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MORAL VALUES—UP OR DOWN?

ADDRESSING the Law Society's annual conference at Scarborough last week, Dr Coggan, the Archbishop of York, deplored the way in which present day moral values put money before reputation and sex before love.

Since its invention was necessitated by the impracticability of men continuing to exchange the diverse products of their labour, money has been a major medium through which humanity's lower moral standards have been manifested. Present day moral values are tending, if anything, to reduce the power of money as an agent for evil. If one considers the appalling moral standards maintained by feudal landowners or white slave traders with the aid of money, then Coggan's assertion that the *News of the World's* publication of the Keeler memoirs is indication of declining moral standards is revealed to be illogical. One does not dispute that the *News of the World* is putting money before reputation, nor that such a policy is a nauseating and undesirable one, but this is not ammunition for an attack on the morals of our increasingly secular society.

Coggan's second example of our moral laxity, that we put sex before love, presents a far more complex question, principally because 'love' is chameleon-like in its ability to evade clear definition. Coggan is no doubt disturbed by what appears, at any rate, to be a vast increase in adultery, and by the ostensible lowering of the age at which people begin their sex lives, both of which cause an increase in extra-marital sex. However, to say that this indicates that people are putting sex before love is not necessarily true. The trend towards more flamboyant sexual expression can well be construed as healthy, if one has the open mindedness to appreciate that a large amount of sex outside of marriage is the result of strong feelings between two people—feelings of a type which might be called 'love'. The number of people—even proverbially and hackneyed 'young people'—who sleep with people of whom they are not in some degree fond is infinitesimal. The trend can therefore be seen to be desirable in that it is a breakaway from the socially divisive and irrational tradition that one man is capable of loving one woman only, and vice versa.

Coggan gave as an example of the moral deterioration caused by our supposedly putting sex before love, the advertisement for a car, which claims as the automobile's major attribute that it is "just right for seduction". One wouldn't deny that such an advertisement is exacerbating in its crudity. Almost all advertisements are intellectual insults, but this is no proof of the undesirability of the tendencies they reflect.

The Archbishop suggested to the assembled lawyers that Britain needed to return to the values introduced by Christ. Before making this assertion, Dr Coggan should first prove that with regard to money we are behaving less morally than our forefathers, who killed, tortured and enslaved for it; that with regard to sex our present slightly freer sexuality is not in fact more moral than the Christian endorsed marital system, with its history of anguish caused by the heaven sent law which permits one person only to love one other; and finally that the secularisation of society is not in fact beginning to release Britons from a moral code without rational foundation, and not enabling them to build one based on reasoned enlightenment instead of maleducation and the fear of God.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

VERY SOON a resolution will have to be introduced in parliament in order to prolong the Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act beyond the end of its trial period on July 31, 1970. The National Secular Society is to hold a much-publicised meeting on November 6, which will be chaired by the well-known *New Statesman* writer, C. H. Rolph, and at which Canon John Collins, the Chairman of the National Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, Louis Blom-Cooper, the editor of *The Hanging Question*, David Tribe, the President of the National Secular Society and the Right Hon. Kenneth Younger, PC, the Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, will speak.

With the possibility of a spring election and perhaps a conservative government, it is to be hoped that the government will act on the question soon. David Tribe in a recent press statement said: "It is undoubtedly true that violence is rising everywhere. This is a social problem that, by the use of psychological, educational and other preventive techniques, we must tackle. It involves the mobility of criminals, transport of vast sums of cash, undermanned police forces and human frustration in our big cities. Hanging is institutionalised violence, suggesting that peaceful solutions to problems cannot be found. The National Secular Society has always believed that capital punishment should be abolished permanently, so that in a calm atmosphere the social causes of crime can be explored and controlled".

Legislators must be brought to appreciate that criminals should no longer be punished, but cured. To punish criminals in a tit for tat manner is the action of a society which is desperately struggling to maintain law and order—it is the action of a government unsure of itself. The Americans and the Russians do it, but Britain, which continually pats itself on the back for its high degree of democracy, has no need of it, and if the image of Britain as a nice country to live in is to be perpetuated, we must

(Continued overleaf)

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continue to lead in the field of social reform. Many Western European countries have overtaken us in certain spheres. Most of them have left us standing with regard to capital punishment. To bring it back again now would be a tragedy for Britain and the people in it.

