

The Freethinker

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EARLY IN JANUARY, a most interesting and informative lecture was delivered before the Marble Arch Branch of the National Secular Society. The speaker was a native of Goa which, on December 18th, 1961, terminated in so spectacular a manner, its age-old connection with Portugal. In the course of his survey of the generally nefarious activities of our oldest ally, Portugal, the speaker, Dr. Joao Cabral (founder of the Goan League) drew attention

— VIEWS and OPINIONS —

The Jesuits — An Indian Critique

By F. A. RIDLEY

to the past and present activities of the Jesuits in Goa during Portugal's long era (1510-1961) of domination. In which connection he cited the still current case of a heterodox Indian Jesuit, Fr. A. Mendonca, SJ, described by an Indian publicist in Bombay, Mr. Z. P. de Sousa, in a most informative brochure entitled, *The Case of Fr. Mendonca, the Jesuits and Goa* (2nd Edition, 1959, Bombay). This little book is not only of interest because of its proper theme, the dramatic clash of Father Mendonca with his Jesuit superiors in India and Rome, and his subsequent expulsion from the Order; it also sheds much light on both the generic character of the Jesuit Order and in particular, upon its activities in Portuguese India. European criticisms of The Company of Jesus (to give Loyola's historic creation its proper name) have been not infrequent. As our Indian author goes on to note, at one time or another the Jesuits have been expelled from most European lands including this one; but an Indian critique such as is here advanced necessarily gives a new angle—for European readers at least—upon the activities of Loyola's Order. One may add that this is particularly so in India, which has been a major field of Jesuit activity ever since the famous Jesuit missionary, St. Francis Xavier landed in Goa in the mid-16th century. Moreover, as our authority demonstrates, Goa, under the rule of the "Most Faithful" Kings of Portugal as under their present also "Most Faithful" successor, Dr. Salazar, was the one area in the Indian sub-continent where the Jesuits (as formerly the Holy Inquisition with its *Auto da Fé*) had a free hand for centuries. Here, in fact, in the appraisal of our Indian critic, we have a new, as well as a most enlightening slant upon the world-wide activities of the most powerful and famous of Catholic Orders.

Father Mendonca

Whilst the successive vicissitudes undergone by the Indian (Goan) Jesuit, Fr. Albert de Mendonca make intriguing reading, besides shedding much light upon the internal constitution of the Society itself in its dealings with its individual members, it cannot really be said that any real freethinking ideas were mooted by Fr. Mendonca in the citations from his correspondence with his Jesuit superiors reproduced here. Contrarily, when one of his superiors did actually accuse him of teaching heresy he indignantly repudiated the innuendo, and even went out of his way to explain that any unorthodox citations to be found in his university lectures (in a Jesuit college attached to the University of Bombay) were quotations from non-

Catholic works included by his University authorities as part of his University course. It is clear that Fr. Mendonca is no Joseph McCabe! In point of fact, his differences with the Jesuits which led to his removal from Goa and to his eventual expulsion from his Order in 1959, were actually due to points unconnected with the basic religious tenets of the Roman Catholic Church. They are of more interest to Indian than to European critics of the Jesuits;

viz. in particular, Fr. Mendonca was accused, prior to Indian Independence in 1947, of excessive sympathy with Indian nationalism and of excessive interest in non-Christian Hindu philosophy. In the former connection a visit he once paid to

Mahatma Gandhi evidently aroused the ire of his Jesuit superiors. It would appear that these objections were political rather than theological in character. Evidently the Jesuits in Goa were part and parcel of the Catholic Imperialism of Portugal; evidently they had not at this time discovered their present interest in influencing the post-colonial regimes in India and Africa. Consequently, whilst the sections of Mr. de Sousa's narrative dealing specifically with the case of Fr. Mendonca, SJ, certainly make interesting reading, they do not really involve any genuine critique of Christianity, or even of the Roman Catholic Church as such. Though certainly more than the proverbial storm in a teacup, the whole "affair Mendonca" seems really to have been an internal matter concerning the most authoritarian Order of the Church, with its perennial insistence upon Loyola's famous injunction to practise "corpse-like obedience".

An Indian Critique

Of much greater interest to Western readers are our author's general criticisms of the Jesuits as such and his incidental criticisms of their past and present activities in Goa. Not that there is much that is actually new in such criticisms. What is actually interesting about them is the identical way in which Jesuitism works in both East and West. In Goa itself, it seems clear that the Jesuits regarded themselves as a very important part of the four-and-a-half-centuries long Portuguese Colonialist Establishment that has just been so summarily ended by Mr. Nehru's lightening military *coup d'état* since the appearance of both editions of Mr. de Sousa's booklet in respectively, March and December, 1959. The Jesuits, who had initially assisted the Portuguese in the destruction of the original Hindu temples in Goa and in forcible conversion of the Hindu inhabitants, continued to fight the rise of modern Indian Nationalism both in Goa itself and in India at large. Even at present, charges our author, Jesuits of various nationalities have virtually spiritually partitioned India into a number of Jesuit dependencies, where they work assiduously to undermine India's present officially secular state. Mr. de Sousa also criticises the historic organisation and activities of the Order in terms reminiscent of the European critics of the Jesuits cited in the introductory bibliography of ten works which in-

cludes—as I am proud and happy to record—two books of mine: viz., *The Jesuits: a Study in Counter Revolution* and *The Papacy and Fascism*.

