

# The Freethinker

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VIEWS AND OPINIONS

## Nonconformity Does Not Pay

By A HEAD TEACHER

THIS MORNING I received the record card for a new boy who is in our IB class. His family moved into our area and his mother wanted him to come to us. His last school, a Church school, offered many objections to the transfer, until his mother settled matters by going to the Education Office. The Church school, like ours has only two first year classes, but I noted that the B class, the backward class, in the Church school had 38 on roll. Our IB has only 20 on roll, because our intake was small last year. It was small because, although we draw our children from Church primary schools, we did not receive all the children, many of them going to the Church secondary school.

Many of the parents of course never enter a church. It simply happens that the only primary schools in this area are run by the Church, who appoint good churchmen as heads and who get as many good churchmen as they can on the staffs. These schools, nice attractive propositions for ambitious young men, are of course barred to nonconformists, except as assistant teachers. It also happens that the Church authorities have plans to build a new and larger secondary school, the money for which will, of course, largely come from the taxpayer. What they have to do is to convince the powers that be that there is a demand for a new Church secondary school. This means that they must prove that their school is full to the doors.

### Canvassing for Children

On the face of things this could have been difficult, as the old catchment area from which the Church secondary school drew its children has largely been demolished. But that has not prevented the Church school from being overfull at our expense and at the expense of every other secondary school in the area. Each Church primary school in the area received a letter pointing out that many children from Church primary schools had been going to County secondary schools. From the moment that letter was sent out the "drumming up" began.

Each Church primary school received a stock of printed forms which were to be given to children who had failed the eleven-plus and which, when signed by a parent, requested for the admission of a child to the Church secondary school. Stocks were even sent to County primary schools.

This of course put the Church secondary school on a different basis to ourselves, for we all accept the principle that no school canvasses for children. We do not send out forms. This no doubt, in the eyes of parents, makes our school appear not to be as good a school as the Church secondary. This school has come to be regarded, in the eyes of parents, as the next best thing to a grammar school, because, when it is overloaded with applications for admission, it can say "No" to those it does not want.

Our experience is that those it does not want are the youngsters who do not come from the good homes. It

does not matter whether they go to church or not. We have evidence that in a family where there are two youngsters, one bright, and one not so bright, the Church secondary school will, if full, take the bright one and let us have the not-so-bright one. We, of course, are not in the happy position of having every parson in the area able to tell his congregation on Sundays that there are vacancies in the Church secondary school. We who work

in the County schools have to face the smear spread by the good churchgoers that we do not teach them "The Religion" in our school. This, in spite of the fact that we follow the Agreed Syllabuses that were drawn up by the religious leaders of the town. It

does not matter that in my school both our teachers of Religious Instruction are practising churchmen. One indeed is related to a bishop.

### Expected to Kneel

Nor is the Church school necessarily a happy place for teachers to work in—unless they "conform." Once it was desperately short of a Housecraft mistress. Unwisely I mentioned to the head the name of a married woman who was prepared to do supply teaching. I heard she had gone there. Then I heard she was working for another Authority, and she later told me why she had resigned after three weeks. "I used to go into assembly," she said, "although I told them I was an agnostic. The head had no objections, when I went. Then, when the vicar noticed I did not kneel in the weekly service he conducted, I was told about it. He drew attention to it the next time he came. So I got a job where there was no fuss and bother."

That school was without any Housecraft teaching for a term because the Housecraft mistress was expected to kneel during the service that the vicar used to take there once a week.

If I had any illusions left that denominational education was in the real interest of the children, I have only to study the state of affairs in a town not far from here. The bulk of the primary schools are Church schools. The majority are nineteenth-century structures with primitive facilities. Not a single new Church primary school has been opened since 1914. Nor have any been closed, because the local Church policy is a school for each parish. Population however has moved to new estates on the outskirts of the town. There County schools have been built. Instead of joining in and helping to cope with the educational problems of these new areas, the Church has left them well alone and taken the attitude, "What we have we hold." Hence many of these schools are two-or three-teacher schools in a heavily built up area where at least it should be possible to have one-, two- or even three-stream primary schools.

Not long ago, the head of a Church primary school, which was condemned by the Ministry back in the 1920s, retired. The place was nearly falling down. When it rained, buckets had to be put all round to catch the

rain pouring in through the roof, and the time was ideal for combining this school with the Church primary school in the next parish, five minutes' walk away. This was a good building which once housed 400 and then, after a slum clearance, only about 70. Was the opportunity seized? A new head was appointed for the condemned building. He moved from a considerable distance to take over the job. He had been in office about three months when the old building was finally declared so unsafe that it had to be closed. The children were then moved into the other Church primary school five minutes' walk away.

But the schools were not combined. Had they been, there would have been enough children for separate classes for seven-, eight-, nine-, and ten-year-olds. Instead, the schools were kept as separate entities: two schools in the same building, each with a class of seven- and eight-year-olds combined, and a class of nine- and ten-year-olds combined. There are two heads and two assistant teachers in the same building.

This, of course, helps the Anglican-minded to get headships, for there are a mass of these Anglican primary schools closed to nonconformists.