AWARE HEADMASTER

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr Geoffrey Hughes, the headmaster of Millom Comprehensive School in Cumberland, who allowed two 15-year-old girls to play the delightful pop record, *Je t'aime . . . moi n'en plus*, at a morning assembly. The record is the one which was banned by the BBC, because the recording artists, Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg, portray a couple making love with the appropriate sighs and heavy breathing.

Mr Hughes has instituted a system whereby on one day each week his pupils can make their own contributions to assembly. The girls used the record to illustrate a story they had had written about a boy-girl relationship which ends with the girl becoming pregnant and the boy leaving her. Said one of the girls: "We did not write it to shock people. Our intentions were to show other youngsters what

can happen to them if they are not careful. This is what can happen to two people who think they are in love".

A certain number of parents have protested to Mr Hughes. One said: "There is enough sex thrust at children without them getting it in morning assembly. The point of assembly is to give them something to think about. What should they be thinking about after this?" Instead of giving a silly answer, Mr Hughes replied that the girls had treated a serious social problem in a thoroughly moral and effective manner.

SEX FAIR

THE WORLD'S first Sex Fair is being held in Copenhagen at the moment. In calling on the Danish government to stop the proceedings, five Danish church organisations said that "pornography", was a plague which would damage the socially useful activities of individuals, and end in national laxity and licentiousness. In the past few weeks the word "pornography" seems to have issued an unprecedented number of times from the lips of those who have never stopped to define it. Their hesitancy to expand on the subject is probably not so much caused by they're never having actually seen any "pornography" due to high blood pressure, as to the tendency of such people to accept that because the word exists and means something dirty therefore something dirty exists. Whether one considers "pornography" or a sex fair to be dirty or not, one cannot get away from the fact that to prohibit something or make a fuss about its availability cannot fail to arouse public interest. The would-be censors invariably defeat their own objects. The Danish churches were probably crestfallen at the low measure of public response to the world's first sex fair. *The Times* reported that: "Most Danish newspapers say that the fair is dull and lacks both humour and charm".

ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Secular Society. Details of membership and inquiries regarding bequests and secular funeral services may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1. Telephone 01-407 2717. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the NSS.

Humanist Letter Network (International) and Humanist Postal Book Service (secondhand books bought and sold). For information or catalogue send 6d stamp to Kit Mouat, Mercers, Cuckfield, Sussex.

Humanitas Stamps: Help 5 Humanist charities. Buy stamps from/ or send them to Mrs A. C. Goodman, 51 Percy Road, Romford, RM7 8QX, Essex. British and African speciality. Send for list.

COMING EVENTS

OUTDOOR

Edinburgh Branch NSS (The Mound)—Sunday afternoon and evening: Messrs. Cronan and McRae.

Manchester Branch NSS, Platt Fields, Sunday afternoon, 3 p.m.: Car Park, Victoria Street, Sunday evenings, 8 p.m.

Merseyside Branch NSS (Pierhead)—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.: Sundays, 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

INDOOR

Brighton and Hove Humanist Group: Regency House, Oriental Place, Brighton: Sunday, November 2, 5.30 p.m.: "Thomas Paine—with special reference to *The Age of Reason*", Christopher Brunel (Chairman, Thomas Paine Society).

Conservation Society: Royal Commonwealth Society, Northumberland Avenue, London, WC2: Saturday, November 1, 2.30 p.m.:

Presidential Address by Yehudi Menuhin, Hon. KBE—"Heaven upon Earth?".

Humanist Teachers' Association: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1: Saturday, November 1, 3 p.m.: "The New Education Act—The Future of Religion in Schools", Tyrrell Burgess (Author of the Pelican *A Guide to English Schools* and formerly Director of the Advisory Centre for Education, Education Correspondent of *The Guardian* and Assistant Editor of *New Society*).

Leicester Humanist Society: Vaughan College, St Nicholas Square, Leicester: Tuesday, November 4, 7.30 p.m.: Two half-hour films on Race: "Immigrant schools-leavers" and "Ku Klux Klan (produced by David Dimpleby)".

Leicester Secular Society: 75 Humberstone Gate: Sunday, November 2, 6.30 p.m.: "Open and Closed Minds", Derek Wright, MA (Department of Psychology, Leicester University).

London Young Humanists: 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London, W8: Sunday, November 2, 7.30 p.m.: Wine and Cheese party in aid of Swaneng Hill School, Botswana. Tickets 7s 6d from Robert Goodsman, 10 Star and Garter Mansions, Lower Richmond Road, Putney, London, SW15.