From the general nature of the concluding criticism directed against the Jesuits as exemplified in India, it seems clear that, whether in West or East, the Jesuit leopard does not change his generic spots! For the specific criticisms herein directed against the Order are those familiar to all the classic critics of Jesuitism from Pascal and Michelet (as cited in the introductory bibliography) to such themselves ex-Jesuits as Griesinger and Niccolini. They are, in brief, excessive centralisation and over-organisation, coupled with espionage and suppression of originality and initiative amongst their own members, and incessant intrigues and overweening ambition in relation to the outside world. That even the Vatican at

times found the Order intolerable was illustrated by its brief official suppression by Pope Clement XIV (1772-1814) (passages from his Papal Bull of Suppression are included in Mr. de Sousa's text) who subsequently perished miserably either actually poisoned (as Mr. de Sousa asserts) by the Jesuits, or (as I personally think more probable) of "fear of dying". However that may be, authentically inspired Jesuit assassins ran up quite a respectable bag of heretical victims during the murderous era of the Counter Reformation. Our Indian author is to be congratulated upon a timely and valuable contribution to the vast literature of Jesuitism, and for future editions we venture to suggest to its learned author that his title-page might well feature the expressive Italian proverb: "O thou who wouldst walk with Jesus, do not walk with the Jesuits".

From Canada

THE FORMER Quebec Provincial Secretary, Yves Prévost (whose jurisdiction extended over "education" in the publicly-discredited government under Duplessis, and who, therefore, should have known better) recently made a statement in the Provincial Legislative Assembly that religious instruction was mandatory in all US schools, in spite of the separation of Church and State. Having lived in several States of the United States for a decade or more, I knew this was untrue. I wired all 50 State Boards of Education, and inside a week had received 37 replies of which the following are samples: "Religious instruction is not mandatory in our public [i.e. State] schools" (Vermont); "There is no requirement for religious instruction in our public schools" (Virginia); "Our public schools are not permitted to give religious instruction" (Iowa); "Our state does not permit the public schools to be used for religious instruction" (Delaware); "Public schools are expressly prohibited by law from offering any religious instruction" (Michigan). The information was passed on to the press here in Montreal.

I also found it necessary to write to the press drawing attention to an important nuance between the French *laïc* (lay) and *laïque* (secular). As the feminine for *laïc* is also *laïque*, it leads to confusion, and the Church takes advantage of it over here. They wouldn't dare, in France, where people know the difference. But the word *laïque* (for the masculine singular) as in *Le Mouvement laïque de langue française*, is new here in its modern French meaning of "almost anti-clerical". Hence the necessity to get things straight at the start. I made use of the Parish paper of the Cathedral of St. Briec (France), *La Voix de la Cathédrale*, in which *laïques* are called by every hated epithet. Such *laïques* couldn't possibly be the ones pressing for diplomatic representation at the Vatican: these are *laïcs*, lay members of a Church.

Our present Provincial Secretary, Lionel Bertrand, was reported as saying that if "our bishops condemned any one of our policies, I'm sure all the members of the Cabinet would change their opinion". How do you like that? Did we elect bishops or Members of Parliament? It is good to see that various columnists have been ribbing M. Bertrand. Nevertheless, it gives you an idea of the task Freethinkers face in Quebec Province.

Fortunately the *Mouvement laïque* is doing splendid work and awakening opinion everywhere, but everywhere. For tactical reasons some of it can't be revealed. But here are a few examples. It has already published three books on education and secular schools, Church and

schools, etc., and all are best-sellers. It was mainly responsible, with the Quebec Federation of Labour, in preventing an "educational" group called STEM (*Société de Télévision Educative de Montréal*) from obtaining control of the last TV channel available, Channel 4. The majority of the group were French-Canadian Catholics, the remainder English-speaking Protestants—all very respectable people. A priest was secretary.

Talking of priests. The book *Les Insolences du Frère Untel* (Brother So-and-So), which blamed the Church for our poor French and caused an enormous stir (it sold a record 115,000 copies) is being translated into English. "Frère Untel", Brother Pierre Jerome of the Marist Order at Alma, Quebec, who is a sincere Roman Catholic and a rather naive reformer, was exiled to Rome at the end of last year, while his Superior has been sent to France to start as a novice.

The Canadian Postmaster General, William Hamilton, stated in a reply in the Commons that it was government policy to avoid religious subjects on postage stamps "to promote religious tolerance and mutual respect" (*The Gazette*, 2/2/62).

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY, 14TH, 1962. Present: Mr. L. Ebury (Vice-President) in the Chair, Mrs. Ebury, Mrs. Venton, Messrs. Barker, Cleaver, Johnson, McIlroy, Mills, Shannon, the Treasurer (Mr. Griffiths) and the Secretary. Apologies from the President, and Messrs. Corstorphine, Hornibrook and Tribe. Portuguese Embassy reply to protest resolution was noted. On behalf of the North London Branch, Mr. Ebury handed over the usual monthly contribution of £5 to the Building Fund. New Members were admitted to Birmingham, Marble Arch, North London, and Wales and Western Branches, which with Individual members made 10 in all. Bradford, Manchester College of Science and Technology, and San Juan Branch reports were read and approved. Change of Secretaryship of Sussex Branch was noted. Thanks were expressed to the retiring officer, Mr. F. Pearce, and best wishes extended to the new one, Mr. J. Ritter. Arrangements were made for the President to speak at Brighton. A meeting of the Manchester Branch had been held on February 13th at which Mr. G. H. Mills had been elected President and Mr. W. Russell, Secretary. The General Secretary, who had attended, was very hopeful of the Branch's future under these officers. Correspondence from the Young Secularists was noted. The National Council for Civil Liberties was considering the position of non-Christians and the law. Annual Dinner arrangements were completed. The possibility of outdoor meetings at Basildon New Town was being watched. The Secretary was asked to make inquiries to the BBC regarding facilities allowed to the Catholic Radio and TV Guild. The next meeting was fixed for Wednesday, March 14th, 1962.

