

The Freethinker

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WHEN SIR CHARLES SNOW was installed as Rector of the University of St. Andrews, he spoke most appropriately on the subject of Magnanimity. Sir Charles (as we noted on April 20th) put off an operation for a detached retina which had caused blindness in his left eye, so that the installation ceremony might be held; in itself, I suggest, an act of magnanimity. And earlier this year he had displayed this virtue in consenting to the publication in *The Spectator* (March 9th) of a particularly nasty attack on himself by Dr. F. R. Leavis. Now that the resulting commotion has died down, it is perhaps opportune to attempt an appraisal of Dr. Leavis's criticism, and of the two speeches, as indicative, at least in some ways, of the attitudes of the two speakers.

The Two Cultures

Dr. Leavis began his Richmond Lecture at Downing College, Cambridge, on February 28th, as follows: "If confidence in oneself as a master-mind, qualified by capacity, insight and knowledge to pronounce authoritatively on the frightening problems of our civilisation, is genius, then there can be no doubt about Sir Charles Snow's". It would be hard to find magnanimity there, and most of the lecture is in this vein. "Intellectual nullity" and "portentous ignorance" are just two of Dr. Leavis's ascriptions to a man who strives to lessen the gap between Russian and Western culture, as well as between what he has called the "two cultures" in our own civilisation, those of the arts and the sciences.

Sir Charles no doubt had Dr. Leavis specially in mind when saying at St. Andrews, that "we are in danger of forgetting what it is like to be generous to each other", but he went on to larger illustrations. (I take the text from *The Sunday Times*, April 22nd, 1962.)

How many Englishmen [Sir Charles asked] really understand, or want to understand, the great things, admirable by any standards, that the United States has done in the last generation? How many Englishmen understand, or want to understand, that during the past twenty years the United States has done something like 80 per cent of the science and scholarship of the entire Western world?

And:

How many Englishmen understand, or want to understand, that the Soviet Union suffered casualties—let us use the hard English word, deaths—on a scale which no great country has ever suffered; and that, in 1945, immediately after this apocalyptic experience, the Soviet Union, as its first task, threw its creative energy into education? Education, which in depth and width, leaves us standing. We have already seen some spectacular by-products whizzing round in space. We shall inevitably see more remarkable results than those. Of course, magnanimity is not everything. Honesty is important, too. But need honesty involve rudeness? I suggest not. It is petty, to say (as Dr. Leavis did): "Snow is, of course, a—no, I can't say that; he isn't: Snow thinks of himself as a novelist". C. P. Snow is, in fact, a very interesting and widely-read novelist. But, to continue. Are not clarity and conciseness valuable qualities in a

lecture, too? I should say so and I am sure any unbiased reader must agree that neither is noticeable in Dr. Leavis's. His lecture was something of a circumlocution. He accused Snow of being repetitious, but could hardly escape the same censure. But if the Richmond Lecture had an aim other than sarcasm at the expense of C. P. Snow, Bertrand Russell, H. G. Wells, *The Guardian*, *New Statesman*, and the serious Sunday papers, it would seem to be to assert the supreme importance of literature (by which Dr. Leavis means Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence and just a very few others) in the life of humanity. Now I am a great lover and—I flatter

myself—something of an amateur critic of literature. It so happens that my tastes differ from those of Dr. Leavis, which means automatic damnation, not only in his eyes, but in those of his many disciples. (I am guilty, for instance, of the sin against the Holy Ghost in considering Lawrence overrated.) But something more fundamental than individual taste is involved here.

Literature and Life

According to Dr. Leavis, "In coming to terms with great literature we discover what at bottom we believe". Now surely it is in coming to terms with *life*, that we discover what at bottom we believe—at least in any practical sense. Literature may help us to come to terms with life, it can illuminate life, increase our awareness, but our beliefs must ultimately be tested in living. Only a literary don could argue that the "centre of a university" should be a "vital English school", thereby exemplifying the very danger indicated by C. P. Snow in his "two cultures" thesis.

Bread and Jam

It is hard to leave aside Dr. Leavis's pettiness and rudeness, they are no integral part of his lecture. And his slighting remark that Snow "knows all about Russian literature" is self-defeating. If one has to know all about a subject before one speaks on it, the result is silence. Dr. Leavis doesn't know all about English literature—or even *all* about D. H. Lawrence. But behind the rudeness I think we can detect the old fear that the individual will be engulfed in what has been called "mass culture". That this is a very real danger, may be conceded, but hardly, I should have thought, inherent in the social views of Bertrand Russell (described as "something of a paradigmatic hero for Snow"), H. G. Wells or Snow ("himself the spiritual son of H. G. Wells"). That all these men should want to see everybody receiving a share of the material and cultural benefits made possible by scientific and technological progress, doesn't mean that they undervalue the individual. They have never suggested that man lives by bread alone, though they may have indicated that he can't live without it. Snow, for instance, in his St. Andrews address, reminds us that about two-thirds of the world's population doesn't get enough to eat, and he has previously used "jam" as a symbol of something more

— VIEWS and OPINIONS —

C. P. Snow and F. R. Leavis

— By COLIN McCALL —

than mere bread, but he is far from unconcerned with the "higher" things of life. To identify his attitude with that of Mr. Macmillan as Dr. Leavis does ("You never had so much jam") is both cheap and false.

