

The Freethinker

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IN MY REPORT from Canada on August 3rd, I referred to what the newspaper, *La Presse*, called the "most radical" brief submitted to the Royal Commission of Enquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec. It was submitted at a public hearing on July 6th, 1962, by Joseph La Rivière, founder and past president of the National Translators' Society, former senior reporter of Canadian Court Martials, and Canadian representative of the US Short-hand Court Reporters' Association and the Polyglot Stenographers' Association of Paris. These personal qualifications, along with many others, together with the fact that he was the 22nd child in a family of 24 (truly in the French-

Canadian milieu!) were given by Mr. La Rivière because he was asked who he was by the Chairman of the Commission, Monsignor A. M. Parent, Vice-Rector of the Laval (Catholic) University. Msgr. Parent also asked Mr. La Rivière if he was an educator. "No", was the answer, "I am simply a school tax-payer and father of children of school age. Are you either of those?"

Mr. La Rivière also spoke in support of his 35-page brief (of which forty copies had to be supplied to the Commission beforehand), and I am now able, with his permission, to present a summary of what he said in his plea for secular education in French Canada.

The Speech

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Commission: Let me underline the fact that I do not represent 70,000 Knights of Columbus nor the 192,000 Members of the League of the Sacred Heart who indeed never saw, read, nor approved the briefs which were presented in their names, supported by such impressive figures! I do not represent either the great number of our French-Canadian folk who, to the great surprise of self-styled experts on the French-Canadian milieu, recently elected 26 Federal MPs under the Social Credit banner. But, I subscribe enthusiastically to their declaration of principle: 'We don't mix politics and religion'. Some people could draw the salutary lesson from that, that religious belief is a private matter of one own's conscience, that should not be introduced into political and educational affairs. I am not a member of the *Mouvement Laïque*, and I am not attached to the French Protestant Forum. But, I have finally got here in spite of (let us say) certain difficulties."

The Unrepresented

"There is no doubt that many French-Canadians won't ever be heard before you, and that no one will ever come here to 'represent' them. Amongst those you won't hear are those who have something to say but are 'scared', those who can't have leave from their work; those who can't express themselves; those whom the 40 copies [of the brief to be submitted] represent a formidable obstacle; those whom our schools have caused to sink into a euphoric state of passivity and whose intellectual activity is limited to watching wrestling on TV, and reaching for a

small bottle of beer. Finally, there are those whom the asphyxiating (religious) tradition has turned into complete brutes and who are unable to think and form an opinion about any serious subject at all. I have no mandate from them. I therefore represent only my family and myself . . .

"Basically, I say that a child must be taught, not indoctrinated; that we want our children to grow up free men, capable of using their own judgment. We want *s-a-i-n-s* [sane people] not saints. Our children must not become a herd of sheep. We must teach them, not indoctrinate them. Those guarantees of knowledge, fairness, impartiality, that we ask of our teachers; did we exact them from those who have been

directing our teaching system since forever and ever? Have they afforded us those guarantees in the past? Are they affording them to us now?"

The Spectacle

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Commissioners, I invite you to contemplate the frightening spectacle lying before your eyes after having entrusted to the Church of Rome, for decades if not for centuries, not only the direction of our schooling system, but the spiritual direction of our people.

"Therefore, if we were to apply article 1053 of the Civil Code which says that every person capable of discerning right from wrong is responsible for the damage caused by his fault to another, whether by positive act, imprudence, neglect, or want of skill, what would be the consequence?

"Now a new attitude has appeared. The Church is trying to look active and progressive. 'Come, laymen, and take your responsibilities!' it says. 'We are more than willing to withdraw from this or that; to make way for laymen. Come running to rebuild for the greater glory of your Holy Mother!'

"After having taught our people for centuries to bow their heads before the Conqueror; to live only for death and eternal salvation; after having led our people to an intellectual dead end, the priests have the audacity to remain in control of the school system through the use of puppets which they will manipulate from behind the scenes!

"Shall we trust these false prophets once again? I say that French belongs to all those who speak it, and to no Church in particular. That it should not be used by any Church to further its selfish aims. I say that our progress depends on our education and training, that our school system must be democratized; that public instruction or education is now a public matter, not a private one any longer. That the family can't do it, as it did before, that the State has to organise it. I ask for public schools, democratic schools, where all children are treated equally from the start: given the same opportunity. French-Canadians have one thing in common: their language."

The Proposition

"I propose single school, a democratic school, a secular school, open to all French-speaking children; a school

— VIEWS and OPINIONS —

French-Canadian Calls for Secular Education

By LANJE GARDYEN

where no children are religiously segregated in a Christian spirit of brotherly love. Isn't Jesus the one who said: 'Love ye one another'? French and English schools, where possible, built so that the same playground is used by all, permitting the children to learn 'the other language' at play. By the time they reach High School, they will enjoy carrying on with it, because it will be alive, not dead.

"The government has announced that it will follow your recommendations. You will have to decide whether you're going to keep our school system in the shade, or give it its place in the sun. Either you 'liberate' the school or we give up French in two generations. All right, let's be

human. Maybe all clerics didn't purposely push our school into the depths of misery; perhaps they themselves had been blinded by the same asphyxiating tradition as we were. But now, we all know! You know, I know. Everybody knows—what the trouble is. *If you don't liberate the school, history will judge you.*"

I cannot too strongly emphasise the debt that freethought in Canada, and especially in French Canada, owes to Joseph La Rivière for speaking out so forthrightly in favour of secular education, when so many were calling for compromises that would leave the Roman Catholic Church dominant in a field where its effects have been demonstrably disastrous.