A Quest for Honesty

By COLIN McCALL

WALTER KAUFMANN, author of *The Faith of a Heretic* (Doubleday, New York, 1961, \$4.95), was born in Germany in 1921 and brought up a Lutheran. When he found that he couldn't believe in the Trinity, "and especially not that Jesus was God", he became a Jew. He was only eleven at the time, and didn't realise that all his grandparents had been Jewish, though possibly the influence was still in the family, and certainly the Nazis detected it. Now, as the title of his book implies, this Associate Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University has rejected both Christianity and Judaism. A "heretic", as he uses the term, "is one who deviates from the fundamental doctrine of his own church, or of the church with which he was previously connected", while "faith" is "intense, usually confident, belief that is not based on evidence sufficient to command assent from every reasonable person".

Some might regret the use of the latter term—I am not overfond of it myself—but I think that Dr. Kaufmann justifies it. "The world", he says, "abounds in strong faiths that prize conformity above honesty, and we are often told that we can never hope to meet such faiths successfully unless we develop a comparable faith on which all of us can enthusiastically occur. We must stop, more and more men say, being so critical. Dissenters should have at least the grace to keep quiet. Criticism is negative, and we need positive thinking; heresy creates division, and we need uniformity; honesty is fine, of course, but within limits—rather drastic limits". "My faith is not that kind of faith", he continues. "Far from viewing philosophy or heresy with suspicion, I believe that the enemies of critical reason are, whether consciously or not, foes of humanity". "I have less excuse than many others for ignoring all this", he says, remembering Nazi Germany. "If even I do not speak up, who will? And if not now, when?" Speak up he does, producing one of the best-balanced, well-reasoned, and stimulating books I have read for a long time, and which I hope will soon be available in an English edition. A book which—it is worth recording—was praised by the American magazine *Newsweek*, which said that the case against religion had never been more cogently presented.

Theology, he points out, is denominational. "Moreover, a theologian does not merely expound the beliefs, particularly those about God, held by his denomination; he offers a sympathetic exegesis and, in fact if not expressly, a defence". To understand theology, then, one has to understand "commitment to an institution". It depends, in fact, upon a double standard: one set of standards for one's own religion and another for those of others. And Dr. Kaufmann sees no reason why the term "gerrymandering" should be confined to politics. Many theologians are also, as he says, "masters of this art".

St. Thomas, for one. "That Aquinas carved up Aristotle, citing to his purpose what he could fit, meets the eye. But it is scarcely less obvious that he also gerrymandered Scripture". Indeed, "Thomas knows it all and proves it all—proves it in his own fashion, which amounts to quite the boldest and the most extensive feat of gerrymandering every undertaken . . . But even if he had been a still greater scholar than he was, even if he had been able to read Greek and Hebrew instead of occasionally misconceiving Biblical and Aristotelian passages, and even if he had known that the pseudo-Dionysius had not

been converted by St. Paul himself, his method would for all that have been thoroughly unsound".

The point to note, though, is that Aquinas's method is "by no means *exceptionally* unsound. On the contrary, he is a splendid representative not only of his time but of theology in general". Theological method is arbitrary. It also employs "double-speak". Paul Tillich, for example, redefines traditional terms and then uses them in such a way that those who don't know his definitions think he is supporting orthodoxy, "while the initiated realise that Tillich finds the beliefs shared by most of the famous Christians of the past and by millions of Christians in the present utterly untenable . . .". Some unbelievers conclude, says Dr. Kaufmann ironically, "that unbelief is no reason for renouncing Christianity".

Dr. Kaufmann disposes of the popular notion that you can't prove or disprove the existence of God. Obviously everything depends on the definition. If God is defined as omnipotent, omniscient and beneficent, then one can disprove his existence. "The problem of suffering is of crucial importance", as Dr. Kaufmann says, "because it shows that the God of popular theism does not exist". No theological efforts to solve the problem—including free will—are more than pseudo-solutions, and Dr. Kaufmann quotes the moving letter from Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts*, written by the girl who was born without a nose. "What did I do to deserve such a terrible bad fate?" That is the awful question it poses to the theist. The only theism worthy of our respect", avers Dr. Kaufmann, "believes in God not because of the way the world is made but in spite of that. The only theism that is no less profound than the Buddha's atheism is that represented in the Bible by Job and Jeremiah".

He has much to say about the Old Testament, which he thinks has been mistakenly devalued at the expense of the New. The religion of the Old Testament is, he says, "concerned with God only as a Thou, only as related to man, only as addressing man and as addressable by man. His deeds are a subject of concern and related only insofar as they constitute an address to man. Of other deeds, nothing is said: God is not an object of interest, study, or entertainment". And he sees two of the three great ideas of the French Revolution, equality and fraternity, as being readily traceable back to the Old Testament. "What of the third idea: liberty? At least implicitly, this idea, too, is central in the Old Testament". It is my personal opinion that Dr. Kaufmann goes just a little too far in his favourable interpretation of the Old Testament. But even if this be so, it must be said that he acknowledges the danger. He thinks he has averted it: I don't; but I do think he has thrown a revealing new light upon the Hebrew Bible.