The "liberal-idealist sage and social philosopher, Sir Joseph Mattheson", in Lawrence's *Women in Love*, reminds Dr. Leavis "irresistibly of Bertrand Russell", and "the Lawrence-like Birkin" of the novel says (with Leavis's approval): "We are all different and unequal in spirit—it is only the social differences that are based on accidental material conditions. We are all abstractedly and mathematically equal, if you like. Every man has hunger and thirst, two eyes, one nose and two legs. We're all the same in point of number. But spiritually, there is pure difference and neither equality nor inequality counts". It is true that we are all "different and unequal" in what Lawrence called "spirit", whether that be interpreted as mental capacity or capacity for living, but there is nothing mathematically abstract about our fundamental sameness (as Shakespeare and John Donne knew), and to assert that "neither equality nor inequality counts" is not only false, but dangerously so. Dr. Leavis may sneer at "bread and jam" illustrations, as Lawrence casually dismisses "hunger and thirst" as points of number, but Russell, Snow and Wells have rightly taken an opposing line. They have recognised that "material conditions" need no longer be "accidental".

Explicit?

Dr. Leavis prides himself on the precise exposition of literary texts, which are often very far from clear in themselves. His lecture, unfortunately, is in the style of the texts rather than the expositions. Take this quotation from near the end:

But I will come to the explicit positive note that has all along been my goal (for I am not a Luddite) in this way: the advance of science and technology means a human future of change so rapid and of such kinds, of tests and challenges so unprecedented, of decisions and possible non-decisions so momentous and insidious in their consequences, that mankind—this is surely clear—will need to be in full possession of its full humanity (and "possession" here means, not confident ownership of that which belong to us—our property, but a basic living deference towards that to which, opening as it does into the unknown and itself immeasurable, we know we belong) . . . What we need, and shall continue to need not less, is something with the livingness of the deepest vital instinct; as intelligence, a power—rooted strong in experience, and supremely human—of creative response to the new challenges of time; something that is alien to either of Snow's cultures.

Is there really anything very explicit in that? Mankind "will need to be in full possession of its full humanity"; "What we need . . . is something with the livingness of the deepest vital instinct . . .". These seem far from explicit to me, verging as they do on Lawrentian mysticism.

Simplification

It strikes me as presumptuous that the writer of this passage should criticise Snow for saying: "Statistically, I suppose slightly more scientists are in religious terms unbelievers, compared with the rest of the intellectual world". Leavis ironically comments: "There are believers and unbelievers; we all know what 'religious' terms are; and everything relevant in relation to the adjective has been said". But there is no suggestion on Snow's part that everything relevant has been said. *Something* has been said, however, and said with comparative clarity and care. In the nature of the case, the content of the statement could not be put more precisely (the statistics are not available) but, without going into elaborate definitions, the statement fulfils the normal requirements of

common sense discussion. Of course, one may argue about the meanings of "believers" and "unbelievers", talk about borderline cases and so on. In short, Snow's statement is a simplification. But in fact, all statements are simplifications. If one is to make a statement one must be prepared to simplify: the alternative is silence. The question, then, is not one of simplification, but of oversimplification. And, bearing in mind that Leavis's attack is almost exclusively directed at a single lecture (Snow's Rede Lecture on *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, at Cambridge in 1959), I don't think such a charge can be justified. Many of Snow's points would benefit from an elaboration not possible in a lecture, but the import is generally clear and—I should add—valid. Dr. Leavis's criticism contrasts most unfavourably with it.

Moreover, there are a number of things that Dr. Leavis could learn from Sir Charles Snow's recent "Magnanimity" address. I don't just mean that "hate is the worst motive either for private or for social action", important though that is—for politicians, soldiers or academics—but that:

This world is ours; we can do something good with it, or we can destroy it. We cannot cut ourselves off. If we do not show virtue, this world is going to be a hell. But I think we shall not show social virtue, or political virtue, if we fail to make the best we can of ourselves as individuals, in our human relations.

This short passage bears out my remarks on individualism, as would countless passages from Wells or Russell.

Perhaps the trouble with Dr. Leavis is that he *has* cut himself off. Literature is no substitute for life.

MR. CUTNER'S FORERUNNER?

The existence of a man Jesus Christ has been a bone of contention for the past half-century. There have been many mythicists before that, e.g. Marcion, Basilides, Valentinus in the second century AD: and the Naassenes perhaps of the first century BC. There was one Mythicist of four hundred years ago who may surprise you. To discover him was certainly a surprise to the late Professor Prosper Alfaric from whom I quote the following: "(He) was so impious as to declare that the Christ was nothing but the sun, worshipped by the Mithraists, and Jupiter Ammon represented by the pagans as a Ram or a Lamb. He explained the allegories of incarnation and resurrection by the parallel (read in St. Justin) of Christ and Mithras, whom the Gospels and the Sacred Books of the Magi say were born at the winter solstice, i.e. at the moment when the sun begins to return towards us . . . He used to say that the Adoration of the Magi was merely that ceremony in which the Zoroastrian priests offered to their god gold, incense and myrrh, three things sacred to the sun. He used to argue that the constellation of Virgo, or rather of Isis, which corresponds to the solstice and presided over the birth of Mithras, had also been chosen to symbolise the birth of Christ; which, so he said, clearly showed that Mithras and Jesus were one and the same god. He went so far as to declare that there was not a single document of unimpeachable authority which proved Christ's existence as a man and proclaimed that, in his opinion, Christ never had existed".

