

FREETHINKER

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PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICES

On December 21, 1965 the State Parliament of Victoria, Australia, passed a Psychological Practices Act to outlaw Scientology and set up a Psychological Council to determine what psychology could be taught and practised. This measure sprang directly from the Report of the Board of Inquiry into Scientology. As with the row over the family-breaking activities of the Exclusive Brethren, the Scientology controversy has spread from Australia to England. Last week in the House of Commons two Members called for a similar inquiry here.

In November 1963, after a debate in the Victorian Legislative Council, the Hon. J. W. Galbally, MLC, introduced a private member's bill to "prohibit the teaching and practice of scientology for fee or reward and the use in relation to such teaching or practice of any apparatus or device for recording or measuring personal reactions, impulses or characteristics". The Government decided instead to appoint a "Board" of Inquiry composed of Mr. K. V. Anderson, QC. He reported on September 28, 1965 and on November 10 a Psychological Practices Bill was introduced.

Scientology was founded by Lafayette Ronald Hubbard, an American now living in an 18-room manor in East Grinstead, Sussex. He first used the word, apparently, in 1936 when he formulated a series of "axioms". In 1950 he published *Dianetics: the Modern Source of Mental Health*, and in 1951 *Science of Survival*, from which time regular use of the word "scientology" can be dated. With its dual connotations of science and meta-physics it has proved a most profitable creation, peculiarly adapted to the scientism of the age.

Mr Hubbard, who for many years "was a prolific and successful writer of science fiction" and "who falsely claims academic and other distinctions, and whose sanity is to be gravely doubted" (Prefatory Note to Report), is the governing director of and said to wield absolute power in the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International (HASI), now spread throughout much of the world. Officially it does not claim to be a religion, though in certain areas there is a sprinkling of so-called pastors, bishops and DDs. The founder purports to have discovered a "scientific rather than religious or humanistic" proof of a "thetan", a sort of latterday soul. In *The Key to Tomorrow*, compiled from his works by V. Keith Gerry, appear the following extracts:

Scientology affirms the existence of a Supreme Being . . . Modern science has gone so far as to teach that man arose from mud and clay alone, has denied to him even a semblance of a soul; and so has not only solved none of the problems of the humanities, but has aided and abetted Godless totalitarian governments. . . . By its [scientology's] application the sick be-

come well, the insane sane and the sane much saner. For the first time there is a chance that the prisons may be emptied, the asylums freed from the burden of overcrowding and that many veterans of two world wars may return home from their hospitals.

From this it will be seen that the promoters of scientology are aiming at much the same profitable market as Subud, Theosophy, Spiritualism, faith healing, Christian Science, the Aetherius Society, *Intelligence Digest*, Anthroposophy, modern witchcraft, white magic and similar cults that particularly thrive in Kensington, Hampstead, and most parts of the United States.

The Report bluntly says: "The appeal of scientology is at times deliberately directed towards the weak, the anxious, the disappointed, the inadequate and the lonely—those unduly concerned about themselves, who in some cases are mentally unwell. At other times it is directed at university and senior school students, ambitious business men and women, public servants, school teachers, housewives and others." At times of stress, e.g. with students near examinations, people are most susceptible to advertisements. In the early stages, the techniques used "have on occasions produced some apparent benefit for some people; but the enthusiasm resulting from such transient gains is deliberately exploited by the HASI to produce a subservience amounting almost to mental enslavement, from which, because of fear, delusion, debilitation and other conditions induced by scientology processes, the individual finds it extremely difficult, and often impossible, to escape".

By the use of E-meters and other apparatus, candidates have their mental state assessed. This is on a points scale, where death appears at zero. There is however a fate, or fates, worse than death, for it is possible to have a negative rating. In the hands of a scientology "auditor", one then proceeds up the scale towards the longed-for state of "clear", which is almost as difficult to attain as nirvana. It is also expensive. "Many individuals have paid very large sums of money to the HASI for processing and other services, amounts of over £1,000 not being uncommon." To hear enthusiasts talking in their London HQ, it appears that a strong incentive for some to continue their processing is the prospect of gaining a qualifying "preclear" and then becoming well-paid auditors themselves.

Mr Anderson, who is reported to be a Roman Catholic, was not impressed by HASI when he formed the opinion that "the general attitude of its founder is hostile to and disparaging of religion", and angered by "belated claims that scientology is a religion, made towards the close of the Inquiry in an attempt to obscure the real issues in-

volved in the Inquiry". He was also disturbed to find that "much of Hubbard's writings show a morbid behaviour of women, sex, rape, abortions and similar topics". After hearing 151 witnesses and almost 4 million words, he decided that scientology is "potentially dangerous to mental health", can "produce mental derangement which has required hospital treatment", and has sometimes disrupted families. The rather melodramatic summing-up is: "Scientology is evil; its techniques evil, its practices a serious threat to the community, medically, morally and socially; and its adherents sadly deluded and often mentally ill."