He has no difficulty in showing the fallacy of the popular view that the New Testament represents a moral advance on the Old, in the figure of Jesus, and his commandment, "Love thy neighbour as thyself". (This, of course, comes from the Old Testament.) The Jesus of the Gospels, as Dr. Kaufmann says, "appeals to each man's self-interest". And, though the claim that the Gospels are a "distillation" of the older moral teachings is "practically a cliché", it is "nonetheless false, bars any real understanding of the history of social thought in the past 2000 years, and leads to countless further errors

(Concluded on next page)

This Believing World

There is nothing like being a popular "pop" singer in this modern world of ours to give one a status also in the theological world — so no one should be surprised that Mr. Adam Faith, after his recent tussle with the Archbishop of York on religion and sex, should write for that great religious paper, *The News of the World*, an article entitled "I Believe". And what does he believe? Well, to start with he does not believe it is necessary to go to church to be a thorough believer. Of course, Mr. Faith stoutly believes in God, and once you believe in the God of theology, the rest for the Church is easy. You're a believer!

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The real truth is that Mr. Faith knows nothing about religion which he did not know at school when he was eight. His article is naive and infantile. There is not, in fact, any more heresy in it than there is in the questions generally asked by a TV audience at one of Dr. Donald Soper's "soap-box" meetings. The fact that nowadays, 90 per cent of people are quite apathetic to God, religion, and Christianity, must be well known to our bishops; and nothing Mr. Faith can say one way or another will alter the fact.

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It took the late Mr. Hannen Swaffer only a couple of days in Summerland to get used to his surroundings, and to get into touch with (*The People*, February 4th) "his closest friend Maurice Barbanell"; and we shall soon no doubt get vivid journalistic pictures of what it really looks like there. Surely it should not be too difficult to have spirit photographs transmitted as well? What a scoop it would be showing Mr. Swaffer not only talking to Bernard Shaw, but also to the late King Edward VII, and even Queen Victoria, to say nothing of mere Lords like Northcliffe.

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Lest anyone should think this is just ridiculous scepticism let us take the case of Miss Patricia Joudry who has (*Psychic News*, February 10th) written "23 major plays through automatic writing" and who now tells us that she has been in touch with Swaffer who gave her an account of meeting Bernard Shaw in the other "plane of vibration". Miss Joudry, who once was the wife of a Mr. Steel, is so no longer; for she has become "the spiritual bride of George Bernard Shaw". Moreover, she is having another child, "an immaculate conception", and when this is over, Miss Joudry is going to give the world some new novels by Charlotte Bronte, Tolstoy, and of course Bernard Shaw.

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And even then this intense literary activity is only part of what we must expect from the Spirit World, for Miss Joudry is also working on a new Bible which ought to kill all sales of the New English Bible. But after all, why disbelieve these marvels? Summerland teems with great writers, so the scope for Miss Joudry can be considered infinite. At least it requires infinite faith to swallow it.

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The largest organisation of Protestant Churches is the Lutheran World Federation, and it is building a radio station in Addis Ababa to transmit Christian programmes to the whole of Africa. This is obviously the reply to the way Islam is making headway in the Dark Continent, even converting coloured Christians taught in Christian missions. It will be known as "the Voice of the Gospel" — though we have an idea that the Gospel of John will be referred to as little as possible. Even Martin Luther himself might have found it difficult to convince, let us say the Pygmies, what a marvellous expositor of the teachings of Jesus was the Apostle John.

Pastor Jeffreys, famous hot-gospeller who used to send thousands into near-delirium at revival meetings in the 1920s, died "almost forgotten" in Clapham, London, on January 26th (*South London Press*, 2/2/62).

A QUEST FOR HONESTY

(Concluded from page 59)

in historical interpretation". There is, he insists, "a crass discontinuity, best summarised in the word otherworldliness".

Dr. Kaufmann admits his indebtedness to Schweitzer's conception of Jesus. "My heresy", he says, "is hardly that I go along with such highly regarded scholars as Schweitzer and Troeltsch, but that I refuse to make amends for honesty". And an alternative title for this book might be the heading of one of its chapters, "The Quest for Honesty". Organised religion flourishes in the USA. And so, says Dr. Kaufmann, "do thoughtlessness, hypocrisy, dishonesty". He cites disapprovingly a remark by ex-President Eisenhower in December 1952, that: "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is". Morality can't be based on religion, he says. We can't rely on "a deeply felt religious faith" to "determine in the first place what is moral and immoral", though religion may be used to prop up morality. Indeed, an ethic can't be proved; "to be held responsibly, it has to be based on encounter upon encounter". Dr. Kaufmann's own ethic is "not absolute but a morality of openness". It is "not a morality of rules but an ethic of virtues", and it offers "no security but goals". His four cardinal virtues are: "humbition" (the fusing of humility and ambition), love, courage and honesty.

"The rational man seeks the truth gropingly", said Sartre, "... But there are people who are attracted by the durability of stone. They want to be massive and impenetrable, they do not want to change...". If you don't want to change, if you are not prepared to review your opinions, *The Faith of a Heretic* is not the book for you. It is not written, Dr. Kaufmann tells us, "to comfort those who might find my views congenial, nor to shock and offend those whose ideas I question". If, however, you are prepared to "engage in common quest" with the author, the intellectual and moral rewards are enormous. Seldom does one come across a book which so compels one to reconsider one's position. Not only does Dr. Kaufmann maintain his standard of intellectual honesty in a field where equivocation is the rule, he does so without the least sign of priggishness. This is, I think, because his honesty is backed by a deep humanity, and by a remarkable breadth of learning and experience.

News To Us!

Secularists accuse the Church of obsurantism! [sic].
—*The Faith* (February, 1962).

