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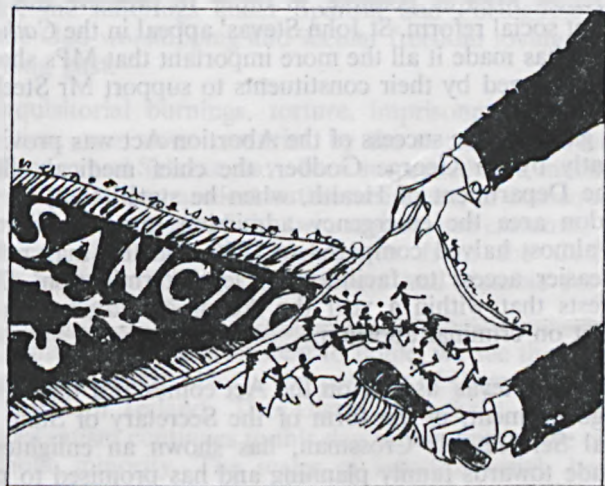
HE MUST BE STOPPED

FREETHINKERS are those who endeavour to ensure that no mind has imposed upon it anything other than demonstrably true facts. They utilise the principle that no man has the right to inculcate in another what he considers to be right unless his opinion is stated honestly, and acknowledged to be only an opinion if it has no logical reinforcement. Most Freethinkers would consider this principle in itself justification for their adherence to it. Others consider that as well as the self-evident justness of the principle of freethought, its utilisation is further justified by what can only be their opinion, that the freer to form its own conclusions a mind can be from the unsubstantiated tenets of its environment and would-be mentors, the more enlightened, socially conscious, and therefore happy the owner of that mind will become.

Whichever way the question is looked at, it becomes abundantly clear that the mind of any human who is kept in subjection to another and who is not permitted the same opportunities as another is not being accorded a reasonable degree of freedom, since an attempt is being made to condition that mind to accept a situation which is not founded on logic. For there is no fact which lends weight to a belief that in any circumstances one human can accord different rights to different groups of his fellows.

It can be seen therefore that campaigning Freethinkers have a lot on their hands. All over the world freedom of thought is being restricted in this way, by men who are endeavouring to foster a belief in others that they are inferior to them and unworthy of equal rights. Just recently this state of affairs has been accentuated by the activities of Mr Ian Smith in Rhodesia. One does not condemn outright his decision to exclude many Africans from a vote on his referendum. There is a case for excluding some of them on the grounds that they are not aware of the issues involved. However, the constitution, the adoption of which was the subject of the referendum, makes no allowance for a time which will undoubtedly come, when the Africans are all educated and therefore in a position to exercise what should be their right, namely to vote for their government. Freethinkers are, of course, perfectly aware of the crime which Smith is committing against his fellow humans. But in considering this, one would ask them to look at the United States, and see there the long term effects of a policy virtually identical with that on which Smith has just embarked.

The question is how can Smith be prevented from continuing with a policy which is not only a despicable assault upon the rights of humans, but also a nose-dive into waters which, within not very many years, will be tainted with blood, shed in a race war. The British government have severed all ties with Smith's Rhodesia. That this is merely a token gesture is only too apparent. Action must be taken to bring about the downfall of the Smith regime, and action can only be either military or economic. Violence and bloodshed must always be ruled out unless it is evident that its use will avert greater suffering. On this basis at the present point in time military action from either Britain or the United Nations is not justified. A time could come however, when the freedom fighters of Zimbabwe are fighting a civil war against the regime, the end of which war could be hastened by intervention from outside.



At the moment though, despite the licence they have hitherto given Mr Smith, economic sanctions are the only pressure which can justifiably be used against him. The British government and the United Nations must therefore strive to tighten the economic blockade. Pressure must be brought particularly upon South Africa and Portugal in order to get them to accept the UN ruling on the use of sanctions. It would not be going too far to suggest that as an ally of Rhodesia and as a government whose principles are no higher and no less dangerous than those of Smith, an enquiry should be launched to research more efficient methods of putting pressure on South Africa. Unless something is done quickly there could well be a race war in Africa within a very few years. Such a war could endanger the entire world.

ABORTION AND FAMILY PLANNING

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS on July 15 Norman St John Stevas, MP, will endeavour to get the Abortion Act amended. His proposals would in effect ruin the basic object of the Act, namely to make abortions easily available to those in need and to end the dangerous activities of the back-street abortionists. Writing in the *Catholic Herald* Mr St John Stevas called on all supporters to write to their MPs asking them to vote with him on the day. Although the arguments used in his article were extremely

(Continued overleaf)

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specious, there can be little doubt that he will get a certain amount of the support he wants from *Catholic Herald* readers, due to the familiar facility, peculiar to the religious, for ignoring rational arguments.

David Steel is leading the opposition to Mr St John Stevas' amendment and will need as much support from his fellow MPs as possible, in order to preserve this important social reform. St John Stevas' appeal in the *Catholic Herald* has made it all the more important that MPs should be encouraged by their constituents to support Mr Steel.

