

The Freethinker

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SWANENG HILL SCHOOL, in Serowe, Bechuanaland, has now been in existence for 16 months. It has 77 pupils, in four classes. We admitted 54 new pupils at the beginning of the year, 44 of whom are divided into two Form I classes (as the first year of secondary education is known here), 23 in Form II; and 10 in a specially created Form III. These 10 will be taking the Junior Certificate public examination this year, and they include seven of the best of our first intake last year, to whom we are giving an opportunity to do this three year course in two years. We have done this because their average age is over 20 and even after they have finished this Junior Certificate course, they will still have two years to go to "O" level GCE. And this country desperately needs trained and educated people.

Staff

We now have five full-time and three part-time teachers. There is Mr. Don Baker who teaches Arithmetic, History and Biology to all four forms. Mr. Baker has a teaching diploma, and heard about the school through the Ethical Union. Mr. Michael Hawkes teaches Mathematics and Physical Science to all four forms. He has a BA Hons. Degree from Cambridge and was sent out by the International Voluntary Service. Mr. Tholo Molefhe, the only African member of the teaching staff so far, teaches Setswana, Geography and Health Science to all four forms. Mr. Martin Kibblewhite teaches French, assists with the English and takes Forms I and II for two periods each of building construction a week. Mr. Kibblewhite has a teaching diploma and read about the school in *The Guardian*. Patrick van Rensburg teaches English to all forms, being assisted in the English teaching by his wife, Liz, and by Martin and Mary Kibblewhite. Mr. Bill Taylor, a Community Development officer stationed in Serowe, has been taking each form for two periods a week of social studies, but unfortunately he is leaving Serowe quite soon.

Administration

On March 14th, 1964, a large meeting of parents and guardians of pupils attending the school was held at the school. The parents discussed and approved a constitution for the school and elected the first Board of Governors. The elected members include Mr. Seretse Khama and Mr. Leapeetswe Khama, the African Authority of the Bamangwato. The Chairman of the Board is Mr. A. Mogwe, the Government Education Officer in Serowe; the Treasurer is Mr. Joe Maboethoe who is the Treasurer of the Bamangwato Tribal Administration; and the Secretary is Mr. K. K. Baruti, the Principal of Simon van Rensburg Higher Primary School (where Liz and Patrick van Rensburg taught for six months in 1962 while awaiting permission to build Swaneng). The Board held its first meeting on May 8th, 1964, at the school, at which the office-bearers were elected and administrative business was attended to.

Buildings

We have not given any of our building out to contract and Patrick van Rensburg, as Project Organiser, has employed local builders to work to specifications. Martin Kibblewhite has been assisting with the supervision of building since his arrival in January, 1964. The buildings so far completed include the large common room (which is also everyone's lounge and dining room) with the kitchen on one side of it and an additional sitting room on the other side of it (being used now as a temporary classroom for Form III) and beyond the sitting room, a bathroom and toilet, a small office, and a private bedroom.

Six rondavels have been completed, in groups of two, and each group is now being converted into a self-contained flat with kitchen and other amenities. There is also a two-roomed building for the cook and her assistant.

The original school building which we built—the office and library—is still being used as a classroom. Nearby, a block of eight classrooms is under construction. Two of the classrooms in this block are completed, another two now have a roof on, the walls of the third are halfway up, and the fourth is up to the floor level. The block of eight is designed as a square with all the classrooms looking inwards into a rectangle.

Voluntary Labour

The most important job, we are all agreed at this school, is to equip the young men and women of this country with the confidence, knowledge, skill and sense of commitment to tackle for themselves, the problems of want, ignorance, hunger and disease.

It is inevitable that in these poorer countries, which cannot afford compulsory and universal education, and where a handful of people are educated, an élite minority tends to emerge. There is a very great danger then that it might become a privileged minority, committed to the maintenance of minority privileges, unless the education is keyed to the social context. We want to create in our students a sense of commitment, not through bitterness, hatred of class or race, but through sympathy and fellow-feeling with the poor and hungry and through an understanding that there can be no development without hard work and that the organised labour of the people, willingly given, can achieve so much.

It is an ideal goal, of course, but we shall be pleased to achieve only a little. On the one hand we are trying to imbue our pupils with a sense of enthusiasm for hard work and for self-help through voluntary labour, and on the other hand we try to give them the technical skill to turn their enthusiasm into achievement. Our ordinary curriculum, therefore, includes a non-examination practical course. In the social studies course, there is an opportunity for discussion of the problems of developing countries and the various means of tackling them, including voluntary labour. Our hope is that our young men and women will organise self-help schemes in the

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

The Humanist School in Bechuanaland Progress Report

villages, when they leave school to work, irrespective of their ordinary jobs and professions.

Our pupils prepared their own sportsfield during the first half of 1963. They chopped down dozens of thorn-trees (very deep-rooted to reach the underground water), they dug out the stumps, levelled the ground and put in the goalposts. Then they moved on to the foundations of the classrooms we are now completing.

