

The Freethinker

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ONE OF THE definitely outstanding facts about the present century has been the greatly increased influence of the Vatican, in particular of political Catholicism in Europe and, more recently, in America and Australia; an influence which in the present writer's opinion, owes more to social and political than to strictly religious causes. For if the Catholic Church as such, ranks along with its traditional rival, Islam as one of the world's two major dogmatic religions, the Vatican headquarters of its autocratic chief the Papacy, have during recent epochs taken up position as a front rank political power. As far back as the turn of this century, the German Protestant scholar, Adolf Harnack, had already noted that "it is an empire that this priestly Caesar rules".

Vatican Politics

In a recently translated volume of substantial dimensions, *The Vatican Against Europe* (R. P. McMillan, London, 25s.) (300-odd pages), a French author, M. Edmond Paris, reviews in considerable and very well documented detail, the major features of political Catholicism under Vatican leadership throughout the current century. Actually the ground covered by this vigorous and well-informed narrative will not be entirely new, at least to English readers already acquainted with Avro Manhattan's *The Catholic Church Against the 20th Century*. In point of fact, not only does M. Paris cover much of the same ground as his English predecessor in this field, but his general point of view is broadly similar. Briefly, this is that in pursuit of its unalterable determination to prevent any sort of radical change whether in the political or in the intellectual sphere, the Vatican has consistently backed the most reactionary forces available in these social and economic spheres. In particular, M. Paris, like Mr. Manhattan (whom he quotes), emphasises the close co-operation during the inter-war period between Rome and the contemporary Nazi and Fascist regimes in Germany, Italy and Spain. Indeed, perhaps the most interesting as well as informative part of M. Paris's thesis, is furnished by his insistence on the consistently pro-German attitude of the Papacy from the time of Benedict XV (1914-22), who actually sent the then Mgr. Pacelli (the future Pius XII) on a diplomatic mission to Germany in 1917, with the avowed objective of saving the Kaiser's tottering throne by a compromise peace designed expressly to avert the then impending socialist revolution, to the later policy of collaboration pursued by Pius XII, as Pope, with Hitler during the Second World War.

Pope Pius XII

As I have indicated in my recent *Pope John and the Cold War*, Cardinal Pacelli owed his unexpected election to the Papacy on the eve of World War II, to the fact that he was the ex-Papal Nuncio in Munich (where in 1920 he was an eye-witness of Hitler's first unsuccessful armed rising and where a street is still named after him)

and in Berlin. The primary reason for Pacelli's election as Pope was that, as the German expert of the Vatican, he would be best able to pursue an effective policy of collaboration with the Nazi regime in the German-dominated Europe that the Vatican (like many secular conservatives) expected to result from the then impending war. As presented by our French author, the history of Vatican politics is virtually equivalent to the history of the European political reaction of which the Vatican is the spiritual leader.

The Jesuits

Incidentally, an effective point made here is the unbounded admiration expressed by Hitler for the Jesuits, who had actually

trained his two ablest lieutenants, Goebbels and Himmler, the dreaded chief of the Gestapo. Nor, though the regimes of Hitler, Mussolini *et al*, are nowadays things of the past, does M. Paris evidently think that in the future as in the past, the Vatican is any less likely to be "against Europe" or at least, "against all forms of European progress". On his very last page he makes the point that Dr. Adenauer (himself a Papal Chamberlain and the father of a priest) has succeeded Hitler as the Guardian of the West, "so that even the mortal peril of an atomic war is powerless to deter the Vatican from his criminal bellicism".

One-Sided

It is indisputable that, very particularly in recent years, there is a great deal of evidence to substantiate M. Paris's fundamental assertion that the Vatican is "against Europe"—and the world—in the basic sense of being the deliberate and permanent leader of what may be termed the European (and where possible, extra-European) counter revolution, a counter revolution as ubiquitous as the Papacy itself is basically totalitarian. M. Paris's excellent documentation certainly provides the basis for a formidable case: after all, Fascism is past, but the Papacy retains, and even augments, its current international power. At the same time, I must state that this view of the Vatican, as, so to speak, the quintessence of reaction, appears to me to be rather one-sided and definitely fails to fit some very important—even fundamental and recurring—facts.

Adaptable

Rome has frequently moved with the times, and in point of fact, would probably have perished long ago had she not been able and willing to do so. In this precise respect, the feminine gender affixed to the Catholic Church has perhaps a certain accuracy for if, as Simone de Beauvoir has recently reminded us, women are not monolithic, neither is the Catholic Church. Rome has somehow managed to co-exist effectively in the social sphere with social and economic systems as diverse and dissimilar as chattel slavery, feudalism, capitalism and even (as in 18th century America), with collectivist regimes. How do we, or M. Paris, know that similar proofs of adaptability will not recur in the future also? Indeed, it can be argued, as

— VIEWS and OPINIONS —

The Vatican Against Europe

By F. A. RIDLEY

I myself have done in my recent publication, that unless the Vatican along with its still immense influence in both the contemporary political and ideological fields can manage to "co-exist" with its present *bête noire*, Atheistic Bolshevism in the near future, there may not be any human future left after an atomic crusade in which any future adaptations can transpire.