National Council for the Unmarried Mother and Her Child: Caxton Hall, London, SW1: Thursday, November 6, 2 p.m.: Annual General Meeting—Address by David Ennals, MP (Minister of State, Department of Health and Social Security) Film, "Who Am I?", introduced by Alexina M. McWhinnie (Adoption Research Worker and Author of *Adopted Children—How they grow up*): Tea: Business meeting.

South Place Ethical Society: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1: Sunday, November 2, 11 a.m.: "Purpose in Life", Lord Sorensen. Admission free. Tuesday, November 4, 7 p.m.: Discussion—"Psychology and Education", Richard Lansdown, MA. Admission 2s (including refreshments). Members free.

SERVETUS

ELIZABETH COLLINS

Towards no crimes have men shown themselves so cold-bloodedly cruel as in punishing differences of belief.

—James Russell Lowell.

ON October 27, 1553, Michael Servetus, one of the Church's most eminent victims was burnt alive as a result of Calvinist intolerance towards a man who questioned certain points of doctrine including that of the Trinity. A black day in the murky history of Christianity, and the same intolerance remains with us today.

Miguel, son of Hernando Villanueva was born at Tudela in Spanish Navarre in a year uncertain but it is thought to be 1511. He studied law at Toulouse and while there, in 1528, his interest was aroused in theological discussion and he received his first introduction to the Bible. He published some early writings under the name Michael Serveto but later changed to the Latinised version Servetus by which he is generally known. At Toulouse he found a patron in Juan de Quintana who in 1530 was appointed confessor to the Emperor Charles V, and as a member of Quintana's suite Servetus attended the double coronation of Charles at Bologna in 1530. There the spectacle of excessive homage accorded to the Pope aroused in Servetus intense anti-papal feeling and he soon afterwards left Quintana—probably on that account.

He then travelled through Basle, Geneva, Lyons and on to Strasbourg where he met Bucer and other Reformers. He adopted some of their ideas but was critical of others and suggested certain further reforms. While studying the New Testament Servetus found the prevailing doctrine of the Trinity so unsatisfactory that he wrote his famous critical essay 'De Trinitatus Erroribus' and published it. His assertion that there was no scriptural authority for this doctrine provoked so much hostility and antagonism towards him that he found it prudent to revert to his former surname of Villanovanus and to conceal his identity as far as possible. The essay was an earnest and original work, product of a wide range of study and printed by John Setzer at Hagenau. It was followed by a much expanded version of the work in dialogue form in 1532. He is next heard of, still using the Villanovanus name, editing scientific books at Lyons, and while there became attached to Doctor Symphorien Champier through whose influence he went to Paris to study medicine under Johann Günther. There, in 1536 he met Calvin who tried to correct him on certain theological points, but evidently without success. That may have been the fatal turning point in the relationship between the two men, giving rise to smouldering antagonism and desire for revenge on the part of the narrow-minded Calvin.

In Paris Servetus soon became assistant to Günther who thought highly both of his general culture and his dissecting skill, rating him second in medical knowledge to Galen. After graduating he published lectures on medical syrups and the pulmonary circulation of the blood, also on geometry and astrology as related to medicine. Following Günther's death Servetus went to Louvain to study Hebrew and theology and then to practice medicine at Avignon until September 1540 when he entered the famous medical school at Montpellier. Archbishop Paulnier of Vienna who had heard Servetus lecture in Paris then invited him to become his personal physician which post Servetus accepted and held for twelve years. During this time he continued the editorial work for his Lyons publishers and made a considerable amount of money.

Servetus was ostensibly a practising Catholic—it was

dangerous to be anything else where he was—but secretly he pursued his own private reformist ideas and theological speculations. In 1545 however, he made the fatal blunder of writing to Calvin, sending him manuscript copies of his revised tracts and expressing a wish to visit him in Geneva. Calvin's reply has disappeared (was it incriminating?) and was evidently not encouraging. Servetus was warned that it would be dangerous for him to go to Geneva, and in 1547 complained to a friend of Calvin's failure to return his manuscript so that he was obliged to re-write it. The two Basle publishers to whom he sent it refused to print it (it is thought at Calvin's instigation). However, Servetus persisted and an edition of 1,000 copies of *Christianismi Restitutio* was secretly printed in Vienna by Baltaser Arnollet in January 1553 and privately sent to Lyons and Frankfort for the Easter market.

