

The Freethinker

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THE PROBLEM of the historicity of Jesus Christ has occupied many freethinking writers, and has taken up quite a lot of space on library shelves. With all respect to the many able writers concerned, and to their often learned and ingenious theories, the whole controversy has always struck me as largely futile, since no first-hand documentary evidence one way or the other, is so far available. Of course, the example of the Dead Sea Scrolls indicates the concrete possibility that eventually some written evidence may help to unravel the knotty points involved. But until this hypothetical event, the probability is that we should go on arguing in circles until perhaps, out of sheer exhaustion we shall be driven to some such conclusion as that of the Teutonic scholar, that though Homer could not possibly have written the poems ascribed to him, they could conceivably have been written by someone else of the same name.

New Testament Christs

Roman and Jewish references to Christ are invariably untrustworthy, being later (the second century at the earliest) and almost certainly derived ultimately from Christian sources. Nor does the Christian bible itself shed much light on the subject, for there are at least four separate Christs in the New Testament and even these are not consistently portrayed. Two of them are unmistakably gods and, originally at least, nothing but gods, a third is a hybrid—a god walking around in the borrowed flesh and blood of a man—whilst only one demonstrates recognisably human traits.

It is important to insist on this classification, for most Christians, in particular Protestants, picture "Our Lord" as the man who went about doing good with an occasional miracle thrown in for good measure: the "gentle Jesus meek and mild", who is drawn ultimately from the synoptic Gospels. These, with some minor variations, portray a still recognisably human teacher who, however, is beginning to be transformed into a god by the addition of items like the virgin birth, a divine origin mentioned only by Matthew and Luke, but obviously unknown to the original Matthew and Luke both of whom began their Gospels with genealogies which, whilst themselves contradictory, at least agree in tracing the descent of Jesus from Abraham and David via a human father, Joseph. They accordingly can have known nothing of any virgin birth and the divine parentage later to be ascribed to Jesus Christ. Despite the incorporation of later miraculous accretions, the synoptic Gospels form the only possible basis for an historical Jesus Christ, an authentic human being, a Jewish messiah who could have lived in Palestine at some period in our first century.

The Pauline Christ

One of the major discoveries of modern Biblical criticism, is that the Pauline Epistles (or at least all the genuinely Pauline ones) were written earlier than the present Gospels. But the Pauline Epistles appear to know nothing about any historical or Jewish Christ. The Pauline Christ is a

divine being and nothing but a divine being—the "Lord of Glory" who was crucified by the Archons of the Aeon, that is, by the evil spirits held by the Gnostics to preside over this era of cosmic time. It is true that the Pauline writer plays some variations upon this general theological scheme. For example, in one epistle, Paul includes God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ as the joint subjects of a singular Greek verb; that is as presumably identical.

("Now God himself and our Father and Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you") whereas in another very famous passage, Paul declares that eventually Christ shall have delivered up the Kingdom of God, even the Father . . .". Here, Christ

appears to be regarded as a kind of secondary deity subordinate to the Father.

Be that as it may, the Pauline Christ is consistently depicted as God. It is only in later pseudo-epistles such as Timothy and Titus edited (or perhaps even forged) in the 2nd century in order to bring Paul into line with then current doctrine, that one gets any clear reference to the gospel story of a human Christ resident in space and time, born of a virgin and crucified under Pontius Pilate. The Pauline *corpus* of Gnostic literature is solely concerned with a divine Christ.

The Johannine Synthesis

So far then, we have recognised two Christs, the original human one of the synoptic Gospels and the originally divine one of the Pauline Epistles. However, the New Testament also provides us with the synthesis between these dialectically opposing conceptions. This is to be found in the fourth gospel written by a later Pauline theologian traditionally (but almost improbably) described as the apostle John, the author of Revelation, an entirely dissimilar book. This gospel represents the synthesis between the Pauline and the synoptic Christs, both evidently known to, but not accepted *in toto* by the pseudo John.

His Jesus Christ represents the God of Paul who has descended on earth in first-century Palestine, where the Logos-God takes possession of the body of the synoptic man, Jesus, originally born of Joseph and Mary. For John ignores the virgin birth, though he must have heard of it by the time he wrote—probably about AD 135 from internal evidence. The Christ of John is a god walking about in the human form of the man Jesus: the gospel is the earlier biography of this god, who took possession of the human Jesus at his baptism in the manner of a spirit taking possession of a medium at a modern seance. The first thing that the god Christ does is to refuse to recognise his mother, the mother of Jesus.

The Christ of the Apocalypse

The three divergent Christs already described have all made their contribution to the later *corpus* of Christian theology. But the New Testament also includes a fourth Christ, perhaps the oldest, and certainly the most spectacular of all, the Christ of the Apocalypse (Revelation). This Christ represents—if we may reverently so describe

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

The Four Christs

By F. A. RIDLEY

him,—a distinct species of the genus Christ. For John's Christ was a divine being like Paul's, but a divine being of a totally different type, a kind of celestial sultan leading a terrifying army to wreak vengeance on the Roman Empire—the then arch-enemy and oppressor of both Christians and Jews—and upon its emperor, Nero, the "Hitler" of antiquity!