Strange we've never heard about it.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY 56th ANNUAL DINNER

Guest of Honour: T. M. MOSLEY

Dancing : : Entertainment by Les Parcs Puppets
SATURDAY, MARCH 3rd, 1962

at The Mecca Restaurant, 11/12 Blomfield Street, E.C.2

RECEPTION 6 p.m. DINNER 6.30 p.m.

Vegetarians catered for Evening Dress Optional
TICKETS 21/- from the Sec., 103 Borough High Street, S.E.1

THE FREETHINKER

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Lecture Notices, Etc.

OUTDOOR

- Edinburgh Branch N.S.S. (The Mound).—Sunday afternoon and evening: Messrs. CRONAN, McRAE and MURRAY.
- London Branches—Kingston, Marble Arch, North London: (Marble Arch), Sundays, from 4 p.m. MESSRS. L. EBURY, J. W. BARKER, C. E. WOOD, D. H. TRIBE, J. P. MURACCIOLE. (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.
- 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: L. EBURY.
- Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square, Nottingham).—Every Friday, 1 p.m., Every Sunday, 6.30 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

INDOOR

- Birmingham Branch N.S.S. (Midland Institute, Paradise Street). Sunday, February 25th, 6.45 p.m.: COUNCILLOR JONAS, "The Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment".
- Conway Discussions (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Tuesday, February 27th, 7.30 p.m.: MRS. PEGGY CRANE, (Executive Officer, Appeal for Amnesty), "Breaking the Barrier of Silence".
- Leicester Secular Society (Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, February 25th, 6.30 p.m.: S. J. LOOKER, "John Masefield—His Life and Work".
- Marble Arch Branch N.S.S. (The Carpenter's Arms, Seymour Place, London, W.1), Sunday, February 25th, 7.15 p.m.: LORD CHORLEY, Q.C., "The Modern Approach to Punishment".
- North Staffordshire Humanist Group (Guildhall, High Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme), Friday, February 30th, 7.15 p.m.: A MEETING.
- Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society (Co-operative Education Centre, Broad Street), Sunday, February 25th, 2.30 p.m.: ARNOLD BONNER, "The Co-operative Way to Peace and Justice".
- South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, February 25th, 11 a.m.: R. STEPHEN SCHENK, "Tradition and Social Change".
- Tyneside Humanist Society (100 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle, 1), Wednesday, February 28th, 7.30 p.m.: JOHN FOGHITT, M.A., "Science and Education".
- Young Secularists (University of London Union, Malet Street, London, W.C.1), Inaugural Meeting: F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT, M.A., "Religion or Reason, The Source of English Law?"

Notes and News

"FAMILY FORUM" in the *Daily Telegraph* (9/2/62) expressed surprise that unbelieving parents should complain about having religion "rammed down their children's throats". "Could anything be more absurd?" it asked. "No amount of religious instruction can deprive anybody of the right to believe or disbelieve as they choose". Quite so. It's not the right to choose that is involved, but the ability, and that may well be impaired. "Yet without religious instruction, how can anybody choose sensibly?" the *Telegraph* asked again. But choice involves alternatives, and the only alternatives that are presented in religious instruction are Heaven and Hell.

"MENSA"—as readers of the Personal Column in some of our weeklies will know—is an association of people with a high Intelligence Quotient. It is interesting to note then, that of 495 Mensa males and 165 Mensa females, 365 and 88 respectively have no religious beliefs or describe themselves as Humanists, according to an interim report on "Matters of Religion" (Mensa Survey 160). In the case of non-Mensa males the proportion was lower: 119 out of 222; but in non-Mensa females it was higher: 150 out of 225. On the question of an after-life, 54 per cent of the Mensa males and 48 per cent of the females did not believe, the comparable percentages for non-Mensa males and females being 39 and 28.

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MORMONS SEEM TO BE in the news. *The Sunday Times* (11/2/62) reported that, "after seeking divine guidance . . . for 24 hours", George Wilken Romney, the Mormon President of the American Motors Corporation, had decided to seek Republican nomination for Governor of Michigan. Mr. Romney is also considered as a possible Republican nomination for the Presidency in 1964.

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THE SCOTTISH CHRISTIAN YOUTH ASSEMBLY in Edinburgh heard London described as "a modern Sodom and Gomorrah" behind "its bowler-hatted respectability" (*The People* 11/2/62). The speaker was the Rev. Denis Duncan, editor of the Church of Scotland's weekly newspaper, and he listed these reasons for the accusation: (1) So-called theatre clubs, many of them prospering on sin; (2) The public sale of call girl lists; (3) The back street shop windows filled with adverts for "models"; (4) Photographic and massage agencies and back street purveyors of pornography. Mr. Duncan's picture needs to be seen in proper perspective of course, but in so far as it is true, it seems to be an indictment of our "sweep-it-under-the-carpet" vice laws.

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BY HIS OWN WISH, Lord Birkett, who died on February 10th, was cremated at Golders Green, London, on Tuesday, February 13th, without a funeral service of any kind.

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ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16th, Mr. A. S. Lawrance arranged a very successful Freethought meeting at St. David's College, Lampeter, Cardiganshire, which was addressed by David H. Tribe. St. David's had at one time a theological bent, but now, Mr. Lawrance informs us things are very different, and Mr. Tribe's lecture was well received.