If I may be allowed to end a review of this, as far as it goes, generally excellent book, on a critical note, I would recommend to present and future critics of the Vatican some study of its variations, since any institution that has managed to co-exist with 2,000 years of history

in what is, after all, an evolutionary world, is not itself generically incapable of further change. It was a former pupil of the Jesuits, the French biologist, Lamarck, who invented the famous theory of the giraffe that "grew" a long neck deliberately in order to survive in the struggle for animal existence. All that M. Paris's eminent fellow countryman had really to do in order to arrive at this biological conception, was to study attentively the history of his former Church and Order which have never demonstrated any reluctance in growing giraffes' necks for their appropriate survival in the given historical milieu.

Pillar of Salt

By EDWARD ROUX

FUNDAMENTALISTS, who interpret the Biblical writings literally, are a dull crowd. Lacking in imagination, they fail to appreciate this human faculty when it is exhibited in the writings and thoughts of others. Analogical moralising is characteristic of the myth, the folk tale and the fairy story. When placed in a religious context these stories do not thereby become literally true. They retain their analogical character. He is lacking in historical and psychological understanding who insists that there was a real Eve in a real Garden of Eden who was tempted by a real snake coiled round a real tree, and so on.

There are liberal churchmen who will agree with this so far as the Old Testament is concerned, but who stand firm and dig in their toes when one tries to shift them from their literal attitude towards the New Testament. The story of the loaves and fishes, for instance, as a possible analogical account by the writer of the second gospel to express his view that the love of God (meaning human fellowship) should be multiplied indefinitely that all may share in it. On the contrary, they insist that there was a historical incident on the shore of Lake Galilee when real loaves and fishes miraculously multiplied themselves under divine guidance.

Similarly your liberal churchmen will not agree that Jesus was said to have been born of a virgin because writers imbued with the ideas of the mystery religions thought that every god must have a miraculous birth. They insist that a real woman called Mary, without knowing any man, gave birth to a real baby called Jesus, which is so much nonsense.

However, in spite of the literalists, the Bible, like Shakespeare, remains an amazing source of analogy and metaphor, which writers may draw upon for the enrichment of their art. And this includes writers of science fiction.

"Lot" is the title of a short story by Ward Moore (Penguin Science Fiction, edited by Brian Aldiss, 1961, 3s. 6d.). The next world war has started and Pittsburgh has been wiped out. Other bombs have hit California, and the inhabitants of Los Angeles are streaming along the highways in their cars, seeking safety in the open country. David Jimmon has prepared for this day, and his station-wagon contains not only his wife, daughter and two sons, but such equipment as one would need for a very lengthy, perhaps a life-long stay in the wilds. As they proceed, Mr. Jimmon becomes increasingly aware that his wife and his sons do not share his views about what is happening in America and the world. They imagine they will return in a week or two to the old comfortable life they have known. His wife is anxious to stop as soon

as possible and put up at a good hotel. The boys are wondering whether they could visit a movie. Only the daughter seems to share her father's serious outlook. They make a final stop to fill the car's petrol tank. Mr. Jimmon makes some excuse to hand his wad of banknotes to his wife, and while she and the boys go off to buy candy, he starts up the car, and, with his daughter beside him, is off.

The Biblical story of Lot (Genesis, 19) describes his escape with his family from the city of Sodom, which Jehovah was about to destroy. And the Lord said: "Look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed". But while they were on their way, "his wife looked back from behind him and she became a pillar of salt".

In *The Bible as History*, Werner Keller tries to prove this story historical by quoting two facts. There is archaeological evidence of towns on the shores of the Dead Sea which were overwhelmed by some catastrophe, probably an earthquake. These included perhaps the Biblical Sodom and Gomorrah. Secondly it is said that near the shores of the lake winds carry salt spray which may form incrustations of salt on objects, including dead bodies, lying on the shore. Knowledge of these things may have influenced the original story tellers, but the story itself is clearly myth.

However the moral is plain enough. If you are faced with a danger and flight is indicated, then flee. If you must choose between long life and short comfort, be resolute in your choice. When fleeing, do not look back. Fundamentalists hold that a real woman looked over her shoulder and was converted there and then into crystals of sodium chloride because she had disobeyed God. We think they miss the point.

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National Secular Society Marble Arch Branch Social in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1, on Saturday, April 14th, 7.30 p.m. Tickets 2s. each. All welcome.

Crime: A Dialogue

By ROBERT LITTLE, M.D.

LIKE LINCOLN'S STEAMBOAT, whose engine stopped when the big whistle blew, Judge Trick had a loud voice.

"We are very just here," said the judge to the man from Mars.

"But," replied the Martian, "to treat unequals equally is the height of inequality. Consider your criminal justice. You will grant that criminals are unequal. And that crime is a symptom of social disease. What, then, has justice to do with disease and its treatment? Does a doctor say he treats pneumonia or syphilis 'justly' when he prescribes penicillin and cures the patient?"

"But," replied Judge Trick heatedly, "crime is not a disease. You can't cure it with penicillin. Man is responsible! Man has free will! We punish crime! And we treat everybody equally."