A gauge of the success of the Abortion Act was provided recently by Sir George Godber, the chief medical officer at the Department of Health, when he stated that, 'in the London area the emergency admission rate for abortion was almost halved compared to 1966, and this may reflect the easier access to facilities for legal termination'. This suggests that within a year the Act is already having an impact on criminal abortion.

St John Stevas' assault on the Act comes at a time when the government, in the form of the Secretary of State for Social Service, Mr Crossman, has shown an enlightened attitude towards family planning and has promised to provide it on the National Health Service. Of this significant step forward David Tribe, the President of the National

Secular Society, said in a recent statement to the press: "The comparatively modest cost of this provision will more than pay for itself in economic terms, quite apart from the human misery of unwanted children. Those of us who fought so hard for the Abortion Bill did so to provide a last resort for desperate women and not as something desirable in itself. With adequate contraceptive arrangements the need for abortion will ideally wither away.

"It gives us in the NSS a special satisfaction at Mr Crossman's action as family planning was pioneered in the world almost exclusively by freethinkers, and our founder Charles Bradlaugh and Vice-President Annie Besant figured in the most notorious prosecution of a contraceptive pamphlet this country has seen. The resulting publicity brought the importance of this problem to national attention and from that time the large Victorian family began to decline. The problem is now a world one and we are pleased that at last, despite the opposition of the Vatican many Western countries are recognising the need for family planning as an integral part of their overseas aid."

Bradlaugh and Besant undoubtedly reflect credit on to the NSS and freethought. However, it is not sufficient in 1969 to pat ourselves on a back which is turned on social progress. Freethinkers must also continue to campaign for those causes which are habitually frustrated by the religious, in order that a time will come when superstition has no power to restrain progress, whether it be social, towards peace or away from human suffering and inequality. At the present time Mr Steel's cause should perhaps predominate amongst the practical causes, towards the furtherance of which Freethinkers can take action.

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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

Sevenoaks Secular Humanists: Public Library, Sevenoaks: Wednesday, July 9, 8 p.m.: A talk by Mr Colin Hutchinson of the Conservation Society.

South Place Ethical Society: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1: Sunday, July 6, 11 a.m.: "What is Progress?", Lord Sorensen.

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HOW LONG, O LORD?

F. H. SNOW

THIS CRY, echoing from old Palestine, rises from massive oppressed peoples in this twentieth century. The appeals for deliverance from oppression would seem, in the circumstances, to be more futile than ever.

Curiously, it is from 'God's Own Country', otherwise known as the United States of America that far the largest of the suffering communities directs its supplications to On High. There is a great dusky people within its vast population, many of whom are compelled to put up with hardships in the way of prohibitions, malnutrition, appalling housing, unemployment and ill-employment, with consequent mental, moral and physical harm. They are deemed inferior beings, and treated as such by the chiefly white remainder of the nation. They are allowed to freely worship, however, and do so fervently, all the while beseeching the God they adulate to rescue them from their miseries.

Unfortunately, they have supplemented their prayers with riots, involving incendiarism and destruction of property of their oppressive overlords. The assassination of several of their most vociferous leaders and pastors has added fuel to the fires of their rightful and righteous wrath, bringing upon them stern reprisals. And so, they continue in most miserable case, with no sign of heavenly deliverance.

From the great Western continent to diminutive Greece in comparatively diminutive Europe, one can travel in less than a day, and find oneself in the midst of a democracy crushed down by methods that disgrace humanity. A military junta rules ironfisted, imprisoning, torturing, executing courageous opponents. The United Nations look supinely on at the tragedy, which the opulent Onassis, on his Aegean islet, abets by his neglect to use the enormous influence of his riches with the 'colonels', to alleviate the sufferings of Greek democracy, whilst the Good Lord turns a deaf ear to the anguished prayers of his Hellenic worshippers.

Away in Iraq, adjoining the so-wrongly-named Holy Land, the bodies of thirteen men swing from nooses in Bagdad, hanged for spying. The state they spied for is that of Israel, of the 'Holy Land' misnomer. And that state of Israel was, in Old Testament days, and in these days of its resuscitation still is, in very unholy fear of its enemies. The persecutions of Jews throughout the centuries have been many, hence their collective and individual apprehensions. God has looked consistently sideways on his 'chosen race'. Only recently, in the long course of time, they of the Hebrew fraternity were persecuted with fiendish ferocity by Hitler's underlings; starved, frozen, herded like animals, and in vast numbers stifled in the gas chambers of Belsen and Auschwitz.

What wonder that, in their new-found Promised Land, the Jews had left nothing for God to do on their behalf, though unflinching beseeching him to do it? They had built up an efficient army for protection against their Arab neighbours, had vanquished them in the notorious Six Day War of '67, and, by means of intelligence agents, or spies, kept themselves informed of their enemies' machinations, but their Wailing Wall in Jerusalem echoed often their doleful weepings, because of God's omission to succour them.

Their traditional enemies, equally unfortunate, called upon God for blessings, though naming him Allah, and

having the uncrucified Mahomet or Mohammed as intermediary between them and him instead of Jesus. They also, though far from experiencing the tribulations of the Jews, had lived it hard, and many of them had suffered ejection from the territory now possessed by Judah, and planned assiduously for vengeance, of which the strangled emissaries in Bagdad are but harbingers. Their faith in Allah's intervention for them is apparently undampened by their defeat at Israel's hands, though they are relying far more upon the aid of Communism, and tanks, guns and aircraft, than upon their Arabic god whose hand has remained unlifted for them, in their lust for deliverance from their massive wrongs, and the ultimate triumph of the Crescent.