The Jews and Jesus

By F. A. RIDLEY

IN ONE OF THOSE typically hard-hitting articles that we all so much enjoy even when (as occasionally happens) we may query some of their learned author's conclusions, Mr. H. Cutner has referred again to the perennial and knotty problem of the historicity of Jesus. Mr. Cutner's views on this extremely controversial question are, I imagine, by now reasonably familiar to past and present readers of THE FREETHINKER. As I have actually no very strong views on this question, I shall only deal here with the references to myself in his article.

With regard to a statement made previously by me, that the millennial censorship of the Christian Church has destroyed nearly all the ancient and medieval literature hostile to Christian orthodoxy: this fact is so indisputable that I am surprised frankly at a scholar of Mr. Cutner's erudition even so much as querying it. To take only one branch of such anti-Christian literature, viz., the anti-Christian apologetics prior to the victory of Christianity in the 4th century: we know the names of several such authors, Porphyry, Proclus, Hierocles, Julian (the so-called Apostate) and Celsus. Only Celsus has survived in part, thanks to Origen's later reply which quoted part (but only part), of this book in his reply. All these writers—and no doubt many other Pagan and probably Jewish critics of Christianity—had their books committed to the flames by several Imperial Decrees of Christian Emperors. How do we know that they did not give information regarding Christian origins? Josephus had a fraudulent passage later inserted in favour of Christianity, unknown to Origen and therefore inserted subsequent to the mid-3rd century, and it is quite possible (as Mr. Cutner's *bête noire*, the German critic, Robert Eisler suggested) that an authentic but hostile passage had been eliminated. Incidentally, the present state of Josephus's text rather appears to suggest such an arbitrary excision.

In brief, ancient anti-Christian literature today, consists of a few fragments preserved by chance, and that surely is where we should have expected to find any *genuine* information about Christian origins and—if any such person existed—about Jesus, not in our present heavily-edited and bowdlerised (in the later interests of orthodoxy) text. Mr. Cutner really ought not to allow his apparent obsession with one particular theory of Christian origins (the mythicist) to destroy so obviously his critical faculty in approaching the literature of a bygone age.

With regard to the passage that he quotes from the early Christian writer, Justin Martyr's reply to the Jewish rabbi, Trypho, this passage is admittedly a very obscure one, and as neither Mr. Cutner nor myself is an expert in the Greek used by the Christian Fathers, we had better perhaps

leave Trypho's precise meaning to experts upon this kind of Hellenistic Greek. It is, however, a fact that some such experts translate Trypho quite differently from Mr. Cutner, and that they do not construe this passage as denying the existence of Jesus, but only the authenticity of his Messianic pretensions.

Be that as it may, even if we suppose (with Mr. Cutner) that Trypho did deny *in toto* the historicity of Jesus, he was quite alone in his contention, for the (post-Christian) Jews as we know, both from references in the Talmud and in Celsus (who reproduces the current Jewish anti-Christian criticisms of his day) did not deny the existence of Jesus, though they did denounce him as an impostor and his disciples as a rabble of blasphemers and ne'er-do-wells. The attitude that the Jewish rabbis have always taken up with regard to the New Testament is, not that it was entirely mythical, but that contrarily (as the old rabbis so neatly and accurately put it) "What's true in it isn't new, and what's new in it isn't true".

I also regret to note that Mr. Cutner (as indicated in his final paragraph in particular) appears to regard the whole question of Christian origins more from the present-day point of view of actually scoring points in current debates with modern Christians than in finding out what *did* actually happen.

I can only deplore such an attitude which I find incomprehensible, particularly in view of the permanent importance of the issues involved.

Conway Hall Reunion

THE ANNUAL REUNION of South Place Ethical Society will take place in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1, on Sunday, September 30th. The Secretary, Mr. J. Hutton Hynd, will preside, and the Guest of Honour will be Dr. Maurice Burton, late of the British Museum (Natural History) and nature writer for the *Daily Telegraph* and *Illustrated London News*. There will be an informal meeting of members and friends at 3 p.m., followed by speeches and music, and tea at 5 p.m.

HER EMINENCE

Two hotels were suggested but Sir Alec [Guinness] decided neither was satisfactory. Instead he chose the 360-year-old Santa Scolastica monastery, near Subiaco—a small town better known as the birthplace of Gino Lollobrigida.—*Daily Express* (5/9/62).

WITHOUT COMMENT

An appeal for £50,000 to build a church on the new Oxford city council housing estate at Blackbird Leys has raised only £264 since April.—*Daily Express* (8/9/62).

Bicentenary of the "Fifty"

By D. J. McCONALOGUE

THE YEAR 1762 was an important one for Voltaire and for Freethought. On March 10th, the Huguenot merchant Jean Calas, was broken on the wheel at Toulouse for allegedly murdering his son Marc-Antoine to prevent his going-over to the Catholics. The evidence pointed unmistakably to the fact that Marc-Antoine had hanged himself in a fit of despair, when he found that his Calvinistic beliefs precluded his being allowed to practise law. The simmering fanaticism of the area was brought to the boil by the local priests, with the result that the factual evidence was soon swamped by a torrent of Catholic hysteria, the unscrupulous suppression of relevant witnesses and pious lying. Once again, the sole custodians of the Religion of Love and Truth had vindicated their God.