"Rubbish!" said the man from Mars. "Every measurable biological character varies according to the bell-shaped curve of normal distribution—yes, even man's intelligence and his energy as well as his height. Even identical twins are born unequal, and their environment soon makes them more unlike. Equality, bah! Freedom, bah! You think in terms of the French Revolution."

"Well," continued the judge, "if a man in my court—no matter what man—steals, he gets five years. Stealing's stealing."

"But," replied the Martian, "stealing is only a symptom. Why don't you treat the man and his disease, not merely symptoms? Let us imagine you are a doctor of medicine (which, thank God, you are not!) and a patient with fever is brought to you. The constable says, 'This man has 102° fever'. You say, 'This degree of fever gets five years' hard labour. Next case.'

"This man," says the constable, 'has 104° fever.' You say, '104° fever gets ten years' hard labour. Next case.'

"But," protests a physician who happens to be present, 'the first man has pneumonia and the second malaria.'

"Fever's fever!" says the judge. "Next case."

"Constable: 'This case is in for cough.'

"Judge: 'Coughs get two years' hard labour—then we let 'em out.'

"Doctor: 'Please, sir, the man has tuberculosis and is a danger to his cell mates and to society.'

"Silence," roars the judge, 'or I'll have you up for contempt. Coughs get out in two years.'

"This," continued the man from Mars, "is how you treat social deviates or 'criminals,' as society calls them. What a man does is a *symptom*, and you treat the symptoms (equally as you say). You don't treat the man or his disease which caused the symptom (what he has done). The treatment in your hospitals (prisons) makes most patients worse than when they entered. The patient, furthermore, may be released before he is cured (!) or kept in long after, in rare cases, he is cured. Or he may be discharged in a contagious condition and a danger to society."

"Shut up," roared Judge Trick, "or I'll have you up for contempt. We've always done it that way. Yeah, and we often kill 'em. It's a great deterrent and, besides, the people love it!"

Said the man from Mars, "Statistics show that it is not a deterrent. Killing merely repeats the crime, and we have two killings instead of one. Legalised murder is still murder! Man is a power-loving, emotional sadistic

animal with little insight into his real motives. He loves vicarious suffering. Witness the popularity of the Roman arena, the Spanish bull ring, the modern prize fights. Consider sadistic American comics and gangster and cowboy films when the one-two punch to the jaw settles all arguments. The H-bomb diplomacy, which replaces reason! The napalm bombs, destruction of open cities, the extermination of the Jews. The massacre of Hiroshima and the present vast preparation and stock piling of missiles for the nuclear destruction of the whole world. *Homo sapiens* is a misnomer for all except men with ideals like Einstein, Schweitzer, and Bertrand Russell. Yet Earl Russell was jailed as a pacifist and look what was done to Socrates, Bruno, Galileo, Servetus *et al.*

"Even some intelligent men," he continued, "perhaps also scientists or mathematicians, compartmentalise their brains and believe, at one and the same time, with science and the Garden of Eden, original sin, and the fall of man. What they imagine to be thought is but a chain reaction where 'a' suggests 'b' and 'c' like a row of falling dominoes. The conventional man—the mass man—is a creature of emotion and habit.

"Justice!" exclaimed the Martian. "Plato and Socrates used up a whole dialogue trying to arrive at a suitable definition of justice. The 'will of the stronger' was thrown out. Nor is justice vengeance. Your criminal law is based on empirical habit, custom, and theology. There is a popular theology which believes in hell fire and eternal punishment. If 'God' inflicts eternal torment on the human race for an absurd peccadillo, like eating a forbidden apple, why should the law balk at ten or twenty years of hard labour for a man who has misbehaved?"

"We've always done it that way," the judge insisted.

Said the man from Mars, "Blame and cruelty are by no means the universal remedy they are supposed to be, and never forget that blame and censure raise feelings of self-importance and virtue in those who indulge in them. 'How holy am I!' they are really saying. 'I am not as this creature is. I am of the elect—a child of God.'"

Roared Judge Trick, "We have 4,000 years of precedent. We look to precedent for our answers. Did you ever hear of Hammurabi?"

"Precedent!" replied the Martian contemptuously. "Why don't you look forward with science? Why not pass *new* laws which conform to human nature? Why not treat offenders scientifically and abolish cruelty? Why is not crime prevention a branch of public health and preventive medicine?"

"Science," sneered Judge Trick, "you have not told me what science is yet."

"Science," replied the man from Mars, "is classified, organised, verifiable knowledge. It is based on measurements and relations of more and less. The scientist eschews magic, superstition, theology, and supernaturalism. To the scientist all is natural. All phenomena are preceded by related events which, to the trained mind, are the causes. To use Bacon's classic phrase, the scientist 'controls Nature by obeying her.' Yes, the scientist believes that human conduct is caused, that it can be predicted statistically (if not individually), and that it can be modified and controlled by modifying heredity (eugenics) and by improving environment. The scientist
(Concluded on next page)

This Believing World

So the New English Bible has sold now four times as many copies as the publishers expected, which proves that there is still plenty of money in the Old Book. It always was a money-maker as far as sales were concerned, but the solid question behind all the sales is always, is the Precious Word read? Ask the first Christian you meet who has bought the New English Bible to give you the Marvellous Message which Paul gave to the world through say, Titus, or the Ephesians, and see what happens. Even some of the greatest evangelical preachers would have jibbed if asked to tell us exactly what Zephaniah or Haggai taught, without mugging it up.

