

FREETHINKER

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HELP!

The Beatles have just given permission to the Salvation Army to launch its £3 million centenary appeal with 3,000 posters modelled on promotion material for their film *Help!* Thus one successful industry supports another.

In 1865 the Rev. William Booth of the Methodist New Connection, ably supported by his wife Catherine, started evangelistic work in Whitechapel, centre of London's East End, as an independent organisation. The work soon spread throughout the country, and on August 7, 1878 was formally constituted as the Salvation Army, with Mr Booth as its first General. With its motto "Blood and Fire", it sought to "bring under the Gospel those who were not in the habit of attending any place of worship by preaching in the open air, in tents, theatres, music halls and other places and by holding other religious meetings or services". General Booth had absolute control over the finances and sole right to appoint his successor (his son Bramwell, eventually removed with dubious legality by the High Council in 1928).

What Methodism had been in the eighteenth century, Salvationism became in the nineteenth. Belatedly even the Church of England saw the red light, and in an attempt to capture some at least of the urban proletariat formed the similar Church Army under Wilson Carlile in 1882. To the surprise of many the Army has survived two world wars and the rise of the Welfare State. It now boasts 12,000 evangelistic centres, 2,091 social institutions and agencies, 25,418 fulltime officers and 117,000 voluntary officers in 69 countries. In Great Britain and Ireland there are 3,558 fulltime officers, and the latest balance sheet of the Central Funds (for the year ending September 30, 1963) shows assets of £9,302,325. The freehold and leasehold property is almost certainly undervalued.

Many of the factors which called into being the Salvation Army stimulated the growth of the secular movement, culminating in the formation of the National Secular Society in 1866. Living in poverty, disease, vice, degradation and hopelessness, the urban masses were abandoned by Church and State alike. With a burning sincerity, Booth sought to save their souls, while incidentally offering charitable support to their bodies, while Bradlaugh abandoned their souls to the scrapheap of discarded theology and sought by stimulating reason and organising political agitation to provide lasting betterment of their bodies. In modern terminology, it was the battle of private philanthropy against the Welfare State, evangelism against humanism.

The Army's Centenary last year was celebrated with what it rightly calls the "rare honour, in Britain" of two postage stamps, while "press, radio and TV have made it difficult for anyone in Britain to be ignorant of the fact"

of the Centenary (*All the World*, October-December, 1965). Though taking little or no notice of it at most times, the world is strangely sentimental over the Army with its bands and its earnest officers, its reputation for "doing good" and its attractive young ladies encased nunlike in sexless uniforms. Indeed, though its "image" and its liturgy are very different and there is ill-concealed hostility between them, Salvationism and Catholicism have many features in common. At the core of both is hell-fire, for, though modern apologists may like to think that it is poverty and ignorance from which God's militia are saving the masses, it is the fiery furnace from which salvation is offered. The precise techniques of both organisations may differ enormously, from instant conversion to life-long sacraments, but the underlying motivation and recipe of success are almost identical. So, too, is the discipline. Salvationists must display poverty, chastity, and obedience almost as strict as for Catholic religious orders. The chastity doesn't quite extend to celibacy, but officers cannot marry under 23 and must submit all matrimonial candidates for careful vetting by the organisation. Husband-wife teams are demanded. One particular, however, in which the Army compares very favourably with the Church Militant is in its attitude to women. Whereas the founder(s) of Christianity were apparently unmarried and misogynist, Catherine Booth was a dynamic personality who could not be ignored. The origins of both have determined the future development of both.

As early as 1905, the great pioneer George Bernard Shaw had taken the true measure of the Army in his *Major Barbara*. Undershaft is made to say:

Have you ever been in love with Poverty, like St. Francis? Have you ever been in love with Dirt, like St. Simeon! Have you ever been in love with disease and suffering, like our nurses and philanthropists? Such passions are not virtues, but the most unnatural of all the vices. This love of the common people may please an earl's granddaughter and a university professor; but I have been a common man and a poor man; and it has no romance for me. Leave it to the poor to pretend that poverty is a blessing; leave it to the coward to make a religion of his cowardice by preaching humility; we know better than that. We three must stand together above the common people: how else can we help their children to climb up beside us? Barbara must belong to us, not to the Salvation Army.

Though its simple, sincere members would be shocked to hear it, the motivation of the Salvation Army is no more creditable than that of any other militarism. In the battle for souls the poor are easy game. How can they dare to refuse Jesus after they have accepted your cup of tea and a biscuit? Surely for the price of a bath bun and bowl of soup you have the right to expect domination over their minds! Those who, like George Orwell and the present writer, have broadened their experience by sampling their

much-vaunted hostels know what the system really represents. Within a theory of encouraging selfless service and rescuing the fallen, these establishments—which are not free, but cost about as much as an unsubsidised youth hostel, though they are immeasurably less savoury—are often not supervised by the officer under whose control they nominally are (save for the Sunday services, when he emerges from his secluded quarters) but by not infre-

quently dirty, dishonest and drunken ex-con laymen working for exploitatively low wages; while the central assets grow, the insurance companies proliferate, the real estate multiplies, and the organisation is fast coming to imitate the Church of England it was established to shame. Today it is worthwhile considering George Orwell's final advice in *Down and Out in Paris and London*: never dine in fashionable hotels and never give to the Salvation Army.

WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Otto Wolfgang

IN ANTIQUITY wine was drunk pure only in holy communion with the gods, and the word "enthusiasm" means: to be seized by god, to have a divine spirit inside oneself. Holy ravings could also be effected by drinking a decoction of certain plants, herbs or fungi (e.g., from the toadstool); going "berserk" as a result was taken as the manifestation of supernatural forces. Robert Graves, the English poet and Humanist, believes that such communions were at the root of the Dionysian Mysteries, and Bernard Barrett, the psychiatrist, finds in them the explanation for the hallucinatory confessions of medieval witches. The most popular "hallucinogenes", i.e. drugs for the creation of delusions, were nightshade, mandrake, fungi of the species *Ammanita* and ergot.

According to *L'Express* (January 24 and 30) pilgrims are coming to Huntla de Jimenez, not far from Mexico City, where Maria Sabina offers the "Skin of the Gods", a fungus of the *Psilocybes* group, from which, some years ago, the Sandoz Laboratories (Switzerland) had extracted the active chemical, Psilozbyne. Its effects are similar to those of Mescaline (distilled from the fermented sap of the agave plant, which also provides the Mexican national drink, *pulque*). The Mexican name for the effective plant is Peyotl; if chewed or drunk in decoction, it gives vivid delusions whilst leaving the patient's judgment rather clear.

During the last twenty years, another hallucinogene has been produced from ergot on rye, called LSD-25 (from the German for the di-ethylamide of lysergic acid). It produces in individuals partly nightmares, partly highly agreeable dreams, particularly of a religious nature. So if pious people tell you they believe in God because they have "experienced" his presence, it may stem from that acid, and instead of a "dialogue" an antitoxin may be more effective.

Religion and famine

Famine in India has once again grown to a catastrophe. *Nürnberg Zeitung* reminds us that 80 million cows uselessly roam the streets of India; they must not be touched because they are considered sacred, but they are starving too, and in addition eat crops that could be used for human consumption. To make things even worse, Hinduism (The Law of Manu) threatens every female wasting any natural opportunity of becoming pregnant. Even Nehru, the Humanist, was unable to remove these religious curses—overpopulation and sacred cows—from the Indian scene. People will rather die from hunger than risk "divine" wrath. This shows that religion is far more harmful than good, and that it is essential to remove this spiritual scourge from modern society.

High diplomacy

"I decide who is or is not a Jew!" claimed Goering; and the U.S. Pentagon arrogates the right to decide which governments are legal and representative (read: reaction-

ary). Therefore Wilson, following "His Master's Voice", does not recognize East Germany but accepts the South Vietnamese junta as the legal (although not elected) government that has to be protected.

Vatican diplomacy must be admired for the skill shown in keeping out of openly taking sides, by approaching both sides with an urgent appeal for peace. The present incumbent of the Holy See is an old hand and his Apostolic Delegates and Papal Nuncios are, in the first place, diplomatic arms of the Vatican Spider. Mgr Alberto Giovanetti, the Standing Observer at the United Nations, talks things over with U-Thant; Mgr Paolo Bertoli, Papal Nuncio to France, informs Peking; Mgr Cardinale, Apostolic Delegate in London, contacts Hungary and the Soviet Union; and Mgr Angelo Pedroni, Saigon (*Newsweek*, January 17). Between them and Rome there is an exchange of 140,000 coded cables per month, apart from secret mail and special couriers.

Race hatred

Since the Algerian War put an end to French colonialism, racialism has raised its ugly head also in France. Les Editions Payot have just published a collective study of it (*Les Français et le Rassisme*) with the rather odd conclusion that, far from being a product of primitive communities, race hatred springs up in times of frustration within highly developed industrialized countries. The reviewer in *Le Nouvel Observateur* (January 26) remarks that Sartre when dealing with anti-Semitism limited his survey to the ideology only, since liberalism is merely another philosophical attitude and you can't fight one ideology with another. Teaching and preaching is of no avail in the face of irrationality; you have to change the social conditions that require a whipping-boy.

Another Anschluss?

The Austrian Freethinkers are jubilant in expectation of an early Dialogue with their Cardinal König. In the current issue of their paper, *Der Freidenker*, they bring a survey of what the other free thought organizations think of it. The West German *Freidenker* reprinted an article, "The Balance of the Council", published in the previous Austrian issue. This was in January, whilst the February issue printed my repudiating strictures, "Wie stehen wir zum Dialog?"

FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH CHRISTIAN LAYMEN WE DO NOT REQUIRE THE VATICAN'S PERMISSION, AND WITH PROFESSIONAL SHAMANS THERE IS NOTHING TO DISCUSS. It's just as simple as that.

Only *Voice of Freedom*, Milwaukee, the paper of a small band of German-American Freethinkers, is four-square on the side of the Austrians, whilst the French, in their Congress Resolution of Grenoble, gave a clear-cut refusal to assist in a farce, enacted by a sterile "Pseudo-Liberalism".

"We have to carry on the struggle for the emancipation of human intelligence, because this alone will result in the amelioration of living conditions on earth".

"Modernisation"

The remaining quotations from our Austrian friends have no connection with the problem of dialogue. The Belgian Freethought Congress at Charleroi (October 1965) decided to modernize the constitution of its League since the anti-clerical aggressivity of the last century is dated. From Italy, an article in *La Ragione* (Reason) is quoted which merely states that the Church can no longer mount crusades against heresies. The survey ends with a report from the Soviet Union. The magazine *Nauka i religya* (Science and Religion) published a note by Lenin, who, on the occasion of the May Day celebrations in 1921, advised against the carrying of posters with slogans hurting the feelings of religionists.