On February 26 a page from this work naming Servetus as the author was sent from Geneva to a citizen of Lyons and passed to the Inquisitor-General of that town. Calvin can hardly escape the charge of complicity in this dubious affair, especially as he supplied examples of Servetus's handwriting to the examining authority. Servetus was arrested on April 4 and examined for two days, then through the secret agency of some friend he escaped from imprisonment. How and where he spent the following four months is not known, but on August 6 he was in Louyset, a village on the French side of Geneva. On the next day, Sunday, he unwisely walked into Geneva itself and went to the Rose Inn enquiring for a boat to take him across the Lake en route for Zurich. No boat being available until the next day Servetus rashly went to evensong where he was recognised and promptly arrested.

The nominal prosecutor in the case was Nicholas de la Fontaine and the trial lasted from August 14 to October 26 when Servetus was sentenced to be burnt alive. The condemnatory clauses prefacing the sentence accused him of heresy and of blasphemy against the foundation of the Christian religion. On October 27 the sentence was carried out at Champal. Servetus may have counted on the legal application of the law in Switzerland which would have meant exile only, there being no current law for inflicting the capital punishment in that country. The old laws of Justinian had been abolished in 1535 and the only penalty according to the new Edicts of 1543 which could have been enacted against Servetus was banishment. It appears that at the trial the Procurator-General drew attention to the extinct law of Justinian, and the suspicion remains that this law was revived solely to consign Servetus to the flames. When the outcry arose after his death it was no mitigation of Calvin's criminal intolerance to say he had rather the man had been beheaded. He had achieved his result by no creditable means, and today it is Calvin who stands guilty before the bar of history.

Statues have been erected in memory of Servetus in Madrid (1876), in Paris, Aramnese and an expiatory block at Champal where he was burnt. There is an extensive literature relating to him both in Paris and Vienna, and an almost perfect copy of *Christianismi Restitutio* in Edinburgh University Library. His was an enquiring mind challenging traditional Christianity for which he paid with his life.

Four hundred years ago it was the stake and the faggots, today it is petrol bombs and paving stones. And still, in spite of all the ecumenical talk, divisive credal differences and hatreds, of whatever brand, remain unresolved.

ROBERT BROWN, BOTANIST

NIGEL H. SINNOTT

"IF YOU are no more of a hermit than Brown, indeed, I shall not complain. That is, whether you know it or not, he is really fond of Society and calculated to shine in it: and to my certain knowledge, never so happy as when he is in it. But he has unfortunately sceptical notions on religion, which often make life itself a burden to him: and which bring him no comfort in the prospect of eternity." So wrote¹ Sir William Jackson Hooker (1785-1865) the first director of Kew Gardens, to his son Joseph who in 1840 was collecting plants on St Helena as part of the famous *Erebus* and *Terror* Antarctic expedition. The younger Hooker, who was destined to become a friend of Darwin's and be responsible for "vetting" the botanical parts of *The Origin of Species*, had written to say that if ever he returned he would lead the life of a hermit, "like Brown, perhaps, but without his genius".

Sir William's idea that Robert Brown was unhappy because of his religious scepticism can, I think, be dismissed as wishful thinking. Von Martius² said of him (Brown): "he talked on most subjects—rarely, however on politics, never on religion", and the idea that he was anti-social was much exaggerated, even though he never married, as the following quotation from Robert Hunt³ will show.



Robert Brown (after an old photograph) and flower of *Rafflesia arnoldii* R.Br.

"Brown's character in private life was acknowledged to be peculiarly attractive by all who knew him. This cannot be more satisfactorily shown than . . . from a letter written by Dr Francis Boott⁴ . . . presenting to the Royal Society a copy of Brown's *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae* which was a personal gift from the author: 'I have never presumed to be able to estimate Brown's eminent merits as a man of science; but I knew vaguely their worth. I loved him for his truth, his simple modesty, and, above all, for his more than woman's tenderness. Of all the persons I have known, I have never known his equal in kindness of nature.'"

Robert Brown was born in Montrose, Scotland, on December 21, 1773, the son of the Rev James Brown, an Episcopalian minister (his mother was the daughter of a Presbyterian pastor, the Rev Robert Taylor). He was educated at Montrose Grammar School, Marischal College, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh University, where he was supposed to be studying medicine. The young Brown was not

particularly outstanding at classics or the physical sciences, but became very interested in natural history and joined the Edinburgh Natural History Society, to which he delivered his first paper, on the Botanical history of Angus, in 1791, at the age of 18.