There has been much protest in Australia, even by Mr Galbally, that the Psychological Practices Act goes too far, that parents and teachers could fall foul of the Psychological Council, that the seizing of scientology files was an invasion of civil liberties. If, as has been suggested, the whole affair was instigated by the Catholic Church (whose Catholic Action in Victoria is one of the most powerful in the world, and which has always been hostile to rivals like Spiritualism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Freemasons and similar bodies), the steps chosen could be a two-edged sword.

When Lord Balniel, Conservative Chairman of the National Association for Mental Health, failed to get the British Minister of Health to agree to a board of inquiry, Labour MP Mr Julian Snow supported the Opposition Member, claiming that "an examination of advertisements in some free-thinking journals might elucidate the general picture for him in the sense that there are people who attract a large number of clients by almost fraudulent claims to have a medical background". These "free-thinking

journals" were not specified. Whatever may apply to other publications, the FREETHINKER has not carried and will not carry such advertisements. Freethinkers are as likely to be opposed to scientology as Catholics. But they would ask the Victorian Government and the Catholic Church to consider the implications of their form of attack.

What is the Christian religion, particularly the Catholic form of it, but psychological practices? Like scientology it appeals to certain types of people, may give them temporary comfort in bereavement or other personal crisis, but gradually "because of fear, delusion, debilitation and other conditions induced . . . the individual finds it extremely difficult, and often impossible, to escape". Throughout a lifetime "very large sums of money" are paid to support a system claiming virtue in prayer and sacraments, threatening hellfire, condemning doubt and controlling thought so that it poses "a serious threat to the community, medically, morally and socially". Its adherents are "sadly deluded" whether or not they are often mentally ill.

It is hardly surprising that bogus philosophies rush to call themselves religions. Not only will this generally render them immune from prosecution, but governments will waive taxes, councils forgo rates, newspapers and broadcasting organisations provide free publicity, politicians respect, and reverent Humanists declare uplifting and apologise for not supporting more actively. Freethinkers do not want or need the protection of a Psychological Practices Act. But legislative action is needed to give sanity the same facilities as superstition and amend the libel laws so that both ancient and modern lucrative cults can safely be called by their proper names.

THE ONLY EXISTING "GOD"

Gonzalo Quiogue

TRADITIONALLY, "god" means a supernatural being with human characteristics. However, philosophy Baruch Spinoza (1632-77) stretched the meaning of this to include nature. He taught his students that "there was only one substance, god, with two aspects: thought and extension; Man was part of nature; nature was god and god was nature".

If modern theologians and scientists can accept the nature-god of Spinoza, there will be no dispute as to the existence of God. No one can surely deny the existence of nature or any of its parts or functions. But scientists and theologians as a rule see no reason and no need to call nature God. Nature is nature and God is God, an imaginary personal entity. Although nature is wonderful, people see no sense in praying to it. It is not a conscious being, not a sentient entity. People look at it as when they see a mountain, a sea, a moon or a sun.

It is interesting to note, however, how a modern theologian deifies "a dominant phase of the universe". Dr. Harold Scott, Ph.D., stated in an issue of *Humanist World Digest* (Berkeley, California, USA):

It is common enough for Humanists to be called atheists. Some Humanists perhaps call themselves atheists. It needs perhaps to be pointed out that one may accept a concept of deity without being a supernaturalist. An historical survey of the concept shows that *Man has called deity whatever he conceived the dominant phase of the universe to be*. If we accept matter as dynamic and mind as matter functioning in a high

degree, and all matter as creative, we can call that force, pattern, power within matter that is creative and results in phenomena that are separate, discrete and apprehensible to Man, "God". Not a deity back of, or outside the universe, but wholly immanent, natural, native and intrinsic. If it is natural it is not supernatural. It is not to be considered apart from matter, nor to be matter itself, but the director of matter. Matter then is the agent of God. We can say that God is in all, and through all, but not over all. Absolute immanence means inherent causation rather than intervening causation.

In the opinion of Dr. Scott, there is a creative force in matter which is not matter itself, but the director of matter, God. Matter, he said, is the agent of God. What he called "creative force in matter" is actually the evolving nature of matter. Hence it is matter itself with its inherent property of evolution. But why did Dr. Scott call the "creative force in matter" God? Because, among other things, he wanted an existing deity, unlike the imaginary personal Gods of traditional religions. All right, this so-called "God" exists. But who can have the sense to give it serious attention? Not even Dr. Scott, I suppose. And, more important still, he had to have a deity, for a theologian without a God isn't worth a red cent. Indeed, "Religion without a hell" or theology without a God "ain't worth a damn!"