And all this is peddled as "Opinions" on the Dialogue! Apart from which it should be glaringly clear that conditions under the rule of the atheistic Soviets might somewhat differ from conditions under the Holy Alliance of State and Church.

Exit "opium of the people"

At their Eleventh Congress the Italian Communists have

renounced Marxism as their official ideology. Their chairman, Luigi Longo—Togliatti's successor—declared: "We assist a certain overcoming of positions of conservative idealism (!) which declared the religious ideology the opium of the people". Consequently, the Italian C.P. gave a declaration against "State Atheism" (*L'Express*, February 6).

The rot began under Togliatti, who made modern Italian Communism "a compound of Marx, Machiavelli and Maddison Avenue", as is said in a well-argued article in the official American publication *Problems of Communism* (September-October, 1965).

Leninist phraseology, subtly reinterpreted, remains an essential element of CPI propaganda. . . . Here we have indeed a "party of a new type", but not in the Leninist sense of the phrase—a reformist Communist party, clinging to the tattered banner of revolution, uniquely successful in having its cake and eating it too.

One of the CPI leaders, Giorgio Amendola, has already proposed the liquidation of the party and the creation of a great Socialist Union instead in order to gain power and position. The Vatican, by spreading the meaningless catchword of "Dialogue", has routed the Communist movements of the world and *L'Express* gives them the advice to convene their own Ecumenical Council.

WORLD UNION OF FREETHINKERS

C. Bradlaugh Bonner

READERS may have noted that there will be next September 2-5 an international congress of Freethinkers at Conway Hall, and would like to know more about this organisation. It was established in 1880 at Brussels at a congress convened by the Belgian and Dutch Freethinkers, and attended by Freethinkers from Britain (including Hypatia Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant), from Germany, from France, from the States and several other countries. My mother went as representing her father. Several attempts at assembling Freethinkers had been held previously, notably one at Rome in opposition to the Vatican Council of 1869-70. This was broken up by the police and reformed in Switzerland. Another at Paris, which Garibaldi attended, another at Liège, etc.

In 1880 a permanent secretary was appointed. The first to hold this post was J. Swaagman Darwen, a Dutch Freethinker who had settled in London. The next congress was held in London in 1881 and presided over by Professor Ludwig Büchner, author of *Force and Matter, Mind in Animals*, etc., and a personal friend of Bradlaugh. After that at Amsterdam in 1883, in Antwerp in 1885, again in London in 1887, this time presided over by Bradlaugh himself. And so on every two or three years till 1904, when a remarkable gathering was held in Rome at which, besides 3,000 Italian delegates, there was a steamer load of Spaniards, several hundred French, Haeckel with a following from Germany, and among others J. M. Robertson, G. W. Foote and W. Heaford (who went to all these congresses for many years). This was followed by an even more abundantly attended congress the next year at Paris, where the procession to the statue of the Chevalier de la Barre (tortured and burned for insulting a religious procession) numbered between 100,000 and 200,000.

Expansion

The end of the first great war saw a notable development of freethinking in Central Europe, shown in the remarkable congresses held in Prague in 1920 and in Berlin in 1931. The German freethought organisations numbered by then

over 600,000 members. Disaster was at hand, however; Hitler bloodily suppressed the German Freethinkers, and Mussolini the Italian. Moreover the Communist members broke away from the freethought bodies. In 1936 a reconciliation with the Proletarian (i.e. Communist) Freethinkers, under Russian control, was made at Prague; they agreed to the essential article of political neutrality. This means that the World Union platform is not to be used as a platform for any particular political views. Specific state action hostile to freedom of thought is naturally always attacked. This reconciliation was part of the Popular Front movement and did not last. In fact, beyond sending a paper or two to be read at the 1938 London congress, the Communist element showed little interest in the Union. The alliance was useful in a way to the 1938 congress as it aroused violent attacks on the congress from Catholic, Nazi and Conservative quarters, which gave us excellent publicity.

Contraction

The second great war left the Union sadly weakened in numbers and resources; in fact in 1946 all its treasury possessed was an unpaid bill of 19/-. Since then we have been slowly rebuilding. In 1925 a permanent President and Treasurer as well as Secretary, all Belgians, were appointed. In the first decade of the century the late M. Leon Furnémont of Belgium had given invaluable service, stimulating meetings all over the world, travelling and speaking indefatigably. The Union was fortunate in its president, Dr Terwagne (nicknamed the "Bison of the Ardennes"), an outstanding political figure and orator as well as a man of wide scientific interests. Those who were present at the 1938 congress, the last over which he presided, will not have forgotten his benevolent white head and massive form. Mlle Pardon has been Honorary Secretary since 1925, giving such devoted service as cannot be replaced.

(Continued on page 79)

THIS WORLD

Election Sidelights

ONCE MORE election fever is upon us, and there is every promise of a lively, probably bitter contest. Whatever may be the Prime Minister's justification, after repeated assurances to the contrary, for precipitating politics into the hustings without being driven there by Commons defeat, Humanists may find certain *sequelae* to regret. One is the fact that all the social and law reform legislation still in the pipeline will fall to the ground and have to be re-introduced. Let us hope that it will be reinstated with full Government backing in the new Parliament. Another is the regrettable likelihood that further publicity will be given to racial prejudice.

