. O.W.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

(Concluded from page 251)

tic was the Old Testament. Here it is:—

A century of exploration and excavation in Palestine has produced a reliable map. Archaeology has given a trustworthy profile of history for many of the important places on it. And the daily life of biblical times has been generally documented by illustrations of cultural details such as dress, housing, plans of cities, occupations and crafts, religious practice, writing, and many others.

And the Miracles? Not a scrap of archaeology has established even one—nor has it proved the existence of any of the famous Bible heroes whose names have, so to speak, become part of our language. In spite of the numerous victories of Joshua, he appears to have left no traces anywhere outside the Bible. And this goes of course for David, Solomon, Saul, and many others. Archaeology has in fact told us a little about how people wrote (if they ever did write) or what they drank from, or how they were buried, or how they fought wars and treated prisoners; and that is exactly what we should expect. In addition, place-names can often be recognised, and the older sites of cities established.

But we want more than all this if we have to prove the Bible true from archaeology; and its utter failure to do this is apparent in such books as Professor Pritchard's. Incidentally, it is beautifully printed and lavishly illustrated, and of great interest, though on the authenticity and credibility of the Bible, it has lamentably failed. But what else would one expect?

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Lecture Notices, Etc.

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Notes and News

WE HEARD recently of a Christian headmaster who chose the parable of the talents as his reading for the final assembly of term. When he came to the line (Luke 19. 26) "That unto every one which hath shall be given and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him", the children were unmoved as ever. For the staff, however, the passage had a certain topical—and bitter—flavour, it was the day after Mr. Selwyn Lloyd's crisis speech.

★

IT WILL BE INTERESTING, as well as being important to the peace of the world, to see if Sylvia Sprigge is right in her obituary notice of Cardinal Tardini (*The Guardian*, 31/7/61), "The death of the Cardinal Secretary of State Tardini, a familiar figure in the Vatican these last 30 years to all who have served there", writes Miss Sprigge, "may mark the end of one of the most virulent and intransigent cold wars in history, that between the Vatican and the Kremlin".

★

"A YOUNG ATTENDANT marshals the converts at the rally of the Jehovah's Witnesses to go from Twickenham Stadium to the local baths for a mass baptism". This was the caption to *The Sunday Times* (30/7/61) picture of a man holding a banner, "To Immersion". Below, reporter Gavin Lyall gave details of the arrangements for the Witnesses' semi-annual international assembly. Sheer competence would appear to be one of their two main strengths, he said. "But behind everything a Witness does lies a scriptural reason. Indeed, their one basic tenet is recognition of the Bible as wholly, literally and exclusively true. And in this appears to lie their second strength: that they can produce an answer to all questions". Not all, Mr. Lyall, as many Freethinkers can testify.

WE MAY AGREE with an article by John Knox (*sic*) in *The Free Humanist* of Philadelphia (July issue) that continual press and radio attention to the affairs of Caroline Kennedy can be pretty boring. "As with Prince Charles of England", says Mr. Knox, "everything about her is now supposed to be of intense interest to every citizen of this land". But surely it is too much to see a Catholic plot behind the photographs of her in jeans and holding toy six-guns or the radio report that her pet hamsters had escaped? Is it not simply that Caroline, like most three-year-olds, has "human interest"?

★

"TOP ASTROLOGERS expect some mighty dynamic occurrence under five planets combining in an all-star (*sic!*) performance not due again for thousands of years", a letter to the *Leicester Mercury* (24/7/61) informed us. Unfortunately it seems they can't be very specific. "Will there be a third world war or will there be disastrous earthquakes in 1962? Will there be another Messiah coming? *Time alone will tell!*" (our italics).

★

WE LEARN with some regret that the latest (May-June) issue of *The New Zealand Rationalist* is to be the last with that title. From the July-August issue the new name will be *Polemic*, "signifying argument, discussion, controversy, challenge to accepted ideas". We happen to favour a title signifying rationalism, but we wish the new journal success.

★

IN A LETTER TO *The Times* (26/7/61), Mr. Bernard Hrusa of Thomas Ditton reminded a previous correspondent that among those people who "can acquire wealth without the necessity of working for it", and so participate in "an increasing transfer of money from one person to another without an equivalent service being rendered" are the Church Commissioners for England "by reason of their activities on the Stock Exchange".