Our new pupils have captured the enthusiasm of the more senior ones. Every Saturday during the school term we have had an average of 20 boys, from all forms, at first painting the new classrooms inside and out, then mixing concrete for floors for yet another block of two classrooms, and more recently preparing the foundations for a laboratory and a workshop. Our boys are going to build the laboratory and workshop themselves, from foundation to roof, under Mr. Kibblewhite's supervision.

Dam Rebuilt

A party of sixty students from all the secondary boarding schools in the country came here during their month-long holiday in May and helped us rebuild the old dam at the bottom of our land. The voluntary work-camp was organised by the Bechuanaland Protectorate Students' Union, of which all those who came are members, and

it hardly cost the school a penny. Not only did the students work without pay, but they raised money to buy their own food while they were here.

Although our farm manager has resigned and gone, there is nevertheless progress to report on the farm. The long-term policy of reclaiming our badly eroded land has gone on, we have now been given the land extending down to the hills between which the rebuilt dam wall stands, so that the dam now lies within the school farm.

Finance

Since the inception of the project and up to May 1st, 1964, we have spent or incurred expenditure totalling £14,447 on everything that has been done here. This includes the cost of buildings already erected, as well as the cost of bricks and the roofs for the block of eight classrooms; it includes administration and recurrent costs of keeping the school going for one year and five months, of all salaries and food for teachers; it includes the whole expenditure on the farm, the cost of fencing, of drilling boreholes and providing water; it includes all expenditure on transport, school and administrative equipment, books, labour, furniture and it even includes the fare of a teacher out from the United Kingdom. Our total income at May 1st, 1964, had been £12,810.

Israel's Youth Rejects Religion

By RIVKA YOSKOVITZ (Tel Aviv)

[This report is published by permission of the *Jewish Chronicle*]

TODAY IS SATURDAY, Shabbat. Hundreds and hundreds of cars packed with youngsters jam the roads to the beaches. In Dizengoff Street the cafés are overflowing with boys and girls drinking and smoking and talking. In the kibbutzim it's work as usual in the fields. And yet the synagogues all over the country are practically empty of youth. Israeli youth is not religious.

Most of them come from non-religious families. Others are religious at home, to please their parents, but do as they please outside. The rest, a tiny minority, are really religious and draw comfort and satisfaction from their Judaism.

Those who are very Orthodox find it natural and logical. All their lives they have gone to synagogue, honoured the Shabbat and not mingled with the opposite sex. And since their parents keep Shabbat, they don't find it difficult to do the same.

The others, those who are outwardly observant to placate parents, keep up the pretence at home but give it up once they are married.

Most of the youth of Israel neither pretend nor observe. They keep nothing and they try to justify their attitude. A long time has elapsed since the Laws were written, they argue, and they don't fit in with modern life. It's difficult for youngsters not to drive or smoke or listen to the radio on Saturday, their one free day.

Shabbat is a day of rest and pleasure, they say. If a person enjoys writing or driving, then why shouldn't he? If to be a real Jew means to be religious, Judaism is a difficult religion which takes all the pleasure from life.

They argue that faith in man is more important than faith in God. To be a good human being is more valuable than to keep the Commandments. To be a good citizen, a good soldier and a good human being is more important than to be observant. But one must not interfere with the religious, they say. Everyone must do as he pleases.

All the same, those who are observant need special courage, because Israeli youth thinks it very funny and

strange not to smoke on Shabbat or drive a car or swim off Herzlia beach.

In my search for religious youth in Israel I visited a large yeshiva near Natanya. The pupils wear simple clothes and only their yamulka differentiates them from other Israeli boys. For half the day they study the normal high school curriculum. Their afternoons are devoted to religious subjects — Talmud, Gemara and Torah. And they still find time to eat, do their homework (until 11 o'clock in the evening) and, of course, pray three times a day.

What brought these boys to the yeshiva? Most of them to whom I spoke explained that they come from religious homes. Some said that they found their studies interesting and wanted to deepen and intensify their knowledge of Judaism. Only two boys came with the express intention of becoming rabbis.

All admitted that they are much less religious than their parents. They read forbidden books under the desk (cowboy stories and books on sex), dance the twist and go out with girls. This all takes place far from the rabbis' eyes. And they even admitted that they wouldn't mind marrying non-religious girls.

So I see that if I want to find really religious youth in Israel I must go to Mea Shearim, the ultra-Orthodox quarter in Jerusalem, but I'm afraid to approach their streets for fear that they might throw stones.

"Freethinker" Articles Reprinted

THE JUNE issues of two American Freethought papers contain reprints of articles from THE FREETHINKER. "Religion versus Secularism," by G. L. Simons, appears in *Progressive World of California*, and "Our Father" by Reginald Underwood, in *Voice of Freedom*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PORTUGUESE REPORT

Sick Woman a Hostage for Her Husband

ANOTHER SUCCESS! Ivone Dias Lourenco is at last free after seven years in prison—due in large measure to your protests and those of many people in other countries as well as in Portugal itself. But another woman needs your help.