The Rock of Gibraltar stands out as England's Spanish heritage. If our sense of justice in the religious and political fields were as outstandingly reflected on the Iberian Peninsula, the sufferings under Spanish and Portuguese rule, of the God-worshipping and secular freedom loving, would be long past.

Inquisitorial burnings, torture, imprisonment and confiscation, over seven centuries, by the states now governed by Franco and Salazar, have been succeeded by a much less savage but still tyrannical authoritarianism, in consequence of which the prisons of the twin regimes are crammed with political offenders, and dissentients from the Catholic Faith worship behind closed doors and tremble for the religious rights left them.

Coming right home, or next to home, we see the reverse, though less severe case, in the position of Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland. The Ulster stronghold of militant Protestantism continues to this day rankly oppressive of her Catholic minority. The scales of injustice weigh heavily against members of the older faith in employment, housing conditions, education and voting power. The recent and present demonstrations against this state of things have been answered by intensified repression, despite the humane attitude of Captain O'Neill, the erstwhile prime minister, helpless against virulent prejudice, inflamed by Ian Paisley, the clerical persecutor of Catholics.

The Supreme Justiciary to whom Greek, Jew, Arab, Negro, Mohammedan, Protestant, Catholic address their pleas for deliverance from tyrant power, is impartially indifferent. Yet still his praises resound. Manned rockets explore his cosmos, science goes ahead, but the jungle jargon of the fetish worshippers mutes the voice of reason, in these suppliants of the Highest.

When will they ever learn? When will they, and the underdogs of every clime and race, come to see the folly of dependence on the sky god, and cease to incantate, in their various languages, in churches, chapels, temples, synagogues, mosques: "How long, O Lord, how long? When wilt Thou save Thy people?"

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RUSSELL'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

G. L. SIMONS

SEVENTH OF NINE ARTICLES

CERTAIN ASPECTS of Bertrand Russell's philosophy were formed very early. His attitudes to mathematics, religion, education, etc., crystallised when he was still a young man: a framework was quickly established and he saw no cause to overthrow it in later years. Other aspects of his philosophy, however, enjoyed a continual development, the most obvious examples here being epistemology and politics. In epistemology Russell progressed from idealism through dualism to the neutral monism of *The Analysis of Mind*. In politics the development was no less dramatic: here he evolved from a semi-respectable liberalism to a position bordering on revolutionary socialism.

Russell comes from a famous Whig family known for its radical reformist inclinations. Lord John Russell was perhaps the most famous Russell politician, and his brief premiership was marked by various attempts at social and political reform. His grandson, Bertrand, began in the Whig tradition, and in his early days would have called himself a Liberal. Such a position had strengths and weaknesses—the strengths lay in the deep concern for the rights of the individual; the weaknesses in the absence of a deep analysis of human society which could point the way to a realisation of these rights.

After a period in Germany, Russell wrote *German Social Democracy* (1896) in which he criticised Marxism from first-hand experience. In later years he was to attack Marxism with persistent vigour, although recently he has come to write in a way that is pre-eminently Marxist. In *Roads to Freedom* (1918) he observed that "time has shown many flaws in Marx's theories", and in *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* (1920), *Prospects of Industrial Civilisation* (1923), *Freedom and Organisation* (1934), and other works specific criticisms are developed. In Chapter 6 of *In Praise of Idleness* (1935) Russell lists eight reasons why he disagrees with Marxism, and in the *History of Western Philosophy* (1946) he remarks that "Considered purely as a philosopher, Marx has grave shortcomings". In the *History*, however, the tone is different to that of the earlier writings on the subject: there is less of the vigorous and easy condemnation. There are hints here that Russell is esteeming Marx more highly than formerly.

To some degree Russell's attitude to the Marxists had always been ambivalent. In *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*, despite many criticisms of the young Soviet Republic which he had just visited, Russell felt obliged to remark that the Bolsheviks were "neither angels to be worshipped nor devils to be exterminated, but merely bold and able men attempting with great skill an almost impossible task", and in *Prospects of Industrial Civilisation* he writes that "Few governments in history have had more honesty, determination, and energy than the Soviet government . . .". And capitalism has often been criticised with Russellian wit and acerbity.

In the *Prospects*, written with Dora Russell and in my opinion too little read, we find sentiments that could have been culled direct from Marx: "Capitalism, by being ill adapted to industrialism, rouses an opposition which must in the end destroy it. The only question is whether labour will be strong enough to establish socialism upon the ruins of capitalism, or whether capitalism will be able to destroy

our whole industrial civilisation in the course of the struggle". The Marxist may be more confident than this but the writing contains an illusion to the class war which is unmistakable. Later in the *Prospects* we find a perceptive and prophetic (?) reference to American imperialism (written in 1923):

"The future of mankind depends upon the action of America during the next half-century. If America advances smoothly upon the path of capitalist imperialism which is indicated by present tendencies and opportunities, there will be a gradually increasing oppression of the rest of the world, a widening gulf between the wealth of the New World and the poverty of the Old, a growing hatred of America among the exploited nations, and at last, under socialist guidance, a world-wide revolt involving repudiation of all debts to America."