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So far, the figures for the New English Bible are 3,961,292 copies sold, while poor Lady Chatterley has only managed 3,250,000, though here it can be said with truth that the Lady's buyers all do read her amorous adventures—yes, even with enthusiasm. And some of them will probably read the book again. But how many ordinary people ever read the entrancing Epistles of Paul *twice* — even in the New English Bible?

★

The rector at Trimley St. Martin's (in Suffolk), the Rev. A. Denney, wants to know if "your child is one of the lost million on Sunday?" He is very disturbed at the way Sunday schools are steadily being depleted, and is trying hard to bring the kiddies back. According to the interview with him reported in the *Daily Express* (March 15th) he takes two things for granted — that the children want to go to a Sunday school and that the Church's teaching has never been questioned. But how can he and his fellow teachers prove that the stories of a Hebrew-speaking serpent, the Fall of Man, the Devil with whom Jesus flew into the air, and dozens of similar ones are true? It is quite uncertain that the mass of children — except those under five or six — will now swallow these Oriental myths as easily as he has. After all, they learn some science in schools.

★

The very latest proof that religion, like apples, is good for you comes from a Dr. H. Williams who, in his book, *The Will to Health* insists that "you can improve your health by acquiring and holding on to a strong religious belief". The *Daily Mail's* pet theologian, Miss Rhona Churchill, reports this (March 20th) and rather surprisingly does not quite agree — surprisingly because she swallowed at least half a dozen Lourdes "miracles" without a tremor. She quotes a "God-fearing" psychiatrist, a strong believer in Christianity who thought "it is most dangerous to make such unfounded claims for religion".

★

As far as Dr. Williams is concerned however, he does not specify Christianity *only* as a cure for illness—any religion will do the trick, he blandly informs us. Whether this includes some of the many still believed in by most African tribes is not quite clear. For those who would like to see what religion can do, he claims that "It is the act of believing that does you good and keeps you healthy, not what you believe in". Most people would rather trust a doctor or even a humble aspirin, all the same.

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Dr. C. F. Whitley, who is Lecturer in Hebrew and Biblical history in the University College of North Wales, has made a startling discovery about Humanism. He has found out where we can find "the earliest statement of Humanism", and we should not be too surprised to learn it is in

the first chapter of Genesis — "And God created man in his own image". No lecturer on Biblical history is going to give up Genesis if he can help it, even if Evolution does prevail in all scientific circles.

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But the real point is that nowhere in his lecture, given first on the radio, and reproduced in *The Listener* (March 15th) does he give any date for the first chapter of Genesis. He takes it for granted that Moses wrote it down as a "revelation" from the "Creator God" (as he calls "El") and that it was written in perfect Hebrew by Moses about the year 1450 BC., whereas the truth is that *no one knows* when Genesis was written, and therefore no one can possibly say that it contained the earliest reference to "Humanism". Still Genesis must be saved at all costs, even at the expense of making silly statements about "Humanism".

CRIME: A DIALOGUE

(Concluded from page 107)

believes that, had he the criminal's heredity and environment, he would himself have been criminal. He believes in treating scientifically, not in punishing the criminal. He believes in preventive hygiene—not sin and retribution here and hereafter. His guiding star is Dr. Schweitzer's 'reverence for life' and Bertrand Russell's 'love guided by wisdom.'

"A worthy physician of the last century writes in his book *Physician and Patient* that all men claim proficiency in the art of mending an ailing fire and in physic. The good doctor omitted to state that they also feel competent to judge and treat their delinquent fellows. Such ignorant men imagine themselves to be expert in the most difficult branch of medicine—psychiatry. For criminal law, although not yet so classified, is really a branch of psychiatry.

"All the charges and convictions which are hung on a 'criminal' are scientifically beside the point because they are symptoms of a disease—half the criminal's own and half society's. A good doctor treats the disease and the man who has it, while the lawyers, judges, and legislators concern themselves only with symptoms and with irrelevant points of law. It is a rare Clarence Darrow who can see through this humbug, and Darrow could not change it but used it cleverly to win his cases.

"The first thing to do is to abolish the death penalty. Second, to require a basic science training for all lawyers, judges and legislators."

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Lecture Notices, Etc.