CHAIRMAN of the Conservative Party Mr Edward du Cann has condemned any exploitation of the racial issue in the election, but the public has not forgotten his party's failure to discipline its Smethwick candidate (now MP), Mr Peter Griffiths. Whatever the attitude of party headquarters, there is always the temptation in marginal constituencies for harassed and exhausted candidates to make a bid for a vote of prejudice, whatever their personal feelings. When it is further remembered that all the political parties have some prejudiced candidates with a solid Tory or trade union or shopkeeper bloc behind them, the situation appears disquieting. A survey recently conducted by A. J. Allen and Associates showed a marked swing against the Minister responsible for integration, Mr Maurice Foley, at West Bromwich. Though with little solid evidence, the British National Party, running Mr John Bean at Southall, is claiming mounting support throughout the country. Racialists are well-organised while, with few exceptions, immigrant populations often feel themselves psychologically oriented to their countries of origin and take little active role in politics. Lord (formerly Mr Fenner) Brockway was disappointed that hundreds of immigrants at Eton and Slough in 1964 did not vote while he lost the seat by 11 votes.

ALL recent Governments and many local councils have urged landlords, employers and trades unions to abandon discrimination while doing little or nothing themselves to help immigrants, who fare no better on council housing lists or in civil service employment than they do in the private sector. Many sweep streets; few sit in town hall. Many are in friendship societies; few in the Commonwealth Relations Office. Many complain about the attitude of the police; virtually none are in the force. The Home Secretary has given a "hint" that coloured bobbies should appear. What is needed is not a hint but a directive. Fortunately there is full employment in the country at the moment or a worse situation would certainly exist. But immigrant housing is becoming a festering sore, and will remain so while there is an overall housing shortage in the country. It is imperative that ghettos on the American pattern should not develop. Desegregated schooling then involves onerous travelling burdens, with inevitable strain, tiredness and lowered educational standards, for the children involved.

Modern Miracle

UNDER the heading "The man who found a 'miracle' on his right arm", the *People* (February 20) tells of a man twice visited by a red-robed Jesus, who touched him on the arm, leaving the sign of the cross. Naturally there is a doctor (unnamed)—"At the moment I can find no ordin-

ary explanation for it"—and a vicar (Canon Francis Wright)—"I'm sure it is genuine. I know that visitations do happen and they are particularly credible when they happen to an irreligious man and change his whole life". The man, Mr Alfred Bolton, is quoted as saying:

I have had a recurring illness. Jesus seemed to know this because He said: "Your suffering will soon be at an end."

Freethinkers can imagine what the illness is and hope that Mr. Bolton will soon be cured.

Uber Alles

AS East Germany applies for membership of the United Nations, the West German Minister of the Interior, Herr Paul Lücke, reports a disturbing rise in Right-wing extremism of the neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic pattern. Like his mentor Pius XII, Pope Paul VI knows Germany well, knows that it was in Catholic Bavaria that Hitler came to power. Instead of ostentatious visits to the United Nations and messages to Communist leaders, Secular Humanists suggest that he exercise his concern for peace within his traditional sphere of influence.

Prayers for Hire

HIS HOLINESS might also give his attention to a matter yet nearer home. Tourists in Italy have often seen a crocodile of infants in cortèges, and have naïvely imagined they were relatives of the deceased or pious choirboys. It transpires that they are orphans hired out by local orphanages. In parts of South Italy these hirelings pray at all-night wakes.

Morality in Schools

IN a long article "Why This Sell-Out to the Sectarian Schools?" (*Tribune*, February 25), Jane McKerron combined criticism of the Government's proposals further to subsidise church schools with a review of *Religion and Ethics in Schools*. She concluded:

Mr. Crosland . . . has objected strongly in the past to the various forms of segregation and injustice which exist within our educational system. Yet he is proposing to subsidise sectarian schools which perpetuate a narrow and often bigoted morality and accentuate social divisions. All members of Parliament who genuinely desire a comprehensive and liberal system of education in this country must oppose this decision. It is inconsistent with a Labour Government's pledge to end the social inequalities of our educational system and must be condemned as a cowardly genuflection to the sectarian lobby. When urgent social priorities abound it is surely not the moment to allocate more resources to perpetuate the doctrines of hell-fire and overpopulation.

AT progressive King Alfred School (Manor Wood, North End Road, London, NW11) a day conference will consider "Ethical and Moral Values in Education" on April 30. Speakers will include James Hemming, Margaret Knight, John Wilson and John Wren-Lewis.

Third Reading Debate on the Pill

THE POPE'S 50-strong Birth Control Commission will soon have its third meeting in 2 years. To the consternation of progressives, Cardinal Ottaviani, arch-conservative of the Curia, has been appointed the new chairman. A Papal pronouncement is expected this summer. Meanwhile the fat grow fat while the thin get thinner.

Ties of "Blood"

THE COURT of Appeal has recently acknowledged the principle of blood-relationship as being a recognisable bond between an 18-month-old boy and a natural father whom he has never seen. While welcoming the march towards recognition by society of "illegitimate" children signposted by the 1959 Legitimacy Act, Humanists now find that the

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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.