Voltaire at this time was approaching seventy, his health was weak, but his interest in life was undiminished. A traveller from Toulouse brought the news to him in Geneva, and after satisfying himself of the innocence of Calas (a necessary precaution, as murder for religious reasons was not an exclusively Catholic prerogative), he wholeheartedly and unselfishly undertook the vindication of the memory of Jean Calas, and the alleviation of the condition of the Calas family, who had been arrested and financially ruined when the head of the family had been judicially murdered. After three years, his efforts were to achieve complete success.

Up to this time, Voltaire had fought various guerrilla battles with the Church: in 1734 his *Philosophical Letters* were publicly burned by the Paris hangman, and an impressive list of his works had achieved the honour of being placed on the Roman *Index*. But these were incidental to his enormous literary output, his travels over the continent, and to a host of social and business transactions.

From 1762 onwards, he was engaged in an all-out war against the "Infamous Thing", which was only to end with his death. From his study of Christian origins, he had seen that organised Christianity had no historical basis, but rested on pious fraud and fanatical make-believe, and was kept alive by the twin tyrannies of Throne and Altar. Surveying the history of Europe, he viewed Christianity (particularly in its Catholic form) as a major tragedy. The early Fathers like Ambrose and Augustine were cunning and implacable fanatics who had trampled the superior culture of Imperial Rome with its easy-going polytheism under their ignorant feet, and who, unaware of their insanity and ignorance, had, with an unparalleled megalomania, attempted to define for all time, mankind's duties to an invisible power. The legacy of their systematised insanity had polluted the main stream of European thought, by erecting an organisation which had continuously waged wars of unparalleled greed and barbarity, and which ensured its own survival by the systematic paralysation of the minds of those whom it could get into its power, employing every weapon of fear, and exploiting every human weakness, with complete disregard for the consequences in terms of human degradation and unhappiness. The Monster, grievously wounded at the Reformation, was, wherever possible, functioning as viciously as ever. It was as strong as ever in the France of the Age of Reason. Such was the enemy which Voltaire was compelled to strike with all his might.

The opening shot in this total war was the republishing in August at Geneva of the famous *Sermon of the Fifty*, originally written in 1749, towards the end of his association with Mme. du Châtelet, an association of fifteen years during which they had read the Bible, using the critical material available, which even then was quite formidable. To celebrate this bicentenary of the Geneva edition a translation with introduction and notes by Mr. J. A. R. Séguin has been produced in the USA. Many readers will be familiar with the *Sermon* in the *Selections from Voltaire* by Joseph McCabe in the Thinker's Library. Mr. Séguin pays unstinted tribute to McCabe's translation, which he has studied closely, but points out that McCabe used the Kehl edition, whose text omits some important final revisions of Voltaire, and that McCabe, for reasons of prudery, omitted the passage in which Voltaire discusses the Lord's instructions to Ezekiel (Ezekiel 4, 12) on the preparation of his bread.

The *Sermon*, one of the most devastating weapons ever directed against Christianity, is couched in the form of a homily delivered to "fifty educated, pious and reasonable persons", who are devout Deists. After a dignified prayer to the Supreme Being, the preacher proceeds to an examination of the Hebrew scriptures, discussing in detail all "those features which are offensive to purity, charity, good faith, justice and universal reason". The absurdities, atrocities, prophesies, and obscenities of the Old Testament are exposed and flayed, and the claim that the Hebrew mountain-god Yahveh is the Supreme Being is shown to be a brazen imposture of priestcraft.

The *Sermon* then proceeds to the New Testament, with equally fatal results, and a brief history of Christianity drives the final nail into the coffin of "the most cheerless delusion which has ever offended human reason". It ends with a prayer to the god of the Deists to forgive the Christians for their blasphemies, and implores Him to deliver mankind from the poison of superstition.

Mr. Séguin's volume is delightfully produced, and is unlikely to be superceded for a considerable time. His detailed knowledge of the orthodox and freethinking writings of the period is immense, and he has used it to trace each idea of the *Sermon* to its original source. While the notes are primarily intended for scholars, the amateur will find them as entertaining as the text itself, due to the judicious selections of relevant quotations from Bayle, Father Jean Meslier, the English Deists Tindal and Woolston, and the orthodox Dom Calmet, OSB, whose voluminous *Commentary* has been quarried by Mr. Séguin, an undertaking which must have required the patience of Job.

Freethinkers will find a certain piquancy in the fact that this edition has been produced by Western Buddhists. It is, however, a Buddhism which believes in "man's inalienable right to free thought, tolerance, literary criticism, and unfettered religious experience", and for which "all metaphysical systems upholding the existence of an immortal soul separate from the body or of a personal deity overtopping the universe are simply chimerical". Voltaire is honoured as a liberator of the human mind, while his Deism is regarded as a metaphysical illusion.

As the present edition is limited to 250 copies, and sells for 6 dollars, it is, of necessity, a collectors' item. It can be obtained from Ross Paxton, Publisher, 236 Henry St., Brooklyn, New York.

This Believing World

Champions of the Design Argument have now a marvellous chance to prove that Almighty God doeth all things well. The latest earthquake disaster, the one in Persia, has resulted in the deaths of many thousands of men, women, and children, and if the Lord did not design earthquakes, who did? Moreover, all Theists will tell you that God is "omniscient", that is, he "foresees" everything; so he foresaw this (and every other earthquake). He knew what would happen, and didn't do a thing about it! Yet the Design Argument is still religion's strongest card!

★
Although Evolution is "anathema" to all true Christians—it must be, because it destroys the Bible story of the origin of man and the universe—many of the most interesting scientific lectures on the radio and TV are forced to deal with it. But quite a few of the speakers often make silly mistakes. In the *TV Times* (August 26th) we have quite an interesting example of how difficult it is to get even our advanced writers on Evolution to avoid making mistakes. The writer of "Man—by Chance" coolly tells us that in the *Origin of Species* Darwin "announced to a startled world that man was descended from apes". We thought this had been quashed long ago.