Theology is a business wherein self-evident nothingness, the unknown, and human fear arising from ignorance, are being exploited as its capital!

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CRIME

Kit Mouat

I WAS WONDERING if and where hedonism merges into masochism when I read that another child's body had been found in a ditch. No one, surely, could fail to react, but how? With stark horror at what the girl may have suffered before she died? With an equally stark despair that human sexual energy so often destroys rather than creates, and bewilderment as to what can be done to protect children and help the men who harm them . . . ?

Locking up sexual offenders may protect us all from a repetition of the crime by the same person, but it does nothing to make a similar tragedy impossible. Obstruction to the prevention of crime and disease is all part of our much vaunted "Christian heritage". Pagans may have feared and even made fun of the mentally sick, but it was the Christians who decided that such people were possessed by devils, so that in Christendom the "sick" were tormented and treated as criminals. The idea of preventing such demons from entering the body, so restricting crime and sickness, would have been to interfere with the "divine laws" and the "will" of the Almighty which was so wretchedly being "done".

We still lock up those whose minds (and perhaps glands) we do not understand, and have only just stopped behaving as if the old Jewish-religious attitude of "a life for a life" were the best way of ridding society of murders. But how are sexual crimes to be prevented?

It seems to me that the problem concerns our too-limited conception of the human sexual norm. When even a homosexual may hesitate to admit his difficulties for fear of a prison sentence, it cannot be easy for those who are obsessed with the idea, say, of intercourse with a child or an old woman to speak up and ask for the advice they so urgently need. So-called pornographic magazines may whet the appetite, but recourse to them may be the only hope of satisfaction available. Inasmuch as they may provide some sort of outlet, I suppose they might even help to prevent "abnormal" appetites from becoming uncontrollable, but this is only guesswork. What seems obvious to me is that if we are to prevent the all-round misery of immature, unbearable, unfulfilled and possibly lethal desires, then it is vital that the early symptoms shall be recognised and admitted and dealt with sympathetically by experts. The conditions that promote such difficulties, be they religious or social, have also to be diagnosed and eradicated. More children might survive if, when the attack on them has been made, the attacker were not persuaded by his own terror of confession to kill his victim.

Most women have as children, I suppose, been submitted to some masculine sexual unorthodoxies. Mere exhibitionism need not, I think, cause more than mild surprise in the balanced girl-child. But it is not uncommon to hear of a lesbian who, when very young, was molested by an older boy-cousin or neighbour who then made her promise never on any account to tell anyone about it. This threatening children "not to tell" may, I suppose, do the real damage, and it is very difficult to forgive. Adolescent male curiosity is a very poor excuse in such instances, and surely this sort of thing could be prevented by more intelligent teaching in boys' schools.

The time has arrived when women can admit to not liking their newborn babies (if this is so) without being

accused of being "bad mothers". Wives can even expect some understanding if they admit that, after the baby is born, they lose interest for a time in their husbands. But for all the wave of so-called sexual freedom there is still a mythical "norm" to which a large number of men and women cannot aspire. It is, of course, vital that we should be able to prevent the non-conformist sexual tendencies from becoming dangerous to others (and this can include frigidity as well as violence) but one way to make this possible is surely to emphasise just how many sexual non-conformists there are, so that none feels ashamed to deny orthodoxy. . . .

I believe that the violently aggressive are often afraid of their own violence. Certainly, when I was told that a friend (who came to us to have a nervous breakdown before going into hospital) might attack me if I helped her wash her hair, it worked wonders when I made it clear that not only was I quite capable of defending myself, but I would also slosh her back if she became too obstreperous. She admitted that she had imagined everyone to be helpless while, quite unable to control herself, she did her worst. In much the same way, those who are not tempted to steal or destroy other people's property have, perhaps, a duty to those who are tempted. By leaving cars and houses unlocked and "defenceless", we may present a "challenge" to the incurable adventurer, but we may also provide the first opportunity for the half-hearted delinquent who only half wants the door handle to move in his favour. And so parents who let their children wander alone at dusk or by reservoirs are partly responsible for what happens when they are attacked or drowned. Again, I remember, when our son was five I refused to let him walk alone with other five-year-olds across a field out of sight of habitation. I was considered over-fussy. Yet, during the time he was at that school, the body of a woman who had been dead for two weeks after drinking acid was found not 100 yards from the path. No child can (or should) be "trusted" not to explore away from the straight and narrow sometimes. But it was easy for me; I had only one child. Unless neighbours can rely on one another to help in such situations, mothers are forced to take risks that are bound sometimes to lead to disaster. In Sweden it was considered fussy to have a baby-sitter. We saw one three-year-old alone in the snow on a balcony, calling for her "mamma", who took her time at a party before coming home. . . . Friends who regularly left their small girl alone returned more than once to find her having hysterics. No one knew why or for how long it had been going on. Other children were burned to death in wooden houses while their parents followed their uninhibited sexual inclinations in other people's houses. That was 12 years ago, and I am not a bit surprised to hear now about the current Swedish "teenage problem".