Who wrote this? Of whom did he write it? Won't you guess? Must I tell you?

The writer was Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador at the Vatican. The Mythicist to whom he referred was Alexander Farnese the Holy Father, Paul II (who excommunicated the Tudor King Henry VIII), elected Pope 1534 and died 1549, aged 80. The letter was written just after a mithraeum had been discovered under the Vatican.

Would you have thought it?

C. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

EMMETT McLOUGHLIN'S BOOK

We have received many inquiries about Emmett McLoughlin's latest book, *Crime and Immorality in the Catholic Church*, reviewed by Colin McCall on April 13th. The Pioneer Press can now supply copies of this American publication, price 44s. 6d., plus 1s. postage, on firm orders. Delivery will be approximately four weeks.

George Orwell's "Homage to Catalonia"

By F. A. RIDLEY

SINCE HIS LAMENTED DEATH in 1950 at the comparatively early age of 46, the reputation of Eric Blair—George Orwell—has increased with a startling rapidity. In particular his two last books, *Animal Farm*, a satire on the Russian Revolution and upon (what Orwell considered to be) its subsequent degeneration under Stalin, and *1984*, a gruesome fantasy of mankind's hypothetically totalitarian future, have earned him a world-wide reputation. In addition, Orwell wrote, mostly in the pre-war period, a number of novels and essays. I understand that literary critics do not rank him very highly as a novelist *per se*, but he was certainly a very fine essayist who struck a fresh and original note, sometimes on such out-of-the-way subjects as *Shooting an Elephant*. A number of these earlier works are now available in Penguin Books at modest prices that should ensure them a wide circulation.

One book stands out not merely by its undeniable merits, but also as regards its subject matter. This is Orwell's description of his personal intervention in the long drawn out and ferociously cruel civil war in Spain, in the course of which, Orwell, besides coming up against continental politics in a highly unpleasant manner which probably gave him living material for his later anti-totalitarian satires, also received a dangerous wound that was probably at least a contributory cause of his premature death from tuberculosis thirteen years later.

Homage to Catalonia is in many respects, the most personal of his books, since it combines a vivid military saga of personal service in what was itself perhaps the most unique war of modern times (a war of conflicting ideologies no less than of conflicting material interests) with a first-hand account which itself embodies the passionate reactions of a fundamentally honest man when suddenly immersed in the cesspool of political intrigue—of the battle of ideologies (often actually waged by most unideological means) that raged in the anti-Franco republican camp during the early months of the Civil War. I may add the personal comment that I well remember the initial appearance of Orwell's book as well as the controversies that it provoked at the time. I then reviewed the book at the express request of its original publishers, (Messrs Secker and Warburg), and whilst I never met George Orwell, several of his colleagues in Spain who are expressly mentioned in *Homage to Catalonia* were later on to become friends and colleagues of mine.

Homage to Catalonia is really a saga of the Spanish Civil War as seen from the Catalonian Front, where Orwell served until incapacitated in May 1937. As older readers will no doubt recall, the Spanish War broke sharply with the normal routine pattern of modern wars, in that volunteers from many lands went to Spain to fight on behalf of many ideologies: Communism, represented in Madrid by the International Brigade, Anarchism, Trotskyism etc., on the Republican side, and Nazism, Fascism and Catholicism on what eventually proved to be the winning side of General Franco. The general result of this was to give it the character of a primarily crusading war of an ideological kind, the general atmosphere of which—here vividly described by Orwell—must have been much more similar to that of the medieval Crusades or the wars of religion in the era of the Reformation, than to the sordid down-to-earth wars provoked by territorial and commercial rivalries of more recent centuries.

The remarkable picture by this English participant in a

strange and now almost forgotten episode in European history, will, I confidently predict, make it an invaluable source book for future historians of the Spain and Europe of the 1930s, quite apart from the book's very considerable literary merits. For George Orwell himself was one of the many idealistic volunteers who went to a fight the Cerberus of International Fascism that was just then growing a new and a specially ferocious head in Spain which, despite the personal heroism of Orwell and of so many like him, has ultimately proved to be the most long-lived form of Fascism and clerical reaction.

Orwell went to Spain as a member of the Volunteer Contingent sent out by the Independent Labour Party under the command of Mr. Bob Edwards, now M.P. for Bilston, and served on the Aragon Front along with the Anarchists and the Socialist Party of Catalonia. Here, his description of the Spanish Anarchists is of special interest. Subsequently, he was forced to quit Spain and to fly hurriedly from Barcelona due (so he says) to the malevolent hostility of the Spanish Communist Party. After saving Madrid from Franco's initial drive by its timely arrival, the International Brigade—the Army of the Comintern as it was currently described—set itself (so Orwell charges) to eliminate rival ideologies such as Anarchism and Trotskyism within the Republican camp. Whatever the ultimate truth of this extremely tangled affair may have been, its sequel as far as our author was concerned, was to fill him with a lasting and implacable hatred of all form of the Totalitarian State, whether Fascist or Communist. Without his bitter Spanish experiences, it is very unlikely that George Orwell would ever have written his later world-famous satire, *Animal Farm*. And to them, of course, we owe this fascinating narrative of one of the strangest episodes in modern history, *Homage to Catalonia* by one of the most honest observers who ever put pen to paper.