★
Firstly, it should be noted that in that work, Darwin hardly dealt with the origin of man at all and, in any case, he would not have said anything so silly. It was in his later book, *The Descent of Man*, that he dealt with man's evolution that man and apes are descended from a common ancestor. However, the writer, Steuart Hynd, admits that man's evolution "may be an accident", and that it must be about 350 million years ago, "that the first backboned fishes crawled out of the sea", that "it took 150 million years to produce the first mammals", and so on. All this is a far cry from the "simple" story in the first chapter of Genesis.

★
About 15 years ago the Churches initiated a "Commando campaign" designed to bring the people back into their pious fold and, as far as we remember, it fizzled out in a most unholy defeat. Not to be outdone, the Catholic Church instituted an "enquiry" service, but it has been rather shy in telling us the number of converts it has made from Freethought ranks, the only converts who really matter. However, the *Sunday Express* (September 2nd) now tells us that "a highly organised task force of more than 1,000 Roman Catholic men and women has arrived in Britain from Eire" to persuade people "to take instruction in the Roman Catholic faith". These Irish apostles must really have boundless faith.

★
They call themselves "The Legion of Mary" and have modelled themselves on the army of Imperial Rome—just as General Booth modelled his Salvation Army on our regular army. The Salvation Army has had extraordinary success in persuading people to give them money, but the only converts it has made came from fully believing Christians who may or may not have "strayed" a little from the straight and narrow path. However, the Legionaires have persuaded some Irish Catholics to be converted to Catholicism in the same way as Jehovah's Witnesses get "converts"—by the dear old door-to-door method, and they will be rather surprised to find that Protestant England is quite different from Catholic Eire.

★
According to themselves, spiritual healers must have cured millions of incurable people, and at least fifty per cent by

"absent" healing. But we must confess that the story in the *Sunday Pictorial* (September 2nd) of a healer who can do it by telephone is a new one on us. He is of course always successful, especially with incurable cases, and is always also ready to produce documentary proof. Alas, he failed to do so with the *Sunday Pictorial* reporter. We wonder why?

Saucepans and Serpents

THERE HAVE BEEN a number of good books on Zen such as Eugen Herrigel's *Zen In The Art Of Archery* (Routledge, 10s. 6d.), which have been remarkable for their clarity. One has been left with a respect for the achievements of mental disciplines and relaxations. But with Hubert Benoit, author of *Let Go! Theory and Practice of Detachment According to Zen* (Allen & Unwin, 30s.), one feels one is being drawn into a verbal elaboration that can only be of value to idle people who need something like a religion or a crossword puzzle to occupy their minds.

There are passages in his text which might, in fact, be recommended as substitutes for witches' recipes for banishing distress. Yes, by the time the witch's client had collected the eyes of a newt and the hairs of a scorpion and all the other ingredients, he had forgotten what was upsetting him in the first place. The average reader, then, might discover that the same magical result attended him after a meditation on such sentences of Mr. Benoit's as: "If my verbal thought can create the idea 'the cook uses saucepans', it can also create the idea that 'the cook betrays some serpents'". These two verbal ideas participate in the syntactical structure which is one, and therefore they are single and have absolute meaning; they manifest equally the principal identity of all things; the one, like the other, manifests the original mental movement or essence of the mind".

The rationalist, of course, is distrustful of systems which promise content by dismissing all problems as illusionary. Naturally, one can be without *angst* if one accepts a vegetable state of being. Most of us would not go as far as the aristocrat who cried: "Happiness? you ask too much! We must leave something to the unsuccessful!" but most of us are prepared to accept the nobility of the suffering which goes with worthwhile achievement. The artist embraces the anguish which produces the work of art, knowing that men have evolved from the amoeba to—suffering and achievement.

To be fair to Mr. Benoit, he would probably accept this; but he does not convince us that he does. Again, as with so many expounders of Eastern religions and philosophies, he spoils many an argument with a trivial illustration which simply reduces the "secret" to the level of a columnist's answer to a heart-throb letter or to a nursery command. Yet, as his compilation is based on Zen and the works of interpretative philosophers, there are inevitably inspiring asides. Take, for instance, this paragraph on death: "Only other men are mortal for me; as for my own organism, it is immortal for me because it is the only organism whose death it will be impossible for me to perceive; I can see my own life decline, I cannot see it stop. It is thus with sleep; I can be aware that I will be asleep soon, but not that I am asleep".

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

RUSSIAN SCIENTIFIC WORKS IN ENGLISH

- Space Laboratories**, by G. Zhdanov and I. Tindo. Illustrated with photos and diagrams, including map of far side of the moon. 6s., plus 6d. postage.
- The Universe**, by A. Oparin and V. Fesenkov. Illustrated. 4s. 6d., plus 6d. postage.
- from THE PIONEER PRESS

THE FREETHINKER

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Lecture Notices, Etc.

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North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead).—Every Sunday, noon: L. EBURY.

INDOOR

Birmingham Branch NSS (Midland Institute, Paradise Street), Sunday, September 23rd, 6.45 p.m.: W. LINDSAY NEUSTATTER, MD, MRCP (Consultant Psychiatrist), "Reform of the Homosexual Law".