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INDOOR

- Birmingham Branch N.S.S. (Midland Institute, Paradise Street), Sunday, April 8th, 6.45 p.m.: T. D. SMITH, "What My Faith Means to Me".
- Conway Discussions (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Tuesday, April 10th, 7.30 p.m.: MRS. LILIAN HARDERN, DR. D. McI. JOHNSON, M.P., and others, "Is there 'Occasion for Ombudsman' in G.P.?"
- East Surrey Humanist Group (Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, West Croydon), Sunday, April 8th, 7.15 p.m.: COLIN MCCALL, "Militant Atheism".
- Leicester Secular Society (Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, April 8th, 6.30: EDMUND TAYLOR, "The Cultural Lag".
- South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, April 8th, 11 a.m.: DR. RICHARD PETERS, "Our Emotions and Their Training".
- Tyneside Humanist Group (100 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle, 1), Wednesday, April 11th, 7.30 p.m.: MRS. G. WILKES, Recital of Gramophone Records.

Notes and News

THE PIONEER PRESS recently received a letter from a blind man asking for a copy of *The Age of Reason* by Thomas Paine, as his original copy had "vanished via the forgetful borrower". The writer is a member of the Tape Reading Service for the Blind which, at his request, is at present reading *The Rights of Man* on to tape for him. He asked if THE FREETHINKER was still published and added "I hope so". Learning that it was, he remarked: "I am delighted to know that the old faithful is in circulation, and don't be surprised if one day you receive from me an annual subscription for it once more . . . some very strange things happen".

★

THE REV. GORDON GIRLING, Vicar of Holy Innocent's Church, Kingsbury, thinks it "inconsiderate" to specify "no flowers" at the funeral of a relative, and he very much dislikes private funerals. "As far as I know", he says (*Evening Standard*, 16/3/62), "there is virtually no such thing as a service in private for a Christian person". And, referring to the death of a public figure, clearly Lord Birkett, he adds: "It is somewhat deplorable to those of

The Freethinker Sustentation Fund

PREVIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED £144 0s. 6d. Pius John 23, £4 6s. 10d.; Anon, 5s.; Anon, 2s. 6d.; J. B. Miller, 9s.; S. Merrifield, 2s. 6d.; Miss K. Kough, £1; C. Cullen, 6s.; Mrs. N. Henson, £2; R. Astbury, £1; R. J. C., £1 17s. 6d. Total to date, March 30th, 1962, £155 9s. 10d.

us who are practising Christians to know that at his cremation there was no service of any kind, that his son was the only person present, and stood for a brief moment only before the coffin was committed to the fire". To which the answer is plain. Lord Birkett personally requested a private funeral with no service and his wishes were rightly carried out. What a few "practising Christians" think about it is of no consequence.

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"WHERE IN YOUR BODY is your soul?" asked Ronald Bedford, in the *Sunday Pictorial* (11/3/62), and went on to cite the results of an inquiry by Dr. Neville Gittleson of the Department of Psychiatry at Manchester University, reported in *The Journal of Mental Science*. Dr. Gittleson questioned twenty nine women and sixteen men having treatment for mental ailments, including severe headaches, and the same numbers of men and women in hospital for operations on other parts of the body. He found, said Mr. Bedford, "that a person tends to think his soul is in the part of the body he regards as most vital. In other words, if you suffer from headaches you are more likely to believe your soul is in your head than if you suffer from pains elsewhere". But only a small number of the "headache" patients believed they had a soul at all: ten of the twenty-nine women and four of the sixteen men. Among the surgical cases, thirteen women and thirteen men thought they had souls, and eleven and seven respectively placed them in the heart.

★

GIRLS WHO ARE "hungry for romance" have been accused by the Bishop of Innsbruck, Dr. Paul Rusch, of invading the Austrian Alps in pursuit of handsome skiing instructors. And the *Daily Herald* (23/3/62) tells us that the Bishop made his attack on the "immorality of foreign city girls" at a private clergymen's conference at Tutzing, Bavaria, the quoted phrase presumably being his own. His allegation has been denied. "I can say that 99 per cent of our women pupils are interested only in learning to ski", said one famous instructor. But assuming that the Bishop was right that the girls' chief interest in skiing was in the men who taught it, he still wouldn't be justified in calling this "immorality". It is Catholic perversion that sees immorality in a girl seeking romance or wooing a ski-master.

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BUT CATHOLIC PRIESTS are not the only ones with sex-obsessions. The Rev. C. Thomas, a Congregational minister of Hinckley, Leicestershire, said recently that "we live in an age that is riddled with sex until it has assumed a proportion on its physical side that is truly frightening" (*Leicester Mercury*, 15/3/62). "One trembles for a generation growing up in a society in which on every bookstall there are papers and novels waiting to be purchased which reek of sex", he continued, and he recalled nostalgically "That full and satisfying Victorian Sunday . . .". The Secretary of Leicester Secular Society, C. H. Hammersley, put the matter in perspective in a letter to the *Leicester Evening Mail* (20/3/62). "If you go around looking for that kind of thing", wrote Mr. Hammersley, "you could say that every age has been riddled with sex, and none less than the Victorian age . . .". He referred Mr. Thomas to Henry Mayhew's *London's Underworld*.

The Sabbath and The Lord's Day

By H. CUTNER

ONE OF OUR READERS and an occasional interesting contributor, Mr. C. Stanley, has been having some theological arguments with Canon T. B. Scrutton (who speaks on Tower Hill on Tuesdays) about the "Sabbath Day", and now finds himself having to answer a "leading" question—"Did Christians before 320 AD keep Sunday as a day of worship and thanksgiving for the Resurrection?" The Canon very cleverly, according to Mr. Stanley, had drawn a "red herring" across some previous arguments on the Sabbath Day—which, as he once was a practising barrister, he could often very well do.