Published in 1938, whilst the Spanish War was still in progress, *Homage to Catalonia* was not an outstanding commercial success. I understand that the first and only edition to be published in its author's lifetime did not sell out until after Orwell's death in 1950. However, I personally, think that it is quite possibly both Orwell's best book, as equally the book with greater and more lasting social significance than anything else he ever wrote. I read his now world-famous satire, *Animal Farm*, in MS before publication and I made the same criticism of it then when it was unknown as I do now when it is world-famous: viz. that really *great* satire—say *Candide* or *Gulliver's Travels*, to take two authentic examples—portray types and not individually-known characters, whereas anyone at all acquainted with the Russian Revolution and its aftermath would have *no* difficulty in naming any of the major characters in *Animal Farm*—thinly disguised portraits of all the major actors in the spectacular drama of the Russian Revolution. This is not great satire like Voltaire's or Swift's satirical portraits. I do not think that Orwell was really subtle enough for effective satire, and this comes out also in *1984* also world-famous which, (or so I submit), is a caricature rather than a satire on the Total state of the future. I think that George Orwell, whilst not the greatest, was the most honest writer of his time; the one who put down the sheer truth as he saw it; without either fear or

(Concluded on next page)

This Believing World

Well known as a journalist of what may be characterised as "saccharine"-studded articles, Mr. Godfrey Winn in the *Daily Express* (April 19th) has joined the Christian brigade who object to any attack being made on their religion. "We must stand up", he cries indignantly, "to the mockers". He attacks the Spanish film *Viridiana* because it "degenerates into monstrous bad taste", that is, the film does not hold anything (or very little) about religion as "sacred". And to stop this, what Mr. Winn wants is "a giant crusade, a new affirmation of belief, to stand up to the mockers, the jeerers, the ever increasing army of the anti-Christ".

★

Then why does he not start the crusade? Why does he not stoutly defend the Miracles, the Devils, the Angels, the hopeless absurdities Christianity is littered with? He can write about "the solitary figure on the Cross", though he must know that in the "record" there were two other figures quite close, for whom neither he nor any Christian has felt a spark of pity. We Freethinkers never "mock" mercy or justice or love. We certainly mock Oriental credulity and superstition taken as literal truth.

★

A Methodist minister, the Rev. C. J. Thomas, accuses Granada TV of "neglecting religion", of not broadcasting "religious programmes or a nightly epilogue". This must be very heartbreaking for all pious Christians some of whom may, however, be just as angry if religious programmes were introduced in peak hours conducted by Papists, Mormons, Plymouth Brethren, Christian Scientists, Muggletonians, Southcottians, or any of the other 200 Christian sects still flourishing. Perhaps Mr. Thomas wants only pure and unadulterated Methodism broadcast?

★

In the meantime, we now have Evangelist Eric Hutchings dropping a "bombshell" according to the *Daily Mail* (April 27th), in Brighton. He accuses that famous London by-the-sea resort of harbouring "Black Magic, Devil Worship, and even Witches' Covens". He even points out that "three self-confessed witches" on the radio all came from Brighton. In fact, "investigators" have told Mr. Hutchings that Brighton is "a centre of demon worship throughout the whole of Britain".

★

Unfortunately for him, investigations by the Brighton CID "have produced no results". What a pity! We wonder what Mr. Hutchings would have done if Devil Worship, Witches' Covens, and similar blasphemous meetings took place say, on a Sunday, on the sands? The good old Christian way, backed up by all the Churches and the Bible, was to burn alive all offenders. Would Mr. Hutchings want to begin the same treatment again these days — or what? After all, it was thoroughly Christian.

★

Christianity and Cash have always been good friends, so we congratulate the Church in Wales for "doing so nicely on the Stock Exchange" according to the *Daily Express* (April 26th). In seven years, it has made £2,500,000 profit. And though the Archbishop, Dr. E. Morris, has recently declared in connection with Sunday pub opening that "alcohol was a gift from God" — he probably had the celebrated wine miracle at Cana performed by Jesus in a jolly mood in mind — "the Church still bans investment in brewery shares", we are regretfully told. Still, there is nothing like the story of "our Lord" having nowhere to

lay his head for raking in the shekels, aided of course by judicious investment.

★

We heartily welcome the Report of the Church of England recently published on how to reach "millions of teenagers". It advises a more "down to earth" approach which appears to us more or less like Secularism. It is we who have always pointed out that the pie was not up in the sky above, but was down below on the earth. The report wants, not bigger and better churches for youth, but bigger and better clubs; and in resumés both the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* haven't a word about either God, Jesus or the Blessed Apostles. And not a word about Paul either. So let it be always "down to earth".

★

One famous lady appears to suffer every time Easter approaches—Therese Neumann of Bavaria. Her speciality in illness is that her hands and feet begin to bleed, her head has marks as if she were wearing a crown of thorns, and she weeps red tears. It is all very sad, but a most prosaic State medical certificate about her simply declares that the good Therese suffers only a form of hysteria.

GEORGE ORWELL'S "HOMAGE TO CATALONIA"

(Concluded from page 147)

favour. It is not only because of the fascinating theme, but primarily because of its basic and fundamental honesty that I regard the early and relatively unknown, *Homage to Catalonia* as both the best book that George Orwell ever wrote as also the one most likely to endure.