Clearly, the "socialist guidance" to be provided is not of the British Labour Party species!

But though the trends of American capitalism were predicted by Russell in the early twenties he was still not able to evolve quickly to the only political philosophy that had any hope of providing an effective counter to these trends. In Chapter 7 of *In Praise of Idleness* we are given nine arguments in favour of socialism, but these follow a preamble in which any revolutionary change to socialist society is specifically precluded. Russell suggests that we be nice to the capitalists whereupon they will give up their power and wealth—he writes that if socialism "cannot now be realised without a violent upheaval, this is to be attributed largely to the violence of its advocates. But I still have some hope that a saner advocacy may soften the opposition, and make a less catastrophic transition possible". Or in short, that we don't have socialism is to be blamed on the eager socialists rather than on the rapacious and militaristic capitalists who have milked human society since the early days of the Industrial Revolution. A further limitation of the Russell outlook is revealed in this essay: true to the Liberal tradition he believes (believed?) that democracy is simply a question of enfranchisement and does not demand social and economic institutions of a particular character.

In the fifties his main preoccupation was with the prevention of nuclear war—a disaster that at times seemed quite likely. He helped to found CND and Pugwash and wrote *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare* (1959) and *Has Man a Future?* (1961). In October 1962 Russell immersed himself in the Cuba crisis, and wrote a Penguin Special on Cuba and the Sino/Indian border trouble. Around this time a significant new thread could be detected in the Russell political outlook. Almost for the first time in his long life Russell doubted the value of the constitutional means of registering dissent. He urged people to go out on to the streets to protest at the likelihood that they would be incinerated in a nuclear conflagration. Realising the impotence of CND, Russell broke away to form the Committee of 100 which embodied a significantly more vigorous and militant philosophy. Here the keyword was 'civil disobedience', and Russell was obliged to spend a second spell in Brixton Prison for his pains. *And Vietnam completed Russell's political education* and swung his outlook to the Left as it did with many another liberal/socialist. But Vietnam deserves a separate article.

I will finish the present one with a reference to a remarkable article by Russell that appeared in the *New Statesman*

(15/3/69), written when Russell was ninety-five years of age. The nominal purpose of the article was to urge the government not to renew the membership of NATO when it fell due, but the article is fascinating for the incidental information that it contains. Russell virtually admits that he has come to share the Marxist view of American imperialism, as this view was represented to him repeatedly

by the late Isaac Deutscher at Russell's home at Richmond. Russell admits in this article that American imperialism is naked and all-pervasive, and that the historical representations of Soviet aggressive intent are fabrication and nothing more. There is much more of this in *War Crimes in Vietnam* and this will be considered in the next article of this series.

THE BREATH-TAKING MR PAINE

CADMUS

A SPEAKER on BBC radio the other day described the Bible as "the worst-read, best-seller". Christopher Brunel, Chairman of the Thomas Paine Society, quoted this at the opening of *The Age of Reason* Exhibition at the Central Library, Bethel Street, Norwich (open weekdays until July 5), and boldly declared that *The Age of Reason* was a best-seller that was read.

The exhibition commemorates the 175th anniversary of the publication in Britain of Paine's great work, and Mr Brunel showed it to be the culmination of Paine applying his scientific mind to so much in his life. "In 1754", he said, "Paine took the rivets and tacks out of the Bible." Paine's book was written to rescue what he considered was true theology from abuses by the Church.

In it Paine wrote that "if credulity could swallow Jonah and the whale it could swallow anything". Paine questioned things and analysed things that were taken for granted. That, said Mr Brunel, was the best lesson that *The Age of Reason* gives us for today's world.

Dr Howard Temperley (Senior Lecturer in American History at the University of East Anglia), officially opened the exhibition with a short lecture on Paine, whom he described as "this most notorious, probably most talented, certainly most controversial East Anglian of modern times".

"His career," said Dr Temperley, "really began with his arrival in America. His first great work, *Common Sense*, appeared in January 1776—it is an astonishing document. More clearly than anyone else, Paine perceived that the conflict was about, where the Colonists stood and what they needed to do. It took Paine, an outsider to put what in retrospect is obvious: that *potentially* America belonged to a quite separate political order; that by severing its political connections with Britain it could float free of Europe and all the conflicts, manoeuvrings, repressive laws that Europe represented.

"The boldness of this perception was matched by the force and clarity of his style. Paine's pamphlet gave the Colonists the ideological ammunition they needed."

Turing to *The Age of Reason*, Dr Temperley said it was easy to see why people regarded it as atheistic, "for it was a scourging attack on Christianity". He added, "But strictly speaking it was anything but atheistic—it was deistic. Infidelity, Paine claimed, consisted in professing to believe what one does not believe—and who could believe that ragbag of quibbles composed by the scriptures? But God existed, and his work was to be found in the creation we behold. The true theology lay in the study of mathematics and astronomy.