Anyone who has studied the advertisement columns of the educational press in recent years, will have noted that practically all the small secondary schools in need of heads—and there are an increasing number of new ones

built largely at your expense and mine—are denominational. What often happens is that your ambitious young man, who sees the value of going to church, gets one of these headships and the experience which goes with it. This of course helps him later in life to get headships of County schools which are the only ones open to nonconformists.

In one area littered with these denominational schools, a divisional officer is reputed to have advised a young Methodist out for a headship: "Start going to church. Do all the jobs you can in the church. Get a job in a Church school where the head is getting on and likely to retire soon. Make yourself indispensable to the vicar. Then, just when the old head is about to retire, threaten to leave. You'll get the headship." This advice has proved invaluable to more than one young nonconformist who valued the cash-in-hand more than his nonconformity. Other nonconformists who started out at the same time and who remained loyal to their chapels, are still assistant teachers.

It is this sort of thing which makes denominationalism stink, just as in my view it is sacrificing the interest of a child to cram it into a class of 38, when there is another school like mine, not run in the interests of a denomination, with a similar class of 20 on roll. Still perhaps the child's immortal soul has benefited from the denominational teaching he has had!

## Heretics and the Church in Medieval Europe

By JAMES D. YOUNG

THE REFORMATION began in 1517 when Martin Luther denounced the sale of indulgences in Germany. But the roots of the Reformation sprang out of the soil of medieval Europe when artists, scientists, sculptors and astrologers came into sharp and open conflict with the Church. Moreover, the antecedents of pre-Reformation struggles were not to be found in the lives and work of typical men of the time, but rather in that of heretical representatives of their time who wanted to rid themselves of the stultifying institutionalism of the Church.

Four very representative men helped to free the human mind from medieval superstition by opening up historical processes that led on to modern science and the nation state. They were Dante, the Italian poet, Leonardo da Vinci, the Italian sculptor, Galileo, the Italian astronomer and Spinoza, the Dutch grinder of lenses.

Dante was a bourgeois of Florence at a time when Florence and other Italian cities were self-governing republics, able to preserve their freedom only by playing off the two great feudal potentates of medieval Europe (the pope and the emperor) against each other. In Dante's time the pope was the stronger and set himself up as the supreme overlord. All through Dante's work runs an intense hatred of the papacy, though knowledge was not advanced enough for him to reject Catholicism outright.

But Dante played a part in Florentine politics and opposed the papal party. Consequently in 1300 he was banished (with 14 others) and told that he would be burnt alive if he came back. He spent the rest of his life in exile, depending on the hospitality of Italian bigwigs, and hoping vainly that the emperor would come and restore him.

Dante was the spokesman of the Italian bourgeoisie at that early age, who wanted a government that would bring order to their country. His frustration found expression in his great poems on hell, purgatory and

paradise, in which he vented his hatred of the Papacy again and again, and put his particular enemies in hell.

He was eventually followed by Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo was the illegitimate son of a lawyer by a peasant girl. His father brought him up with his other children; so we may call him middle class. Florence, in the territory of which he was born, was one of the greatest republics in 15th century Italy. In Leonardo's time it was "bossed" by the Medici family, who were merchant capitalists at the start, though they rose so high that two of their number were elected pope (Leo X and Clement VII). Later they intermarried with the royal family of France; so the later kings of France had Medici blood. So had Charles II and James II of England, through their mother, who was a French princess. This shows how thin the line had become between the merchant capitalists and the feudal landowners.

Leonardo was employed as an artist by Lorenzo de Medici, the boss of Florence (who also employed Botticelli and other great artists). That led on to other things, as the Medici recommended Leonardo to other rich employers. All his famous paintings were done for one or another of them; and he also served as an engineer. He ended up in the employment of Francis I of France, and died in 1519.

Leonardo da Vinci did not, so far as I know, come into any open conflict with the Church; but he had sharp struggles with individual priests and disapproved of Roman Catholic dogma. He was, moreover, an all-round man—painter, sculptor, architect, musician, engineer and scientist—and he had his own private opinions and criticisms of the Church, but he kept many of them to himself. His ability as an artist and engineer earned him employment by the Italian princes of that time (15th-16th century) but he committed his scientific discoveries to

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# The Vatican and Atheism

By F. A. RIDLEY

HERE'S NEWS! Pope Paul VI in the course of an encyclical letter to "his beloved brethren" the bishops of the Roman Church, has laid it down canonically that the major enemy of religion today, and in particular of "the one true Church," is atheism. We assume that by this term His Holiness means both atheism as a scientific philosophy and atheism as a practically world-wide movement. This constitutes, were one really in need of it, a further and cogent disproof of the idea, still far too common in certain anti-Catholic circles, that the Church of Rome represents a rigid, an unalterable code of conduct and belief.