The case of Maria da Piedade Gomes dos Santos is one which clearly illustrates the workings of Portuguese justice and reveals the complete cynicism and disregard for elementary human rights that characterise Portugal's repressive system. It is at the same time one case in which public action—before September 19th—can at least secure freedom for a sick woman who completed her sentence in 1961, and whose true "crime" is her loyalty to her husband and her own principles.

What are the basic facts in this case? Maria da Piedade was born in 1919, the daughter of a glassworker. She worked at home as a seamstress before her marriage to Joaquim Gomes. When, in 1952, her husband was driven "underground" by police persecution, she joined him in his life as a virtual fugitive until they were both arrested in a raid on their home on December 5th, 1958. Maria da Piedade was not allowed to take even a change of clothing, and it was six weeks before this "luxury" was permitted. There followed six months of interrogation, but her trial did not take place until March 1961—over two years later. She was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, which she was considered already to have served, plus an initial three year period of Security Measures. Her husband was tried in his absence, since he had succeeded, with nine others, in escaping from Peniche Fortress in January 1961.

During her imprisonment her health, both physical and nervous, became worse and worse, but only persistent protests—which sometimes led to punishment and deprivation of family visits—finally resulted in an operation being performed in September 1961. Since then, Maria da Piedade's health has not improved. Her defence lawyers make it clear that prison conditions and inadequate medical attention are responsible for her present condition—she weighs only 6½ stone—and that the only real cure would be her freedom.

The first three-year period of detention under Security Measures expired in March 1964. The PIDE (political police) application for a further extension was presented to the Tribunal after the expiry date for such an application, and was not accompanied by the various documents required by Portuguese law. On their own admission, the PIDE application had very little legal foundation. Judge Azevedo Soares, however, ordered a "provisional" six month extension—to allow him time to consider a defence plea for conditional or absolute liberty—which he was empowered to grant in any event by a very provision embodied in Security Measures! Forty Portuguese lawyers have taken up the whole question of the illegality and unconstitutional nature of the procedure.

On January 6th, 1964, Maria da Piedade Gomes dos Santos was interviewed by Jose Barreto Sachetti, Vice-Director of PIDE, Brigade Leader Candido Pires, and PIDE officer Diamantino Fernando Pires, who signed the report of the interview—from which we quote.

The prisoner was asked what she would do if she was freed, and she replied that she would live with her father, who was prepared, with other members of her family,

to support her in case of need, and that she would work as a dressmaker, at home.

Asked if she was still committed to the principles which directed the activities of the secret and subversive organisation known as the PCP [Portuguese Communist Party] she replied that she did not intend to engage in political activities in the future . . .

Asked whether she knew where her husband was or what sort of life he was leading, she said that she had nothing to declare, or rather nothing to say on the subject.

Asked to make clear whether it was her unshakeable desire not to return to living in clandestinity, even if her husband was very insistent that she should, she stated that she was prepared not to engage in any further political activities.

After further questions about her activities prior to her arrest, to which she replied that these questions had been fully answered at her trial, she was once again asked to "make clear her future behaviour vis-a-vis the PCP she stated that as she had already said, she would engage in no further political activities."

Despite her statements, however, the conclusions drawn by Jose Sachetti, Vice-Director of PIDE, in a submission to the Tribunal dated January 15th, 1964 are:

A reading of these reports make it possible to deduce that Maria da Piedade Gomes dos Santos has in no way become less dangerous and that if she were freed she would not fail to return to her underground life . . . It does not appear that the punishment inflicted on her has so far had the slightest intimidating effect, and her own statements are sufficient grounds for believing that she would make use of her freedom to continue the practice of crime. In view of her character, therefore, I consider it more advisable to . . . prolong imprisonment under security measures.

The Director of PIDE, Silva Pais, opposed conditional liberty, in his proposal to the Porto Tribunal dated January 16th, and said that if she were to remain in prison, "it would not only be to her advantage [!] but primarily to the advantage of society, which must be protected against elements threatening its security."

However, even PIDE are aware of the legal weakness of their case, for Major Pais continues: "Admitting, however, that the degree of danger which she represents is not legally significant, if she is conditionally freed I suggest a surety payment of not less than 50,000 Escudos [£625] which would at least delay her return to clandestinity."

Maria da Piedade's courageous defence lawyer, Arnaldo Mesquita, together with a number of other lawyers, has contested the legality and constitutionality of the Judge's decision on a number of grounds, including her detention for a "provisional" six month period without any crime having been committed, despite Constitutional provisions guaranteeing the freedom of the citizen. He considers questions on the whereabouts of Maria da Piedade's husband as an intolerable form of pressure and states that if Joaquim Gomes is still inside Portugal, he could be arrested at any time. Maria da Piedade's desire would be to assist him. Her present state of health preclude her living "underground" and if she were to join him, she would then be powerless to help him were he to be arrested.

Various attempts have been made to intimidate the defence. Letters from Dr. Mesquita to Maria da Piedade have been intercepted at Caxias Prison, and notes which she took during an interview she had with her lawyer on January 27th, were confiscated. When she protested, she

(Concluded on page 239)

Madalyn Murray

A FORTNIGHT ago we quoted *Time's* description of Madalyn Murray as "the most hated woman in America." She had, we reported, been flooded with abusive letters and had received "everything from a psychotic document repeating the word 'kill' to a newspaper picture of herself smeared with excrement." The following (slightly abbreviated) letter, dated July 2nd, was received from Mrs. Murray's new address, 1060 Spencer Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

Friends,

If you have been reading the newspapers or listening to radio or television, you know that we have been driven out of Baltimore, Maryland by brute force.