"This argument has been repeatedly attacked, and many have regarded Paine none other than Old Nick himself, as some of the cartoons in the exhibition showed. But it is notable how many of the replies to Paine, perhaps the most famous being that of Richard Watson, Bishop of Llandaff (*An Apology for the Bible*), accepted most of Paine's points, at least with respect to their accuracy on the scriptures."

Dr Temperley regarded Paine primarily as a writer, and not a politician: his writings were extraordinary. "There is nothing obscure, nothing dull, nothing long-winded. His contemporaries found them breathtaking, and it is easy for us, reading them even today to see why."

"This has lead many", concluded Dr Temperley, "to say that his style alone explains his great influence. But this I doubt. What is basic in Paine's writings are his principles, which seemed revolutionary to his contemporaries, but which we now—whether we know it or not—take as automatic. These principles have endured."

The exhibition was then officially open. Staged by the Thomas Paine Society in conjunction with the Norwich Public Libraries, it starts with scenes of Thetford, Norfolk, as Paine knew it, when he grew up there. A selection of the many editions of *The Age of Reason*—including those published in Sweden, the USSR and the USA—lead on to the struggle for a free press, exemplified by such pioneers in England as Daniel Isaac Eaton and Richard Carlile.

Contemporary prints and token coins that were connected with the ferment of ideas of the 1790s around Paine's works give graphic impact to the exhibition. In this section some important additions to the exhibition were made by Mr R. C. Bell, MB, FRCS, a leading authority on tokens. Mr Bell also loaned an interesting pack of cards, which showed Paine's cottage in America on the backs—ironic, since Paine pointedly eschewed the playing of cards!

The scientific side of Paine's life, that Mr Brunel had referred to, is exemplified in the exhibition in details of the Monkwearmouth bridge, that was built to Paine's design in 1793-96; usually referred to as the Sunderland bridge, it became a popular design on Victorian pottery, which never gave credit to Paine.

As well as replies to *The Age of Reason*, the exhibition displays the worldwide following that Paine has had, mainly in free thought circles, right up to the present. Perhaps the most ambitious that the Thomas Paine Society has put on, the exhibition not only looks back into the past, but brings it to life in a manner that has meaning—and lessons—in today's situation.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUPER-EGO AND ITS DEVIATIONS

WILLIAM WELSH

BBC TV RECENTLY featured a Sunday night discussion on "Guilt and Grace". This is a sign that theologians as well as psychiatrists are getting to grips with a subject apposite to our sophisticated Western civilisation.

By coincidence, the Wednesday play on the evening of March 5 was concerned with a youthful delinquent so overcome by remorse that he became nurse to the victim of his gang, a wages clerk. Strange as it may seem, the youth simultaneously plotted the death of his patient.

It has long been accepted that man is motivated by unconscious forces which render his conduct irrational in certain circumstances. Freud is regarded as the pioneer in this field. He investigated the depths of the 'id', a storehouse of hidden desire and of aggression; also of that even more enigmatic phenomenon known by him and his devotees as the super-ego.

These terms are Freudian, and it was he who elaborated their exploration with a view to the better understanding of human nature by applying the scientific method. But the mental phenomena thus explained had previously attracted the attention of Schopenhauer.

Freud was only four years of age when the death occurred of the German philosopher whose outlook is invariably associated in the popular mind with pessimism. More significant, it was he who first versed an opinion about the "still, small voice", which was quite contrary to established tradition.

Schopenhauer stated what is now considered axiomatic by the modern psychoanalyst: that conscience could be identified with the policeman, with not a little cowardice, as well as fulfilling its true function, that of altruism.

While it would not be correct to say that Shakespeare propounded any specific moral doctrine, there is abundant evidence in his *Hamlet* and in *Macbeth* that he anticipated Freud, as well as did the ancient Greeks.

Hamlet is essentially a play built round the notion of the Oedipus complex; likewise, *Macbeth* has interest for the psychologist. Macbeth is a man whose lively conscience is at war with his ambition. One way to rid his conscience of guilty fears, strange and irrational though it appears at first sight, is to bludgeon it so much that the killings subsequent to the assassination of King Duncan are those we would normally associate with the psychopath. Complete moral disintegration is the inevitable result.

Schopenhauer's method of release from the conflicts of earthly life was to withdraw from it into a world of quietism; he was ever seeking Nirvana, and this aspect of his outlook has much in common with Buddhism. A determinist philosopher, he held that freedom of the will was illusory, yet at the same time, he drew a sharp distinction between acts called 'good' and those that are considered 'bad'. The 'good' acts were aimed at man's betterment.

Theologians have for long regarded conscience as a divinely implanted wisdom. Even Roman Catholics are required to give it precedence over certain papal dictates, papal infallibility being confined to (a) pronouncements of doctrine to be accepted by the faithful, in which case the Pope speaks with the voice and the authority of the Church, and (b) weighty decisions arrived at after consultations with experts.

An example of the latter instantly occurs to one: the decision incorporated in the encyclical concerning birth control. Admittedly, the Roman hierarchy does in practice,

speak in terms which rationalists would hold to be equivocal, and which even the Roman Catholic laity find baffling.