Ordinary disease is clear-cut; almost certainly infectious or not. Even if we say that some sexual tendencies are of the same nature as disease, we are not yet able to admit them as we are now, at last, able to admit having, say, cancer. In sickness we take it for granted that we seek cure and health. But sexual "abnormalities" are still too closely linked in the public mind with delinquency or crime, and people who "contaminate" others are put in prison. Perhaps the time will come when we shall be able

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THIS WORLD

The Profitability of Apartheid

UNDER this heading *Anti-Apartheid News* (February) calls attention to the fact that "the abundant supply of cheap labour and lower taxes has encouraged British firms to set up branches and subsidiaries in South Africa and to invest their capital in South African industries and to bolster the apartheid system at a time of increasing international pressures for boycotts and sanctions". In 1963 more money was invested by British manufacturing firms there than in any other country except Australia, and at 12.3 per cent the return was highest.

The Cost of Libel

THE *Private Eye* libel case, where Lord Russell of Liverpool was awarded £5,000 damages, has brought up again the issue of punitive damages. Justice, the British section of the International Commission of Jurists, has recommended that newspapers should be granted qualified privilege like certain professions. On May 6 Martin McLaren, MP, will present a libel Bill to the Commons for the Second Reading. This will remove many cases from the jurisdiction of juries, who tend to award punitive damages, to that of judges, who think more of compensatory damages.

WHILE anxious not to undermine the status of juries, libertarians cannot be happy with the present position. Damages should surely be related to actual damage, and the proposition of "the greater the truth, the greater the libel"—certainly much inroaded today—should utterly disappear. It is perhaps a pity that any case for reform should hang on such a bruised reed as *Private Eye*, but the recent case clearly brings out the nature of punitive damages. Could anyone really claim loss of esteem or income through being traduced in the columns of *Private Eye*, an undergraduate mecca of private vendettas which never employs satirical subtlety or drawingroom debate when lavatory ululation will do?

Child "Care"

THE Home Secretary has ordered an inquiry into the case of the Dorset boy who was sexually assaulted in a foster home. Some 65,000 children are in the care of local authorities, over half in private foster homes. It is said that this is in the best interests of the child, but children's committees cannot overlook the fact that it also costs a quarter of the per capita cost of a children's home. One suggestion which seems reasonable, though it is not fool-proof, is to keep children in residential homes during the week and send them to foster homes under proper supervision during weekends and holidays. Scandals are not unknown, it should be said, in residential homes, where they are more likely to be hushed up. By and large the service is dedicated and efficient, but human tragedies will be more frequent than necessary so long as the Government starves the welfare services to indulge a "role east of Suez".

Comments on Past News

FATHER Dominic Scerri has identified himself as the Maltese monk alleged to have refused to tend a Scottish clergyman. He says that he suggested calling a doctor before he left, that the situation was well in hand, and

that he "refrained from administering any sacraments to the unconscious clergyman, not simply because such action is prohibited by my religion, but also not to go against the ecumenical movement and not to trespass on the religious convictions and sentiments of the Rev. Grey" (*Sunday Times*, February 6).

PROFESSOR Glanville Williams, President of ALRA, pointed out to *Observer* readers that Sir Dugald Baird had an easier time performing abortions in Scotland than his colleagues in England, because there it was a common law not a statutory offence, and investigations were carried out by a medical team and the Crown Office and not by the local police. In a random survey of 58 GPs, the *Sunday Times* found 45 in favour of a more liberal law on abortion.

The Other Ward Case

VALERIJ Tarsis, Soviet writer of political bestsellers in the West, is now in Britain, at the time of writing in the *Ritz Ward Seven* is said to be based on his experiences as a political prisoner in a Russian mental hospital, where apparently he embraced Christianity. Whatever may be the state of such institutions or the malevolence of his Communist opponents, the florid and discursive outpourings of this mediocre potboiler struck at least one reader as pathognomonic of paranoid schizophrenia. Any British mental hospital could produce hysterical tales of wicked nurses, doctors and politicians, and religious conversions. One wonders though whether they would be hailed as literary masterpieces.

Humanist Holidays

THERE are still vacancies at Quinney's Hotel, Bournemouth West, April 7-16. The cost is 27/- per day, with reductions for children. There are also some vacancies at Aberystwyth (August 13-27). Further information may be obtained from Mrs M. Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey.