Notes and News

IN Views and Opinions this week, Lanje Gardyen gives us a shortened version of Joseph La Rivière's splendid speech before the Royal Commission of Enquiry on Education in Quebec. It is worth mentioning that the French newspaper reporters were absent during Mr. La Rivière's hearing, *Le Devoir* never even mentioning that he had submitted a brief. But he was interviewed on television on July 10th. ★

THERE is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Church in Canada is worried. On February 11th, Bishop Charbonneau, auxiliary Bishop of Ottawa, told a French-language Teachers' Congress that the problem of youth was "purely and simply the problem of faith". "It is not", he said, "despite appearances, a moral problem". Even Catholic immigration from Europe doesn't seem to have helped. An Italian priest, Father Alessi, has declared (*La Presse*, 14/4/62) that 80 per cent of the Italians in Toronto don't practise their faith any longer. And, according to a recent Gallup Poll, "The largest segment of Canadians with an opinion on the matter, believes that religion as a whole is losing influence in Canadian life" (*Montreal Star*, 8/9/62). Attitudes among Protestants and Catholics were "almost identical on the question", and indeed, "This is one of the few questions on religious matters, as reported by the Gallup Poll, on which men and women of all faiths have much the same opinion". ★

IN THE United States, on the other hand, more people (45%) believed that religion was increasing its influence. Only 25% held this view in Canada. The relative per-

The Freethinker Sustentation Fund

Previously acknowledged, £230 2s. 4d. Mrs. M. Evans, 7s.; F. Gibbs, 5s.; E. Drabble, 7s. 6d.; R. Underwood, 4s. 6d.; J. Buchanan, 2s. 6d.; C. Holmes, 10s.; Anon, 2s.; Pius John 23, £1 13s. 7d.; S. C. Merrifield, 2s. 6d.; T. L. Marshall, £1 6s. 9d.; H.C., 10s.; Mrs. A. Calderwood, £2; E. Swale, £1; J. Goudie, £50. Total to date, September 21st, 1962, £288 13s. 8d.

centages who believed it was losing influence were 31% in the USA, and 37% in Canada. 17% and 27% respectively thought its influence was about the same, and 7% and 11% had no opinion. Whether the poll had been taken in the US before or after the Supreme Court's decision on the New York Board of Regents' prayer is not stated. ★

THE LATEST expression of displeasure at the Supreme Court's ruling occurred in the apple orchard of 75-year-old Senator Harry F. Byrd, "political chieftain of Virginia" (*Newark Sunday News*, 26/8/62). The senator asked 3,500 invited picnickers to join him in reciting the prayer, and said that the country needed to get closer to God. To declare the prayer unconstitutional, he went on, "is a legal distortion that can only cause doubt and distrust among young people. The 'Warren' court was not satisfied with rewriting the constitution, now it appears it wants to rewrite the Bible". Or just keep it out of the schools? ★

"I WAS ashamed—it was just like King's Cross railway station." That is how the Rev. Timothy Kidd, of St. Anne's, Grantham, Lincolnshire, described Canterbury Cathedral in the tourist season (*Sunday Express*, 2/9/62). A family was eating and drinking in the transept, and children were playing hide and seek in the crypt. Mr. Kidd even "removed a beer bottle top from the altar", and, as he knelt and prayed in a chapel with a grill, the "average comment of those who looked through was that I was barmy". But it seems that the vicar of St. Anne's only saw the worst. "Most of the hundreds of thousands of visitors behave extremely well", said one of the Cathedral clergy. And on the whole, we feel that the Cathedral would be better compared to a museum than a station. ★

THE REMARK of Mr. Frank Whitworth when prosecuting at Kent Quarter Sessions at Maidstone, that Irish labourers are "particularly notorious in their reluctance to pay income tax" (*The Guardian*, 12/9/62) reminded us of Emmett McLoughlin's analysis of the causes of Roman Catholic criminality in *Crime and Immorality in the Catholic Church* (Lyle Stuart, New York), which we reviewed on April 13th. Mr. McLoughlin points out that "violations of common morality, upon which the integrity of nations is built are normally only venial sins, which need not even be confessed and are therefore perpetrated with complete impunity by Catholic youngsters and elders". It is no sin, he adds, to cheat the government through income tax fraud, whereas the obligation to finance the Church is binding under penalty of mortal sin. Of course, not all Irish tax-evaders need be Catholic, but the majority is likely to have had a Catholic upbringing. And while it might be argued that an alien will naturally feel less social responsibility than a native, we still hold by the "common morality upon which the integrity of nations is built". ★

WE ASK those who are not convinced of the evil influence of Christian belief, to consider two quotations from John Budd, aged 37, and paralysed, whose three children were killed in a fire while he was on pilgrimage to Lourdes. "My faith in life has now been renewed", he said on his return to Britain (*Daily Express*, 8/9/62). And, "I am sure I could have walked home if my children were here".

THE COMMON MARKET DEBATE

Rome and the Treaty of Rome

By J. A. MILLAR

IT NOW APPEARS that Great Britain will be joining the European Economic Community, despite the opposition of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, and as a complement to the excellent articles of Mr. Ridley, it seems necessary to demonstrate that, whilst it cannot be disputed that Rome has quite definitely assumed its proper place as the ideological leader of the unquestionably political alliance of Europe, it could hardly have done so without possessing *real* economic power. After all, if the dominant ideas of an historical era are invariably those of the ruling class, it must follow that a pointer to the ruling class must be ideas which are dominant, and these, in Europe today (and presumably England tomorrow) are those of the Holy Apostolic Church at Rome, as witnessed by the accession to power of Catholic leaders such as Adenauer, de Gaulle, and the Christian Democratic parties.