More nonsense (not all unfortunately by Christians) has been written about Revelation than about any other Biblical book, except perhaps the Book of Jonah with its allegorical whale. But actually, and in spite of its, to Western eyes, bizarre imagery, there is no book in the Bible, the purport of which is easier to decipher than Revelation. It is a hymn of hate against the Roman Empire, and its grand climax depicts the final overthrow of the harlot drunk with the blood of the saints, the

"Scarlet Woman"—the arch-oppressor, the universal slave-empire of Rome—by celestial intervention; by the final victory of the Messiah over Rome.

John's Christ, perhaps the oldest in Christian literature, is a Jewish warrior-messiah who descends from heaven in terrifying panoply in order to wreak vengeance on Rome and thus to inaugurate the messianic millenium. As a recent historian of Christian origins has aptly commented, to appreciate Revelation one must have some knowledge of the social, as well as the religious, evolution of the classical world of antiquity, for John's Christ takes his place with other ancient anti-Roman messiahs both pagan and Jewish, such as Spartacus and Bar Cockba.

Well, there are four major and distinctive Christs of the New Testament. Did any of them exist, and if so which?

Christianity and the Jews

By N. E. S. WEST (USA)

IN 1944 the slaughter of the Jews in Western Europe was about to end, due to the impending defeat of Hitler. This slaughter was the crime of the ages in its magnitude and yet, even after 20 years, hardly a word is heard as to its motivation.

A study of the slaughter of about 5 million Jews in Europe, and the destruction, by starvation and by exposure to freezing temperatures, of countless other Jews and other people by the Germans, surely should, inescapably, force the conclusion that, even after more than 1,000 years of constant and intensive teaching by Catholics and Protestants, Christianity has been an abysmal failure.

Instead of Christian brotherly love there was *no mercy*. And German Christianity at least helped to increase the German hatred for the Jews. For the Christian Bible is very outspoken against the Jews. The Jews were Christ-killers, and so all Christians must hate the Jews and condemn them for killing their God (see Matt. 27, 25; Luke 23, 28; Mark 15, 10-13).

See I Thessalonians 2 — 15-16, "Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us: and they please not God and are contrary to all men." Such instructions in the sacred inspired word of God, as was only to be expected, produced hatred.

In 1936 Robert Gessner in his *Some of My Best Friends are Jews*, said that there were 15 million Jews in the world and that everywhere they were hated. The Bible teaching, as supplemented by popes, priests, bishops, padres and preachers, had proved effective — the Jews were hated *because they were Jews*.

Martin Luther despised the Jews and said, "First they want to rule the world — second, they are arch criminals, killers of Christ and all Christendom and, third, they are a plague, a pestilence and pure misfortune" (see pages 9 and 10 in Raul Hilberg's *Destruction of the European Jews*, 1961). Hitler knew that Luther "wanted Germany to be rid of the Jews and when they left he wanted them to be deprived of all their cash and jewels and their silver and gold" (William Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, pp. 326-7). Hitler did as Martin Luther recommended.

Even the USA has assisted in the Christian effort to damn the Jews. In 1945 Woolsey Teller in his *Essays of an Atheist* reported that the Catholic prayer book then being distributed (by the US military) to our men overseas called the Jews "the Synagogue of Satan."

Let us briefly see how the Roman Catholic Church reacted to the instructions in the Bible. As Guide Kisch

said in *The Jews of Medieval Germany*, "The Jew whom the early Church displayed before its adherents is not a human being at all. He is a monster." The object of the Church was to keep the Jews in perpetual servitude, and this aim was sponsored by Innocent III, July 15, 1205. Kisch also named Honorius III and Gregory IX as participating in anti-Jewish activities. The teachings of these men, as Kisch remarked, were factors of the first magnitude in moulding the attitude of the people toward the Jews in the Middle Ages.

The same author outlined some of the restrictions that were placed on the Jews; restrictions which had the approval of the Fourth Lateran council (Canons 67, 68 and 69). In 1215, the Council decreed, in Canon 68, that the Jews were to have distinctive dress, badges and hats, etc. And, gradually, they came to live in ghettos. For a more detailed list of restrictions imposed by the Church on the Jews, see Hilberg.

M. Searle Bates tells us that:

From Paul IV (1555-1559) on the popes began to denounce Jewish influence and demand segregation, the burning of "dangerous" Jewish books and economic restrictions. In 1581 Gregory XIII asserted that "the guilt of the race in rejecting and crucifying Christ only grows deeper with successive generations entailing on its members perpetual servitude"; and this declaration was appended to the Canon Law. (*Religious Liberty*, 1945, p. 162).

In short, the Christian Bible and the Churches for over 1800 years taught the people to hate the Jews — the Christ killers — and actually murdered and persecuted thousands of Jews. By preaching this hatred the Christians, and especially the Catholics, contributed to the committing of the German crime. They instigated the slaughter of the Jews and they were in reality accessories before the fact. Hitler reaped the harvest of their sowing: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

A German witness in the Nuremberg trial confirmed that the harvest — the slaughter of the Jews — was the inevitable result of the 1800 years of Christians being taught to hate the Jews. The effects of such teachings were cumulative. (See page 241, *The Scourge of the Swastika*, by Lord Russell of Liverpool, 1954.)