These "red herrings" were very well known to me in my early days of arguing with Christians. I would go, primed with "unanswerable" questions, to Hyde Park and elsewhere but, generally to my surprise, it was I who within five minutes or so had to answer questions, mostly also of the unanswerable kind. What could a young and untrained Freethinker do with one of those Christians who can twist the argument in a few minutes because of his longer dialectical experience?

I dealt with the whole Sabbath question very fully in a pamphlet (*What is the Sabbath Day?*) and any Freethinker who gets into a dispute with a "Lord's Day" champion should do his best to confine himself well within what is therein said. The subject is a vast one, and J. N. Andrews, whose book *The History of the Sabbath* is easily the best ever written upon it, devotes over 500 pages to the fullest elucidation of the problem, following this book up by another of over 100 pages dealing in full with the *Testimony of the Fathers*. These works are not only out of print, but probably almost unobtainable. I doubt whether anything now written on the subject could supersede them even though they were written by a Seventh Day Adventist.

The very first point which should be made is that for Jews the Sabbath Day takes first place as a "sacred" day. It must be kept "holy", hence a number of what seem to most people—and even Jews—to be silly restrictions mark it out. In the Old Testament two reasons are given for keeping the Sabbath day—that is the *seventh* day of the week. The first is that God rested on that day after the heavy and laborious work of creating the Universe; the second is in Deuteronomy (5, 15) the Sabbath must be kept in memory of the way God brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Whether the Israelites kept the Sabbath day before Moses took over, I have been unable to find out. I don't think it was known to them. The word means "rest" and, at least ever since the Hebrew Bible was first compiled, the Jews have always done their best to rest on that day. As far as the complete Bible is concerned, the seventh day Sabbath was never changed. There is not a word in the Bible which shows the early Christians keeping any other day as a Sabbath than the *seventh* day. When was it therefore changed for Christians to the *first* day of the week called then (as now) Sunday, the Mithraic day devoted to the worship of Mithras the Sun-God?

To begin with, it must be admitted that the converts to Christianity, most of them Jews, kept the seventh day as the Sabbath day though, at the same time, they also kept Sunday in some form as a day of thanksgiving for their new Lord's Resurrection. But, and this is crucial, they did not call the Lord's day the *Sabbath* day. That was, once for all, the day on which the Lord rested;

and his divine command to keep the Sabbath Day holy could never be abrogated. As it happened, however, Paul (or whoever wrote the Epistles under that name) decided to do away with as much of Judaism and its laws and rituals as possible, so that when the story of Jesus was made up, he also is shown to do away with the Sabbath day which was for all Jews the most sacred day of all. There is not in the whole of the New Testament—as Godfrey Higgins long ago pointed out in his *Horae Sabbaticae*—a single passage clearly "directing the observance of a Sabbath". One would have expected that in Acts we should have it clearly stated that the seventh day was no longer obligatory on the new converts, and that the day devoted to worshipping the sun would henceforth be called the Christian Sabbath day. Nothing like this is said anywhere in Acts.

And what about the famous Justin Martyr whose two "Apologies" for Christianity appeared about 150 AD? He knew nothing about a "first day" Sabbath. In fact, in the famous *Dialogue* with the Jew, Trypho, the latter actually chides Justin, saying, "You observe no festivals or Sabbaths".

When therefore did the early Christians substitute the Lord's Day, on which they celebrated the Resurrection, for the Jewish Sabbath as a *Sabbath*? The plain and sufficient answer is that nobody knows. If Canon Scrutton does, let him produce the evidence.

Andrews quotes that fiery Christian Tertullian (c. 200 AD) admitting "that Sunday was a heathen festival when it obtained a foothold in the Christian Church, and that the Christians, in consequence of observing it, were taunted with being sun-worshippers".

With so many Pagan sun-worshippers converted to Christianity, it is not so remarkable that *their* sacred day, Sunday, kept first by them as the Lord's Day in memory of the Resurrection of Jesus, gradually became also their Sabbath day, leaving the real Sabbath day to the Jews. But we simply do not know how long it took for the change. Andrews quotes the Christian writer, Lactantius, who died in 325 AD, as containing no reference in his voluminous works to the first day of the week as a Sabbath. And only twice does he use the word Sabbath, and this is not in connection with Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. Here then is the chance Canon Scrutton is no doubt waiting for — to prove from Lactantius that Christians were divinely ordered to change the Sabbath day of the Bible to the first day of the Pagans.

Incidentally, it is not only the divinely-ordered seventh day as the Sabbath which Christians like Canon Scrutton have abrogated. Most, if not all, the dietary laws in the Old Testament are also contemptuously thrown overboard by Christians. And I am sure the worthy Canon will be able to supply Mr. Stanley with good reasons for so doing. But for many centuries there was one Divine command in the Old Testament which no Christian ever disputed, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live". However much they hated the Jews and most of the laws in the Pentateuch, Christians were determined not to suffer a witch to live and proceeded through many centuries to exterminate at least a million men, women, children and even animals with the utmost savagery. The Jewish Sabbath they rejected with the greatest happiness too, but not putting witches to death.