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AT ITS MEETING on January 17th, the Executive Committee of the National Secular Society supported a resolution passed by the Marble Arch Branch calling on the Portuguese Government "to implement the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in its overseas territories and to take immediate steps to prepare its determination". This was sent to the Portuguese Embassy, from whom this reply (dated February 9th) has now been received:

"With reference to your letter of January 22nd last, I have pleasure in informing you as follows: The Portuguese Government has carried out in the Portuguese Overseas Provinces a policy which, in the matter of human rights, as in all others, compares favourably with that of other countries in territories in similar conditions. The Portuguese Government has used its best endeavours to better the living conditions of the peoples of the Overseas Provinces. These are an integral part of Portuguese territory and their inhabitants take part in the political life of the Nation and enjoy the same rights as all Portuguese citizens". It is signed by A. de Carvalho, First Secretary to the Embassy.

Confucius

By ADRIAN PIGOTT
(Concluded from page 52)

AT THE AGE OF 68, after a strenuous life of travel, teaching and endeavour, Confucius returned to his home-town for his remaining four years, and he gave a thumb-nail sketch of his life in characteristically concise terms: "At 15, I thought only of studying. At 30, I had formed my character. At 40, I was sure of myself and had no doubts or complexities. At 50, I knew my position in the land. At 60, nothing disturbed me. At 70 (now that I am retired), I can relax and follow my desires without violating the moral law".

He occupied his last few years in arranging the local songs and music and editing the writings of old sages, singing all the 305 songs personally and adapting their music to stringed instruments. Through his efforts the ancient music was rescued from oblivion and handed to posterity.

He was disappointed at never having gained a permanent position in any government where he could have put his theories into practice. He imagined that he had failed in his mission in life, yet he was not embittered, and he was admired for his nobility of character by his fellow citizens. In 479 BC his pupil Tse Kung found him at home ill and hobbling about with the aid of a stick. He was deploring the fact that "Local chaos still exists and that no ruler has been able to follow me". It must, indeed, have been intensely disappointing for him, in his last days, to have known that the civil disorders (which he had made it his life-work to eradicate) were still prevalent in Shantung. In fact, they were as prevalent as they had been fifty years previously, when he had dedicated his life towards reducing local suffering. In his sorrow, he forgot that he had trained 3,000 promising pupils who eventually handed on his valuable message with success. He refused to be comforted and (with a presentiment of death) he sang a lament to Tse Kung—

The great mountain is crumbling down.

The pillar is falling.

The philosopher is passing out.

The man who had considered himself to have been a failure in life was buried with the greatest honours outside his native town on the banks of the river Sze. The grounds containing his tomb extended to sixteen acres on which a temple was erected to his memory, as well as a library and halls for discussions and study. His personal belongings, such as his caps, gowns, musical instruments, books and carriages were preserved there. Emperors paid homage at the temple, and every visitor to Lu did likewise.

By 200 BC China had become a united empire, and after a visit to Confucius's tomb, the official historian of the Han dynasty wrote these touching words—

"I saw his carriages, robes and books displayed in the temple; and I saw the students reading his works in the library. I found it hard to tear myself away from the place. There have been emperors, kings and great soldiers who enjoyed fame and honour while they lived—but they came to nothing at their deaths. While Confucius (who was but a scholar clad in a cotton gown), became to be acknowledged as being "the Master of Knowledge" for ten generations. All people in China (from the emperor downwards), who discuss the Six Arts, regard him as being the final authority."

Those of his pupils who were not working elsewhere stayed by his grave for three years of mourning. They lovingly made arrangements for the temple and other buildings.

These early Boswells recorded their recollections of their "Great Teacher", thus preserving details of his habits:

When the Master was unoccupied he was relaxed. He looked cheerful.

Whenever his bowl was filled at a feast, he would rise to thank his host. He enjoyed the pleasures of food—but never over-ate. He set no limits on his wine, although he never got drunk.

An official who had been placed in charge of a prison asked how he should administer the post. Confucius replied "You should try to imagine the sorrow and remorse of the prisoners. You must have compassion for them, and you must show no joy at their punishment".

A student inquired about the essentials of good government. Confucius replied: "Sufficient food: sufficient armament and the confidence of the people". The student then asked "Suppose a necessity arose, and it was impossible to have all three? Which should be dispensed with?" Confucius replied: "Armaments should go first—and, after them, the food. (Everyone has always been subject to famine and death.) But, without the confidence of the people, there can be no really good government".

Whenever the Master received a man dressed in mourning, or a blind man, he would always rise—even if they were younger than he was. If, from his carriage, he saw a man dressed in mourning, he would wave his hand to salute him.

He advocated the ancient custom of assigning places of honour to old people at the festive table in the ceremonies of ancestor worship. When his fellow-villagers held a feast, he did not leave until after elderly folk had gone.

When a friend died poor and homeless, Confucius would say "Entrust the funeral to me".

In his private life in the village he was gentle and refined and did not talk much. But at the Court he was eloquent, yet careful of his choice of words.

Confucius seldom talked about profit, destiny, physical exploits, unruly conduct or heavenly spirits.

Confucius once asked some pupils what they desired most in life. He gave shrewd comments on their answers, and then they asked him what he desired most in life. He replied, "I should like to bring Security to the old; to be loyal to my friends and to be affectionate towards the young".

"When speaking to a superior, one must look out for three things. If you talk before you are invited, it is called 'Impulsiveness'. If you fail to talk when you are asked, it is called 'lack of candour'. To talk without noticing the Superior's frame of mind may be called 'blindness'."

A student asked him "Are there any persons whom 'Ideal Man' dislikes?" The Master replied, "Yes! He dislikes those who divulge the faults of others. He dislikes inferiors who malign their superiors and those who react without thinking."

Although Confucius never considered himself to be any higher than being a conscientious teacher of the art of good living, his disciples successfully developed his ideas; and, in the course of the centuries, State worship was accorded to his memory as being "the First Teacher", "the sagest of the sage" and other complimentary titles.