The *Los Angeles Times* of February 18th, 1964, reported that: "Dr. Helmut Krausnick, 58, of the Munich Institute of Modern History, told Germany's largest war crime trial that 'Adolph Hitler was not an accident but the result of centuries of anti-Semitism in Germany.'"

The Church, for centuries, had preached Jesus and his crucifixion by the Jews.

Charlie Peace

By F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT

At a time when the Victorian era has become history and the subject of learned studies, nobody ought to claim any right to be at home in the period who does not know something of Charlie Peace. His name typified for a whole generation the romance of crime naked and undefiled. He was essentially Victorian in the semi-legendary memories which he left. Peace sneaking through the foggy street, dimly illuminated by gaslamps, a sack of stolen goods upon his back. Peace drawing a pistol and firing at close range as the pursuers gather on his trail. Peace the hero of many an escape, making a last bid for freedom as he jumps from the window of the moving train. Peace at last in the grim quiet of the condemned cell. It was all there and furnished the dual satisfaction of the boy's thriller linked with Victorian assertion that, in the end, vice would bring its own terrible downfall. Small wonder that Peace left a traditional folklore to be re-echoed in the music halls of his era and garnered into one literary forerunner of the modern paperback after another.

Actually, the true figure falls far short of the romance of the folklore. His story is told in its repulsive naked detail by David Ward in a new work, *King of the Lags: The Story of Charles Peace*, (Elek Books, London, 1964, 18s.), and a very grim story it is. Born at Sheffield in 1832 and hanged in Armley Gaol, Leeds, in 1879, Peace's life spanned the first two-thirds of Queen Victoria's reign. He came from the lower classes of industrial workers and decided in early manhood that any form of honest work had no place for him. Professionally, Peace was a burglar and more or less lived for years by this form of dishonesty, serving various prison sentences. But he also had two brutal murders to his credit and, at the end, was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment by the redoubtable Mr. Justice Hawkins for attempting to murder the police constable who was apprehending him. Peace was a master of disguise as well as being a semi-dwarf of considerable physical strength and it was some little while before the prison authorities realised that their captive, John Ward, was none other than the Charles Peace much wanted for murder in Sheffield. A further trial followed and Peace was finally hanged.

There is little to say for Peace's character save that he developed untutored yet extraordinary musical abilities. He was a competent violinist and had a pleasant singing voice. In his last years at Peckham, he gathered his neighbours for musical evenings and he exhibited boastfully his fine collection of violins, failing however to point out that every one was stolen. He had a great liking for church music and was wont to end the evening's musical entertainment with the melodies of Moody and Sankey, the contemporary revivalists. So, too, he was a regular churchgoer and sang in the choir. To the end, Peace remained a deeply religious man and his last letters from gaol were firm in their assurance that he would shortly be in Heaven. Incidentally, they said nothing concerning the somewhat awkward interviews which he would undergo there if he chanced to encounter his two murdered victims in the same celestial regions.

The Victorian folklore which gathered around Peace's memory is to say the least more than misleading. Typical of the age, it talked with bated breath and a muted yet compelled admiration of his villainous exploits. But it passed over in silence his violent sexual appetite and his strange Peckham establishment where his wife and son lived in

the basement whilst Peace disported himself with his mistress on the ground floor. So too was it silent about his religion, not wishing the sacred portals of the age to be sullied. These were features in the life of the hero-villain over which to draw a veil. Actually, as Mr. Ward points out, Peace was a man of his age. He belonged to the period of the industrial revolution, to the large slummy manufacturing towns with their darkened streets, their dim gas lighting and their hidden courts and alleys. His exploits were those of an age when modern police methods were in their infancy and detection was difficult. Peace belonged to the age of Samuel Smiles and *Self-Help*. But Samuel Smiles wrote of the industrious apprentices who made good in the world. Peace was the other side of the picture, the outcast of the contemporary society, and he helped himself at society's expense in a manner far from that which would have won Smiles's approval.

But one of the more interesting features of Peace's behaviour was that of his unchanging reliance upon religion. He lived in an age which had been shaped by the Evangelical revival of preceding years and which thought in terms of theological beliefs concerning sin and redemption, damnation and salvation. Yet by the time that Peace had reached years of maturity, the peak of the Evangelical revival was over. Its unintellectual fervour had frequently become an emotional outlet having little or no relationship to personal or social conduct. Indeed, some of the worst excesses of the industrial revolution were perpetrated by men firm in their piety. Even the vaunted William Wilberforce refused to parallel his concern for black slaves abroad with an equal concern for the factory slaves at home, a fact which made him a figure of hatred to Chartists and radicals. The contemporary working-class novelist, G. W. M. Reynolds, never tired of pouring out his contempt for the pseudo-saints of Exeter Hall. Peace was clearly an illustration of this trend painted in the more violent of contrasting colours. It is not necessary to postulate that he was insincere to the extent of being an arch-humbug. He was an extreme example of the tendency to separate religion and life, to use the one as a stimulus to emotional satisfaction and to allow life in a highly competitive society to make its own way to the best of personal advantage.