By some singular oversight it does not seem to be generally noted that the Vatican has emerged from the Industrial Revolution as "the largest *shareholder* and property owner in the world!" (*Der Spiegel*, June, 1961), and it must be frankly admitted that this could only have been accomplished by a shrewd body of far-sighted men, quick to adapt to modern conditions. "*Semper Idem*", like industrial philanthropy, is merely part of the Vatican "image" on the public relations front. Anyone who thinks we are dealing with a 20th century anachronism is naive in the extreme.

The *Wall Street Journal* (14/9/60), for instance, reported that the Vatican's financial dealings are so vast that it frequently buys or sells gold in \$1 million or larger lots with the US Treasury in Washington, but since so much is loosely spoken about "Big Business" it is not irrelevant to get just a little perspective first.

The *City Press* (24/11/61) stated that the richest man in Europe is Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach whose infamous "Dynasty of Death" needs no introduction. With assets of around £400 million, this industrial giant is slightly less powerful than our own War-Lord Vickers Armstrong, both of whom exceed in power "the world's richest man", Paul Getty, who qualifies for the title with a mere £300 million. The above, along with other financial small-fry such as Courtaulds (£m230), Aristotle Onassis (£m300), Steel Company of Wales (£m200), US Steel, General Motors, etc., are likely to stand little chance against the aspirations of the real Titans, such as ICI of Great Britain, with assets of about £1,000 million, Unilever of Holland (£m1,000), Du Pont de Nemour of the USA, and a mixed bag of bankers and insurance companies.

Thus, we can see that an industrial colossus with about £m300-£m400 which dominates a nation, is, in its turn, dominated by the great international Titans with upwards of £1,000,000,000 (give or take the odd £100,000,000).

We can now place the Vatican in its relative position of power when we consider that according to *Der Spiegel*, the *Daily Express*, the *Italian Expresso*, and a number of other sources, in *shareholdings alone*, the Church of Rome is worth some £5,000,000,000 at least. That is, five times larger than the world's largest company and larger than the twelve largest world dominating companies all rolled into one. There can be little doubt however, that the computation given is not an accurate one. I personally estimate the wealth of the Vatican at about £20,000,000,000, or four times larger than the twelve largest companies in

the world and equal to at least 25% of the whole of English industrial wealth.

Since however, large capital dominates smaller capital, the influence of the Vatican is considerably larger than would appear from the above. Rome owns or controls at least ten banks situated in Italy, Switzerland and America, and their influence can be noted in the holding by Baron Nogara of no less than 74 European industrial directorships. Since he was the financial leader of the Curia, all of these 74 companies, their subsidiaries and even their trade suppliers, are certain to be Vatican-dominated, as must be the Pirelli company at Burton-on-Trent and elsewhere, together with the giant Fiat-Citroen merger, since both Pirelli and Fiat are members of the Curia. Similarly, the meteoric rise of ENI under the Catholic Enrico Mattei (whose £575 million group's part in directly fomenting the war in Algeria deserves greater attention) may also be traced to the influence of Catholic financial power in Europe.

What hope does Britain have when even the "almighty American dollar" was impotent in the recent Wall Street crash, due primarily to President Kennedy smashing the virtual monopoly of US and Bethlehem Steel with the aid of the Catholic-controlled American, National and Republican Steel Company? The Vatican is not powerful in America because there is a Catholic president—there is a Catholic president because the Vatican is powerful in America. Does any materialist really doubt that in a country where 90% are apathetic to religion the decisive argument is the possession of economic power?

No longer can we say with Thomas Hobbes that "the Papacy is the ghost of the Roman Empire sitting crowned on the grave thereof", since like Jesus Christ it has risen from its grave, but in its modern guise, like all present day Empires, is financial in form. True, the battle is not yet won, but secularists may be excused their cold shivers while they wait to see if the Protestant Prodigal Son is going to respond to the beckoning of the fleshless finger of Rome.

..... The Debate Continues

In a democratic nation the majority rules the minority, but the minority can work to become a majority. This is not so true with regard to the Common Market. To start with, even if we changed the government in this country the new policies would have to be thrown over if the majority in the Market were against them. Change here does not mean change there. Nor is it true that our influence would counter that of the Catholic Church. If it is influence that counts then we can better exert it by remaining outside.

A united Europe, if not a united world, is a fine thing, but not if it is based on a philosophy of exploitation of man by man, or—put another way—dog by dog. Yet such is the basic mode of operation behind the Market. It is dominated by certain giant combines and this will become more marked than ever as it gets consolidated. I would maintain that it is already controlled by reactionary forces of the very type the Roman Church has allied itself to in the past—and present, and which its social teachings contained in certain papal encyclicals are designed to back. Britain should keep out of the Common Market, in doing so we will help to defeat a major menace to true unity.

R. W. MORRELL
Note: 1. If Britain enters the EEC our economic, and eventually our political, independence will be surrendered to a West European parliament with a Romanist majority. 2. As Mr. F. A. Ridley has written, the growth of Romanism here has been due mainly to Eirean immigration. In the EEC this process would be speeded up by the influx of Europeans. 3. The EEC nations are ruled by-and-large by Romanist parties who might well lead us into a "crusade" against the USSR.

FRANCIS SOATER.