OUTDOOR

- Edinburgh Branch NSS (The Mound)—Sunday afternoon and evening: MESSRS. CRONAN, McRAE and MURRAY.
 Manchester Branch NSS (Car Park, Victoria Street), 8 p.m.: MESSRS. COLLINS, WOODCOCK, and others.
 Merseyside Branch NSS (Pierhead)—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.; Sundays, 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.
 Nottingham Branch NSS (Old Market Square), every Friday, 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

INDOOR

- Glasgow Secular Society (66 Berkley Street, Glasgow), Sunday, March 13th, 2.45 p.m.: E. G. MACFARLANE, "Why Christian Belief in God is Out of Date."
 Leicester Secular Society (Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, March 13th, 6.30 p.m.: RICHARD CLEMENTS, "Why we are Secularists."
 Marble Arch Branch NSS (Carpenters' Arms, Seymour Place, London, W.1), Sunday, March 13th, 7.30 p.m.: R. W. EDWARDS, "Religion in Society."
 South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, March 13th, 11 a.m.: LADY STOCKS, "The Social Problems of Persistent Sex Offenders"; Tuesday, March 15th, 7.30 p.m.: MARGARET LAWS SMITH, "Honest to Matter, Honest to Man."
 The Progressive League (109 Lancaster Gate, London), Sunday, March 13th, 7.15 p.m.: Dr. ERNEST SEELEY, "Psychological Aspects of Road Accidents".
 The Progressive League, Spring Conference, "Mental Health and the Community". Endcliffe Hotel, Cliftonville, Kent, March 18th-20th. Details from Mrs. Joyce Coles, 120 Corringway, London, W.5.
 West Ham Branch NSS (Wanstead and Woodford Community Centre, Wanstead Green, London, E.11), Meeting every 4th Thursday in the month at 8 p.m.

THIS WORLD *continued*

myth of blood, quite unrelated to any hormone condition in father or child, is taking precedence (unless reversed by the House of Lords) over natural justice to foster parents and applicant adopters.

Room to Differ

THE PRESENT writer welcomes the Minister of Health's exhortations to local councils to step up fluoridation of drinking water and the Chancellor of the Exchequer's decision to tax gambling. Mr Robinson believes that medical evidence overwhelmingly supports claims for the beneficial effects of fluoride on dental caries and that feckless parents cannot be relied upon to provide for their children voluntarily. Mr Callaghan considers gambling

taxes long overdue, and hopes to raise thereby £50 million yearly to support home-ownership schemes. Perhaps this welcome derives from past association with the medical establishment and puritanical nonconformism. Other Humanists say fluoridation of water is a costly and potentially dangerous prophylaxis and an invasion of civil liberties; and that gambling is a harmless and natural recreation which should not be penalised. *Wie Sie wollen.*

Collective Psychopathology

THIS formidable subject is to be studied by a centre at the University of Sussex, financed by the American-backed Columbus Trust. It is to investigate the nature of human cruelty revealed in genocide. Let us hope it will regard sectarianism as a valid part of its investigation. In this connection, Mr Eric Lubbock, MP, has urged the Queen not to go to Northern Ireland in July a few days before Orange Day.

Humanist Youth

THE January Newsletter of the Humanist Youth Service Committee contains an interesting article by Mr Robin Payne, founder—with his wife Kay—of the first Humanist youth club in the London area, and soon to commence training at Leicester University. He points out that 17 is a vital transition age between the beliefs of childhood and adult orientation, and is today likely to be associated with religious scepticism. Teenage doubt is particularly strong in secondary modern schools, but a certain section of the Humanist movement is ignoring this potential in its single-minded pursuit of an intellectual membership. There is another interesting article by Mr Nigel Bruce on the Edinburgh "problem" youth home, which is seeking support through 5 channels: service, hospitality, gifts, finance and miscellaneous (Treasurer, HYSC, C/- BHA, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London, W8).

Youth against Hunger

THIS campaign (17 Northumberland Avenue, London, WC2) is now sponsoring a Declaration, the Ten Talents Scheme (FREETHINKER, January 14), sixpenny badges and an appeal for books (Ranfurly Libraries, The English Speaking Union, 11 Charles Street, London, W1).

NO COMMENT

"This is the most recent development in the affair which caused a public outcry at the disciplinary procedure of the university; the affair that involved accusations in the Commons of 'squalid fixing' . . . A professor . . . described Glasgow as 'the last hideout of the kirk elder and the old dominie with the mortar board'"—*New Society*, February 10.

"*Religious and Moral Education in County Schools*: statement by a group of Christians and Humanists . . . has been very favourably received by those closely involved in the work of education in schools and colleges. A typical comment is: it is a courageous and honest attempt to face a problem that is too often glossed over"—hand-out, February, 1966.

"Mr Edward Short, Labour Chief Whip, told a teachers' meeting in Sunderland last week that the demand to drop RI from State schools is growing. . . . It was up to them to spread knowledge of Christianity, he went on, because Sunday schools seemed to be passing into oblivion and the number of people who went to church regularly was a small minority"—*Catholic Herald*, February 18.

CONTEMPTUOUS AND DEGRADING

(Mr) Mace McCarthy

THE ABOVE title is taken from a statement by Mrs Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), the reformer who did so much to bring about the right of American women to vote. The full statement is as follows: "The whole tone of church teaching in regard to women is, to the last degree, contemptuous and degrading". I do not believe you can separate religion and "woman's place" in society. Girls are told from childhood that their chief aim in life should be to make a man happy, not waste time and money going to college, marry a good man, raise his children, clean his house, serve him faithfully. Tell your man he is superior, above you, cling to him like a weak vine. I recall a cartoon I have seen in a magazine which shows how women are thought to play up to the superior male. It shows a few girls who have just finished a game in a bowling alley; one girl says, "Quick, let's erase the high scores from our average sheet, the boys will be here soon to teach us how to bowl". The early fathers of the church had this charming thing to say, "Every woman should be ashamed of the thought that she is a woman".