Mr. Ward has written an excellent book. It will be of interest to the lover of the Victorian age and will bring back many old memories. There is the usual excitement to be found in accounts of criminals and of trials for murder. Figures of the past such as Mr. Justice Hawkins, Mr. Justice Lopes or Sir Frank Lockwood, QC, stand like threatening milestones along the muddy highway of Peace's career. The social historian will also find the book of great use. Charles Peace could not exist to-day simply because the social environment has changed. The little villain with the genius for disguise could scarcely survive for long in a world of modern arc-lamps or of radio-controlled police cars. But freethinkers should also consider the implications of this speckled biography. Peace is in some ways a perennial figure when regarded from this angle. He stands out as a personal example of what happens when an emotional religion is detached from life as a whole. His letters at the last illustrate once again the non-social, or even anti-social relationships which may be implicit in

(Concluded on page 172)

This Believing World

The famous—or should we say notorious?—photograph of a little girl in a wood with fairies dancing around her, guaranteed genuine by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, appeared again in *Psychic News* (May 16th) with the glad news that “no one has been able seriously to challenge the fairy photographs” published by Sherlock Holmes’s creator. This sounds suspiciously like the claim made by all the Christian Churches about the resurrection; for, of course, both have been challenged over and over again. The fairy photographs were “montage”, and therefore fakes.

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We are also told that “fairies are elementals”; and it appears that a Russian professor, Boris Porshnev, even regards leprechauns as “cousins of the Abominable Snowman”. For him it is not a question of mere belief. “We know that there are such creatures” he asserts. Leprechauns apparently “slipped back” in evolution when Neanderthal man appeared, and they never evolved out of fairyland!

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The Bishop of Chichester wants to raise a fund of at least one million pounds to build new churches. But why? Christians can’t fill the churches they have; in fact, the trend seems either to sell them for other purposes, or pull them down and sell the land. But the Bishop is not disturbed. “To be the evangelist” he declares, (*London Evening News*, May 12th) “the Church must be visible there, in the midst where people are . . .” But the empty churches are already where people are, and quite visible.

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The much-haunted cottage in Stow-in-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, with a devilish ghost, or poltergeist, or some such being from another world regularly proving his infernal presence to both believers and sceptics for over a year has, we regret to say, been exposed. And this in spite of the Rev. H. Cheale’s assurance that George—as he was called—was “definitely” genuine. The poltergeist has turned out to be the 14-year-old son living with his parents in the cottage. He was caught red handed doing his stuff, and could only stammer—like so many other genuine ghosts—“I don’t know why I do it”. But even now some of the people who have seen the spirit at work are not convinced that it was the boy. They never could be.

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The “South London Press” (May 5th), dealt with the impudent claim that Catholics make when discussing religion in our state schools. They pay twice for theirs, they say. But why should Catholics not pay for their special brand of religion to be taught? If we grant the Catholic claim we should have to pay for all the various Christian sects, —to say nothing of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and all the Afro-Asian religions—taught in our schools.

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An Italian priest known as Padre Pio is called in Italy a “man of God”. He is declared to have many “supernatural” attributes, one of them that of being in different places at the same time. He first became famous, because as a young man, he collapsed, with blood coming from his hands, feet, and side; and though the Vatican itself was not convinced that Pio had the same crucifixion marks as had Jesus, the crowd believed it. So naturally, he began to cure people, and as the present Pope is one of his warmest admirers, Pio has become honoured. A fraud? Well what do you think?

Stupid or Criminal?

ONE DOESN’T go to the Irish Catholic press for a sensible, modern approach to life and love, any more than one does to Archbishop Heenan. Yet a recent article in the *Catholic Standard* (April 24th) shocked even an old campaigner like me. The headline, “They’ve buried five babies and their next may die too”, really tells the story, but a few more details as given by Monsignor John C. Knott, as well as some of his comments, are worth recording.

The couple, who live in the American mid-west, have just buried their oldest child, a nine-year-old daughter, the last living of five children. Three of the others had died at the age of two years, and a fourth at three months. All of them were afflicted with a rare, incurable, neurological condition known as Schilder’s disease. The mother is now expecting a sixth child in June, and medical evidence suggests that this baby will be similarly diseased.

The story, as Msgr. Knott says, tells “nothing of the heartaches and sorrows involved”. But, he adds, the couple are not crushed. “We have more faith than that”, they said, “and we always have hope. Without hope there would be no sense of life”. And, the mother, added, “We have always loved our children and we always hope for a healthy one”.

Here, says the Monsignor, are “the three theological virtues in practice—faith, hope and love”. The parents’ faith told them that “however brief the earthly life of children might be, an eternity of living was ahead of them in heaven”. It also “helped them to accept their own helplessness at seeing a little child suffer and their sorrow at his death, for they knew he was returning to his Father’s house”.

“Their sense of loss, multiplied five times an infinity, was not less poignant because of their faith”, Msgr. Knott goes on, “All they clung to was the awareness that the present parting was temporary and that one day, God willing, they would be reunited with their children. Their parenthood was already proven a success in their own eyes and in the eyes of all believers in God since they had, in the short space of ten years, known briefly and returned to God forever, five saints”. The Secularist, says Msgr. Knott, “would say that the parents were either foolish or stupid . . .”.