It is when we come to consider the real nature of the super-ego that we find psychiatry venturing into the field of ethics, a formidable undertaking indeed.

Most of us have heard Dr Johnson's compulsion not to tread the dividing line between one paving stone and the next. The author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan, was troubled in mind after playing hockey one Sunday afternoon. *Grace Abounding* is a catalogue of the writer's inhibitions.

It may be superfluous to elaborate Freud's insistence that it is in very early childhood that fear of parent abandonment and parent displeasure sows the seeds of later conflict. Sufficient to say that this fear can give rise to antagonism towards one or both parents; a fear of retaliation develops into a hostility turned inwards towards the self.

This emotion is derivative of self-punishment, self-torture, which can wreak such havoc in an otherwise balanced personality.

It is not in doubt that the element of aggression is in this way bound up with the complex working of the super-ego. Guilt feelings may at first be faint, but they are nevertheless related to the original fear of punishment by parents. So as to avoid feelings of guilt, the unhappy victim comes in time to act strictly in accordance with the prohibitions of parents and unconsciously to adopt adult norms of behaviour.

Whereas at first, discipline has to be externally imposed, it ultimately becomes identified with the child's own set of standards; hence the rise of self-discipline. Harsh discipline is to be avoided, also the administration of indiscriminate penalties.

A happier stage is reached when the child's conduct becomes in the real sense morally orientated in the sense that he or she can appreciate in some degree the consequences of one's behaviour on others.

The pre-moral super-ego is concerned with avoiding physical punishment; later it develops into what we know as conventional morality, directed at voiding the disapproval of others and at giving consideration to those in the immediate environment.

Originally, Freud believed that the uncovering in itself of hidden sex desires and repressions assisted the patient to use his reason, or ego, with a view to bringing these under control; ultimately, Freud relied more on suggestion and hypnosis.

People afflicted with a harsh, hypersensitive super-ego find the pangs intolerable. It is anomalous, too, that what is called the "sense of sin" is strongest usually in the most moral person.

The healthily developed super-ego, does not have this imbalance. And it's important to appreciate that the real purpose of the super-ego is to mould the personality in such a way that it conforms to the norms of the social environment. It is unfortunate, to put it at its mildest, when persons find the "inner light" and its inhibitions so severe an experience, so savage and brutal in its operation, that the disintegration of the personality results. As has been shown, escape from such a harsh master can take on a form that is quite irrational.

In general, criminals are notably defective in moral

sense. It would be an oversimplification to say that this is always the case. There are notable exceptions, and it is here that research might help in the wide field of criminology.

It is clear in Schopenhauer, although he did not of course use the terms, that a person with an over-sensitive super-ego, can at one and the same time be more moral, or less moral, than others according to the ability of the ego, or reason, to strike a healthy balance between the claims of the id and of the super-ego.

It is true when we look around, that a code of ethics can prove workable, even though it is not supported by the sanctions of religion. Julian Huxley points out in *Religion Without Revelation* that man has religious instincts for which there can be no accounting. But to some unfortunately, religious exercises only serve to underline fears by way of unhealthy introspection, and at the same time they are offered a cure for a state of mind nurtured by these same exercises.

Here then is the eternal paradox. The super-ego which develops naturally is the safeguard of society and at the root of altruistic activity; but when over-developed, it becomes an irrational burden of no use to the individual concerned or to society at large. Conversely, when under-developed, it can be the cause of offences against society.

To channel aggression in such a way that social benefits follow is a meaningful exercise of the 'censor'; in this way, too, the balanced, mature person strikes a happy mean or compromise between the opposites of an under-developed moral sense, and one that is so exacting and inexorable, usually in trivial matters, as to become irrational.

In these matters normality as opposed to abnormality is not easy to define. There may well be overlapping. The subject bristles with difficulty and complexity.

Only in a perfect society could the mechanisms work perfectly. We have to make the best of an imperfect world. The attainment of a happy balance comes more easily to some than to others. There is no egalitarianism where personality endowment and personality development are concerned.

BOOK REVIEW

R. K. MEARS

THE BUDDHIST WAY OF LIFE: Christmas Humphreys (Allen and Unwin, 40s).

Buddhism and the Eastern way of life are currently arousing considerable interest amongst the Western intelligentsia. Because of this it is becoming important that Freethinkers should give attention to the religions and beliefs of the East. That Buddhism is becoming increasingly popular is hardly surprising when seen alongside the rapid deterioration of Christianity, which is being brought about by science.

Unlike Christianity, Buddhism can withstand the buffets of science and reason because it is both more rational and at the same time so far outside the realms of reason as to render science impotent. In short, as religions go, Buddhism is far superior and contains far greater appeal to the intellectual religiophile than Christianity. And it is this appeal to the intellect which makes Buddhism a greater danger to rationalism in the very long run, and also a far more difficult religion to refute.