★

ON WEDNESDAY, July 26th, *The Evening News* of London celebrated its eightieth birthday by issuing a special souvenir reproduction of its first copy published on Tuesday, July 26th, 1881. A back page news item headed "The Bradlaugh Oath Case", reported that: "Mr. Bradlaugh in this case applied to the Court (Queen's Bench Division) yesterday, to extend the time for moving for a rule to show cause why there should not be a new trial until Thursday next". After Mr. Justice Grove had asked what were the grounds on which the rule would be moved and Bradlaugh had said the only ground was that the verdict was against the weight of evidence, the application was granted.

★

"ALL OBSTACLES OVERCOME," said the *Daily Herald* (18/7/61), "the 67-year-old Earl of Dudley and Princess Grace Radziwill were married at the little Roman Catholic church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Rickmansworth, Herts, yesterday". Both had been married before, Princess Grace's former husband being now the husband of Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy's sister, Lee, but a short while ago "they heard that the Catholic Church did not recognise their former marriages . . .".

★

C. H. HAMMERSLEY'S article, "The Confessions of an Atheist", which appeared in THE FREETHINKER on April 14th, has now been published by the National Secular Society as a four-page leaflet under the title, *How I Became an Atheist*. It is a useful introductory leaflet for newcomers and free copies may be had from the Secretary of the National Secular Society. Please send stamp.

Four Philosophers: 2—Plato

By H. GEORGE FARMER

HOWEVER MUCH one may feel inclined to look askant at some of Plato's conceptions of society in his Utopia, his idealistic—although not altogether impracticable—ideas of justice lifting man above the world of senses so masterly and convincingly is truly noble and grand. Leaving sentiment aside, Plato does grapple firmly with the question of the "superior happiness of the just man", and it is in his *Republic* that we get the best and most explicit definition of what is meant by justice. Indeed the second traditional title of that monumental work is *Concerning Justice*. It was to explain the principles of justice that Plato created his *Republic*, which seems to have been a peg upon which to hang his ideas. This book opens with a discussion of justice in the individual which, he says, can only be explained by analogy with justice in the state. In other words, understand what justice means in the state and you grasp its implication in the individual. At the outset (331) we are asked "What is justice?", and Plato makes Polemarchus give the definition of Simonides as all-sufficing. It is, "To restore to each man what is his due". This latter eventually turns out to be "doing good to our friends and harm to our enemies" (332). Thrasymachus insists that in reality justice is no more than the "interest of the stronger", and that it is better to practise injustice yet maintain a reputation for justice. Plato, by the mouth of Socrates, attacks these propositions with dialectical skill, and demonstrates that justice proceeds from harmony and agreement, whilst injustice results from discord and disagreement. To answer all the objections, the philosopher proposes to "enquire into the nature of justice and injustice: first as they appear in the state, and secondly [as they are seen] in the individual, proceeding from the greater to the lesser and comparing them" (369).

For the purpose of reflecting justice in its ideal form Plato creates his ideal state, the success of which depends upon certain rigid principles of organisation. This state is divided into three classes: 1, the Guardians or legislative class; 2, the Auxiliaries or military class; and 3, the Producers or working class. The political virtue necessary to those classes is made up of Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice. Wisdom belongs especially to the Guardians; Courage is particularly requisite for the Auxiliaries; whilst Temperance is indispensable in all classes. Justice, he claims, is that which should obtain in every member and class in the state. The Guardians, as philosophers specially selected by virtue of their wisdom and probity, are superior to the other two classes. The Auxiliaries, who carry out the will of the Guardians, preserve domestic tranquility and assure the safety of the state. The Producers, who are subordinate to the two preceding classes, furnish what is requisite for the material wants of the state. When each of these classes fulfils its particular function, without trespassing on the domain of the others, the ideal and perfect state exists, and only on such a foundation can political justice be built. We can appreciate from this why Plato should define justice as "Minding one's own business". When the principles which govern this state are ignored, there results a timocracy, *i.e.* the ascendancy of military prowess; or an oligarchy, *i.e.* the domination of wealth; or a democracy, *i.e.* the abolition of all distinctions; or a despotism *i.e.* the rule of a tyrant. In all of these latter, instead of the harmonious working of the three classes mentioned, we

get discord, with its resultant injustice. Thus far the state.