And finally one more word. No Freethinker should ever bother about answering such a point as that raised by Canon Scrutton. None of us cares two hoots when the early Christians took over the Pagan day devoted to sun worship as their own Sabbath Day. If the Bible is really "Divine" then there is only one Sabbath day for Jews and Christians alike. It is the *seventh* day of the week — and Canon Scrutton knows it.

Giving and Receiving

By DENIS WATKINS

By PUTTING ASIDE any diffidence it may have had and boldly asking for money from parishioners, regardless of whether they attend church or not, the Church of England seems to have hit the jackpot. The bright new scheme called Christian Stewardship has been handled with a fine degree of delicacy, giving donors the impression that the Church has done them a favour by relieving them of their cash. Collection plans are followed through with verve, and the contributors do little except provide the money.

Interest in the scheme is kept alive by visits of collectors, the supply of graphs and statistics showing the relation of donations to targets set, and sometimes by gatherings of parishioners lured by the promise of a free supper. An attempt is made to obtain promises of a specific amount to be paid each week, and periodically a slip is issued showing the amount given compared with that promised. This is a rather nice touch as, in the case of a deficit, it looks as if the donor is in debt. Presumably a salutary feeling of guilt is engendered. Conversely, those who keep up their payments will no doubt be warmed by a self-righteous glow.

Since March 16th, the *Christian Stewardship* scheme has had the support of the *New Citizen*, which costs 4d., is published by the Christian Citizen Publicity Co. Ltd., and appears to be mainly concerned with bringing home to its readers the need to contribute money to the Church. It is apparently designed for popular appeal, and naivety is the keynote of its articles. There is a pattern of fairy tale innocence in which Christian writers assume their readers live. On the back page a picture, reminiscent of Sunday School days, will show a white suited cleric talking, in a timber yard, to a negro appropriately garbed in jeans. There is no attempt to deal with the challenges to Christianity, the paper merely fostering the myth that God is in his heaven and Christian Stewardship will keep him there.

The Christian Stewardship Scheme, by going outside the immediate congregation brings in money from many nominal Christians who do not wish to be troubled by attending church. In a Christian community there is a natural bias against thinking ill of religion and a small contribution to the Established Church is not much of an inconvenience. Donors do not, however, share the bubbling enthusiasm and breathless anticipation of the clerics who see Christian Stewardship heralding a new resurgent Christianity. The money they pay may, at first, assuage the guilt they feel at their neglect of their faith, but when the expiatory contributions become irksome many nominal Christians are likely to wonder if their tottering faith is worth the money.

NEXT WEEK

A MODERN REFORMATION

By E. G. MACFARLANE

Non-Smoking Compartment

By OSWELL BLAKESTON

"Do you mind if I come in here, lady?" He was carrying a paper parcel and he looked delinquent.

"But," said the nun desperately, "but . . . this is a non-smoker."

He stubbed out his cigarette and put it behind his ear. "Do you know anything about the Law?" he demanded.

"Oh," she said wildly, "you might . . . you might find a lawyer in . . . in a smoking compartment. That's for men, isn't it? I mean if you really want to find a lawyer."

He laughed unpleasantly and he told her quite brutally that he was on parole. He was going back to another eighteen months, and he wondered what the chances were of getting another little jaunt before he'd served his term.

It came to the nun that, whatever she felt, she simply had to try to be kind. It might make all the difference.

Fearfully, she set out to talk about innocent things. She tried to find out what he'd been doing before he went to prison. But he was cagey about this, and it seemed to her that soon they were talking as if they were discussing what some young student had done before he went to a university. It was false. It was not the thing that mattered. But she couldn't ask him why he'd been arrested, could she? Supposing it was a case of rape? He was blond and had a hare-lip.

She looked out of the window at squalid little houses drenched in rain. Where was the prison? Wouldn't it be prison to live in such a house and go to a factory every day? Wasn't it prison to be shut up in a convent and only be allowed out for three days because one's father was dying?

An attendant banged down the corridor. It was time for the first lunch. She had booked a seat, but could she leave her luggage with such a creature?

Well . . . wasn't it the Christian role to show trust?

When she came back from the dining-car, the boy was smoking furiously. He greeted her by name.

"How did you know?" she gasped.

He jerked his thumb at the rack, and she realised that he had read the label on her case.

The knowledge of her name seemed to have made him more familiar and he started to tell her how he'd like to join the regular army, only they wouldn't have a man with a criminal record. That seemed so odd to her. Surely the army wanted . . . killers and . . . and ravishers . . . and pillagers?

She shuddered, and then she saw that he had a woman's name tattooed on each of his fingers.

"I did it myself", he said proudly.

"Oh," she murmured, "you must be ruthless. I'm such a coward. Didn't it hurt terribly?"

"It hurts to leave you, lady," he jeered, "but this is where I get out. Keep your chin up, sister. Be seeing you sometime."