As you know, our "Tax the Churches" suit was set for June 2nd, and the powerful forces of the Church had to stop us in some way. And so, on June 1st, Bill and I were dragged into a Criminal Court in Baltimore to face charges that we had forced a young Jewish girl to abandon her Jewish faith and turn to Atheism. The girl's family asked for Bill and me to be sent to jail for two years.

Our "Tax the Church" suit was then postponed—by a request from the Catholic Church which the State of Maryland granted—to June 22nd, which would give the State time to put Bill and me in jail on the above ridiculous charges. But, let us get this clear: if they had not tried to frame us on this charge, it would have been some other charge equally as ludicrous.

We asked for a jury trial—knowing full well that in Maryland every single person is required to swear that he believes in God before he or she can sit on the jury. Meantime the Judge . . . ordered that Bill could not see the girl any more at all. This was too difficult for Bill or the girl, and they eloped to Hagerstown, Maryland, where they were married on June 16th.

Meanwhile the State of Maryland, hoping to pursue this matter further, postponed the "Tax the Church" suit again to July 1st, hoping to have us in jail for certain by then.

And then, Bill brought his bride home. Within minutes the house was surrounded with police cars. The police had no warrants, no court orders, nothing, and when we confronted them they said so into a tape recorder which we carried. And then, they flew into us. Calling in reinforcements, they broke into our house, dragged me into the streets and beat the living hell out of me. Bill was unmercifully beaten. A crowd gathered—over 250 people—and they screamed and howled to the police, "Kick them again" "Hit him again." "Kill her, kill the Bitch." The police enthusiastically responded to the point that Bill and I were both hospitalised. Mother (aged 73) came out of the house and begged them to stop, only to be felled with one blow from a night-stick. She also was taken to the hospital.

When we were beaten insensible, we were taken to prison, then to the hospital, and then back to prison where we were held incommunicado for the day. Our lawyer found out where we were only on a radio news broadcast. On a Sunday we were hauled into court, and before the day was over our bonds were increased, Bill was again beaten in his jail cell . . . and we were released. Returning home we had two nights of dread as the police attempted break-ins again since they knew we had the tape-recording of the fracas in our home. After two sleepless nights, we fled to Hawaii, but still Maryland is trying to extradite us and take us back.

And then, the crowning blow came. Persons in our own organisations illegally entered our Freethought Building, illegally called themselves the Board of Directors, illegally set up a President, illegally seized our building, our mail, our bank accounts by printing a phony corporation seal, and declared themselves hostile to the Murrays and to Freethought. Apparently from the beginning they had come in as agents of the Church and had gained our confidence by lies and deceit.

The proof of the pudding was that when I sent a true friend in to see what was happening, the group in Baltimore called in the police and tried to arrest her, the same police who had beaten us and driven us from our home.

We beg you—for your own safety—beware of Baltimore and any information from LeMoin Cree, who is claiming to be President of the Freethought Society of America, Inc., and President of Other Americans, Inc. Please, cancel all

cheques you have sent there.

We will begin to send out our magazine and newsletter from Honolulu as soon as we can get set up here. We have a new legal action going in Baltimore to free our equipment and presses from the religionists entrenched there in our office . . .

MADALYN MURRAY.

Religion in the School

A WELL-ATTENDED meeting of parents and teachers to discuss problems of religion in schools was organised by the National Secular Society in London recently.

Mr. David Tribe, President of the Society, said that religious education is becoming a joke. It is often extremely badly taught. Religious instruction is objectionable educationally, as the subject is not approached objectively, and children are discouraged from using their reason; it is objectionable ethically, as moral education is given as part of religion, with the result that the many children who are uninterested in religion are in danger of rejecting all morality with it; it is objectionable democratically, as teachers have either to conform or seriously reduce their chances of promotion, and parents fear that their children may be victimised if they are withdrawn from religious instruction. In fact, the main lesson taught is conformity.

Mr. F. H. Amphlett Micklewright, representing the Progressive League, said that secular education was essential in a society such as ours, where religious views differ so greatly. Ideas should not be imposed by the state. He warned against the activities of some Christian teachers who form pressure groups to evangelise their schools and discriminate against non-Christian teachers.

Mr. H. J. Blackham, Director of the British Humanist Association, told the meeting that religion in schools had suddenly become news, mainly because of a revolt against it by senior pupils. The BHA thought it wrong that humanist parents should acquiesce in the present situation, and was trying to organise groups of parents in the same school to withdraw their children simultaneously. The Association was also raising the issue with the Plowden Committee, and collecting the opinions of senior educationalists on religion and morality. MPs of all parties were concerned that religious education should not become a political issue.

In discussion, several parents emphasised their unwillingness to withdraw their children from collective worship in school assemblies, as long as these remained a regular part of the school day.