The Roman Catholic Church is, always has been, never was so more than today, a supremely elastic and flexible organisation, which has always consistently followed the Pauline injunction to be "all things to all men." That this is indeed so, is being conclusively demonstrated in both the spheres of faith and morals to which papal infallibility expressly extends. For the second Vatican Council (disregarding the protests of old-fashioned purists like Archbishop Heenan) appears to be upon the point of summarily altering God's "unalterable law" on the subject of birth control whilst simultaneously summarily throwing overboard the immemorial teaching of the Church upon the first and most important article of faith in the Christian creed, the existence of God. And yet there are still people who persist in taking Rome at her face value as *semper idem*—always the same.

It is, I repeat, a veritable theological revolution with which we are confronted. For at least prior to Pope Paul's infallible pronouncement—for surely the existence of God if anything does come under the heading of "faith and morals" in which sphere papal infallibility expressly operates—it was one persistent and insistent doctrine of the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church that there was and there never could be, in the nature of things, any such thing as a *bona fide* Atheist. For the existence of God, the Creator, is self-evident; and the arguments that natural theology (i.e. that specialised department of theology which "proves" by reason the credibility of the basic dogmas of Christianity) musters in its favour are part of the normal mental furniture of mankind and are, *per se*, self-evident. They have only to be stated properly (as for example, Thomas Aquinas in particular has stated them in his classic "five proofs") in order to produce immediate and overwhelming conviction.

The Church, of course, knows and admits that there have been since very remote times—in fact since the very dawn of rational thought amongst its originators in classical Greece—self-styled Atheists. For example, Cicero, a pre-Christian theist mentions several otherwise forgotten Atheists by name in his extant book *On the Nature of the Gods*. However—or so the Church of Rome has always taught—there is not, and *ipso facto*, there never could be, such a person as a real convinced and authentic Atheist. Accordingly, it has always been the orthodox Catholic teaching that people who called themselves Atheists were either mentally defective—and as such congenitally incapable of even understanding the self-evident arguments in favour of the existence of God ("The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God")—or else, and probably more often, atheism represents a desperate camouflage for depraved and immoral men

who tremble at the prospect of post-mortem divine judgment, and who accordingly pretend to believe that there is no God. Men who, as the French Deist, Robespierre, once dramatically phrased it, "will protect outraged innocence and punish triumphant crime."

Atheism, accordingly, is merely a convenient subterfuge for what present-day psychology terms the "guilt complex," where it is not mere imbecility due to a total inability to comprehend even the most elementary and obvious processes of conceptual thought such as those which demonstrate the existence of the Creator. Such, we repeat, has always been the traditional Catholic doctrine ever since the days of that early Catholic theologian who wrote the Pauline Epistle to the Romans.

The startling change in the current reactions of the Roman Church towards atheism, as exemplified in Pope Paul's encyclical, reflects the spectacular expansion and diffusion of atheism throughout this present century and generation. For it appears indisputable that it is only since the industrial revolution transformed the immemorial agrarian social order, that atheism effectively emerged from the cloisters and ivory towers in which it had hitherto exclusively dwelt, and became embodied in mass movements. Whilst predominantly agrarian societies have been religiously-inclined societies, the deterministic processes of an industrially-based social order induce a natural tendency towards atheism. As a French Atheist once observed, in a modern factory you don't say "Let there be light" you just switch it on. Of course atheism *per se* is far older than industrial society; it is sufficient to recall such brilliant examples as, say, Spinoza, whose "God" turns out on investigation to be merely the universe, or Jean Meslier and Diderot. But these men and their kind worked in isolation; it was not until the advent of the modern era engendered by the French Revolution in the political field and by the industrial revolution in the field of technology, that atheism became a mass movement and, in time, a universal one.

Speaking chronologically, one might say that the 19th-century generation that saw such atheistic apostles as Bradlaugh, Marx and Bakunin—who translated Voltaire into atheistic phraseology by noting that "If God existed it would be necessary to abolish him"—appear as the spokesmen of mass movements, saw the first appearance of atheism as a world cult: a world cult, at that, powerfully reinforced by the startling contemporary progress of a materialistically-based science of which such widely influenced and at least *de facto* atheistic philosophies as Darwinism and Marxism represented the outstanding manifestations. But it was really only in this present century and in particular since 1945, since when the industrial revolution has become world-wide in its diffusion, that atheism can accurately be said to have superseded such rival religions as, say, Islam and the Indian religious cults, as the major rival of Christianity, and very particularly so, of the most highly cohesive and dogmatic of the Christian Churches, the Church of Rome.

One can perhaps relevantly add that atheism would become a still more effective philosophy if its adherents were to devote as much trouble to defining it as Catholic theology for example does in arguing its hypothetical God. For example, is it possible to *disprove* the existence of such a hypothetical deity, or does atheism merely

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## This Believing World

Everybody of course knows that England is a mere speck compared with the United States of America. Everything there is on a big scale—even spirit “materialisations.” Poor old England has to be content with a few miserable specimens a year. On the other hand, in the land of the mighty (we have *Psychic News*, August 29th, as our authority), no fewer than 150 materialisations took place recently in a three-hour seance! These are guaranteed by a London Spiritualist, Mr. H. V. Barker, who saw among them (fully clothed) Hannen Swaffer and Mrs. Duncan. Many of the spirits were clearly seen arm-in-arm, others were partly naked, or were fantastically dressed with feathers reaching the ceiling. There were some actually wearing chain mail. What more could even the most sceptical of us now need as proof of Spiritualism?