Just as the state reflects justice under the conditions specified above, Plato then proceeds to demonstrate that precisely the same thing is to be found in the individual when his soul is ordered and disciplined, and to this end he divides the soul into three distinct elements or faculties, which correspond to the three orders of the state. These are:—1, the Rational or reasoning element; 2, the Spirited or irascible element; and 3, the Appetitive or concupiscent element. These elements are assigned special functions and excellencies, which Plato links up with the state classes. The Appetitive would be connected with the Producers, because it possessed a negative aspect in its submission and restraint. The Spirited could be bound up with the Auxiliaries, because it brings impulse to the higher passions. The Rational, as in the Guardians, governs the other two, and is therefore the guiding principle. Just as in the state, so long as the Rational rules, and the other elements are kept within their functional bounds, so long will justice obtain in the individual. But as soon as these mutually ordered relations cease to be effective, we get the timocrat, oligarch, democrat, and tyrant operating in the individual soul, and health and strength, which had once been the boast of the ordered functioning soul, is succeeded by disease and impotence.

Thus we apprehend what Plato meant by justice in the individual, just as he had demonstrated it already in the state. Not that the philosopher meant that individual justice was tutored by state justice, or that justice itself was "the mere doing of one's own business in the state". Indeed that is stated conversely by Plato when he argues that "if the outward action is really just, it means that the soul is just within". To use a more homely simile, justice in the state is but "the outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace".

Now comes the question, "What does it profit man to be just?" In our *praeludium* we have quoted the partisans of sophistry who said that justice did not pay, and that it was preferable to practise injustice yet simulate justice and so reap the reward. Plato's reply to that is simple. If justice in the individual is the harmony of the three elements—according to balance and subordination of the respective parts—then it is quite evident that the reverse of this will be injustice, because justice—by its harmony and order—brings health and happiness to the soul, whilst injustice—by its discord and disorder—brings disease and misery.

Yet it is not until we reach Books VIII and IX of the *Republic* that the "superior happiness of the just man" is definitely proved. Here Plato deals with three points:—1, the happiness of the just man; 2, the meaning of happiness and pleasure; 3, the ideal interpretation of happiness. He discusses Freedom, Wealth, and Security from fear, each of which are the respective ends of the democratic, oligarchic, and timocratic man. He then asks which of these men is really free, rich, and without fear? Obviously none, says Plato, for the simple reason that the basic principle governing the just soul, is the balance and subordination of the three elements, have been thrust aside. In the democratic man, his striving for equality and freedom means in the end that all pleasures are equally good, and anarchy follows. In the oligarchic man, his great vice is the struggle for wealth, which produces its correlative poverty. The timocratic man, having

no other ideal than position, finds himself thrall'd by passion and contentiousness. Lastly is the despotic man, whose cravings have to be satiated at the expense of all else. After this *reconnaissance* Plato asks how is it possible to find happiness in such men? It might be answered that the democratic man has *freedom*, which to him means happiness, just as *wealth* does to the oligarchic man, and *position* to the timocratic man. But Plato would reply that the mere gratification of one element in the soul, to the detriment and palpable ruin of the others cannot be real happiness, for "the best and justest of men is also the happiest". This leads us to enquire the meaning of Plato's happiness.

In *Protagoras* Plato is inclined to distinguish between happiness and pleasure, and like Socrates defines the former as the "true" and the latter as the "illusory", but in the *Republic* he makes no specific difference. Certainly in Book VIII he says (588-9) that there are "necessary" and "unnecessary" pleasures. In Book IX, he refers to "wild beast" pleasures, and here we find him insisting on the unreal, illusory, transient character of the sensual and emotional pleasures prompted by the lower elements, whilst the intellectual pleasures are real, true, and permanent, because they are derived from the "rational" element whose parent is "knowledge". In the *Gorgias* (470) he repeats that happiness depends on knowledge, or on the possession of virtue and goodness, and that it is the presence of such in the individual man that attunes his soul to harmony and concord. Therein lies "true happiness". Against this, we have ignorance, that breeds vice and evil, which lead the soul to "illusory pleasure". Again and again Plato demonstrates that not only is the just man right, but that he is happy, whereas the unjust man is wrong and wretched.