It came to her as a shock that he knew the address of the convent from her luggage label. But surely he wouldn't attempt to see her there? Yet a man like that might attempt anything. He had forced his way into the compartment. He might do anything for . . . for "kicks"?

Dear God, would he find his lawyer and get another parole, or would she have to wait a whole eighteen months to find out what he'd meant by "Be seeing you sometime"? . . . Or had the wretched boy simply been com-

mitted to jail for smoking in a non-smoking compartment? After all, she'd been given a life sentence, only because her parents were religious fanatics!

Perhaps God was good, and it really didn't matter if she ever encountered him again or not. But she knew one thing. She was going to buy a packet of cigarettes and smoke one before she went back inside Mother Superior's "hallowed walls"!

CORRESPONDENCE

CONFUCIUS, ETC.

Mr. Adrian Pigott deserves profound thanks for his articles on Confucius. The memory of such an ancient freethinker should be kept green. It may not be of vital importance to know his domestic habits (G. Thomas, p.80) but it is extremely interesting. And his attitude to the blind and them that mourn provides us with guidance even today. Let us have some more from the same pen.

Incidentally, I should like to praise that ideal book for young people, *The Human Body* by Bibby and Morison. It can be obtained from the Pioneer Press at 2s. 6d., and I shall see that it is available to my grandchildren. W. E. HUXLEY.

THE CRIME OF AUSTRIAN HIERARCHY

In June last year I reported in THE FREETHINKER that, sixteen years after the downfall of Hitler, there was still a picture and memorial tablet in a church in Lienz (East Tyrol) declaring that in the 16th century a gentile child had been murdered by the Jews, who had confessed under torture that the victim's blood was needed for ritual purposes. I added that the Austrian hierarchy, despite many protests, stubbornly refused to remove this example of group defamation. As I happen to be in personal correspondence with Dr. Kreisky, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, I mentioned in a letter to him that I had sent a copy of my article to the Presse Attaché of the Austrian Legation in London, hoping for a demerit, but that I had received no acknowledgment of it.

"I understand", I went on, "that the Church, if forced to remove these documents of barbaric anti-Semitism from the church in Lienz, would insist on exhibiting them in an urban museum. Bearing in mind that Jew-baiting has long been and still is rampant in Austria, this should only be permitted if these exhibits were to be kept in a 'chamber of horrors', not open to the public at large. Every sensible person knows that (a) the allegation of blood ritual was first pinned on to the Early Church by the so-called Heathen, and (b) that Jews under no circumstances must eat blood and ritually cleanse even animal meat from blood. Therefore, to accuse them of such a primitive crime reduced the spiritual level of Austrian Catholicism to that of the fascist John Birch Society in the USA. The accusation against the Jews is just as mad as the one that Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles were crypto-Communists.

In his prompt reply, the Minister wrote: "Dear Mr. W., To your letter of February 24th, I can tell you that I have contacted the highest ecclesiastical authorities with regard to the memorial tablets in St. Andrew's Church at Lienz: I understand that they already know of it and this question will be on the agenda of the Bishops' Conference. Kindest regards".

I then wrote to a high-ranking educationalist, a pillar of Austrian Catholicism, who, as the editor of the *Austrian Teachers' Journal* occasionally publishes my linguistic research articles. I told him to do what he could, and said that I could not understand what the Bishops still had to deliberate about, as the present Pope and many of his predecessors already had categorically decided against this piece of defamation. At the moment of writing I have not received his reply, but I feel that it would help if a number of people sent letters of protest to the Austrian authorities. O. WOLFGANG.

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NAN FLANAGAN

I was more than interested to read in last week's FREETHINKER that Nan Flanagan had at long last got her translation of *The Sin of Father Amaro* published. My mind goes back perhaps 15 years ago, when I had a lively correspondence with Nan in Lisbon, and she told me she had translated the book and wondered if I could get it published for her. She sent the manuscript and I presented it to Watts & Co., but they could not entertain it, due to the paper shortage. As every publisher was bothered in the same way at that time, I returned the manuscript to her but she had tremendous difficulty in getting possession of it again, as the Post Office held it up for a long time and she almost despaired of seeing it again. I remember I had to get a declaration signed by the Portuguese Consul in Barrow-in-Furness and send it to help her to recover the manuscript. For some reason I cannot remember, our correspondence ceased and I would like to write and congratulate her on at last achieving her ambition to get the book published. Is it possible please for you to give me her present address?

I have taken THE FREETHINKER for many years and think I got Nan's name and address originally from your paper.

(Mrs.) MABEL JENKINSON.

[Miss Flanagan's address has been given to Mrs. Jenkinson.—ED.]

DISCLAIMER

Without seeking to reopen a closed correspondence, may I ask you to give publicity to a personal disclaimer of statements by Mr. Bennett in THE FREETHINKER for March 23rd, 1962? (1) I do not "preach" the course of sexual conduct commonly known as "Free Love". (2) I do not "practise" the course of sexual conduct known as "Free Love". The assertion to the contrary is based upon a misunderstanding of what I have written.

F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT.

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