★

Of Buddhists in general, we have always been taught that one of their most famous tenets was the sanctity of life, be it that of a bug, a poisonous spider, or even a human being. However, in spite of this, we get a vivid picture of a “Buddhist mob” staging “ceremonial killing” (*Daily Express*, August 29th) of a young Roman Catholic during the recent riots in Saigon. A Buddhist boy of 10 stabbed the Catholic with a butcher’s knife, and other Buddhists “beat him to death with clubs and iron bars.” Now how did the legend that Buddhists never, never, kill any living thing, arise?

★

The religious genius who writes the “Saturday Reflection” for the *London Evening News* has, like so many other Christian geniuses, often to explain away the meaning of the Precious Words of Wisdom emanating from “our Blessed Lord.” He tells us that “Blessed are ye poor,” and “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” do not refer to “destitution and distress.” What he does not tell us is what they do actually mean. Instead, he quotes Paul—“Our sufficiency is of God”—which leaves the matter as obscure as before. Try telling strikers for more pay that belief in God is “sufficient,” though we suspect quite a number of employers would heartily agree with Paul.

★

The coloured messiah or prophetess, Alice Lenshina, whose Christian tenets were literally followed by her devout followers leading to the massacre of at least 500 men, women, and children, was given over two columns publicity in *The Observer* (August 16th). The writer, Bryan Wilson, is of the opinion that if she receives any punishment now she is behind bars, it might “turn her into a martyr” and “worse trouble may follow.” She might even be “deified.” After all, “the Lenshina movement” is Christian in organisation with “a simple faith and pious hymns.” One of these seems to us most applicable, “Wash Us Father, Wash Us,” and even more saintly is, “Teach Us Saviour, You Have Shown a Way of Life.”

★

Taken all in all, religion is perhaps the greatest “boycotter” in existence, always looking for something to ban. We notice for instance that Arab physicians want to ban all medicines and drugs touched by “infidel” hands—especially of course any of them made or invented by Jews. As Arabs have rarely invented anything, this will probably hurt their own patients more than the infidels. But does this matter? Not two hoots. When it comes to intolerance and slavery, Islam is perhaps at the top of the table. Yet Muslims believe it comes direct from Allah. What a breath of fresh air we get from Freethought in comparison!

## HERETICS AND THE CHURCH IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

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private MSS, which were not published for centuries after his death.

Of the men who were more directly involved in science the story is better known, partly because of the work of Copernicus and Galileo. Copernicus had, of course, no intention of attacking the Church, and the Church was not afraid of him. In fact, the Pope accepted the dedication of his book on astronomy. His theory was, in fact, put forward to simplify astronomy, and therefore was calculated to assist seafaring, and the greatest sea-powers were then Spain and Portugal, both Catholic nations.

Between the time of Copernicus and Galileo the Reformation, and the defeat of Spain by the Protestant Dutch and English, had badly shaken the Catholic Church. And the writings of Bruno had shown where the new astronomy was leading. Bruno affirmed the infinity of the universe and denied revealed religion. He was burnt by the Inquisition in 1600. So when Galileo began his work, the Catholic Church was on the alert. He was warned not to defend Copernican astronomy, and when he nevertheless went on defending it, he was summoned before the Inquisition and forced by threats to deny the doctrine that the earth moved.

But the Catholic Church was not the only enemy of science and progress, and much later, in 1656, Spinoza (with his war-cry of “Not to weep, not to laugh, but to understand”) came into open conflict with the Jewish Church. In 1656 at the age of 23, Spinoza was expelled by the Amsterdam synagogue for unorthodoxy. As an optician he became acquainted with the astronomers of his day and was led to philosophy. His contribution to philosophy must be judged by 17th-century standards. It was the time when natural science was just beginning to break loose from medieval fetters (Galileo was condemned when Spinoza was just an infant). Descartes had tried to reconcile religion and science by drawing a sharp distinction between spirit (that which thinks) and matter (that which is extended in space): science could do as it liked with matter, but spirit was the preserve of religion. Spinoza advanced on this by laying down that there was only one “substance,” which both thought and was extended in space, and might have other attributes too for all we knew. Spinoza called it “God” or “nature.”

Thanks to living in the Dutch Republic, Spinoza was not persecuted, but even there his books had to be published anonymously or after his death. He died at 44. His contemporaries and successors called him an atheist: and as “God” to him meant simply “nature,” i.e. everything, they had some justification.

## THE VATICAN AND ATHEISM

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connote being (as the original Greek implied) “without a God?” Personally, I agree with Bradlaugh that the answer is the latter.

Be that as it may, the present Holy Father evidently agrees with Bradlaugh. From opposite angles the infallible Pope and the great English Atheist concur in their past and present appraisal of the current situation in its most fundamental ideological connotation. For did not Bradlaugh assert a century ago that the final conflict of ideas in the field of religion would be between Rome and reason, of which he held atheism to be the ultimately logical expression? In this year of grace 1964, it is clear from Pope Paul’s recent encyclical that the infallible Vatican has now effectively come round to the point of view expressed a century ago by Bradlaugh.