No, not stupid, Monsignor; I should say that were criminal. And I consider it significant that, in the whole of your article there is not one word of sympathy for the children, brought into the world to suffer; that all your thoughts, all your condolences are reserved for the parents who kept hoping and—presumably—praying. Successful parenthood you call it!

CHARLIE PEACE (Concluded from page 171) death-bed repentance. Above all, he illustrates the fact that religion may be strongly emphasised and yet may do little or nothing for the building up of personal character. All of these are points which arise again and again in the long history of religious belief. Ecclesiastics assert with a drearier reiteration that religion is a character-builder: it is claimed again and again as essential to education and to life. But Charles Peace was a deeply religious man. Mrs. Dyer, the brutal Reading baby-farmer, who was also sentenced by Mr. Justice Hawkins, likewise found solace in supernatural beliefs concerning her salvation. They are but two Victorian figures in a far wider rogues’ gallery which gives the lie to the religio-moral pretension and which illustrates the point that there are forms of religion capable of sustaining a strongly anti-social personal Character.

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Details of membership of the National Secular Society may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, S.E.1. Inquiries regarding Bequests and Secular Funeral Services should also be made to the General Secretary, N.S.S.

Lecture Notices, Etc.**OUTDOOR**

Edinburgh Branch NSS (The Mound).—Sunday afternoon and evening: MESSRS. CRONAN, MCRAE and MURRAY.

London Branches—Kingston, Marble Arch, North London: (Marble Arch), Sundays, from 4 p.m.: MESSRS. L. EBURY and J. A. MILLAR.

(Tower Hill). Every Thursday, 12—2 p.m.: L. EBURY.

Manchester Branch NSS (Car Park, Victoria Street.) Sunday Evenings

Mereside Branch NSS (Pierhead).—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.: Sundays, 7.30 p.m.

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

Nottingham Branch NSS (Old Market Square), every Friday, 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

INDOOR

Birmingham Branch NSS, Midland Institute, Paradise Street. Sunday, May 31st, 6.45 p.m.: J. M. CHAPPELL, "Statistical Tests versus The Holy Book".

North Staffordshire Humanist Group, Guildhall, High Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme. Friday, May 29th, 7.15 p.m.: A Meeting.

Oxford University Humanist Group, Queen Elizabeth House, St. Giles. Friday, May 9th, 8.15 p.m. DAVID TRIBE, "Religious Pressure Groups".

Richmond and Twickenham Humanist Group, Richmond Community Centre. Friday, May 29th, 8 p.m.: R. PERCHERON, "The Buddhist Path—a General View".

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1. Sunday, May 31st, 11 a.m. JOHN BURROWS, "Pressure and Problems in Education".

Notes and News

TWO CARTOONISTS treated the Heenan pronouncement on the pill in their characteristically different ways. Trog, in the *New Statesman* had a benign priest calmly contemplating a harassed mother who was feeding her infant with the bottle and had three other children. "But that's just it, Father", she was saying, "I haven't had a safe period again". In the *Daily Express*, Osbert Lancaster's priest was anything but benign as he listened to the Irish girl's explanation: "Sure, Father, an' I thought it was just an aspirin". Mr. Lancaster's Maudie Littlehampton also had a relevant comment at a church bazaar. "Well, Canon," she said in her inimitable way, "you must admit that there is just this much to be said for Archbishop Makarios—at least he spares us his views on contraception and teenage sex".

NOR HAVE all Catholics, in fact accepted Dr. Heenan's ruling without demur. A Catholic mother asked in the *New Statesman* (15/5/64) if priests themselves were not "guilty of frustrating the natural law, and therefore God's purpose for man", by arresting their sexual development. And R. J. Barrett in *The Observer* (17/5/64) put "natural law" in its proper place. It is, he said, the "Natural Law of Aquinas that Archbishop Heenan refers to when he

talks of the Law of God", and "Let it be clear that Roman Catholics are free to believe or not believe in the philosophy of Aquinas".

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MOREOVER, the *Evening Standard* (19/5/64) induced Archbishop Thomas Roberts to answer Dr. Heenan. After saying that "very many clergy and laity, holy and learned" were sympathetic towards the sex-problems of married Catholics, Archbishop Roberts indulged in a little theological argument with his fellow Archbishop and hoped that "we may one day improve on Archbishop Heenan's advice of daily Communion for women now desperate in the choice between their marriage and religion".

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ON SUNDAY, May 17th, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster spoke of a "spiritual common market" to unite Europe (*The Guardian*, 18/5/64). "We have the wisdom now surely", Dr. Heenan said, "never to speak words to separate nation and nation and creed from creed". If we have, it's a pity we don't always display it then, isn't it?