The Churches and Big Business

By LEON SPAIN (USA)

IN ENTERING THE DOMAIN of speculative enterprise, avowedly to assist in maintaining their educational institutions and other integral parts of their religious programme, the Churches in America have reaped huge profits and returns which secular enterprises would envy. In many instances they have done so, claiming special immunities from taxation, as religious institutions, which secular enterprises have not enjoyed. However, the acknowledgment of the huge clerical organisations that they are actively engaged in the arena of big business enterprises has not passed without a protest from their secular competitors; and many of the laity versed in church affairs—apart from the secular competitors—are maintaining that it is time that Churches which are engaged in business enterprises should shoulder their fair share of national and state tax burdens. There is also a demand that the Churches should pay their proportionate share of real estate and property taxes.

This issue is posing a major problem, for the Churches are the only listed charitable organisations under the USA Internal Revenue code that are exempted from the 52 per cent corporate income tax on unrelated business. Many Church leaders and secular opponents contend this is direct tax favouritism by Congress, and actually constitutes a discriminatory practice against all businesses which are in the same enterprises as the Churches.

In the United States today Churches are providing, on a grand scale, competition in hotels, office buildings, bakeries, wineries, real estate and stock investment, parking lots, gasoline stations, radio and television stations, book stores, newspapers, food production, etc. Many do not question the right of the religious institutions to engage in business for profit; their contention is that if a Church is secular enough to engage in such a mundane activity as competitive business enterprise, then it should abide by what fair play exists in business enterprise. It should pay the tax collector. It should, as the saying goes "pay its way" and not be "a free rider".

A national survey by the Associated Press has listed the various holdings, enterprises, and profits of many prominent religious institutions in America. Among some of the major organised religions which it has listed are:

The First Christian, First Baptist, and Second Presbyterian Churches in Bloomington, Illinois, bought the Biltmore Hotel there in 1954 for \$3.3 million. The hotel is now leased to Hilton Hotels.

The International Church of The Four Square Gospel in Los Angeles, California, owns and operates two radio stations listed at more than \$3 million dollars.

The Mormon Church in Salt Lake City, Utah, has large holdings of land and is engaged in many enterprises. Among some of their business interests are, Desert Publishing Co., Beneficial Life Insurance Co., Orlando Livestock Co. (which has 300,000 acres of cattle ranches in Georgia and Florida) a coal mine, 30 canneries, and poultry and dairy farms. David O. McKay, president of the Mormons, last year announced a \$40,000,000 building programme in Salt Lake City. The programme will comprise a new 28 storey office building, an additional 17 storeys on Hotel Utah, purchase of 786 acres and 14 industrial buildings to be constructed in the city for investment. It has been stated that the landed enterprises of the Mormon Church are managed by Zion Securities, which pays taxes. However, profits from vast investments are said to go tax free.

The United Brethren Church operates a cheese and dairy farm at Milbank, South Dakota. The capital stock is listed at \$100,000.

The Loma Linde Food Co., valued at more than \$1,500,000, and located in Arlington, California, is owned and operated by the Pacific Union Conference of The Seventh Day Adventist

Church. Its specialty has been to produce more than fifty varieties of meatless foods for its vegetarian members. In 1960 it netted \$71,000 from the sale of the food.

The Adventists also have enterprises in a bakery, furniture store, gasoline station, and an Oregon Lumber mill which they inherited. It is reported they pay taxes on the operation of the mill.

It is unquestioned that various orders of the Roman Catholic Church operate such enterprises as wineries, radio and television stations, cattle ranches, and bakeries. In the listing, mention is made that in Columbus, Ohio, the Roman Catholic College of Josephinum owns the Montgomery Ward Building. And it is common knowledge that the Christian Brothers, an order of teachers, and not priests, are large scale competitors in manufacturing popular brand wines. Among some of the wines manufactured by Christian Brothers are, cream sherry, dry sherry, burgundy, rose wine, red and tawny port, muscatel, Chateau la Salle—all listed, in Pennsylvania State Liquor Stores, for \$1.51 per bottle. Extra dry champagne is listed at \$3.86 per bottle. Last July, in a case considered as a legal landmark, Federal Judge Sherrill Halbert ruled that the Christian Brothers, while members of the Roman Catholic Church, were teachers and did not perform "sacerdotal functions", and that the winery is not part of the Church's unrelated business. On the basis of that ruling, the order was forced to pay an additional \$3,477,390 in back taxes for 1954, 1955, and 1957, since the court action was based originally on the claim of the Christian Brothers, when they filed claim for the return of \$489,000 in income taxes in 1952, 1953, and 1956.

The above is only a mere cross section—in fact, an infinitesimal particle—of the total commercial enterprises in which the large religious corporations in America are engaged at present. And it is quite likely that what has transpired in the way of clerical enterprises in the field of business during the past will not even be approximately plumbed. Church leaders, outstanding in Protestant affairs, are seriously concerned to the point that public awareness of the commercial activities of the Churches will lead to the development of anti-clerical sentiment on a large scale, and the impact of which will be felt in the near future. Some are even fearful that if the present trend of ecclesiastical large scale business enterprise continues, the Church will probably face revolutionary expropriation within one hundred years. And some outstanding Church leaders have gone on record as advocating the payment of the federal income tax on unrelated business and the payment of property taxes, in order to alleviate the stress on city, state, and national tax structures. However, there is a huge segment of official clerical opinion which maintains that the Churches and their unrelated businesses, despite arguments to the contrary, are entitled to any and all exemptions and immunities which they enjoy, and also any which they can wrest from city, state, or federal government.

In the past the US Supreme Court has ruled that the constitutional guarantees stipulating the separation of church and state are inviolable and are not to be infringed in the American school room. This was recently evinced in the 6 to 1 Supreme Court ruling banning the Regents' Prayer at the opening of the school day in the class rooms of New York state. This has caused a tidal wave of clerically-conditioned sentiment denouncing that decision in the most vehement and negatively emotional manner.