# THE FREETHINKER

103 BOROUGH HIGH STREET, LONDON, S.E.1

Telephone: HOP 2717

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## 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

Merseyside 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

Lewisham Humanist Group (The Saville, 436 Lewisham High Street, S.E.13). Friday, September 11th, 7.45 p.m.: DAVID TRIBE, "The Place of Marriage in Society."

Maidstone Humanist Group (Community Centre), Thursday, September 17th, 7.45 p.m.: DAVID TRIBE, "Objections to Humanism."

## Notes and News

CONTINUING OUR education controversy, we print the personal experiences of the Head Teacher of a North of England secondary school. While, for obvious reasons, the author must remain anonymous, we might say that he holds an arts degree and is a justice of the peace.

★

DOESN'T THE psychopath behave in what we might call a perfectly "natural" way? This question was asked by Professor H. J. Eysenck in his address to the psychology section of the British Association at Southampton on August 28th. Aren't young children psychopaths—"selfish, egotistical, cruel, without thought of consequences, living for the moment and without guilt or shame?" The proper question is, the Professor went on, "why are we not all behaving like psychopaths and criminals . . . ?" Religious people spoke of conscience but gave no clue of its nature and origin, he said, either forgetting or ignoring that such people would say it was given us by God. Professor Eysenck then gave his own Pavlovian explanation. Conscience was in fact a conditioned reflex. Research had shown that animals and young children could be conditioned—trained to follow certain behavioural patterns when pleasurable consequences followed them and unpleasant consequences followed another course of action.

★

TO CALL OUR present methods of dealing with criminals "primitive," was to understate the case, Professor

Eysenck said (*The Guardian*, 29/8/64). "We are still doing what the Assyrians, Carthaginians and Romans did two and three thousand years ago. We avenge but we do not reclaim . . . We believed that punishment deterred and . . . that the more severe the punishment the greater the deterrence." But this was "not always true." The effects of punishment were "extremely variable, very difficult to predict and often contrary to expectation." The Professor suggested a reform of the prison system so that its chief aim would be to cure rather than to punish, with special drugs given to types of criminals likely to change their outlook.

★

ON AUGUST 30th, the *Sunday Telegraph* said that, underlying most of the enlightened remarks about crime and punishment "in recent weeks" was "the complacent assumption that those who break the law are a class apart." This couldn't possibly apply to Professor Eysenck (witness above) but it gave the paper the chance to "contrast" the "Christian view" that "we are all sinners and could therefore become criminals;" that "There, but for the grace of God, go I." This "old-fashioned doctrine," according to the quaint outlook of the *Telegraph*, "even when associated with severe punishment, implies both humility and sympathy on the part of the punisher." It must be comforting, indeed, to know that the man who is flogging you is humble and sympathetic! Another point: surely receipt of "the grace of God" puts one in a class apart. The *Sunday Telegraph* really ought to think a little before it rushes to the defence of Christianity.

★

THE JULY ISSUE of *Family Planning*, journal of the Family Planning Association, contained an excellent review by Christopher Dunkley of Professor Ronald Fletcher's booklet, *Ten Non-Commandments* (Pioneer Press, 2s. 6d.). Mr. Dunkley, a young reporter, was by no means uncritical. "God save us from the coming generation," he exclaimed, if all they want is "peace and quiet and happiness and love and a house with a garden and a sandpit at the bottom." He asked for a little more romance, "a little more of 'Byron's 'Manfred,'" but thought Dr. Fletcher's remarks on love "rather dangerous." Nevertheless *Ten Non-Commandments* should, Mr. Dunkley said, "be ordered by the gross by every secondary school librarian and left in prominent places on the shelves for students to find." It could do much, he added, "to offset the dogma and cant called Religious Instruction which . . . is drummed into pupils each week under the euphemistic title of 'RI.'"

★

IT IS FITTING, here, to record perhaps the best educational feature produced so far on BBC2—*The Artist in Society*. Three programmes of an hour and a quarter each, dealt successively with the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the modern world, the film of the Sistine Chapel ceiling in the second programme being breathtaking, even without colour. There was sufficient time for each expert to develop his theme and to present relevant dramatic scenes, and the introduction and conclusion of each programme was by Dr. Fletcher, who has now taken up his appointment as Professor of Sociology in the University of York, and whom we wish every success.

★

A NEW ANTHOLOGY, *The Protestant Mystics*, edited by Anne Fremantle and W. H. Auden (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 45s.) includes Swedenborg, Keats, Goethe, Thoreau, Emerson and Virginia Woolf. "Protestant," has rather a wide connotation, it seems, for Miss Fremantle and Mr. Auden.