Christmas Humphrey's latest book *The Buddhist Way of Life* comprises a most skilful resume of the fundamentals of all Buddhism, an account of the development of the different sects or schools, an extensive section on Zen and an appraisal of how Buddhism could be, and is, practiced in the West. Thus as a book for anyone who is interested in Buddhism but has no knowledge of the subject it is excellent, and Buddhism is definitely something about which the serious Freethinker should know. It is indication of the strength of Buddhism and its potential that much of the

polemic in this book was to me, a Freethinker, most attractive. The looking inward in the attempt to eradicate 'self'—the looking outward towards helping others form the basis of Buddhism in practice, as of course to an extent they provide the foundations of Christianity and Humanism. However, the Buddhist mysticism which is held out as a bait towards attaining these ends is undeniably more tempting than the prospect of going to church on Sunday and kneeling beside one's bed every night. And further it is undeniable that Buddhism is more scientific than Christianity and indeed that it is more likely to be of benefit to its adherents. Belief in Christianity provides merely an escape from reality and a source of inspiration with which to face life; such a belief arises from weakness. Belief in Buddhism on the other hand tells the individual to rely on himself and merely 'points the way'. In this way it is very humanistic, but at the same time it depends on reincarnation at which doctrine the mind boggles perhaps even more than it does at the resurrection. However, utilising a technique similar to that of many Christian priests Humphreys enjoins us to begin upon the path because then we will see that it leads to the truth. Were one to take away the reincarnation doctrine and its corollary the objective of nirvana, one would be left with a fundamental method of self-improvement awaiting the adoption of the humanist objective—namely that of a life well lived with its corollary that more happiness is to be derived from altruism than self-seeking.

Thus it can be seen that for a humanist this book provides both a first class account of all facets of Buddhism and a good deal of material which is of definite value and appeal to the humanist trying to clarify his personal philosophy. The danger of Buddhism and its value are summed up in Humphreys' words: "... it seems that there is a need for a moral philosophy or way of life to replace the dying hold of Christian dogma on the Western mind". As a Humanist I cannot deny that there is much in Buddhism, as expressed in *The Buddhist Way of Life* that is totally rational and of value to me. The implication therefore, that in its entirety Buddhism could gain great popularity amongst those who desire religion, cannot be avoided.

LETTERS

Eloquence ?

MR JEROME GREENE, reviewing *William James and Religion* by Mason and Burton, commends for its "eloquence" a passage beginning: "Man, being imperfect at the present time, cannot hope to create a Utopia immediately. However, by joining with others in the persistent and courageous use of intelligence, he can certainly make the world a better place to live in". If this is an example of "eloquence", what might one cite as an example of sloppy writing? Or is man already in touch with beings of superior intelligence who may help him to make the world a better place? I must have missed this news item somehow.

BARBARA SMOKER.

Hanging

THERE IS one point in the argument for the retention of the abolition of hanging that I think the police should consider very carefully. It is that a man who has murdered someone would not hesitate to shoot a policeman to escape arrest, even if his chances were slim he would risk it, after all he can only be hanged once. Whereas if he thought his punishment would be imprisonment, even for life, he might think twice, especially if there was really not much chance of his getting away. It is a thought that the police should consider, when campaigning for the return of hanging.

LILIAN MIDDLETON.

Powell

I HAVE BEEN a Freethinker and Agnostic for some 40 years and after a lapse of seeing the FREETHINKER for 20 years, I recently gave my newsagent an order.

Alas, I received the copy for June 21 and I must say at once that I was disappointed. It certainly is a poor copy of the editions printed before the war. It has as much relation to an anti-religion journal as the *Daily Telegraph* and what inferior articles. I think the Editor's one which he calls 'Powellmania' must be one of the worst of its type that I have read. It certainly beats any written by Black Power writers. There is nothing constructive in it at all, just amounts to a continued vitriolic attack on Mr Powell. Surely Mr Editor, there is something, however slight, that you agree with Mr Powell? I do not myself agree with everything he has said, but you know, that after reading the Government's recent survey on Immigrants, in which it states (not Mr Powell) that immigrants lead a crowded life, eight families to a house, families in one

room, 112,000 share kitchens, 853,000 new immigrants of which 85 per cent are fully employed and 3 per cent on the dole (some 25,000?). Since this country hasn't solved its own housing problem, what chance do these unfortunate immigrants have of getting decent homes? As for integration, well, it has never worked anywhere in the world, simply because coloured and white simply want to stay with their own kind, its as simple as that. I think it is a great reflection on our Governments in allowing this colour question to arise in this crowded island in the first place and Mr Powell should be congratulated in bringing it out in the first place and not behaving like a lot of ostriches or write stupid articles against anyone calling them racials. Finally, I think it would be more appropriate if you printed that 'articles written by the Editor are not necessarily the views of the readers'. P. G. HALL.

THE FREETHINKER in my opinion has declined, it certainly is not the paper it was. All we get now is plays and politics.

For instance your article on 'Powellmania' I disagree entirely. It is possible you have never had to seek for a home, like so many without success. "If it were not for the fact that so many immigrants are flooding this small island that we cannot do without their labour"—I have heard this argument too often this is complete rubbish.

I have worked with immigrants and in my experience they have not contributed much toward labour. However it is they who fill our hospitals with mothers to be. It is not the question about colour of skins it is the *principle* and I am not prejudiced because of colour.

I think of our own homeless who cannot find a home for this fact. Never mind about Rhodesia, that nonsense does not fool me. CHARLES SMITH.