In response to an eloquent appeal by Mr. David Silloc those present contributed generously to launch a Secular Education Fund to finance this campaign.

MARGARET MCILROY.

[The above meeting is referred to in a letter on page 240]

The Post

We regret that subscription copies of THE FREETHINKER have been delayed owing to the cancellation by the Postmaster General of all printed paper rate post.

The postmen's strike and work-to-rule has interfered with our inward mail. H. Cutner's *This Believing World*, normally received "on the dot," was one of the casualties.

THE FREETHINKER

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THE FREETHINKER can be obtained through any newsagent or will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates: One year, £1 17s. 6d.; half-year, 19s.; three months, 9s. 6d. In U.S.A. and Canada: One year, \$5.25, half-year, \$2.75; three months, \$1.40.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 103 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1.

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

Marseyside 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, July 26th, 6.45 p.m.: "The Midlands Art Centre for Young People."

Notes and News

WE PRINT this week a British Committee for Portuguese Amnesty report of a sick woman, Maria da Piedade Gomes dos Santos, who is held in prison in Portugal as a hostage for her husband, despite the expiry of her sentence in 1961. The BCPA, which is soon to publish a pamphlet, *Portugal: Women in Prison*, urges readers to protest strongly in writing to the Portuguese authorities about the case of Maria da Piedade, and hopes this will have the same effect as in the case of Ivone Dias Lourenco, who was released on June 8th, after serving seven years on a two-year sentence. Details of the splendid work of the BCPA may be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs. Helen Ward, 30 Benson Road, London, S.E.23.

★

"ARE YOU A Protestant?" Speaking in the Vestures of Ministers Measure in the House of Lords on July 13th, Lord Alexander of Hillsborough said he would like to put the question to all the bishops of the Church of England. The Archbishop of Canterbury acted as the bishops' spokesman. I am a Protestant, he said, "precisely in the way in which the Prayer Book and the Anglican formularies use the term . . . I believe in what these formularies call the Holy Catholic Church precisely in the sense in which our formularies do—with no qualifications" (*The Guardian*, 14/7/64). Lord Alexander saw the Measure as "the first step in more drastic changes in the offices of the Church of England," the vestments being, "practically speaking, the vestments of the Mass." The Archbishop denied any "plot to assimilate the Church of England to some other Church in Christendom." He valued vestments because they "symbolised the continuity"

of the Christian Church but, he said, "in some churches, I wear no more than a black scarf."

★

A POSTSCRIPT to Archbishop Heenan's reply to John Grigg on secular education (referred to last week) was provided by C. G. Johns of Swansea in a letter to *The Observer* (12/7/64). As an educationalist, Mr. Johns "wondered where education came into the picture, for all the general principles of education were ignored"—by the Archbishop. There is no place in education for political or religious vested interests, Mr. Johns added. "Piaget and others have shown that children get to the stage of abstract thinking at about 13 years of age." Any religious teaching before this age, therefore, "will imbue children with religious dogmas that prejudice the issues and build emotional barriers against logical thought and inconvenient evidence." Mr. Johns concluded that "the indoctrination of children with Roman Catholicism or Communism before the age of 13" was "an offence against true education."

★

IN THE PAST it used to be people of lower intelligence who sought hospital treatment for venereal disease. Now, said Miss Marion Loveland, health visitor tutor at the Department of Biological and Health Studies, Battersea College of Technology, "at Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospital, it was the highly intelligent intellectual young women who were going for treatment and to have illegitimate babies" (*The Guardian*, 11/7/64). They were "the humanists, the freethinkers who lived only for the day—under the shadow of the atomic bomb—and did not think about tomorrow." Miss Loveland should be challenged to substantiate these remarks (made at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford). As there are now more Humanists and Freethinkers than "in the past," they are likely to be met with in all places. That they are in a majority among women who go for VD treatment or to have illegitimate babies—even if we only consider Guy's and St. Thomas's—we very much doubt; if we take the country as a whole, we are pretty sure they are not. That they do not think about tomorrow is disproved by the very fact that they go for treatment at all.

★

BUT PERHAPS we misjudge Miss Loveland. Perhaps she intended to compliment Humanists and Freethinkers on living only for the day and taking no thought for the morrow.

★

Destroy it not in any way,
Upon it lays a dreadful curse;
Who plucks a leaf,
Will need a hearse.

THAT WARNING verse on the church wall at St. Newlyn East, Cornwall, refers to a fig tree which is alleged to have grown from a staff planted by St. Newlyn, and "Legends say that two men—one a vicar—died after pruning the tree" (*Daily Herald*, 9/7/64). Now, however, the cursed fig tree has snapped off near the bottom of the trunk and the vicar, the Rev. Peter Denny, wants the wreckage removed. He may not be prepared to do the job himself, but he hopes to persuade a farmer, Bradford Pascoe, to haul it away with a tractor. For Mr. Pascoe, believe it or not, once pruned the tree and suffered no misfortune in consequence!