## An American Priest's Complaints about his Archbishop

ON AUGUST 14th, we reported that an American Roman Catholic priest, William H. DuBay, had been transferred to a suburban parish in California, after asking Pope Paul VI to remove Cardinal McIntyre from his office as Archbishop of Los Angeles for failing to give Roman Catholics a lead on racial issues. We print below (by courtesy of the American Freethought paper *Progressive World*) Father DuBay's letter to the Pope and (from *The Reporter*, newspaper of the Kansas City Roman Catholic diocese) an account of the reaction of the Catholic Human Relations Council.

To His Holiness, Pope Paul VI Vatican City.  
Your Holiness:

It is indeed regrettable that I must appeal to you and request that you remove His Eminence, James Francis Cardinal McIntyre from his office as Archbishop of Los Angeles. But the truth is that my obligation to my conscience, my priesthood, and to you, demands that I protest the Cardinal's gross malfeasance in office.

Cardinal McIntyre has perpetrated inexcusable abuses in two areas: he has failed to exercise moral leadership among the white Catholics of this diocese on racial discrimination; and he has conducted a vicious program of intimidation and repression among priests, seminarians, and laity who have tried to reach the consciences of white Catholics in his archdiocese.

His Eminence has often protested that there is no racial problem in Southern California in spite of the fact that Negro groups here have often publicly demonstrated against racial discrimination and injustice, and in spite of the fact that non-Catholic religious groups have taken a stand in the fight for social justice for the Negroes here.

His Eminence has condemned direct action demonstrations on the grounds that they incite violence. But as a matter of fact he has contributed to the possibility of serious racial violence by depriving civil rights groups of responsible Catholic and clerical leadership necessary to encourage Christian forms of non-violent protest. His inaction has promoted the prolongation of Negro grievances by failing to mobilise the Catholic population against the social evils of segregation.

In addition to simple inaction, His Eminence has severely chastised priests for speaking out against segregation. Los Angeles, the third most segregated city in the United States! Facts compiled from official census records show that housing restrictions against Negroes have steadily grown since the end of the Second World War.

A constitutional amendment to legalise segregation will be on the ballot for the voters in November. If enacted this measure will make California the first state in the Union to adopt segregation as an official constitutional policy. Similar measures will then be inaugurated in other states, duplicating the pattern of South African *apartheid*. The Church must be free to speak out against this now!

His Eminence has refused to receive groups of responsible Negro Catholic laymen concerning their just grievances, in spite of his statement that, "No representative members of their community have indicated that they desire a change in these [Church] policies." He has refused to acknowledge the Catholic Council on Human Relations, a group of laymen whose objective is to enlighten their fellow Catholics on the issues of race relations. He has even denied them the use of facilities for their meetings.

His Eminence has insisted that the civil rights issue in California is a purely political one, into which the Church

has no right to interfere. His policy is to limit the Church's activity in integration to her own institutions and to the preaching of Catholic principles of justice and charity. But he has failed in not allowing both priests and laity to apply these principles of justice and charity to concrete situations and forming a program of effective social action.

By using harsh reprimands, he has tried to prevent students of St. John's Major Seminary at Camarillo from learning of the Church's social teaching in matters of local concern. Just recently 60 theological students were disciplined for their general commitment to racial justice and for taking part in an informal conversation with a visitor to the seminary, John Howard Griffin, noted Catholic author and spokesman for the civil rights movement. One third-year theological student was dismissed; another was recalled from receiving ordination to the subdiaconate. One student left the seminary for conscientious objections against such policies. Many others were not given promotion and sent home on vacation "on probation." All concerned at the seminary and throughout the archdiocese are scandalised by such vicious attempts to isolate our future priests from real issues and their Christian solutions.

All of us concerned with giving Negro congregations (such as St. Albert's) positive leadership in their yearning for full protection under the law, equal opportunities for education, jobs and housing cannot reconcile the clear teachings of Christ and the Church with the restrictive and nullifying policies of the Cardinal.

Our Caucasian congregations, too, are not free to act in a Christian manner unless they are told, not only general principles, but also how these principles apply to their concrete situation and how to put them into practice.

Speaking for myself, for other priests and religious too intimidated by threat to speak here, for the Negro community in Los Angeles (one of the largest Catholic Negro communities in the US), and for all dedicated to the advancement for the reign of justice and charity, I urge you, therefore, to remove Cardinal McIntyre from office.

Most respectfully in Christ,  
(Rev.) WILLIAM H. DUBAY

In the wake of a priest's charge that his Cardinal-archbishop had failed to speak out on moral issues involved in racial discrimination, an unofficial Roman Catholic group has called on the Apostolic Delegate in the United States to investigate civil rights issues in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

The Catholic Human Relations Council here, in a wire to Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi, said:

"Because the sin of racism and related sins against justice and charity are being virtually ignored in the Los Angeles archdiocese, the moral health of all Catholics is in peril and the faith of many Catholics is being undermined."

The council supported Father William H. DuBay, 29-year-old priest who recently charged, in a letter to Pope Paul VI, that Cardinal James Francis McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles, had held there was no "moral issue" involving race in the archdiocese. The priest, then administrator of St. Albert the Great church of suburban Compton, called on the Pope to remove his Cardinal.