[Footnote: George Orwell's account of the Communist Party's bid for power in the Barcelona "May Days" of 1937, is corroborated by other eye-witnesses of these spectacular events: e.g. by my late friend, Captain Jack White, the famous Irish revolutionary who immediately left the Communist Party in disgust. However, looking at matters in the wide perspectives of the Spanish Civil War as a whole, it seems clear that without Communist intervention via The International Brigade, Franco would have won in a few months instead of the three years that it actually took him.]

PRIESTS GIVE UP

Nine out of ten student priests in Italy change their minds, and return to lay life on the eve of being ordained, says a Vatican review.—*Daily Mail*, Report from Rome (1/5/62).

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Lecture Notices, Etc.

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INDOOR

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, May 13th, 11 a.m.: O. R. MCGREGOR, B.Sc., "Farmer's Glory: or Milking the Taxpayer".
Tyneside Humanist Society (100 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle), Wednesday, May 16th, 7.30 p.m.: ROY CAIRNCROSS, "Sociology and Public Policy".

Notes and News

ARCHBISHOP EGIDIO VAGNOZZI, Apostolic Delegate to the USA, is "concerned with the uneasiness and preoccupations of some Catholic intellectuals" (*The Faith*, Malta, May 1962). They seem to feel, he said, "that the Catholic intellectual effort of today does not seem to measure up satisfactorily with the level of secular effort . . .". And we should say they are right. But we can appreciate the Archbishop's fears. In order "to build a bridge between modern secular thought and Catholic thought", the intellectuals are "digressing from positions traditionally accepted in the past" and "are inclined to introduce interpretations of Catholic teaching which often appear to be contradictory to what has been believed not only in the last century but in the preceding centuries as well".

WE HAVE *The Universe's* word for it (13/4/62) that there are "1,000 Protestant converts a day in Latin America", and more would-be pastors than candidates for the priesthood. Meanwhile, in Southampton, a priest refused to baptise a baby girl because her parents had not been married in church. "We will bring the baby up in the Church of England", said the mother, Mrs. Anna Gallagher. "It is the only thing I can do after a slap in the face like this" (*Daily Herald*, 19/4/62). Though not quite the only thing, it is certainly a better course.

OVER TO Northern Ireland, where a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Edward Flanagan of Fermanagh, publicly announced that he was joining the Protestant Church (*The People*, 8/4/62) and went into hiding. "I am frightened

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I will be forced against my will to return to the Church of Rome", he said.

★

THE REV. W. D. JACKSON, of Loughton, Essex, President of the Baptist Union, cannot share Lord Fisher's view that "the Roman Catholic Church is now our friend". "While we cherish the friendship of individual Catholics" said Mr. Jackson in his presidential address to the Baptist Union in London, "we regard the Roman Church as the enemy of truth" (*The Guardian*, 1/5/62). "She talks freedom in England, but suppression in Spain", he added. And then he let himself go: "Her financial methods are unworthy of the name of Christ. She has canonised bingo. She sprinkles her infants in holy water and dips her parish funds in the unholy water of football pools. In short, we are not going back".

★

ALL PRAISE to the Baptist Union, though for calling on Government leaders to make a supreme effort to reach an agreement on nuclear tests.

★

MR. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG'S *The Plain View* is described as "a magazine of understanding". In fact it is ordinarily beneath notice, but the April issue contains a remarkable article by Lynn E. Torrance on "German Rationalism Exposed". Remarkable because though it claims to reveal "proof that the God-rejecting theories of Evolution, Nazism and Communism were all inspired by the German Rationalists", it never mentions either Nazism or Communism from start to finish.

★

A "DIAL-A-PRAYER" telephone service introduced experimentally in Auckland, New Zealand, by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church proved so popular that it had to be temporarily disconnected after one week (*Auckland Star*, 9/3/62). Two automatic answering machines proved inadequate, and the exchange was jammed with calls. Two more machines have been installed and provision is being made for another four. Calls were coming in at two-a-minute, said Pastor W. A. Coates. "We were completely staggered at the demand". It rather surprises us, too. Did someone say "a dead horse"?

★

THE SECRETARY of the National Secular Society again reminds members of the Annual Conference to be held in the Secular Hall, Leicester, by kind permission of Leicester Secular Society, on Whit Sunday, June 10th, preceded by a reception in the same hall on the Saturday evening and followed by an open air meeting on the Sunday evening. Those wishing to attend are asked to let him know their hotel accommodation requirements as soon as possible.

THE YEAR'S FREETHOUGHT

The Freethinker for 1961

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From Canada

A FLOOD OF "degrading, disgusting, rotten" literature published in France, is being spread throughout the Province of Quebec, former Provincial Secretary Yves Prévost told the Legislative Assembly on April 7th. "Even the titles are disgusting", he said, and he urged "a fight against this obscene literature which is degrading to human dignity, which has a tendency to pervert" (*Montreal Star*, 8/4/62).