★

"HE SOMETIMES attended chapel, and even preached; but he could not be described as a Christian". Thus *The Guardian* (23/6/64) in its obituary of Dr. E. F. Carritt, philosophy tutor at University College, Oxford, who died on June 19th at the age of 88.

Saints or Sinners in Brave New Christendom

By BOB CREW

THERE is almost as much heresy within the crumbling confines of the Christian Camp these days as there is in the allegedly pagan world outside, and as the Christian movement of doubting Thomases gathers in momentum there are touching little scenes of outraged theology and apologetic non-alignment with fundamental beliefs. Free-thinkers will be amused at these new Christian postures—"After you Cecil: No, after you my dear Claud!"

But Christian heretics are a strange race of disbelievers indeed. Whilst questioning or rejecting fundamental belief they still grope around anxiously for an excuse to retain a revised version of their spiritual nest egg; only the more tedious half-truths and myths are to be cast off. Like fond lovers, amorous and undying, they clamour for rueful reconciliation with their old flame who may appear to have betrayed them in the light of new findings, but still has an awful lot of comfort to offer.

Although the Christians have never managed to effect a breakthrough in their efforts to regulate the moral behaviour of the masses, Christian heretics—the new Christians—are seen to be achieving a breakaway. They are coming closer to official recognition of their non-conformity, and providing they do not judge their colleagues too harshly over differences of theological opinion, they might well survive as Christians of today and keep the great tradition rolling for the Christians of tomorrow.

At the helm of activity in the heretic movement we have none other than the redoubtable Bishop of Woolwich, or perhaps just plain John Robinson in the new Christian order. For many people, as Anthony Wedgwood Benn the Christian MP has so admirably put it, "Robinson's book burst through like a shaft of light, illuminating the relationship between man and his Creator, and man and man, in a way that none of the accepted mythology of the established Church has ever been able to do." Freethinkers will observe that it would take a very great shaft of light indeed to pierce the dark and mysterious reasoning of Christianity which befogs the age-old quest for a unique relationship with God, or the Man in the Moon for that matter.

Such are the flirtatious aspirations of the new Christians. Another of the new Christians was Pope John who must surely have indulged in a degree of heresy when he talked about bringing the infallible Church of Rome into closer union with those fallible Churches beholden of conflicting beliefs. Following closely on the heels of the late Pope we find another Catholic making a brave stand in favour of birth control and thereby challenging the authority of her Church and its infallible interpretation of the Almighty—Dr. Biezanek is one of the new style Christians, too. Dr. Jacob's serious argument with the Chief Rabbi is another example of religious heresy, and the Methodists' recent expulsion of the Reverend Walter Gill, for refusing to give the doctrinal assurance required annually of every Methodist minister, brings another member to the clan.

But what is the main difference between a Christian heretic and a Christian fundamentalist? Are we to expect the new Christians to extend their disbelief into a greater intimacy with the truth and become Deists or Atheists rather than apologetic Christians, or will they continue to uphold the ideals and ambitions of the established Church despite the fact that they have admitted that it generates

lies, deception and irrelevancies? Certainly they will not sell their Christian principles to the Devil, but then why should they if they are beginning to question that he ever existed. My guess is that they will be too proud to make a complete conversion to Humanism or Atheism—they will probably push on like Christian fathers before them making most fuss about nothing and least fuss about the things which really matter. They will probably take a tip from science and political opinion as it suits them, but otherwise I do not foresee any radical change coming from these brave new Christians who still can't make up their minds whether to be saints or sinners.

Discussion—Clerical Style

By D. W.

RECENTLY, in the course of a discussion, I informed a vicar that I was unable to believe in God. I wondered if, assuming God existed, He would hold this lack of belief against me despite the fact that it was honestly held. In short, my God-given intellect, such as it is, will not allow me, whether I want to or not, to believe in the Deity. I submitted that as no attitude but non-belief was available to me then presumably God would not punish me for what I could not help. The discussion at this point, I should add, concerned future rewards and punishments.

I was informed that punishment would indeed be inflicted on me since I had had the opportunity to know God but had somehow rejected it. However, the vicar was good enough to suggest that the punishment might, in the circumstances, be mitigated. He proceeded to be even more helpful and suggested that for a time I pretend that I believed. Following this, providing I was assiduous in my efforts, there would be such a difference in my life that there would be no room for further doubt.

I wondered if Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists should also pretend or perhaps they thought Christians should pretend to accept *their* beliefs. The vicar thought that God, in his infinite wisdom, would see a way to dispensing justice to these unfortunates who did not believe in Him. Many of them had, of course, never heard of Jesus, but this minor point was ignored.

In the course of the subsequent discussion we touched on the impossibility of knowing that God existed and I was quickly informed that there must be a first cause. I replied that even if this were so, there was no justification for assuming that this first cause was the Christian God. The good vicar happened to believe that they were one and the same and he appeared to gain considerable self-satisfaction from his unfounded belief and from my discomfort at having the argument left thus. The problem of suffering, the validity of the Bible and the history of Christianity were discussed with similar results to those already mentioned: namely a bland self-assurance and complete disregard for facts by the vicar and increasing personal frustration.