In its telegram to Archbishop Vagnozzi, the Catholic Human Relations Council said it was confident that

Father DuBay's charges were true and that "unless solutions are found, the image of the Catholic Church will suffer." The wire was signed by Emil Seliga, president of the council.

The Vatican has not commented on the controversy, although newsmen heard from authoritative sources that Father DuBay's letter would be forwarded to Archbishop Vagnozzi in his post as Apostolic Delegate in the United States.

Pickets representing the Catholic Human Relations Council and St. Albert's (parish) Catholic Committee for Human Rights have picketed the Los Angeles chancery office and several places visited by Cardinal McIntyre, including the graduation ceremonies of a school of nursing at St. Vincent's church.

Supporting Father DuBay here is an organization known as Catholics United for Racial Equality (CURE). John Bucholdt, a layman co-founder, told newsmen that Father DuBay had decided to seek "canonical and civil

legal advice" before making further comments to newspapers, radio and television.

The priest, however, let it be known that he had received 300 letters on his action and that 90 per cent of the correspondents agreed with his stand.

According to one report, Father Arthur J. Lirette, new administrator of the parish, refused permission for the St. Albert's Catholic Committee for Human Rights to hold a meeting in the parish hall. About 60 members gathered in the church parking lot for a period and then dispersed.

In Washington, D. C., a Jesuit scholar active in the Catholic movement for interracial justice was quoted as having "no opinion" on whether Father DuBay had acted "wisely."

"But," said Father George H. Dunne, S. J., of Georgetown university, "I do think he acted courageously, and that he expressed grievances which many people have long felt."

## Tell Me the Old, Old Story

By D. F. M.

THE CARPENTER, knowing that his wife was away visiting a friend in the next village, left his workshop and entered his house. He had heard rumours regarding the wine at a recent wedding, and also that his son had made a very angry verbal attack on his mother at the same wedding.

His son had been behaving in a very strange manner during the last few months, and had threatened to leave home and go on some preaching tour with a crowd of men with whom he was always having meetings. The carpenter found him staring into space, as though he was either going mad or seeing a ghost. The father asked what was the matter, and questioned his son regarding the wedding rumours, and why the angry outburst against his mother? The young man jumped as though frightened, but almost at once he smiled a sly, half-roguish smile and thanked his father for forcing him to come into the open—and for the chance to have a chat about things now that his mother was absent.

The young man explained how, over the past years his mind had changed regarding religion in general, and their own Jewish brand in particular. Must we forever, he asked, be bound by the ancient writings, so much of which, if examined critically, were but very petty and parochial versions of Jewish history all mixed up with absurd vapourings of silly old men who claimed to be the voice of God? He told his father that he felt compelled to preach against all this in the near future, and the threat to leave home came from a wish not to involve his own family in what could easily lead to trouble. Oratory, he knew was in him, and usually, when a small crowd had gathered at some secluded corner, one or more of that crowd had met him later and said how, they too, would like to see so many foolish things swept away, and had promised him help if he did tour the country. That was the reason for his rather odd collection of friends. The rumours apropos the recent wedding had nothing at all to do with his views on religion, but he felt that his father was justified in asking about them and he would tell everything. He regretted his rudeness to his mother and would certainly apologise, the reason would be found in the account of what really happened.

Recently he had heard—or rather overheard—his father and mother having a slight quarrel over the wedding invitation from the stonemason and his wife, and

had heard his father say in very strong terms that he would not attend that wedding at any price. He had always been against the mason and could see nothing funny in the many practical jokes that the mason had played on him. The young man told his father how he well remembered when the man had, in his father's absence, mixed up the seasoned and unseasoned planks, and the angry customer whose table had warped so much and had to be remade. Before he left home—if he ever did—he wanted to have at least one practical joke against the mason and his chance had come at the wedding.

There had been a large congregation at the synagogue, and before the ceremony commenced, he had given his seat at the front to one of his friends and had pretended to go to the rear of the building and take a back seat. Actually he had left the building and, avoiding the wedding procession, had got to the mason's house unobserved. He had found only one very old servant in charge of the house; he had told her some story about instructions from her master regarding the wine, and she had gone about her own business of attending to the food. The wine he had found in some cool outhouse, about a dozen jars only partially filled for easier handling. He had filled four, five, or six jars completely full and made the remainder up to their previous level with water from the well. The full pitchers he had carried into a dark corner and the diluted wine had been carried by the returning servants into the feast. As at all weddings the host becomes more and more generous as the wine flows and in due course, the host, the mason, was ordering more to be brought in. The servants reported that they could find no more and the mason was most embarrassed, and then—the son continued—he had ordered the servants to look at the back of the outhouse and of course there was more embarrassment when the real wine was served.

It had been about this time that his outburst against his mother had occurred. When his mother was about to say something, he had feared, for an instant, that the old servant had seen his trick and had told his mother about it all. It had been all too easy, and at the time he had had much fun watching his host's embarrassment all through the feast. First, he had watched his host's face at his first drink of the diluted brew, then, what fun to hear the polite guests, as guests will, praising up the

vintage to their host's face, and then saying to each other, what vile concoction is this; after that the shortage, and then the true wine being offered later. He had overheard two guests express the thought that the mason had tried to get away with the wedding on the cheap.