M. Prévost (who made the absurd remark that religious instruction was mandatory in US schools, *THE FREETHINKER*, February 23rd) was referring to books sold through the post by Editions de la Liberté, Case Postale 45, Station "S", Montreal 20, and he may have had *Album Brigitte Bardot*, *L'Amant de Lady Chatterley* or *Flagellation et Perversions Sexuelles* in mind. On the other hand, he may have been thinking of *Assassins au nom de Dieu* (a book very like Avro Manhattan's *Terror over Yugoslavia*), M. Edmond Paris's *Le Vatican contre L'Europe* (recently published in England as *The Vatican Against Europe*), M. Frederic Hoffer's *L'Equivoque Catholique*, or M. Jean Cotereau's *Défense de la Laïcité*.

For the curious thing is that the proprietor of Editions de la Liberté has been selling books on sex (as opposed to pornography) through the post for some time now without interference, all of them being approved by the Ottawa Postal Customs. Lately, however, he has added a few anticlerical books (like those mentioned) from Fischbachers in Paris.

Immediately, two Bishops complain to the Attorney-General about "pornography"; the police call on the proprietor; his bank asks him to withdraw his account; his local post office "re-checks" him. Meanwhile, he can't despatch the orders fast enough!

The Quebec Provincial Government, through a Council of Arts, buys thousands of books by young authors, to help them, and to make French-Canadian literature known in other countries. But the Opposition leader Mr. Johnson, recently declared that "All these books are written by Leftists" and shouldn't be encouraged. This protest prompted a delightfully satiric letter of approval in *Le Nouveau Journal* (13/4/62) from Joseph La Rivière of Montreal (of whom more later).

Quite right, wrote M. La Rivière, we should only buy and send abroad as propaganda such good, solid and valuable books as the one written by Canon G. Panneton on *Hell*, in which he gives word-for-word interviews with several damned souls, a description of Lucifer by St. Veronica, and relates how St. John Bosco brought a child back to life six hours after death (just as it was falling into Hell) so that it might confess its sins and be saved from eternal torment. But M. La Rivière consoled the Leftist writers. If they go to Hell, he told them, they would meet such distinguished predecessors as Voltaire, Zola, Gide, Renan and Loisy. See page 191 of Canon Panneton's book, he added.

Another interesting letter—this time in the *Montreal Star*—emphasised the real point behind the notorious book, *Les Insolences du Frère Untel*, for which the priest-author, Brother Pierre Jerome (as noted on February 23rd) was exiled to Rome. The first part of the book, said letter-writer Maurice Kohler (a High-School teacher of French) is especially amusing, and the references to "joul" (slang) could be termed hilarious. "But the book is aimed at something more important, deeper than this question of slang", said M. Kohler. And he quoted

Raymond Dionne, who reviewed the English translation for the *Star*, that the book is really concerned with "emanicipation from the tabus of the Quebec society".

Four teachers who were fed up with the tabus in Quebec's French Catholic schools caused a sensation on March 22nd by walking out of the St. Nom de Jesus school in Montreal, after a dispute with the principal over "holy pictures". A few days later, the teachers Jules Chatelain, Guy Tremblay, Roland Berger, and Miss Dolores Cote, issued a declaration saying that Montreal schools are only "indoctrination mills attached to an outdated tradition". On April 19th the Montreal Catholic School Commission announced that all four were being dismissed from their posts.

By this time, though, the strike had caused a great furore in the French-Canadian press, and M. Chatelain, who is only 22, had even written a series of articles in *Le Nouveau Journal*. A Parents' Committee for the Aid of Teachers was formed with Madame Armand Sauvé as President and the aforementioned M. La Rivière as Secretary, and 850 signed petitions (out of 2,000 sent out) were obtained in support of the teachers.

Even the Catholic School Commission had to admit that there were many "faults" and "deficiencies" in the schools under its jurisdiction (*The Gazette*, 20/4/62) but it felt that the four teachers had not chosen a "wise way to air their grievances". Of course they hadn't. They knew their jobs were at stake, but they were concerned with saving something more important: saving the coming generation from being stifled in our Catholic schools.

Leftism, this time in the press, and coupled of course with atheism and agnosticism, was the subject of a complaint by the Rev. Jean-Louis Brouille, Jesuit editor of *L'Actualité*, but his suggestion of an investigation received short shrift. On radio and TV, as well as in the papers themselves, the Father was made to look foolish. (He made nearly as bad a showing on TV as he did when questioned at the Cercle Juif de langue française. This latter meeting had to be "adjourned" for his sake).

He was even jumped on by the Dominicans, who are rather "smarter" and want to save the situation for the Church by making it more liberal. They accused him of being obtuse and too uncompromising. Finally the poor fellow reconciled himself to being moved by his superiors, and the little paper *Ici Montréal*, has suggested that he will be moved to Manitoba.

It must be said in Father Brouille's defence, though, that Catholic papers do criticise the Church. They have to if they want to keep their readers.

Finally, also from *Ici Montréal* (24/3/62) we take this sample of Catholic arithmetic. "Quebec Province has 4,000,000 inhabitants. Only 3% of them are atheists. What is the number of unbelievers?" It is reprinted from the review, *L'Elève* ("The Pupil"), approved by the Catholic Committee for Public Education. J.L.

WITHOUT COMMENT

On Saturday evening the Abyssinians, who have a chapel on the roof of the cathedral, search for the body of Jesus by the light of the moon. The abbot, under an umbrella of green and gold, reads the story of the burial and the empty tomb while his monks do a ritual dance to the music of tom-toms and drums. —The Bishop of Southwark's "Journey to the Holy Land", *Evening Standard* (18/4/62).