Still No Chief Rabbi

MAGNATE Sir Isaac Wolfson and Orthodox synagogues throughout the British Commonwealth have not yet found a replacement for Dr Israel Brodie. This right wing of Judaism is similar in its conservatism to the Vatican, but is more undermined by defections of the laity and bickering among the leaders. Its theology may be no more fantastic, but its ritual is more onerous and less meaningful for modern man.

Animal Protection

HUMANIST will be interestd to hear of two organisations for animal welfare that are more forward-looking than the RSPCA and less hysterical and unrealistic than the Anti-Vivisection League. The World League for the Protection of Animals (25 The Bridge, Harrow, Middx.) urges that "just as family planning is becoming a vital necessity in view of the threat of world population explosion, so is there an equal need for Animal Birth Control". The Promoters of Animal Welfare (18 Manor Close, Great Horkeley, Colchester, Essex) suggest that the proper use of digital computers, tissue cultures, protozoa, human embryonic tissue from aborted foetuses, and plant substitutes for insulin could greatly reduce the need for laboratory experiments with live animals.

FREETHINKER

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Telephone: HOP 0029

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

SUSTENTATION

Despite rising costs the FREETHINKER is making valiant efforts to hold its price at the traditional 6d. This can be done only with the help of a greatly increased circulation and donations from those who can afford it. Please help all you can.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

Items for insertion in this column must reach THE FREETHINKER office at least ten days before the date of publication.

INDOOR

Leicester Secular Society (Secular Hall, 75, Humberstone Gate), Sunday, February 20th, 6.30 p.m.: C. SHUTTLEWOOD, "Man in Space."

Manchester Branch NSS (Wheatshaf Hotel, High Street), Sunday, February 20th, 7.30 p.m.: C. SMITH, "Secularism and the Criminal."

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, February 20th, 11 a.m.: KATHLEEN NOTT, "Culture and Morality"; Tuesday, February 22nd, 7.30 p.m.: AVRIL FOX, "Christianity and the New Paganism."

University of Keele (Keele, Staffordshire), Friday, February 18th, 8.30 p.m.: Debate: "This House Deplores Compulsory Religious Instruction in Schools."

THIS WORLD continued

Expensive Consciences

THE Vatican Council's Declaration on Christian Education recognises "the pluralism that exists today in ever so many societies". Instead of suggesting that this affords wonderful opportunities for dialogue in community schools, it insists on the right to establish religious schools as a matter of conscience. The cost of this conscience is, of course, to be borne by the community:

Parents, who have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children, must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools. Consequently, the public power, which has the obligation to protect the rights of citizens, must see to it, in its concern for distributive justice, that public subsidies are paid out in such a way that parents are truly free to choose according to their consciences the schools they want for their children to attend.

Holy Writ ?

HIGH Court writs have been issued by Mrs. Gladys Spearman-Cook of the School of Universal Philosophy and Healing in Kensington, and Mr. John Averill, editor of the kindred *Occult Gazette*, against the Commissioner of Police and five local police officers for alleged trespass and defamation. Hitherto nobody has offered any public explanation for the search. In recent numbers of the journal, under the inspiration of "the united power of the 12 Great Cosmic Powers, Source of the Cosmic Rays, the 12 Hier-

archies as the ONE VOICE, THE LORD MAITREYA OF THE AQUARIAN AGE", Mrs. Spearman-Cook has been writing about Roman Catholicism. This she describes, with picturesque detail, as "the black scorpion of the world . . . filled with the hypnotic thirst for power and pomp" and calling on "vast hordes of religious fanatical bands".

The Host with the Most

ANOTHER book by a divine is to challenge the divinity of Christ. It is *What Is This Treasurer?* by American Episcopalian Bishop James Pike of California. But though he may not have been divine, reassuringly "Jesus was the most".

Tax the Church

MRS Madalyn Murray O'Hair (PO Box 2117, Austin, Texas 78767) is in the news again, fighting the tax exemption of church real estate holdings in the State of Maryland before its Court of Appeal. The Catholic Church has intervened as a litigant. Fought on the First Amendment of the US Constitution, the case is likely to be fought right through to the US Supreme Court. If successful for Madalyn Murray, it will become applicable to the entire country and "it is estimated that every family in America will pay \$140 less a year in taxes on their real estate" (January Newsletter).

NO COMMENT

"Among the films which were banned in South Africa in 1965 were some of the most highly regarded films made in Europe and America in the last two or three years. Among the censor's victims were, 'Knife in the Water', 'Jules and Jim', Antonioni's 'Eclipse' and 'The Red Desert', 'Lilies of the Field', which starred the Negro actor Sidney Poitier, Bunuel's 'Viridiana', Bergman's 'The Silence', and even 'Diamond Head', a second rate adventure starring Charlton Heston"—Anti-Apartheid News, February.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CRIME

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to say, "Meet my uncle. He has been having treatment for transvestism. He is almost completely cured!" without causing a riot. Or, "This is my aunt who has nearly completely recovered from her frigidity . . .". We may think we are sexually progressive, but I think we have a long, long way to go, and we ought to start moving in more directions.