Ancient outlook

The "book of blood", some people call it the "Holy Bible", has similar awe-inspiring comments on women. Just read 1 Peter 3, 7; Genesis 3, 15-17; Ephesians 5, 22-24. They all say the same thing, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands"; "Woman shall be a sorrowful creature over whom her husband shall rule"; "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection"; "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man"; "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children"; "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything". These are only a few samples, the "good book" is full of them.

Even some of the sayings of Plato and Aristotle show man's bigoted views on women. Plato said that men who do not seek wisdom in this life will be born again as women. Aristotle claims that female blood is blacker than that of males, and that if people marry too young their children will be female. Since young girls are taught only "how to catch a man", is it any wonder that they go about each day to seek the admiration of men and the envy of other women? Their only ambition is to attract a man's eye, wear a tight skirt or get a new permanent wave. This type of upbringing not only cheats the girl but also her country, all the potential brain power down the drain, ignored, simply because its owner is "only a girl".

Women in history

However, there have been and still are many women who fought for the right to think. Their names are in more fields than men care to admit. *Philosophy*: Hypatia (370-415) was undisputed leader of the Neoplatonic school of

philosophy, a brilliant mathematician, murdered under the order of Bishop Cyril, who was later canonized by the church. The American author Ayn Rand is the founder of the philosophy of objectivism. Among her books are *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*. *Anthropology*: Margaret Mead and the late Ruth Benedict. *Poetry*: Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), recognized as one of America's greatest poets, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861), already a legend, well-known long before she wed Robert Browning; Gabriela Mistral, winner of a Nobel prize for poetry.

In the field of *painting*, there have been Angelica Kauffman, Mary Cassatt and, more recently, Georgia O'Keeffe. In *sculpture* there is Malvina Hoffman. *Music*: Most people know that Mr Francis Scott Key wrote the American national anthem *The Star Spangled Banner*, but how many know that it was a woman, Teresa Carreno, who was the author of the Venezuelan national anthem? Teresa Carreno was also the best (or one of the best) pianists of the nineteenth century, and also a distinguished composer and opera singer. In my opinion, Wanda Landowska is the greatest harpsichordist to today.

When we come to *physics* and *chemistry*, why do we always stop at the name of Marie Curie? Like her mother, Irene Curie-Joliot was a Nobel prize winner in chemistry and physics. One should also mention Gerty Cori, winner of the Nobel prize in *medicine* and *physiology*.

In *psychoanalysis* and related fields, the names of Therese Benedek, Karen Horney and Clara Thompson come to mind. In *literature*, names that glow are Mary Webb, Fanny Burney, Virginia Cowles, Jane Austen and Virginia Woolf.

Harem virtues

In short, the mind has always been there, but society has told them not to use it. Religion prefers the harem virtues of submission, obedience, and servitude, as far as women are concerned. Down through the centuries the lot of women has been, "Keep silent, fetch and carry". If man had suffered like woman, how many great thinkers would there be? Under the lash, bound in chains, one is thinking of how to keep alive, not discover a cure for cancer.

Given equal opportunity and encouraged by their families, women can go just as far as man, matching him thought for thought. Religion? Again I quote my dream girl, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. "The memory of my own suffering has prevented me from ever shadowing one young soul with the superstitions of the Christian religion". In case anyone should think that this article was written by a "frustrated old woman", let me say to one and all, I am a young man, happily married to a wonderful girl for the past four years. Sorry to disappoint the egotistical "superior males".

COSMO

THE INTERESTING thing about the COSMO Group is the strong emotions which it has aroused from its inception. Obviously the controversy about "decency" on television and radio is one which touches deeply-felt principles. It is noteworthy that of the twenty-odd letters opposed to us that I have received as founder of the Group, some three-quarters have been obscene, and they are nearly all pathological.

The Group has grown very rapidly since its inception

on December 12, when it took its name from Cosmo Place, in which the inaugural meeting was held. A journalist asked us if there was any significance in the fact that we met first in a public house on a Sunday! It had not occurred to me that the fact might mean anything, but on reflection I realised that all our members were the sort of people who would not feel that the mere fact of being unconventional mattered, as long as an action was principled. This included the Christians among us, and it is

Avril Fox

of interest that we have a number of clergymen and parsons' wives as members.

Opening doors

Another unusual factor about COSMO, as the *New Statesman* has pointed out, is that we are not trying to *do good* to anybody. The tradition of British institutions is that they form themselves to promote some good cause which will assist some body of people (or animals), but we are not in this stream. Yet our battle is as fierce as any, and it is right in the centre of modern thought; the battle to prevent a door from closing and to force it more widely open. I particularly noted, in my first encounter with Mrs Whitehouse (of "Clean Up TV") at Granada Television studios, that she used this phrase, very seriously and forebodingly: "You are opening doors". "Of course", I said.

We have had to deal with a number of misconceptions. Some thought that we were an all-female body, or composed solely of "housewives". (I note that even such an enlightened journal as *The Ethical Record* repeated this error in its February number!) Those of us who signed the initial letter to the *New Statesman* were all women because we were opposing Mrs Whitehouse's claim to speak for the women of Britain, but we are in fact against forming purely feminine organisations, as we believe that it is just as nonsensical to talk about "housewives' interests" as it is to talk about "husbands' interests". Women are people, and their interests vary, as do those of men.