195 BC. His official recognition when the first Han emperor visited his tomb at Lu and publicly paid tributes in his honour.

136 BC. The emperor Wu (Han dynasty), made Confucianism the basic training for all mandarins and officials.

59 AD. Honours were ordered to be paid to his memory in all schools. In every market town of any size, temples and shrines were erected in memory of the Master and his most meritorious followers.

1233 AD. The Sung emperor made the sage's senior male descendant a hereditary duke.

1300 AD onwards. Twice a year, the emperor accompanied by his courtiers used to visit the Confucian temple at Peking and "kow-towed". (This means kneeling on the ground and then placing the hands and head on the ground also. For an emperor to humiliate himself in public is an indication of the extreme reverence in which Confucius was held.)

Then the emperor would rise and proclaim in a loud voice to the assembled Court, "Great art thou, Kung Fu Tzu! Thou of perfect wisdom. Full is thy virtue and thy doctrine complete. Mortals have never known thy equal. Thy teachings and laws have come down to us in glory. All Kings honour thee! Filled with awe, we clash our cymbals and strike our bells".

As the centuries passed by, posthumous honours were heaped upon Confucius. He was promoted to be a duke, a prince, "the sacred teacher of etiquette and good behaviour", and finally in 1906 the last Manchu emperor elevated him to the highest level of all. He was accorded the same honours as were rendered to the sun and moon. Undoubtedly, the great man would have disapproved of such extravagances, which were not in keeping with humility which was one of his basic principles.

Confucian temples and shrines are simple but dignified. They serve as places where reverence and gratitude can be displayed in peace and quiet. They contain nothing ornate, no effigies, pictures or statues, but on the walls there are marble slabs engraved with the most valuable Confucian words of wisdom. And the names of his foremost disciples who spread his theories.

The master had one son (who was quite undistinguished) and two daughters. Today about 40,000 Chinese claim descent from him, and the Confucian family pedigree is the oldest authenticated one in the world. His present day descendants are the seventy-seventh generation in an undisputed direct line.

It is sad to have to record that, in the 20th century, Confucianism has suffered an undeniable decline. This is due to the inevitable march of events in our changing world. For twenty-four centuries, the majority of hundreds of millions of Chinese lived happily, obscurely and innocuously in the immense remote areas of Confucian China resembling the worthy peaceable villagers described in Gray's "Elegy".

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learnt to stray.
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

To disturb peaceful China, "Western Civilisation(?)" started to arrive about 1850. Supported by gunboats, rapacious merchants descended upon the coastal cities of the undefended country. Also accompanying the gunboats were crowds of missionaries of varying creeds who (with the best of motives) sought to introduce new religions intended to improve the Chinese. All missionaries are called "Jesus-men" by the Chinese, who are naturally bewildered by the many varieties of Christianity purveyed by these well-meaning devotees. Ironically enough, all the missionaries came from countries whose ethical records as regards war, crime and social oppression in Victorian days were far below those of Confucian China.

The rich unwieldy country of China was defenceless and unpractised in modern warfare. (It is a tribute to the sanity of the Chinese that—although they were the inventors of gunpowder about 800 AD, they only used it for such innocent purposes as crackers and fireworks. Other nations were less scrupulous and applied gunpowder to warfare.) China had no choice but to modernise herself under the new Republic of 1911. Many of the old ideas were scrapped, and Confucianism was discouraged, although not prohibited. It was frowned upon because it favoured the patriarchal village way of life. Madame Sun Yat Sen considered it "a feudal system which must be eradicated". So Confucianism had to be sacrificed by the leaders of the new Republic, who, by 1925, were in difficulties themselves. As a result China reverted to chaos and civil war, with a number of striving warlords devastating the country. To add to their sorrows, during the 1930s, Japan invaded China (with the tacit approval of the dishonest Western Foreign Ministers). It was then that the young Chinese intellectuals began to realise the extent of the moral bankruptcy of the West. The tragedies of the shameful betrayals of Abyssinia,

Spain and Czechoslovakia also exposed the immoral behaviour of European politicians—and fortified the Chinese in their determination to rely on their own strong right arm, rather than to put any trust in "foreign devils".

In 1928, Chiang Kai Shek emerged as the victorious war-lord, but his shortcomings included the non-Confucian habits of accumulating money for his friends, neglecting his people and forgetting to pay his soldiers. In 1947, the Communists, who were far more honest, had no difficulty in deposing him. But the newcomers did not favour Confucianism either, because of its emphasis on family life which was at variance with submissive obedience required by Governmental orders.

However, neither the corrupt Chiang Kai Shek nor the autocratic Mao Tse Tung can easily eradicate the laudable and lovable habits which "The First Teacher" has implanted into the Chinese since 500 BC. Confucianism has experienced many setbacks during the centuries, but it has always returned. All revolutions have their transient and understandable excesses which eventually subside. It took France about 30 years to return to normal after her revolution. If the ingrained virtues of Confucianism will one day eventually return to the new China, it will be an unbounded benefit for mankind.

The four leading political leaders in Washington, London, Moscow and Peking hold in their hands the destinies of 3,000 millions of the human family; and it is to be hoped that at any Summit Conferences they will be great-minded enough to adopt the spirit of the Confucian "Golden Rule" of Reciprocity, and to realise his saying that "Within the four seas, all men are brothers". The consummate wisdom of the great man from Lu, Shantung is still available to confer further inestimable benefits. He transformed Old Cathay and enabled her people to become the worthiest and best behaved in the world. His wisdom—if it can be allowed further scope in promoting harmonious relations between East and West—can improve our world, and can confer undreamt-of standards of happiness upon future generations of mankind.