Inasmuch as there is a tendency today to regard Instant Sex as a "right", then our problems will probably increase rather than diminish. Some frustration, tedium, misunderstanding and failure is inevitable. Neither the Bunnies nor the Pill, and not even freedom from religious taboos, will make the sexual life of even the most fortunate easy all the time. The Humanist aim that it should be responsible and enjoyable as much of the time as possible is surely excellent. This can be achieved only if more people understand just how normal abnormalities probably are and how much mutual understanding is needed if adults are to be happy and our children safe.

THE CHURCH IS ALL FOR PEACE AND LOVE

Phillis K. Graham

(dedicated to Father Paris, OP)

YES, friends, this edifying fact we know
Because dear Father Paris tells us so.
Even for Unbelievers there is hope
In that angelic Message from the Pope:

Come, let us go back through the shining ages
Of christened history, and turn those pages
With reverent awe, and read therein the story
That kindled to this present Blaze of Glory!

See, hipped Augustine and neurotic Paul
Changing love's honey into chastest gall;
And there the bands of battling theologians
Carving irrevocable christian slogans
To guide our pilgrim way, and fondly tell
Of Love and Peace that lit the fires of Hell!

See Innocent the Third, the heretics' scourge,
Command the Albigensians' total purge!
Yet surely Love and Peace on earth so mild
Embrace each slaughtered man, woman and child.

This noble Pope devotes his happy reign
To high ideals of Peace-and-Love-through-pain:
For now Inquisitorial thrills begin
To shock the heretic from his deadly sin;
Wondrous new agonies will be invented,
And Faith by fire will soon be implemented:
The fun of human sacrifice once more
Will draw the mobs, like pagan crowds of yore,
Except, of course, that these poor wretches roast
To please sweet Jesus and the heavenly host.

Now Innocent the Eighth leads forth his Bull
(A sacred beast of holy malice full)
And sets him at the witches and their brooms
With tortures, hunts and terrifying dooms.
Nearly three centuries of witch-alarum
Follow after Malleus Maleficarum.
And since these victims of his holy zeal
Are mostly female, we can doubtless see
The ghost of woman-hating Paul abroad
With other misogynist servants of the Lord.

That time fair France for thirty days is watered
With blood of Huguenots adroitly slaughtered,
The Thirteenth Gregory hearkens to Lorraine
(Cardinal of) who begs, and not in vain,
Permission to organise a public do
Thanking the Lord for Saint Bartholomew.

And now not thirty days but Thirty Years
Rack christendom with anguish, blood and tears.
Yet are not these the fruits of Love and Peace?

When Pius Ten (whom children canonize)
Lies sick, soon of a broken heart he dies
Because the world is on the brink of War.
But—*isn't this* just what he plotted for?
With Austrian hounds on hated Serbia's track
The Orthodox Church will soon be on its back;
Russia allied with France? He'll grind their bones
With German might. Why, then, these dying moans?

Great Britain rallies in the Entente cause;
'Tis *rage*—not grief—on which he heavenward soars.

So, having struck his blow at earthly peace,
Secure in Heaven, where all sorrows cease,
Numbered with the Saints, he'll send us from above
A cosmic tidal wave of Peace and Love.
A generation of the flower of youth
Must perish, but this merely proves the truth
Of "Greater love than this . . ." and suchlike texts
From the glib Tongue that always resurrects.

Now Mussolini rises like the Star
Of Wonder o'er the Holy Church bazaar,
And with the Trader of the Vatican
Signs the great Treaty of the Lateran.
The Church rejoices: this is Caesar's hour;
Once more her Head enjoys the temporal power!
And no one cares, so happy are the chimes,
About the Blackshirts and their ugly crimes,
Nor does the Church the chief Assassin ban,
No! "Mussolini is a wonderful man"
Cries Pius Eleven, who adores the Fascists
And looks with horror on all Socialists.

The rape of Ethiopia he views
With calm like that of Eichmann killing Jews;
When Mussolini uses poison-gas
Bland Pius lets this peccadillo pass.
Milan's Archbishop hails Italian slaughter
"A Catholic Crusade!" by a loyal daughter.

And later, in the spring of thirty-nine,
Once more they'll exercise their "right divine"
When Mussolini, mad with egomania,
Will crush the unarmed people of Albania
With Fascist bombs, the very day Christ died:
A nation and a saviour crucified.

In Spain a "dress-rehearsal" is soon planned,
For greater things our Papa has on hand.