WANTED by West Indian Freethinker: *Jesus and Judas* by John M. Robertson.

The Christian Anti-Communism Crusade

By JONATHAN STORY, Litt.D
(U.S.A.)

THE NAME "Christian Anti-Communism Crusade" used to designate an enterprise currently being conducted worldwide by Australian evangelist Fred C. Schwarz, reminds one of the 12th and 13th century Crusades. The motivation of these was primarily religious; the results were chiefly economic and intellectual.

Mother Church gained wealth and prestige through the Crusades, but many of the previously faithful became sceptics and freethinkers through contact with Byzantine culture and Muhammedanism. A general broadening of horizons developed, and a spirit of inquiry was created in Europe which led to the Renaissance.

At the same time the growth of maritime commerce was accelerated by the Crusades, and the merchants of many port cities became rich and prosperous. Navigation was improved, larger ships were built, and knowledge of geography was increased. All this provided a foundation for the age of discovery which followed.

And so it is with Dr. Schwarz and his "Christian" school. They teach that we are now engaged in a war against merciless, atheistic Communism, that Communists are constantly gaining territory, and that the only effective weapon against Communist force is greater force. How different this is from the Christian precepts which say: "Judge not, that you be not judged!" "Love your enemies!" "Do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well." It would appear that if we followed these Bible precepts, true morality would be reversed, the good would be at the mercy of the bad, our civilised society would end, and the free world would be lost.

What then is this "Christian Anti-Communism Crusade?" Is it simply another Christian Crusade, with anti-Communism as the money-raising gimmick? (A "gimmick" is defined as "an ingenious device or scheme for attaining an end, often one artfully concealed.") There is no doubt that a popular school of "anti-Communism" is an ingenious device for raising money. Thousands are contributing to it, and in 1960 the "Christian Anti-Communism Crusade" reported a total accountability of \$382,657. But it also reported that of this amount, 16.6% went for administrative purposes and 83.4% went for missionary purposes. From this it would appear that "the end" is largely missionary, and one wonders if the end justifies the means.

For instance, \$48,000 was spent on a rotary press for an Indian missionary group and \$10,000 to house it; \$10,000 for an Indian missionary orphan boys home; \$5,000 for a South African missionary magazine, *Our Africa*, etc., Such expenditures may help somewhat in furthering knowledge of Communism, but one easily gets the impression that it is the furthering of Christian teaching that is the real aim of the school.

Asking the aid of church groups in each city in which "Anti-Communism Crusades" are conducted has probably been found to be very effective. This is the Billy Graham technique, and it has proved lucrative, both for Graham and the Churches. This summer (June 1962) Dr. Schwarz and his "Christian Anti-Communism Crusade" will descend on Madison Square Garden in New York City for "the greatest anti-Communism campaign America has ever

known." The city's Christian churches will be asked to support the campaign.

Now when a school of anti-Communism is conducted under the name of "Christian", and when some of its faculty are rabid fundamentalists preaching prophecy and other outmoded Jewish mythology and speculation, then it is time that we all broaden our horizons and develop a spirit of inquiry into *both* Christianity and Communism. Both Christianity and Communism are religions, and both, in times of supremacy and power, have inflicted cruel suffering on humanity. *Neither is capable of governing under true democracy, and we want no more religious wars to perpetuate one or the other.*

Teaching that the Bible is the divinely-inspired word of God is the greatest hoax that has ever been perpetrated on the human race. But this is taught by officers of the "Christian Anti-Communism Crusade," as well as other Christian precepts, prophecy, and propaganda.

An intelligent spirit of inquiry into both Christianity (as revealed by the Bible) and Communism (as revealed by Lenin and Marx) will show that they are both founded on fallacies—one supernatural, the other economic.

We in America do not welcome Communist teachings, and nations of other religions do not welcome our intrusion with Christian teachings. Nor can we buy friendship or loyalty by spending vast sums on so-called "foreign aid." International bribery is no more honest than private bribery. Let us develop a policy and a philosophy based on true morality, as found by the experience of man. It can be, and it must be developed soon.

The wisest course we can follow is to resist Communism with all of our intelligence and discard outworn Christianity. We should go on the offensive by developing a new national philosophy and foreign policy with the same zeal, intelligence, and devotion as that shown by the founding fathers of the United States of America when they wrote the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and its Amendments.

We need complete separation of Church and State more now than ever before in history. We need new, constructive thinking instead of any further reliance on the clever writings of those who would have us believe in supernatural nonsense and its perpetuation. Such new thinking might also provide the foundation for a new age of reason and discovery, one that might result in great economic and intellectual gain, peace of mind, and international security.

OBITUARY

W. H. Cousins (better known as Walter Carlton), who died on April 24th, after a long illness, was a member of Marble Arch Branch of the National Secular Society. Walter had travelled a good deal in earlier years, and had a wide reputation as an able and witty speaker, who could enliven any meeting. He was pleased to meet a number of old friends at the Marble Arch Branch social on April 14th, but it was obvious to them that he was a very sick man. He was 67 years of age.

The funeral took place at West London Crematorium on April 28th.

We send our sincere condolences to Mrs. Cousins.

NEXT WEEK

REPORT FROM PORTUGAL
BY A PORTUGUESE STUDENT

CORRESPONDENCE

WOMEN AND GOD

Your correspondent, Mr. Arthur W. Uloth (April 20th), is very chivalrous, but equally irrelevant and romantic. Women are no different from men only they dissemble better. Let me stick to the point.