THEATRE

"THE BED BUG"

The first English professional performance of Mayakovsky's *The Bed Bug*, at the Mermaid Theatre, London, is not, we are told, up to the standard of that in Moscow in 1960. That may be. Certainly there are criticisms that one can make of this Bernard Miles production. By and large, though, it is both commendable and enjoyable. In some particulars it is excellent.

It is splendidly staged in settings designed by David Myerscough Jones, making good use of the open platform stage and the auditorium. Two scenes, the wedding and the hunting of the bed bug would indeed be hard to fault, the former being among the most moving I have experienced in a theatre, and Joss Ackland gives a most sensitive performance in the principal part of Scrofulovsky. The translation, by Dmitri Makaroff, sounds well.

The Bed Bug is, of course, a remarkable play. Pre-dating the artistically-restricting social (or socialist) realism, it was daring both socially and artistically in 1928. Its (then) futurism proves most adaptable to our present belated but welcome free theatrical style, while its theme is vital to Russia and to the rest of the world. It is encouraging that the play should have been revived in the USSR today, for it is essentially critical of over-organised society. Mr. Bernard Levin has called it "perhaps the bitterest comment ever made on Soviet society from inside", but it isn't quite as simple as that. To find a parallel to Mayakovsky I should go to George Orwell, a man who similarly believed in social equality and shared the revolutionary aspirations of the people, but who stood firmly for individual liberty. Ironically, Orwell, since his death, has been adopted by his Western opponents. They read into him what they want to find there. But Orwell is deeper than that, and so, I suggest, is Mayakovsky. Anyway, his play shouldn't be missed.

C.McC.

CORRESPONDENCE

FROM POLAND

I am very satisfied with your FREETHINKER. This paper is a little surprise to many Polish Catholics, who are so educated by the clergy that they believe only Communists are Atheists and that all the West is Christian. J.J. (Poznan).

SPCK BIRTHDAY CARD

A very cheap birthday card has just come into my possession. It appears to be one of a series sent by the SPCK and Mother's Union to addresses given in the local church — St. Peter's (C of E) Leicester. The first verse on this card for a 2-year-old, just refers in an ordinary way to childish play, growth and sunshine; but the second verse shows how religion tries to catch 'em young even before they can read.

Two years old today,
Folding hands to pray,
God the Father loves you dear,
He is always very near,
Two years old today.

H. SHAW.

THE WAY TO ENLIGHTENMENT

As a Bible student I am interested in your criticisms in THE FREETHINKER. Regarding your view of Satan, who was once Lucifer, a bright angelic being. "Pride and prejudice" were found in him, so he was cast out of heaven, and he seduced Adam and Eve by lies similar to your articles. "Modernists" will swallow anything, we must keep to the written phrases of the Revised (1946) Bible. Then we may all be truly enlightened.

A. WAKEFIELD.

"GOODNESS"

Reading Mr. G. I. Bennett's reply to *Reader's Digest* challenge to Freethinkers (THE FREETHINKER, Friday, 2nd February, 1962) which seems to centre around the quality and cause of "Goodness", I had the feeling that this whole question has been pervaded with confusion.

In the first case, it is only because of religion that the question arises, and were there no religion, there would be no problem.

Goodness in the individual is the natural outcome of evolutionary progress. The goodness obtained by a conversion to any religion is spurious and superficial and is of no value to the recipient or converted one, though it may be of some benefit to the community inasmuch as he is no longer a charge or a nuisance with his "badness". To this person, goodness is always a suit or garment which he wears with wonder and apprehension, and naturally gives continual thanks to one whom he feels much greater and who provides this suit and may remove it at any moment if he fails to give due obeisance. On the other hand, the naturally evolved person does not wear a suit, but has as an

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integral part of his makeup, that goodness which in most cases he is entirely unaware of, and which, of course, varies in degree according to his evolution.

To one who understands evolution, goodness is a natural part of culture which in turn is a major part of the fruit of progression through time; and one reason for man's slow progress in this direction is marriage and progeny of mixed culture levels (physical not financial). An advanced culture level marries a retarded culture level (often recognised as a "well dressed mass of primitivity") and you have Mendelian laws operating culturally.

This problem seems inextricably mixed up with a story of a fall of man and the redeemer, and only adds confusion where there should be clarity of thought.

The solution, to my mind, is to cease all this talk of sin and wickedness and to make people realise that their lack of "goodness" is merely a lack of progress of natural instincts. In other words, they are mentally retarded even though the brain may work to a clever extent.

They would — one and all, then see the true light and would seek to eliminate in themselves those traces of primitivity which they have been unjustly heir to. This would save all this wasted emotionalism and would lead to true progress in the world.

JAMES HENDREN.

OBITUARY

ARTHUR W. DAVIS of West Wickham, Kent, who has died at the age of 92, had for long been a keen member of the National Secular Society and reader of THE FREETHINKER. He was a great book lover and an interesting conversationalist. In keeping with his wishes, the cremation took place without any form of service at Beckenham on February 13th.

We send our sympathy to Mr. Davis's devoted wife and daughter, who nursed him in his last illness.

WITHOUT COMMENT

The New English Bible may be revised four or five years hence said the chairman of the Churches' Joint Committee on the new translation, the Rt. Rev. A. T. P. Williams, at Southampton yesterday.

—The Guardian (16/2/62).

Elderly couple (Freethinkers) seek furnished bed sitting room, kitchen, use of bath. London area. Moderate terms.—

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