Already there has come a mighty Figure—
A mystic paperhanger who grows bigger
And bigger (though he looks a proper jelly)
Encouraged by von Papen and Pacelli.
Already pogroms rage and camps abound
Whither the Jews of the Fatherland they hound;
But this is good: for anti-Semitism
Already decorates the Catechism.
So, as is fitting, in nineteen thirty-three
(The Holy Year of Christian Jubilee)
Pius and Hitler (Chancellor) plight their troth
In a Concordat profitable to both.

Now (not without amaze and some distress
At this conversion of His Holiness
To Nazi faith, which erstwhile he condemned)
The Church embraces Adolf as her friend.
Henceforth they'll toil and fight in union—
The Cross-and-Swastika Communion.
To some they may appear as God and Mammon,
But Tiso tells us "they have much in common

And work hand-in-hand to reform the world."
Hosanna! Now the banners are unfurled,
The heavens glow, there's nothing to prevent
War coming to us as a Sacrament!

Just like Pius Ten, Pius Eleven
Departs this life to his reward in Heaven
On the eve of the war he's been preparing,
A zealous task with his Pacelli sharing.
And now the illustrious Nuncio takes his place
On Peter's Throne, and so the work of grace
Goes on with perfect continuity.

Now genocide's the order of the day,
"Eliminate!" the most efficient way
Of stamping out all breeds except your own.
Six million Jews are slaughtered to atone
For One Who died. His Representative
Makes no remonstrance: no sign does he give
Of pity or of wrath. He lets them die
And millions of his fellow-christians, too,
Butchered by Nazis or Ustashis, who
Commit atrocities that would shame a savage,
While priests and monks assist or lead the ravage,
And pitiless prelates let their victims die.
But Pius does not ask his servants why
This ghastly cruelty must shame our race:
He knows it is the working of God's grace
Through sinful human hearts: the Will Divine
That through the vilest evil loves to shine.
It rather seems (but whisper it *sub rosa*)
It's holy oil that runs the great bulldozer!

Mass-murders are but moves, and murderers pawns;
What wonder, then, that every brute who fawns
Upon His Holiness, without exception,
Is honoured with a Vatican reception?
Nor should we be astonished when the end
Comes crashing on the Game, that still this Friend
Of sinners has another game to play:
With equal skill to get his friends away
From justice that demands their punishment.
By countless ways and wiles they're safely sent
To the New World, where they may live at ease
And plot for future power as they please.
Who keeps them? They're the Church's pensioners:
Have they not banked their massive loot with hers?
The wrack of war leaves misery untold—
But Vatican coffers overflow with gold.

It's thus the Church adapts her policy
Of Peace and Love to raw expediency,
And even with most admirable aplomb
Regards the Nemesis of atom-bomb,
For if the Holy Word went forth to use it
Against the atheist herd, God would excuse it.
(Did He not often command, as grim Jehovah,
Wipe out your enemies and get it over?)

The Hero dies at last, with fulsome rhyme,
"The most tragic pontificate of all time."

New era opens with the genial John,
The cheeriest hope that ever the sun shone on.
An Aerosol, he sprays the Vatican well
To cleanse it from its recent nasty smell.
Now Peace-and-Love is everywhere just-the-thing,
For ecumenical doves are on the wing . . .
Poor John soon dies. But not before we see

He keeps the papal love for Germany,
And judges christian meekness quite unable
To sit with communists at conference-table.

So we are blest with Paul, who's left to plan
The Sacred Enterprise as best he can.
Globe-trotting's now the rage: the Holy Showman
Makes news like the Abominable Snowman.
His Hymn of Peace is like the nightingale's
Paean of Love amid the woods and vales.
Through the wide world it sounds in solemn chimes
"Mankind, unite! for perilous are the times."
But through the Church it rings a message sweet—
"Rejoice! We'll bring the whole world to Our feet!"

Whoever hearkens, by the song bewitched,
May find his dreams gone sour, his freedom ditched.
For though the Singer warbles Love and Peace
Imploping nations from their strife to cease,
Certain phenomena we must observe
That call for caution and a wise reserve.
Our Paul, once henchman of the heartless Pius,
Has not renounced a pupil's loving bias,
Since to the ranks of Sainthood he would raise him
And bid the world he desecrated praise him.

Falstaffian John had laughter on his lips
And mercy in his heart. But his eclipse
Put out whatever hope the Church has had
Of sifting goodness from the mass gone bad.
Or so it seems, while populations swarm
Unchecked, with every ecumenical form
Of human misery proliferating
The fruits of "God's Own Law" on human mating.
And Paul, a celibate free from pain and strife,
Babbling of those "guests at the banquet of Life."

This truth we know, that long historic trends
Alter not overnight, and nothing bends
The stubborn will of those who fondly dream
They have the "Truth" and therefore are supreme.