To his mentor Socrates, "happiness" could not come from external things, and that teacher beseeched his disciples to shun all out such outward visible signs, for he conceived happiness as an inward spiritual joy, and it was this dualistic view of things which brought criticism. Thrasymachus had giped and jeered at Plato's axiom that "virtue hath his own reward", pointing out the palpable advantages which the unjust man enjoys whilst the just man actually suffered. This led Plato to stress the ideal happiness as a foil to material happiness urged by the sophistic Thrasymachus. The soul, said Plato, belongs to the world above the senses, and here alone can man find happiness, since the body and its sensual life is the prison of the soul, and the very source of the irrational elements. Man's goal is therefore the escapement from the material world to that sphere which is the divine. (*Theaetetus*, 176: *Phaedo*, 64-9). At the same time it is palpably clear that Plato did not altogether ignore the happiness expressed by sense phenomena; but so far as the visible is but a copy of the invisible, the former could only be valued and appreciated by communion with the latter.

Now, what is the upshot of Plato's philosophy as expressed within the limits of the above. If we take his last statement that we can only understand the visible in relation to the invisible; then we can only assess the numerical value of 4 to 2 by reference to 0! His explanation of justice is clear enough for all practical purposes, but when he tells us that "piety" (*oseotes*) is "justice in relation to the Gods", it is like walking in a circle to get somewhere. All that was due to his persistence in knowing the unknowable—to use an elegant Hibernicism.

Fortunately we have no reason to touch upon such Platonic conceptions of society as his community of women and children, his recognition of slavery, and his contempt for manual labour. But we are concerned with his myth-

making; and that, with other irrationalities, must go "by the board". Plato's assumptions concerning a real and absolute something outwith sense impression, i.e. the so-called "world beyond", compels all rational thinkers to part company with him, if only in that respect. We can well believe in escapement from this world of "becoming and decay" into a transcendental heaven of contemplation; but even that haven of "pure thought" is the product of sense impressions, for there can be no other sphere of thought save that impelled by phenomena. In spite of Plato's grand and noble aspirations in his doctrine of the "just man", his influence on the ultramundane teaching of the Medieval Church, especially in its advocacy of the subordination of the individual to the whole, has led to the enslavement of the mind of man to "other-worldism", instead of "this-worldism"; and the crowd—the mutable many—has been persuaded to yearn for the embraces of that "Grey spouse of Satan"—as Swinburne called the Church of Rome—which, even today, is the greatest threat to our moral, social, and political state.

The Papal Attack

IT IS SURPRISING how unaware the people of Britain remain about Vatican-instigated encroachments on their freedom. Tolerance, for which the British are rightly noted, seems to be being replaced by a dangerous lethargy. The Romanists in our midst work busily, with no interference to their scheming, and the general public remains oblivious to their insidious attacks. It would be difficult to find a better example of their frequent, but often unnoticed successes, than the Family Planning poster which the British Transport Commission removed with such indecent haste. Here, because of a minority opinion—and surely no one except the British Transport Commission doubts that it was a minority composed of Roman Catholics?—the people of this country were denied useful knowledge presented in a perfectly wholesome manner. The Catholic objection to Family Planning is, of course, because it is contrary to the natural law.

I do not have the Pope's intimate knowledge of what this is, but I should think, for example, that it is the natural law that when a man grows old and weak, then he should die. When the late Pope was dying, however, Catholics were not slow to try and thwart the natural law by employing skilled physicians to try and keep him alive. It seems to me, by the way, that this was something of a reflection on the delights of heaven. Surely Rome should have been only too anxious to see her favourite son go where he could enjoy the transports of delight which are his due. The Catholic, however, "sees through a glass darkly".

Let it be noted that the priests are not content merely to instruct their servile and unthinking flocks about the vagaries of such things as natural laws. Far from it. Because a collection of celibate Italians in Rome desire it, an attempt is made to deny the population of Britain—Catholic or not—Family Planning knowledge. Surely this is the pinnacle of arrogance. The tragedy of it is not merely that the Catholics were successful in having the poster removed but that, with a few notable exceptions, no one seemed particularly bothered.

In education the priest-driven Catholics continually make their impudent demands. As with one voice they write to their Councillors and MPs with hands outstretched for aid towards schools which waste over a quarter of their time on religious rubbish. Consider the effect of impregnating naive young minds with the dogma of transubstantiation. The public through rates and taxes provides

money towards propagating nonsense such as this.