Not "improving"

Another misconception has been that we are aiming to "improve" television and radio programmes. While no doubt we all have ideas as to what is good and what is bad, and while I imagine that few of us would fight to retain, e.g., such a programme as **Double Your Money**, we realise that so long as some people enjoy watching this type of programme they have a right to see it, and we feel that the struggle to raise the level of popular taste is one which must take place in another arena, and probably at an early age.

I think we are now encountering a new error. A number of people are beginning to think that we have links with the CND movement. Perhaps this is because we have joined the fight to get **The War Game** shown on television. But we have no links with any movement of any kind, and I have no idea as to the political or religious views of my fellow-members on the COSMO Steering Committee.

Of course, many people think that we exist simply to oppose Mrs Whitehouse, but this is also untrue. We are opposed to *all* minority pressure groups which attempt to impose their will upon the majority of their fellow-citizens. For example, the Anti-Blood-Sports League have managed to prevent the public from seeing **Matador**, Alan Whicker's brilliant documentary on bull-fighting, on TV. This is one of the items we intend to press for. Whicker's documentary on fox-hunting was highly objective, and we feel that the British public should again be given the opportunity to make up its own mind. Then again, I wonder if the BBC or the ITA would allow a series of discussions on "the British Sunday, and how it could be improved". I doubt it, because the Lord's Day Observance Society has for too long succeeded with its minority pressure, although today its opinions are about as out-of-date as those of the Flat Earth Society.

Discussion of religion

Readers of the FREETHINKER will be solidly behind us in another of our aims: to obtain intelligent and enlightened discussions on religion, with the atheists and Humanists properly represented. The mushiest and greyest programmes on television and radio are those which deal

with religion, however much the subject may be titivated, simply because of the lack of genuine argument. Among the first to recognise this are the enlightened clergy. I was amused recently to hear Mrs Whitehouse complain that the Bishop of Woolwich had actually been allowed to speak on his book without any opposition point of view being put at the same time! Apparently the Bishop of Woolwich is regarded as the extreme of anti-religious views. One wonders where these people live—it is in a different world from the rest of us.

Consolidation

After the initial upsurge of support, COSMO is now working to consolidate and extend itself in the provinces and over the borders, in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and the Channel Isles, where we already have some members. We need plenty of publicity and are willing to send our newsletters and membership forms to any interested enquirers. (Cosmo Membership Secretary, Miranda, 1 Strawberry Vale, Twickenham, Middlesex. Minimum subscription 5s per annum, but grateful for more. Please enclose a stamped long envelope.)

I believe that the Cosmo Group is here to stay, because the struggle to enable people to grow up to mental maturity is not only fierce, but fundamental to progress. Until human beings can become mature, can judge situations from an objective ethical viewpoint and not by using the primitive negative rules of, e.g., the Decalogue or the Koran, we shall still find ourselves at war, perpetuating misery, bringing unwanted children into the world, rearing young people to look at life through the blinkers of their forefathers' ignorance. The only way out of this vicious circle is to train people to think for themselves, and the only way the television and radio can contribute to this process is by providing a wide variety of programmes without timidity or heeding minority pressures. This they will only do when there is a sufficiently strong body of enlightened opinion behind them. To provide such a body is the aim of the COSMO Group.

WORLD UNION OF FREETHINKERS

(Continued from page 75)

Rebuilding

As said above, we are slowly rebuilding. Freethinking extends, but organised freethought remains weak. The formation of the Humanist movement under Dutch and American inspiration and the aloofness of the very lively French Union Rationaliste (aloof in that it will not affiliate, though its members take an active part in our congresses) have not helped us. The 1959 Congress at Brussels, which celebrated the centenary of the birth of Ferrer, was a brilliant one, drawing a distinguished attendance. It was held in the University, where the Rector himself received us.

We hope to make this coming congress, which celebrates the centenary of the National Secular Society, at least as notable.

The Committee of Honour under the presidency of Bertrand Russell includes many world-famous names. Unfortunately, many of these distinguished persons live far from London, and many have very considerable demands made on their leisure already. Those unable to attend will take part by sending messages to be read. Three of these we have received at the time of writing, viz. from 80-year-old Dr P. R. Paranjpye, former Minister of Excise under Nehru and Chancellor of Poona University; Major-General Dr Brock Chisholm, the first Director of the World Health Organisation and former Director of the Canadian Army Medical Services; and Prof. J. Z. Young, the second Reith Lecturer and Professor of Anatomy.

NSS CENTENARY DINNER

W. J. McIlroy

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S Centenary celebrations commenced with a Dinner in London on February 26. The 120 people who attended—many more were unable to obtain tickets—represented the whole spectrum of the Secular Humanist movement in Britain. They came from Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham, Taunton, Ilford, Leicester, Northampton, Brighton and other areas; and from such organisations as the Rationalist Press Association, South Place Ethical Society, the Humanist Teachers' Association, Leicester Secular Society, the Abortion Law Reform Association, branches of the NSS and groups affiliated to the British Humanist Association. It was pleasing to see a large number of young people, many of them attending an NSS function for the first time.

Mr David Tribe, President of the NSS, welcomed the guests and referred to the many congratulatory messages which had been received from leading writers, academics, politicians and theatre personalities. Proposing a toast to Mr Michael Foot, MP, he referred to the guest of honour as "a very distinguished and above all a very honest man". He was well-known as a politician and as a journalist and reviewer. For many years he had been deeply involved in the struggle for social reforms, and had concerned himself with foreign affairs, economic questions and the arts. Many people did not agree with his Socialism, but admired his devotion to the principles in which he believed.