These softer airs, this more temperate climate
(Which have, it seems, seduced His Grace our Primate)
Laid on to thaw the grim hostility
Between the sects of christianity,
Are no less weapons of the papal skill
Implacably set on world "conversion" still.
We know not what this charming fairytale
Of "Peace and Love" may ultimately veil,
But this we know: the art of "doublethink"
Could drag our world to yet another brink
Of total ruin. It might be the last.
Can we not learn the lessons of the past?

Lastly, we hear the voice of popecraft tell
"We must not deny the reality of Hell."
Fear! Always fear! Must primitive-witchcraft fear
Grind the human conscience out of gear?

But I would have dear Father Paris know
I do not wish to aim another blow
In our unequal contest. Here, not above,
Labouring now for real Peace and Love,
I hope to see our Editor's note imposed:
"This" **** "correspondence is now closed."

(The Editor concurs.)

LETTERS

Thomas Paine

THE ARTICLE by Christopher Brunel on Thomas Paine and his influence appearing in the *Freethinker* for January 21 served to underline the difficulties those who fought to spread radical and freethinking ideas had to contend with. Many of those who fought the pioneers so bitterly did so from a religious standpoint and it is an interesting fact that this commenced after the publication of *Rights of Man* and was in full swing when *The Age of Reason* was published.

By the end of 1792 it has been estimated that some 200,000 copies of *Rights of Man* had been sold. The government of the day was not unused to criticism and usually paid little if any attention. Unfortunately—for them—Paine's book was circulating among those considered by authority as being anything but "judicious" readers, a point made by the Attorney-General at Paine's "trial".

Burke, against whose *Reflections* Paine's work was written, never attempted a reply, but many lesser lights did. Hannah More, a leading light in the then powerful evangelical movement, saw in *Rights of Man* a distinct danger to the Christian religion. To Mrs More society was arranged in divinely given layers, and the lower orders (from which she of course excluded herself) should keep their place. Her biographer, William Roberts, commenting on the spread of French revolutionary ideas, states that "the sound part of the community cast their eyes upon her" as being able to "produce some popular tract" in order to counteract such ideas. Mrs. More, very modestly, publicly refused to and privately could not write one quickly enough. Her tract was entitled *Village Politics* and was written in the name of Will Chip. That the real author was Hannah More did not long remain a secret and the "sound part of the community" bought up huge quantities while the government sent "many thousands" of copies to Scotland and Ireland. It is recorded that "numerous patriotic persons printed large editions at their own expense: and in London only, many thousands were soon circulated".

For all her indignation there is no evidence to show that Mrs More ever read *Rights of Man* or, for that matter, any other criticism of "established order". Indeed, the Earl of Orford writing to Mrs More in August 1792 praised her for not reading such criticism and assured her that he acted likewise.

When Paine published his epic work *The Age of Reason* the fury of evangelists knew no bounds. Porteus, Bishop of London, wanted Mrs More to write a counterblast which presented the evidences of Christianity on the Will Chip level. For once Mrs More seems to have doubted her ability and all that happened was the publication of a mass of tracts containing cheap snarls and quotations from the Bible. That Richard Watson, Bishop of Llandaff (who is reputed never to have visited his see), should treat Paine with respect, or as "a sincere and honest man" was something quite beyond her limited comprehension, and according to a letter she sent to Wilberforce in 1796 she told him so in no uncertain terms. Mrs More does not go on to relate Watson's reply and leaves Wilberforce to be content with the statement that the bishop "did not care to offend Paine's party in politics".

Christopher Brunel pointed out that it is hard to clothe bare facts with details, and this is certainly the case with the pioneers who struggled to give us the freedoms we now enjoy. These individuals drew their inspiration from Paine's own dedication to principle as also from others associated with him; their common-sense ideas came from works such as *Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason*. The forces of reaction, as can be seen from the above, had everything in their favour but they represented the past. We should not forget how men such as Williams and Carlile suffered and the least we can do to repay the great debt we owe them is to keep the memory of them alive.

ROBERT W. MORRELL
(Secretary, Thomas Paine Society)

Jesus the Man

MR. MAURICE JONES'S article "Why I am not a Christian" proves to me quite conclusively the prejudice and scorn of most unbelievers like himself in regard to Jesus Christ. But all atheists and agnostics do not share Mr. Jones's superficial and prejudiced views.

I say here and now that Jesus was a giant among pygmies. A great heart in a heartless world. He lived the tragic life to the end. He was born in poverty, lived in poverty, and died in

poverty. He wronged no man, and preached and practised the doctrine of love. He suffered by and for his fellow-man, and died in despair upon the cross at Calvary. And he is still rejected by shallow individuals like Mr. Jones, who, in fact, do not know what they are, outside of not being Christians.

R. SMITH, Dundee

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