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IN A LETTER to *The Guardian* (15/5/64), Christopher J. Weeks reported his recent discovery that Joseph Heller's novel, *Catch-22*, had been removed from the open shelves of Bristol public libraries. When Mr. Weeks wrote to inquire the reason he was told by the city librarian that the book was withdrawn from the open shelves "on receipt of a complaint on the grounds that it was likely to give offence to some members of the public". The implications of this argument are, as Mr. Weeks said, worth considering. It is also worthwhile asking what section of the public would be likely to make such a complaint. Heaven knows we have enough would-be banners of books, plays and films—as Bob Crew indicated last week—but the phraseology sounds suspiciously Roman Catholic. It echoes, for instance, that used when the Family Planning Association poster was banned from the London Underground a few years ago. And we recall that the American author of *Catch-22* described God as "a country bumpkin, a clumsy, bungling, brainless, conceited, uncouth hayseed", and caustically debunks the design argument. Perhaps one of our Bristol readers would inquire from the city librarian if our suspicions are correct. And all readers might note that the novel is now available in paperback (Corgi Books) for 5s.

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EVEN THE eminently reasonable C. H. Rolph seemed to share the view of "most people, today, [who] admit the need for some kind of censorship". The trouble is that they differ "wildly" on "where they would draw the line" (*New Statesman*, 15/5/64). Mr. Rolph mentioned as exceptions, the anarchists, "whose position in this as in everything else is supremely and enviably logical". We are not so sure about the "everything else", but in this case, yes, the anarchist position is logical. Mr. Crew illustrated the illogicality of censorship by the plaint of the secretary of the London Committee Against Obscenity: "it's not easy to find someone who will admit he caught the habit of masturbation from a pornographic book". One might add that it's not even easy to find anyone who caught the sex urge from a book!

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FRANCIS J. KIEDA, author of "How Saints are Made", on page 175, is an ex-Roman Catholic priest, now on the staff of the American Protestant magazine, *Christian Heritage*, where the article first appeared in slightly longer form.

Sex Without Love?

By DENIS COBELL

Sexual Deviation by Anthony Storr (Penguin Books, 3s.6d.) is the first book in a series to be published on social pathology. G. M. Carstairs, the 1962 Reith Lecturer who caused such a furore with his dictum "Surely charity is more important than chastity?", has contributed an editorial foreword, in which he requests a little humane respect for those who are socially deviant, sexually or otherwise. This particular study is not a fully documented manual of the sexual perversions—few actual cases are mentioned—it is an impassioned plea for the employment of sweet reason in dealing with those who vary from what is generally considered to be normal sexual behaviour.

To intensify our understanding of the problem, Dr. Storr points, out, "We all carry within us the seeds of every sexual deviation". This remark is in accord with Ernest Jones's comment: "Another remarkable discovery of psychoanalysis was that every individual passes in early life through a phase of bisexuality, and that the unconscious always retains important traces of this stage of development . . .". The unfortunate fact about the publication of this kindly book, is that it will for the most part preach only to those who are already sympathetic to others' difficulties. Those who deride the "queers" in society are unlikely to worry about law reforms as the Wolfenden Report advised. The severe penalties prescribed by English law for buggery between consenting adults results from outdated prejudices.

The codes of ethics dogmatically fixed in the various religious denominations are responsible for prevailing taboos in certain communities. Dr. Heenan's recent denunciation of birth-control pills is a prime example; it will give rise to further misery and insincerity. Sexual practices considered normal in one area are deviant in another. This book gives welcome criticism of the Christian Church: "Sexual guilt . . . is based upon supposedly Christian values, over which hangs the shadow of hundreds of years of ecclesiastical disapproval." "Christian prohibition of all sexual relations outside marriage is characteristic of only a handful of human societies which include, at most, not more than five per cent of the human race." These quotations epitomise the anachronisms existing in our Christian civilisation; a factor which every Freethinker regrets and strives against.

Furthermore, Dr. Storr writes, "Celibacy is to be equated with virtue . . . especially by those who belong to churches which insist that their clergy shall not marry . . . who still seem to suppose that sex is only another word for sin." The hypocrisy of these efforts is seen in the description of a priest, by an altar boy, in Gunter Grass's novel, *Cat and Mouse*: "He himself appended sachets of lavender to every maniple, every stole, to all the Mass vestments, whether they lay in chests or hung in closets. Once when I was about thirteen, he ran his small, hairless hand down my back under my shirt from my neck to the waist of my gym shorts, but stopped there because my shorts had no elastic band and I tied them in front with tapes".

Sado-masochism is not so deviationary as may be presumed. There is an element of sadism and masochism in all masculine and feminine inter-relationships respectively. The fashions, demanded by men and conformed to religiously by women illustrate this: we may condemn the ancient Chinese practice of foot-binding, yet we adore and encourage the wearing of high-heeled shoes, which are

hardly the most comfortable footwear. Dr. Storr states incorrectly that there are more females than males of nubile age; this was true before the last war, and may explain a certain amount of Lesbianism. (Does the reverse situation explain the effeminacy of those youths, the Mods?).

Dr. Storr is a psychoanalyst trained in the school of C. G. Jung and thinks poorly of the physical therapy employed by some psychiatrists which aim at treating a symptom rather than discovering a cause. He admits his theory is not easily substantiated by scientific proof of "cure", but thinks it better for all that. The present facilities for treatment under the National Health Service are inadequate.