The carpenter enjoyed the story and thought the turn about was fair enough. No one ever need tell the mason whose guests, no doubt, would chivy him until his dying day about trying to marry his daughter off on some very inferior wine.

All the above I heard at an English wedding recently. It was another version however, and why, with a wearying monotony, must presumably able men recount the silly story in front of intelligent congregations is beyond my comprehension? That ordinary and sensible men do not rebel against all this drivel is proof of the terrible danger of indoctrination.

## Portuguese Women in Prison

ARRESTED in December, 1958, tried in March, 1961 and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, Maria da Piedade Gomes dos Santos is still in prison today. She has served her sentence, and an additional three years under "Security Measures," which were extended for six months until September 19th, 1964—when they might well be extended for up to a further three years. The reason? She is still considered "dangerous"—because her imprisonment has not forced a change in her views, and because her husband escaped from prison some time ago.

Dr. Julietta Gandara, originally sentenced in 1959 to two years' imprisonment, had her sentence increased to four years' plus Security Measures, on appeal. She remains in prison today, a sick woman.

Fernanda Paiva Tomas and Maria Alda Nogueira are both serving sentences of eight years plus Security Measures—which can indefinitely prolong the original sentence.

*Portugal: Women in Prison*, (published by the British Committee for Portuguese Amnesty, 30 Benson Road, London, S.E.23, 1s. plus 3d. postage) gives some of the background to these women's lives, includes letters which women political prisoners have smuggled out, and gives factual case histories of 22 of the women at present serving sentences or awaiting trial in Portuguese prisons.

These, and many other Portuguese women are detained, and face indefinite imprisonment because they have engaged in activities which would be quite legitimate in other countries—political opposition to the Government, because they remained loyal to their husbands, and because they have refused to denounce friends, or recant.

H.W.

## DEBATE

ALLIANCE HALL, CAXTON STREET, LONDON, S.W.1  
(nearest Underground, St. James's Park)

THURSDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER, 7.45 p.m.

DAVID TRIBE, *President, National Secular Society,*

and

HAROLD LEGERTON, *Secretary, Lord's Day Observance Society*

"That the Sunday Observance Laws Should be Abolished."

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

## CORRESPONDENCE

### CALVIN

Mr. F. A. Ridley surely cannot hope to get away with his replies to what he rather pompously calls my "sequential complaints." I never denied that Shakespeare was a Tudor courtier; I merely said that this seems to damn him—though presumably not Bacon, the darling of the Marxists—in Mr. Ridley eyes.

Mr. Ridley complained that Shakespeare's quatercentenary had been commemorated but not Galileo's. He now says that one of the reasons why he did not write a commemorative article on the latter was because "the subject itself has been so often dealt with in THE FREETHINKER." So, Mr. Ridley answers himself.

My principal complaint was, of course, against Mr. Ridley's fulsome praise of Calvin. It was not an argument about whether the Reformation was "on the whole" a "progressive event," it was about Calvin and Calvinism; about a ruthless tyrant and a heartless creed. The last place where one expects such a man to be honoured is in THE FREETHINKER.

Calvin not only condemned freedom of thought, he executed those found "guilty" of it. During the first five years of Calvin's rule in Geneva, which had a comparatively small population, thirteen persons were hanged, ten decapitated, thirty-five burned, and seventy-six driven from their houses, Stefan Zweig tells us, while the prisons were overcrowded.

The men that Freethinkers should honour are the men who, at risk of death, opposed the dictator: men like Servetus and Castello.

ROBERT M. YOUNG

### "THE FREETHINKER"

I was amused to read Mr. E. O. James's letter in your correspondence column of August 21st. Mr. James seems anxious to be shown how to think! I welcome the pungent comments in your excellent paper. It seems to me that we can never have enough of debunking the antics of Churchmen.

Thought by the readers should surely follow. The good done by religious bodies is far outweighed by the devilish harm they have done in the past, and *would still do* if they had the power: this is the whole point.

I can only suggest Mr. James reads J. M. Robertson's *History of Christianity* in the Thinker's Library.

(Miss) GERTRUDE E. ROBERTS.

## OBITUARY

We regret to announce the death of Stanley G. Benney in Truro Infirmary, Cornwall, on August 17th.

Mr. Benney, who was aged 79, had been a member of the National Secular Society and a FREETHINKER reader for many years.

## NEW PAPERBACKS

### PENGUIN FICTION BY COLIN McINNES

Absolute Beginners, 3s. 6d.

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New States of West Africa, by Ken Post, 4s.

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Plus Postage from THE FREETHINKER Bookshop

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

## ANNUAL DINNER

New Victoria Hotel, Corporation Street, Birmingham  
Saturday, September 26th Reception 6.30 p.m.  
Tickets 17s. 6d. each from Mrs. M. Miller, 62, Warwards Lane,  
Birmingham 29. Telephone: Selly Oak 1121