Replying, Mr Foot said he had become a Socialist and a Secularist simultaneously. He had been greatly influenced by Freethought writers, and regarded Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man* as one of the greatest books he had ever read. In a tribute to the founder of the National Secular Society he recalled that Charles Bradlaugh was a champion of women's suffrage, family planning and freedom of speech and assembly. One of Bradlaugh's great achievements was founding the NSS, which had contributed greatly to the sum total of human happiness.

Miss Brigid Brophy proposed a toast to the society, and her stimulating speech will be published in a future issue of the FREETHINKER. Mr F. H. Amphlett Micklewright, who responded, was deputising at short notice for Lord Willis, who had influenza. Mr Micklewright said he felt that the revival of the National Secular Society in recent times was due to the fact that it knew where it stood—for a rationalistic view of life.

Mr Charles Bradlaugh Bonner, President of the World Union of Freethinkers, spoke briefly of the forthcoming International Congress in London. As a member of the Bradlaugh family he expressed great satisfaction at the continued good work of the society which his grandfather founded 100 years ago.

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TWO ROOMS are offered to a lady with nursing experience in a large house near London. The main duties would be attending to an invalid lady, and a salary would be paid. A married couple with the husband following his own occupation may be suitable. Further information may be obtained from the National Secular Society, 103 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1. Telephone HOP 2717.

LETTERS

(Many excellent letters from overseas cannot be printed because they arrive after the relevant correspondence has been closed. Letters from abroad should be on general rather than topical issues, on principles rather than particular articles—Ed.)

Agnosticism

UNCRITICAL dependence on adulterated English translations of the Bible is regrettably responsible for much widespread muddle on atheism and agnosticism. *Encyclopedia Biblica* under "Name" explains that the proper name of the Jewish-Christian god was Yahweh, and that the term *elohim*, especially with the article *ha*, like *ho theos* in the NT, meaning "the well-known god", always refers to the West Semitic god Yahweh (*alias* Jehovah).

Pocket Lexicon to the Greek NT, by A. Souter (Oxford, 1960), under "Theos" gives precise information: *theos* without article is "a god or a goddess" but with the article *ho theos* means "the god". Then Souter adds an extremely relevant comment which should be memorized by all freethinkers: *ho theos* is a class name, and the Jewish Christian, like the orthodox Jew, avoided naming this West Semitic god but referred to Yahweh as "the god" (see also under "Moichalis"). Consequently, Souter quite honestly translates composite Greek words containing *theos*, like *theosebeia* as "reverence for the god", *atheos* as "without the god" (i.e., without Yahweh). This means that the traditional mistranslation "God" in the English Bible must be read "the god", referring normally to Yahweh. Incidentally, *al'lah* means "the god", i.e., the god of the OT prophets, Yahweh.

Chapman Cohen's brilliant analysis of agnosticism, anticipating Professor Ryle's Category-Mistake, demonstrated once for all that there can logically be no one god, called "God", distinct from, and in addition to, all particular gods. The agnostic is in the silly position of not realizing that Chapman Cohen's logical (semantic) argument is perfectly true, and in accordance with modern analytical philosophy!

The same ignorance of modern biblical scholarship explains the absence, in freethought literature, of stressing one vital point in the composite Jesus-myth, namely, that "Jesus" was originally also preached as *Yahweh incarnated*. *The Dictionary of the Bible*, by Hastings (2nd ed. 1963), under "Incarnation" says that it was Yahweh ("the Lord"), the god of Israel, who, in Jesus Christ, has visited and redeemed his people (Luke 1, 68), and that it was the Syrian (Antiochene) theologians who therefore thought of "Jesus" as that one in whom the god Yahweh lived as man.

Thus, modern theologians furnish atheists the most destructive facts against the Christian mythology itself (see also Rev. Prof. Hooke, *Middle Eastern Mythology*, Pelican, 1963, for many more such facts). But the agnostic will literally never know what he is talking about. Like the parson, he is out of date now.

GREGORY S. SMELTERS (Sydney)

AGNOSTIC

A. E. Carpenter

As I grope and grieve through morning mists
I half-believe the sun exists;
Yet when pristine-pure is the noonday fair
I'm (almost) sure old sol is there.

Wee Frees

EVEN one of the strongholds of faith, the Scottish Free Church, is admitting that they are in a bad way!

To quote the recent words of the Rev. J. Fraser of Buccleuch Church, Edinburgh, "Spiritual religion was at an all time low, and Church attendance continued to decline. The affluent society did not feel any need for God or religion."

Of course, Sunday skiing has done a lot to break up the Scottish Sabbath, so the fact that we see the "white slopes of the Cairngorms black with skiers on Sunday" rouses the Free Church to fury! How they would love to have the power they used to have to force them into church, and how pleasant to know they haven't!

(Mrs.) M. WATSON

The Social Aspect

RELIGIONISTS when forced on the defensive about their doctrine and the Bible are apt to stray into the social aspect and stress the benefits of Christianity in the fields of slavery, education, hospitals and even science. Perhaps there could be some articles in the FREETHINKER bearing on these matters some time.

JOHN H. CHAMBERS

Details of membership of the National Secular Society and inquiries regarding bequests and secular funeral services may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1. Telephone: HOP 2717.