Recently it has come to light that some Catholic nurses refuse to admit to hospitals women who wish to be sterilised. The reasons for sterilisation, however good, would carry no weight with fervent Catholics. Having received priestly instructions they will carry them out selfishly, unthinkingly and callously. The neurosis of Roman Catholicism is a disease indeed. A Catholic doctor knows that he must not countenance euthanasia. The instructions of the Church on this leave no leeway for discretion. The agony of the patient, the certainty of eventual death or the pleas of heartbroken relatives must all be subordinated to the wishes of the Church of Rome.

There are also, of course, many examples of Catholic wishes being inflicted on the public, blame for which cannot be allocated with certainty. There is no way of knowing how often the banning of certain books from the Public Libraries, the refusal of Watch Committees to allow some films to be shown, or the outcry against particular types of advertisements are Catholic inspired. The priests find it often pays to operate from behind a facade. No doubt, if it could be managed, they would ban all books on the Vatican *Index*. The fact that this would include Milton's *Paradise Lost* would not trouble them at all. They see no inconsistency in an omniscient deity creating a mind as fine as Milton's yet allowing it to produce works abhorrent to that deity.

It is noticeable that Catholics in Britain often adopt devious and oblique, rather than direct methods of gaining their ends. They find it convenient to persuade rather than coerce. This is not due to democratic feelings. The reason is that for the moment it is the right approach. While the Romanist is in the minority he will request; when in the majority he will order. It is time it was made plain to Roman Catholics that because of their ridiculous beliefs they constitute, in the eyes of normal men and women, a subversive element. For the moment they find it propitious to use the velvet glove—but make no mistake, the iron hand is inside it. D.W.

CORRESPONDENCE

"SKY PILOTS"

I always get a great deal of pleasure and much instruction from Mr. Ridley's articles (some I read over many times before passing on my FREETHINKER to another reader), but I very seldom get the amount of merriment from any article as that provoked by his article on July 28th. It was the term "Sky pilot" which touched the button.

I first heard of sky pilots in 1896 when I left school and went in an old "wind-bag" to learn (quoting from my indentures) "the business of a seaman". Amongst other things I learned that all Popes, Archbishops, Metropolitans, High Priests, Rabbis, Vicars, etc., were "sky pilots" and as such the large majority of sailor men had "no use" for any of them. True some shell backs used to attend at the Missions to Seamen premises but made no secret amongst themselves why and what for they did so. Please thank Mr. Ridley. E. NEWBOLD.

Thanks for article by F. A. Ridley. However, Mr. Ridley must not think that Billy Graham and Yuri Gagarin were invited personally by the Queen; she has to do what the Government decides. No doubt the latter was delighted to send Dr. Graham to dine with her, and did it off its own bat, but it invited Major Gagarin to the Palace through force of public opinion and the press. And I suspect that it was done reluctantly. PAUL VARNEY.

ANNIE BESANT

I should like some light on the following point in my friend H. Cutner's review of *The Five Lives of Annie Besant* by A. H. Nethercot. After the death of Mme. Blavatsky, Annie Besant said that she had received letters in the same handwriting as those previously received from Mme. Blavatsky. Commenting on this statement, Mr. Cutner writes in a most casual way (14/7/61) that "she discovered later that the letters had really

been written by W. Q. Judge, one of the most eminent of Theosophists . . . This is a serious allegation. It means that the alleged letters from Blavatsky were really forgeries and that there was complicity between W. Q. and Annie Besant. It compromises Mrs. Besant's honesty. Mr. Nethercot is quite silent about this; apparently he knows nothing about it for he would surely not suppress such a grave charge. Can Mr. Cutner offer any proof of this "discovery" by Annie Besant?

R. J. JACKSON.

OBITUARY

With the death of Edwin Jesse Fairhall on Saturday, July 29th, the Freethought movement in Britain has lost one of its staunchest supporters. A member of the Ethical Union, the National Secular Society and South Place Ethical Society, Mr. Fairhall was Treasurer of the last-named body until compelled to retire last year because of ill health. He also resigned as Treasurer of the joint, co-operative Humanist Council at the same time. Lately his health deteriorated rapidly but his courage never left him. He was 82.

Mr. Fairhall's familiar and respected figure will be sadly missed at home and at international Freethought functions which he regularly attended, always accompanied by his devoted wife. To Mrs. Fairhall we send our sincere condolences. C.M.C.

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