Emphasis is placed upon the sensible sexual education of children within their homes. Many parents are still very backward in this matter and tend to cloak sex in a garb of mystery and thus encourage an unhealthy interest on the child's part, in some cases leading to abnormal sexual practices. The press is to be blamed for increasing the salacious interests of the public.

Promiscuity, about which we hear so much today, is a deviation insofar as it is an inability to achieve a mature sexual relationship. It is not possible to redirect the sexual energies of deviant individuals without realising that their perversions are only outward manifestations of inner struggles in coming to terms with the world. Dr. Storr concludes, "The study of sexual deviation is the study of sex without love". This seems a rather harsh pronouncement in an otherwise benevolent book; an instance of sex without love being the man who consorts with a prostitute—is he really deviant? Promiscuity is more obviously deviant on these terms, but is it really true that all homosexual attachments are devoid of love?

Television

DAVID FROST made a welcome return to the TV screen on Whit Monday, with *A Degree of Frost*. One of his best personal items—reminiscent of TW3—was as a BBC news announcer reporting a number of episodes from the Old Testament (David and Goliath, the Walls of Jericho, Lot's Wife, etc.) and ending with a forecast of plagues of locusts to follow other calamities in Egypt. Among Mr. Frost's guests were the brilliant American pair, Mike Nichols and Elaine May, in a sketch in which she announced the "Biblical spectacular to end all Biblical spectacles, *The Big Sky*, the life story of God!". If *A Degree of Frost* continues as it started it will cause considerable delight, or otherwise "as the case may be".

On May 19th, the BBC paid an eloquent tribute to Bertrand Russell, who had celebrated his ninety-second birthday the previous day. The programme combined an autobiographical interview between Lord Russell and Robert Bolt, with biographical narration and personal statements by a number of people who knew the philosopher—Sir Julian and Lady Huxley, Leonard Woolf, Miles Malleon, A. J. Ayer, Lord Boothby and Michael Foot, M.P. The "Socrates who is also a Puck", as Leonard Woolf described him, in turn paid tribute to the greatness and influence of Spinoza, and especially his determinism. Asked by Mr. Bolt if he had been distressed by loss of faith, Lord Russell replied typically, that, on the contrary, he had felt relieved.

How Saints are Made

By FRANCIS J. KIEDA

THE veneration of saints in the Roman Catholic Church began with the early Christian martyrs, who were believed to be glorified by God and crowned in Heaven. This early veneration of the martyrs was not universal throughout the Christian Church, but limited to the diocese or ecclesiastical province where the martyrs had suffered death for their faith in Christ.

After the persecutions by the Roman Emperors against the Christians ceased, the custom arose of rendering public honour to Christians who excelled in holiness of life and zeal for the glory of God. These individuals were called "confessors," or those who have manifested their faith by the holiness of their lives. In the case of women, they were considered either as virgins or non-virgins, depending on whether their lives were spent in the state of celibacy or not.

Soon after his death, Bishop Martin of Tours (who died in 397) was venerated as a saint. In Rome, Pope Symmachus (498-514) erected a church in honour of Saints Sylvester and Martin, both confessors. The honour bestowed on confessors remained mostly local, although the cult of saints from other dioceses and countries was gradually inserted in liturgical books.

Up to the time of Pope Alexander III, bishops had canonised from time to time, the Archbishop of Rouen being the last to do so, in 1153. There was some confusion in this century before the power to canonise was finally vested in the pope. A case in point is that of Charlemagne, to whom a local cult as a "blessed" had always been extended, and who was canonised by the anti-Pope Paschal III in 1164.

In the year 1171, Pope Alexander III reserved canonisation to the Apostolic See, prohibiting ecclesiastical cult to any person without papal sanction. By a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, dated March 12th, 1631, Pope Urban VIII forbade the bishops and all other authorities inferior to the Supreme Pontiff to permit the public veneration of any deceased person, or to take any official action in the case of examining the lives of persons considered to have been exceptionally virtuous, or to approve the veneration rendered to them by spontaneous demonstration of the people, without first proposing the matter to the Vatican authorities.

Pope Urban VIII, in his Constitution *Coelestis Hierusalem* (Heavenly Jerusalem), on July 5th, 1634, also decreed that when people make votive offerings to a church in the form of tablets, pictures, etc., saying that they have secured a favour through the invocation of a servant of God who has not yet been placed in the roster of saints or of those beatified, the pastor or rector of the church where the offering is made should accept it, taking down the testimony of the donor or others regarding the fact which is claimed to be miraculous. The matter must then be referred to the local bishop. If he gives his approval, the votive and the testimony are to be kept in a safe place outside the church so that they may be examined in a future cause of beatification or canonisation.

Canon 1999 of the Code of Canon Law, confirming the former law, states expressly that the causes of beatification and canonisation are reserved exclusively to the Apostolic See.

Beatification. Beatification is a preliminary step toward canonisation. However, prior to this, the title "Venerable"

is conferred on a person whose heroic virtue or martyrdom has been proved and a solemn decree to that effect signed by the Pope. Then after investigation of the person's life, writings and practice of Christian virtues, and the certification of at least two miracles worked by God through the intercession of the servant of God, the Pope decrees that he may be called Blessed, and honoured locally or in a limited way by public worship.