My original object was to demonstrate the fact that women handed mankind a very foul deal when they fell for religion, believed the soothsayers really could make magic, and became their credulous dupes in spite of all attempts of rational men to dissuade them. My long experience is that they resolutely refuse to listen to any argument against religion, or to advance any argument for it themselves.

Religion is the worst curse that ever afflicted mankind and it is women who perpetuate it; without them it would collapse tomorrow morning. And the fact that men are commonly cut-throats and liars does not alter that fact one iota. Women very prettily pretend to be listening to reason when they are just "having you on" in a frozen obstinacy of loyalty to manifest swindlers of magicians, the priests and the parsons. And the rubbish these vagabonds peddle is so subtly organised that the girls do not have the capacity for abstract thought to counter-act the patter. In helping to maintain the cruel and oppressive hold of religion on mankind, women have betrayed sense, reason and the liberty and happiness of their husbands, fathers and children; simply to promote, in effect, the political and financial power of the clergy who, even in fancy dress, simply cannot make magic.

I have read *The History of Western Philosophy* at least twice and some parts many times. If Russell mentions one female philosopher of distinction, and I cannot remember one, she is not in the class of Russell, Spinoza, Socrates, Hume, Locke, Montaigne, Sartre, Kant, Hegel, Vico, Leonardo, etc., etc. In fields I am familiar with, Medicine and Law, I cannot recall one woman of real distinction, and in the history of mankind, only two women have equalled men's best achievement, Marie Curie and Florence Nightingale, not enough, I should think, to cheer your correspondent's heart. And in the fields of War and brutality women are just as bad as men. Instead of revolting against the destruction of the sons they suffered to bear, in the three wars I know of, the 2nd Boer War and the two World Wars, women were just as bloodthirsty, rabid and frenzied in the noisy demonstration of that ugly war hysteria called Patriotism as men were. Their anti-semitism in my city was sad and shocking. And in blood sports, fox and deer hunting, bull-fighting and boxing, women are just as interested as men, though many women pretend they are not.

All I wanted to show was what I believe to be true, that the maintenance of religion, a world evil, is due in a large measure to the support, irrational and instinctive, of women mesmerised by the spurious promise of magic by a man in fancy dress. It is hypocritical to pity them for subjection to men when they voluntarily accept the grossly cynical exploitation of an ignorant, vain and arrogant clergy, when they kiss their chains. Most Roman Catholic women love their priests and "holy faith" more than their husbands. Ah! the darlings!

J. V. DUHIG.

ATHEISM

I realise with regret that Mr. Underwood has drawn entirely mistaken inferences from my statements (p. 128). As a matter of fact I know well enough that a large proportion of atheists are freethinkers and rationalists and this I never denied. What I maintain is that there is another important proportion of atheists to whom this does not apply and I offered corresponding examples. In propositions like "The atheist is a freethinker" or "... rationalist" the word "the", unless it refers to one particular person—which obviously was not the case in Mr. Underwood's article—stands for "every" or "any" and it is in this generalising implication where I disagree with Mr. Underwood.

In reply to Mr. Underwood's query I would say that the "irrational atheist" holds his belief in a manner somewhat like the Christian does, with the difference that, on the average, his irrationality is a little less pronounced since he is not bound to his belief by any metaphysical or eschatologic doctrine. In other words, his belief may be founded on confidence in atheistic teachers, satisfaction in upholding such belief, etc. For further details I recommend *The Feast of Unreason* by Hector Hawton.

G. WAPPENHANS.

ONE COLD WAR CAUSE

One of the basic causes of the conflict between Russian and the West is that we (in the USA) take the position that we can

proclaim that there is a God, but we refuse to (willingly) permit the Russians to proclaim that there is no God.

N. E. S. WEST (U.S.A.).

"BELLARMINES"

I read with interest the article on Cardinal Bellarmine by Mr. F. A. Ridley, in the April issue of THE FREETHINKER, and call to your notice that we collectors and dealers of pottery have known for many years that a crude likeness was impressed on the front of early pottery jugs and are well known today as "Bellarmines".

I have just been looking through some of my papers and have come across rather a good article on him in the English Ceramic Circle papers, wherein there are several good photos of the jugs and a portrait of Bellarmine himself.

The article also contains a reference to 360 entries in the British Museum catalogue under his name. If Mr. Ridley cares to read it I shall be pleased to lend it to him. After reading it I think he could make up another equally interesting article on the Cardinal.

R. L. KENNING.

HISTORY v. MYTH

In reply to Mr. C. H. Norman's letter (March 30th), I must first state that I feel in exactly the same way about gods and myths. In disgust of the deceit of Religious Instruction, which teaches Biblical stories as absolute historical truth, I was merely pointing out that the content of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, is derived from, besides being equivalent to, other religions of the Ancient Mediterranean world. I was deducing from these latter, e.g. Orphism, which are (generally) accepted as being false and mistaken, that their offsprings—the Bible and Christianity—should also be abandoned to the inconsequential position, which they all deserve.

I apologise if I misled readers of THE FREETHINKER as to my above intention, and join with you all in deploring the propagation of any such superstitions.

JOHN CRISTOPHERS.

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