ISN'T THERE a comparative hesitancy to be found in Enoch Powell's latest speech on immigration? Could it be that 'his political brain' has become less sure in the belief that Powellism can do Powell no ill? Perhaps it may even yet become expedient in further speeches to show some discrimination in the bestowal of charity among people whose colour happens to be white. After all, it may in the long run be easier to ride the 'misunderstanding' of opponents than to control the misgotten hero-worship of followers who follow for the 'wrong reasons'. CHARLES BYASS.

Veneral Disease

IT IS all very well for Mr Cobell to dismiss the problem of illegitimacy as a "purely subjective judgement". There is, however, rather more to getting pregnant than that. If he disbelieves this, perhaps he would ask himself why most married couples use contraceptives—are they worried about what the neighbours will say?

The truth is that young people are not only largely ignorant about contraception but that the best techniques are also unavailable to most of them.

In my letter of May 31 I asked Cobell for his rational proposals for the elimination of VD. His suggestion is that we should conceal the facts about VD from young people in order that they will be "in consequence more wary of casual intercourse". This proposal is not only immoral, but history has also shown to be quite ineffective. If people do not know about VD they are hardly likely to worry about catching it. This might explain Cobell's astonished *cri de coeur* that despite his many lectures to young people they still continue to catch VD!

Cobell implies that young women are catching VD even though they are not prostitutes or promiscuous. In that case he must explain how they get it. Is he aware that the vast majority of the population practise pre-marital intercourse with the people they love and do not catch VD? Why does he think this is?

Cobell states that "no amount of education will prevent some people from catching this disease". It may now be impossible to completely eradicate VD. The reason for this is that for the last five hundred years people have persistently opposed any attempts through education to prevent or control the spread of VD—it is sad to see Denis Cobell on their side.

MICHAEL LLOYD-JONES.

Free will

PETER CROMMELIN's attempt to explain "The Meaning of Free Will" (June 21) only serves to further confuse the issue. By defining free will as "the sum total of voluntary actions" he merely replaces one meaningless concept with another. What is 'voluntary', and what evidence does Mr Crommelin have for considering that the actions of the human animal are completely 'voluntary' while the behaviour of every other animal is determined? I suggest the answer lies in the vanity inherited from Christianity that man is unique and superior to all other animals.

Mr Crommelin gives as an example of free will a man whose "will to believe came to be totally defeated by the facts of life, the facts of history, and . . . the facts of science". I must confess I could not have provided a better example of will being determined by external influences, and fail to understand how Mr Crommelin can consider this example helps his case. I have seldom seen expressed in the FREETHINKER sentiments so unscientific as Peter Crommelin's amazing statement that 'the majority of individuals are what they have chosen to make themselves', or so unhumanistic as "the majority of persons who bemoan their fate have only themselves to blame if they fail to make use of their natural intelligence and free will". Does he consider that two-thirds of the world's population *choose* to be underfed? How are the Greek democrats to use their "natural intelligence" to defeat the fascist junta persecuting them? In what way can the Vietnamese peasant exercise his "free will" to escape American napalm?

If Mr Crommelin really considers the vain concept of free will to be more important than a free society then the most charitable thing I can say is that he has his priorities slightly confused.

MICHAEL GRAY.

Religious Education

IN RECENT EDITIONS of the FREETHINKER there have been a number of articles discussing the effect of compulsory worship on young people and, having almost completed seven years at a High School, I would like to add to this controversy a few thoughts of my own.

Although I feel that there are dangers in compulsory worship I cannot seriously consider indoctrination to be one of them. On the contrary, the dreary, daily ritual tends to encourage apathy. During the first few years at school most people regard the morning service with a certain amount of awe, but as the novelty wears off so does the interest. The School Bible is a huge book mounted on a stately pedestal from which a prefect, looking as miserable and lifeless as possible, reads a short passage. It has no connection with real life and as a result it escapes critical analysis.

The unchanging service, with its daily hymn and prayer, encourages apathy rather than a genuine acceptance or rejection of Christianity and this, I feel, is the greatest danger. The vast majority of people in the school which I attend seem to neither consciously accept nor consciously reject the Christian faith. In discussions on religion only a small minority of the class is prepared to state a point of view. The others are reduced to passive obedience by years of compulsion. Most of them have neither the desire to attend a religious service outside school nor the resolution to withdraw from the school service.

I feel that a much more satisfactory system would be to allow pupils from at least the fourth form upwards to withdraw from assembly without the unnecessary procedure of receiving a written acknowledgement from their parents. If this were the case the school religious service would take on meaning. Attendance or non-attendance would be a positive step and not just a passive acknowledgement of authority. Non-Christians would be spared the embarrassment of degrading themselves by praying to a God whose existence they do not acknowledge. By all means provide facilities for worship, but compulsion will achieve nothing.

Clearly assembly should be made non-compulsory for members of the upper school at least. Given a free choice, young people at school would either be able to make a positive show of religion by attending the service or an equally positive show of resolution by not attending.

Such a system would, I am sure, help to bring an end to the large scale religious apathy present in our schools today.

DAVID BINNS.

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