Perhaps I conducted my side of the discussion very badly although I have made only the briefest reference to the points made. But I think this is increasingly the kind of non-intellectual attitude which believers adopt. Bland

self-assurance despite the accuracy of their opponents is proving a useful aegis. Expertly used this attitude suggests a position which transcends mere facts and a demand for evidence appears almost as an impertinence. The believer restates, as if to a not-to-bright child, and with what I think is meant to be quiet authority, his views. It is almost as if, by holding to views which are clearly absurd, he secures for himself some special merit. The more stupid you appear, the better you are because you show so great an intensity of faith.

The habit of professional blandness appears to be quite widespread among the religious. The aim is not to deal fairly with questions but to preserve a smiling assurance and gentle pity in the face of criticism. Indeed, some believers are developing this demeanour to a fine art so that they appear to include a group in their esoteric views thus isolating the disputer.

Some form of self-protection is needed by the clergy as their beliefs cannot be defended on grounds acceptable to reasonable men. Their present benign detachment seems to be the best method. At the "Honest to God" level there is slippery intellectualism, at ordinary pulpit level there is the protection of unilateral statement to the converted, and finally there is the method already mentioned. This attitude suggests reasonableness and certainty while concealing the impossible and absurd.

PORTUGUESE REPORT

(Concluded from page 235)

was punished for "indiscipline" by being deprived of visitors for two months. When Judge Azevedo Soares made his decision, neither the defence lawyer nor the prisoner was allowed to put the case. The Judge made his order on the grounds that he required time to study the grounds for their plea for the prisoner's freedom. The only proofs put forward by the PIDE are copies of an underground newspaper in which appeals are made for the release of a large number of prisoners, among them Maria da Piedade. Quite simply, what emerges from this case is that Maria da Piedade is being held as a hostage for her husband, and in revenge for his escape.

One of Portugal's leading writers, Ferreira de Castro, has made a dramatic and moving plea for justice and humanity in this case. Portuguese lawyers are taking the matter further. In several countries a campaign is growing to force the Portuguese Authorities to release Maria da Piedade. Here in Britain, we must give the maximum publicity to this case and get the largest number of protests and demands for her release sent to:

Judge Cunha Ferreira, President of the Porto Tribunal,
Largo S. Joao Novo, Porto,
Portugal;

Judge Azevedo Soares, Tribunal do Segundo Juizo
Criminal,
Rua de Cedofeita, Porto; and

The Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior,
Lisbon.

Your protests can not only help secure the freedom of this heroic woman, but can help to build up a wide-scale international campaign against security measures in Portugal. In this way, you will be helping to free Portuguese prisoners from the nightmare prospect of interminable extensions of imprisonment for the crime of continuing to hold certain ideas.

The Crimes of the Popes (A chapter from *The Crimes of Christianity* by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler) Price 6d. postage 3d.

What Did St. Thomas really Say?

By G. M. PARIS, O.P.

MY CONTROVERSY with Mr. F. A. Ridley is about "what did St. Thomas really say about the penalty of death against heretics?" Mr. Ridley had admitted that he was not quite exact in quoting St. Thomas. Then he quoted in Latin, but only a little part of Aquinas's article.

It is clear enough that the best and easiest way to answer our question is to quote the article in question in full. As the article is not a long one, I hope the Editor of THE FREETHINKER will not find it difficult to publish it. I am not going to answer the other points mentioned by Mr. Ridley in his article (July 3rd), nor to take further space. Here is therefore St. Thomas's article in full.

In the article it is asked: "Whether Heretics Ought to be Tolerated?"

(*Summa Theologica*, Second Part, Question XI, Art. 3)

I answer that, with regards to heretics two points must be observed: one, on their own side, the other, on the side of the Church. On their own side is the sin, whereby they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be severed from the world by death. [Note: excommunication by the Church, and death by the Civil Authority]. For it is a much graver matter to corrupt the faith which quickens the soul [Note: the faith in those days was the very life of Europe], than to forge money, which supports temporal life. Wherefore if forgers of money and other evil-doers are forthwith condemned to death by the secular authority, much more reason is there for heretics, as soon as they are convicted of heresy, to be not only excommunicated but even put to death, [Note: One can easily see from these laws and punishments by civil authorities the harshness of the criminal laws in those days. Incidentally, however, even in our own times similar laws are in practice e.g., in Russia, where hoarding money by unjust means is punishable by death].

On the part of the Church, however, [continues St. Thomas] there is mercy which looks to the conversion of the wanderer, wherefore she condemns not at once, but *after the first and second admonition* [italics his], as the Apostle directs [Tit. 3, 10,11]: after that, if he is yet stubborn, the Church no longer hoping for his conversion, looks to the salvation of others [Note: here is the *fulcrum questionis*: the contamination of others], by excommunicating him and separating him from the Church, and furthermore [Note: in accord with the secular laws of that time], delivers him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated thereby from the world by death. For Jerome commenting on Gal. 5,9, *A little leaven, says: Cut off the decayed flesh, expel the mangy sheep from the fold, lest the whole house, the whole paste, the whole body, the whole flock, burn, perish, rot, die. Arius was but one spark in Alexandria, but as that spark was not at once put out, the whole earth was laid waste by its flame.*

So was it in those days. Man's dignity, however, had never been denied, as it is today by crass materialism with all its consequences: the latest news comes from Mexico through Castro's sister. "Cuba," she says, "is nailed to a cross of torment imposed by international Communism" (Reuter's Service, June 30th). May I call it "Inquisition of the XXth. Century?" I think this is the Inquisition we have to fight against, the actual real one, and not that of seven hundred years ago!