Canonisation. Canonisation may be formal or equivalent. Canonisation is considered formal when the Pope concludes a process that has been duly opened and continued with all the rigour of judicial procedure, involving judges, the cardinal relator, the petitioner or group of petitioners, the promoter of the faith, the postulator general, notaries, witnesses, experts, and so forth. Heroic virtues practised by the candidate for sainthood must be juridically established. Moreover, two additional miracles attributable to the intercession of the Blessed are required.

When the canonisation is equivalent, the Sovereign Pontiff orders that a servant of God be honoured as a saint in the Church as a whole, though no regular process has been introduced for him. In place of the juridical process it is demonstrated that from time immemorial public devotion was rendered him. His heroic virtues and the miracles wrought through his intercession and after his death must be related by trustworthy historians and must become the object of the general credence of Roman Catholics.

The decree of canonisation is considered by many theologians as infallible.

The cardinal relator, postulator general (advocate), and the promoter of the faith are the principal persons involved in the process of canonisation.

In the causes which are tried by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, one of the cardinals attached to this department of the Roman Curia is designated by the Pope to act as relator. His office requires that he give special attention to the cause, and report in the plenary or ordinary meeting of the Sacred Congregation all matters which seem to favour or prejudice the cause.

To contact the cause properly in the competent court, a postulator or advocate must be appointed. Whether he acts in his own name or in the name of another, the postulator must be a secular (diocesan) or religious priest (belonging to an order), who has a fixed residence in Rome.

According to Canon 2007 of the Code of Canon Law, the postulator has the following duties: 1, To conduct the cause before the competent judges; 2, To make the necessary expenditures (however, money collected from the people for the expenses of the cause must be administered in accordance with the instructions of the Apostolic See); 3, To furnish the court with the names of the witnesses and the documents; 4, To draw up and submit

Sunday, June 7th, 2.30 p.m.
**UNVEILING OF THOMAS PAINE STATUE
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to the promoter of the faith the points on which the witnesses in the process are to be interrogated.

Besides the General Promoter of the Faith and his assistant known as the General Sub-Promoter of the Faith, both of whom are attached to the Congregation of Rites, a promoter of the faith may be appointed outside the Congregation of Rites either for all causes or for a particular one only. Promoters of the faith in the diocesan courts are nominated by the General Promoter, if they are to act in an Apostolic process, and have then the title of sub-promoters.

The promoter of the faith, who is also referred to as the "Devil's advocate" because his duty is to raise objections against the evidence submitted, draws up historical questionnaires, which must be framed, not to elicit a certain answer from the witness, but in such a manner that the truth may be ascertained also with respect to the points proposed by the postulator. Moreover, the promoter must insist that witnesses be summoned *ex officio*, and must present proper objections to the testimony.

THEATRE

THE BUXOM MUSE

The Buxom Muse, "an Entertainment of Ribald and Amorous Music, Prose and Verse from the 17th and 18th Centuries", is being presented at the Mermaid Theatre, London after their regular production on Fridays and Saturdays at 8.50 p.m. The items are very varied, the performers brilliant, and the entertainment does not drag for a moment. FREETHINKER readers will perhaps appreciate particularly the simple Irish girl describing her dream to the priest. The show will be enjoyed by anyone who likes a good belly-laugh, and wine in the interval—free—adds to the enjoyment. The whole is warmly recommended.

M. McI.

CORRESPONDENCE

GOD AND MEANING

I'm afraid Mr. Simons moves too rapidly to be a good target. Mr. Arran challenged him on the grounds that his "God" had no attributes, but now he makes the opposite mistake; he takes a collection of attributes and calls them "God". He says, in his round about way, that there is no reason to suggest that God (as he defines God) exists, but he is a possibility. Is "he"? and what is a "possibility", and without *reason* what is his criterion? Indeed, when you stand back and have a look at his statement "God is a logical possibility" it has no meaning either in whole or in part. "God and Meaning" is shallower than it might appear.

R. T. RODGERS.

RELIGION IN SCHOOLS

I don't know whether your English papers reported the address in Canberra by the nuclear scientist, Professor Mark Oliphant. He told a conference of science teachers that "accumulated junk" (in which he included religion) should be dropped from school curricula, in favour of science teaching. Religion should be taught in the church and the home. Most present-day school-children, he said, regarded the possibility of life after death on the same level as the possibility of life on Mars. Incidentally,

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the *Cape Argus* (12/5/64), from which I got this Australian report, added what I suppose it regarded as a significant final paragraph. "At the same conference", it reported, "Senator J. G. Gorton said laymen often placed too much faith in the opinion of scientists".

G.G.M. (Cape Town)

As a parent of two school-going children, I am pleased to learn that the National Secular Society is to set up a working party to consider the whole question of the religious indoctrination of our children whilst they are at school. I hope that in their deliberations the Society will not overlook such BBC programmes as *Act of Worship*. May I appeal to all those who have the interest of children at heart, to protest in the strongest terms possible against this intrusion into education by the Religious Department of the BBC?

D. YEULET.

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(A Humanist's Decalogue)

by RONALD FLETCHER

(recently appointed Professor of Sociology in the University of York)

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