And many of the clergy and their uncritical cohorts state that in the light of past Supreme Court decisions, they see the handwriting on the wall of the church in American public life, or its reduction to a minimum. They are more than fearful that the trend which the court has evinced pertaining to church and state in the classroom will be extended to tax questions.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE "CHURCH TIMES"?

With reference to your comment on my letter under the above title (September 7th). It seems strange that my surprise at the inclusion of articles lauding religion should be referred to as "impractical"—which I assume is meant by the use of the word "doctrinaire", as even my Christian "friends" never refer to me as "visionary"—which seems the only alternative meaning given in my dictionary for this word.

As I have a great admiration for both Thomas Paine and Voltaire, I shall be very interested to be referred to any of their writings wherein either suggested that the teachings of Jesus were comprehensible, or expressed views in any way comparable with those in the articles objected to by me.

I was under the impression that THE FREETHINKER was opposed to all religions—unorthodox or otherwise—and advocated militant freethought, but as it is now apparently to include in its (very limited) space, articles giving religious views, one might just as well resign from the Secular Society and join a Bible class—there will be similar (and much more) literature there anyway.

The late G. W. Foote once printed a representation of God showing his "back parts" to Moses. When may we expect one showing this great Freethinker turning in his grave? Your publishers can rest assured that they will not receive a similar reward as that given Foote.

Might I be advised please when Len Ebury and Jim Barker join the Roman Church or Mrs. Eva Ebury takes vows?

C. STANLEY.

REPLY:

We have no wish to enter into a long argument with Mr. Stanley, still less indulge in banter. THE FREETHINKER encourages free thinking as well as freethinking; we print many controversial articles without feeling it necessary to preface them with: "the views expressed do not necessarily represent . . .", etc.

Dr. Blakiston is an ex-nun and Mr. Crommelin an ex-priest, who now hold unorthodox opinions. In the light of their authors' experiences, those opinions seemed of interest, though we didn't share them—and intimated as much in Notes and News (24/8/62). They were to some extent novel and, we judged, sincere. Another editor informed Dr. Blakiston: "Much as I agree with you, such ideas cannot be printed". We printed them though we didn't agree with them.

Both Paine and Voltaire were strongly opposed to atheism. Paine thought that the people of France were "running headlong into atheism" and he had *The Age of Reason* translated into "their own language, to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article of every man's creed who has any creed at all—I believe in God". (See J. M. Robertson's introduction to *The Age of Reason*, Watts and Co., 1912.) Voltaire believed that "Atheism is the vice of some intelligent men, and superstition is the vice of fools", and that, "although less to be dreaded than fanaticism, [atheism] is almost always fatal to virtue" (*Philosophical Dictionary*, article "Atheism"). He also argued elsewhere against atheism.

Both Paine and Voltaire believed in a Creator, an "Intelligence" behind the world. "It is impossible to controvert this truth", said Voltaire (op. cit.), "which surrounds us and presses us on all sides". And, in the article on "God—Gods", he invited the reader to "adore, with me, the design which is manifested in all nature, and consequently the author of that design—the primordial and final cause of all". In the first part of *The Age of Reason*, Paine wrote: "Our ideas, not only of the Almightyness of the Creator, but of his wisdom and his beneficence, become enlarged in proportion as we contemplate the extent and the structure of the universe". While, on the first page of his great religious work he declared, "I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life."—ED.

HOW?

I wonder how many people listened to the BBC news broadcast of September 12th, when it was announced that the Pope had called for a fairer distribution of the world's riches. How can a person, living in such affluence and splendour, talk about distribution of the world's riches? The Roman Catholic Church has amassed and is amassing riches beyond description.

M. D. SILAS.

APPROVED SCHOOLS

The *Liverpool Echo's* London correspondent (September 3rd) reported that twenty new approved schools are being planned on a long term basis, and seven of them will be in the north. The site of one of them is not yet decided, but of the other six, five are Roman Catholic (senior and junior at Salford, intermediates at Billinge and Newcastle, senior boys in Yorkshire) the sixth, non-Catholic is at Manchester.

The Liverpool Children's Committee and Juvenile Court magistrates have declared themselves "harassed and aggravated by the failure of the Home Office to tackle the question of providing more approved schools and remand homes". Approved school building must be given first priority, they said.

But surely first priority should be given to the causal factors of delinquency. It would seem from the evidence of the Home Office list—as well as from other evidence accumulated over the years—that one of the prime causal factors is religious indoctrination at the expense of the inculcation of decent social conduct.

WM. THOMPSON.

"DEFENCE SYSTEM"

The Editor is quite right in saying that "frightful things in the world" shatter the theistic argument (p. 280). But I am sure Mr. Dyte's Christian friends will not see it that way. Christians have their own peculiar and quite effective defence system: if you speak to them about a beautiful landscape, the way organisms of living beings work (as long as they are healthy, of course) or about unselfish sacrifice, they will say that this reflects and proves the existence of God. If you tell them about the polio bacillus with its predilection for torturing innocent babies, and ask them how its creation agrees with infinite love and wisdom, they will say this is something we cannot understand, that we must have faith. Any argument for God is readily welcome as true and sound. Any argument against God merely shows the limitation of our understanding.

The fallacy of this way of reasoning, if reasoning it may be called, is evidenced by the fact that in this manner you simply can prove anything you like. Of logic there is not a bit. So if Mr. Dyte's grounds for rejecting the theistic argument have to do with logic he can very well add this to his collection.

G. WAPPENHANS (Spain).

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