A NOTE ON THE ABOVE

FATHER PARIS hopes that we will not find it difficult to print his translation of Aquinas on "Whether heretics ought to be tolerated?" We print it willingly—with all Father Paris's rather loaded notes—but with one comment. The Dominican Editor of *The Faith* expects—and gets—fair play from the THE FREETHINKER; would he reciprocate? Would he print a letter from F. A. Ridley in *The Faith*? Or would he argue that error (as he sees it) cannot be granted the same rights as his "Truth?" We

suspect the latter for, although THE FREETHINKER is occasionally referred to, and even quoted, in *The Faith*, it is only very selectively. However, as a previous editor of this paper. Chapman Cohen, often used to say, we can give our opponents all the advantages and still win. We don't have to load the scales against Christianity, they are already factually loaded against it.

CORRESPONDENCE

PREJUDICE?

I detect a note of prejudice in your comment on my letter in the issue of 3/7/64. You have pigeon-holed me as a believer in "idealistic internationalism." I protest most strenuously. I am *not* an "internationalist" of any kind. I believe in working for a single world nation—which is a very different and very importantly different thing.

Internationalists believe that world peace can be arranged by making pacts and treaties between nations and, like H. G. Wells, I am convinced that we may sign such things until we run out of gold pens and patriotic blood to fill them with, and still be not one whit nearer to real peace.

The only alternative to the international anarchy of armed nations which Nehru and men like him obviously assumed to be inevitable and "natural" is a system of world-wide law and order under which the great majority of human beings see themselves as citizens of the world. The "menaces" to this idea being realised are those, like Nehru, who wish to become identified with the good of a *part* of this world. And the quotations I selected from Nehru's own words undoubtedly showed that he had this grievous shortcoming so far as thinking in humanist terms is concerned.

Now consider your statement of editorial policy as contained in your comment on my letter. You write "In our view, a love of one's country such as that exemplified in Nehru's will is in no way incompatible with an international outlook." I agree. But surely if I am not an internationalist but a believer in humanism in the sense I have given above I am entitled to say what I think of him from a non-internationalist point of view. And if your statement is a sound indication of FREETHINKER policy then I condemn that policy for the same reason as I condemn Nehru.

You don't have to tell me that Burns was not a humanist in my thorough-going sense of the word. I have criticised Burns publicly for the contradictions contained in his writings and I safeguarded myself in my letter by saying that he was only "a bit more outspoken" than Shakespeare. There is an obvious contradiction between *Scots wha hae* and *A man's a Man for a' that* and there is no brooking the fact that Scottish nationalists quote the former when humanists quote the latter. The only reason I mentioned Burns was that a Burns stamp was suggested to celebrate the bi-centenary of his birth in 1959 but it was refused on the grounds that "only the Monarch's visage should appear on British stamps." Now that the English Shakespeare has appeared—'nuff sed!

If you want a really humanist visage on a stamp I suggest you advocate removing the monarch and put on H. G. Wells on his own!

E. G. MACFARLANE.

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RELIGION IN THE SCHOOL

At the National Secular Society meeting on Religion in the School held on July 5th, 1964, F. H. Amphlett Micklewright made a plea that education should be "free, compulsory and secular," thus reviving the old battle-cry of the non-conformists.

Mr. H. J. Blackham, Director of the British Humanist Association told us that present day MPs were no longer willing to make the children the field of slaughter over which such issues are fought.

We respect Mr. Blackham's integrity and authority, and if he says so, it is so. But we note that he quoted from Archbishop Heenan in the *Observer* of the same Sunday.

The Archbishop should know. In 1944, when the Education Act was the subject of bitter controversy, I was in the Sixth form of a convent school, and saw, at the parochial level, the beginning of a campaign which Heenan's apostolic predecessors then put out, and which permeated the hierarchy and laity. This was the avoidance of direct frontal attack, and the creation of a climate where all discussion must be done in a gentlemanly way.

Twenty years have indeed borne fruit if our own partisans are telling us we must not be militant!

There is a bit of the gospels which freethinkers would do well to take for themselves, and it is that he who is not with me is against me.

The hierarchy know also that he who is not against me is still with us and not won?

People who want to oppose the Christian Churches at a round table are playing into their hands—such people have had their eyes blinded, their claws blunted, and their tails cut, by twenty years of insidious propaganda.

In any case, the children are—regrettably—being "slaughtered," here and now. There is only one way to approach this issue—at opposite ends of the table, and with one's cards underneath it. Then your opponents will respect you.

(Miss) GILLIAN HAWTIN.

[A report of the above meeting appears on page 236]

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