In 1795 (without taking his degree) he joined the 'fencible' Fifeshire infantry regiment as an ensign and assistant surgeon, and was sent to Northern Ireland where he continued his botanical collecting. In 1798, however, whilst on recruiting service, he was introduced to the eminent Sir Joseph Banks (b. 1743), who had sailed to the Pacific with Captain Cook and lived in a great house in Soho Square with his personal herbarium⁵ and vast botanical library. Sir Joseph offered Brown the opportunity of going as naturalist on an exploring expedition under Captain Matthew Flinders (1774-1814); this he accepted, and left from Portsmouth in 1801. Robert Brown was away for four years, and during this time explored the coasts of New Holland (Australia) and Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), bringing back four thousand specimens of plants, many new to science, when he landed at Liverpool in October 1805. (Captain Flinders, meanwhile, had been captured by the French.)

After his return to England, Brown forsook the army and was appointed librarian of the Linnean Society of London. He also worked over his Australasian plants and in 1810 published his *magnum opus*, volume one of *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae et insulae Van-Diemen*, containing 464 genera of plants (a third of them new to science) and 2,000 species (three quarters of which were new).⁶ This work, and Brown's other papers on botany, contributed much to the acceptance of the more natural systems of classification pioneered by De Jussieu and De Candolle, over the artificial Linnean system, based on the pre-evolutionary concept of the "fixity of species".

In 1810 also Dr Dryander, Sir Joseph Banks' librarian, died and Robert Brown took his place. When Banks himself died, in 1820, he left Brown his herbarium and library for life, then to revert to the British Museum. In 1827, however, Brown "succeeded in driving an advantageous bargain with the trustees of the British Museum when he transferred to them Banks' collections on condition that he was appointed 'keeper' on very attractive terms" where he remained "for over forty years, . . . spider-like at the centre of the [British] botanical web."⁷

Robert Brown is famous not only for his many papers on plant classification and fossil botany (he bequeathed a valuable collection of fossil woods to the British Museum), but he also pioneered the use of the microscope. By this means in 1827 he discovered the strange flickering of protoplasm and other colloids (when viewed microscopically) which is named after him, Brownian movement. In 1831 he discovered the nucleus in plant cells and the "streaming" phenomenon of the protoplasm in the staminal hairs of *Tradescantia virginica*. At the other end of the size scale he first described in 1820 the weird parasitic vine from the jungles of Sumatra which has the largest flowers in the world; he called it *Rafflesia*, after the collector, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781-1826) of Java and Singapore fame.

Robert Brown's other achievements are legion: he refused Professorships at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen in order to stay with the Banksian collections, and amongst

his many awards may be mentioned Fellowship of the Royal Society (1811), Honorary Doctor of Civil Law, Oxford (1832), the Copley Medal (1839), as well as the award of the order 'Pour le Mérite' by the King of Prussia. Sir Robert Peel also granted him a civil list pension of £100 a year, though it would appear that Brown was never exactly short of money. After a full, and very fruitful life he died on June 10, 1858, aged 84, and was buried "surrounded by Australian flowers"⁸ in Kensal Green Cemetery on June 15. The great South American explorer, von Humboldt dedicated his *Synopsis Plantarum Orbis Novi* to him, and acclaimed Brown as "Facile Botanicorum princeps, Britanniae gloria et ornamentum". In our own time J. S. L. Gilmour⁹ has stated of Robert Brown: "by his unswerving devotion to the discipline of accurate observation and cautious deduction he stands out as an ornament

and a glory, not only of Britain and of botany, but of the whole world of science". What more can one add except, perhaps, to say that it was a pity that he did not live long enough to see his ideas finally vindicated by the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859.

¹ Huxley, Leonard. *Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker* 1; 1918: p. 162. London.

² (Von Martius) *Annls. Mag. Nat. Hist.* May 1859: p. 329.

³ *Dict. National Biography* 7, 1886: pp. 25-27.

⁴ Bott in the original, but Boott according to Ramsbottom.⁶

⁵ A collection of plants, dried, labelled, and mounted on uniform sheets of paper.

⁶ Ramsbottom, John. "Robert Brown, Botanicorum facile princeps." *Proc. Linn. Soc. London* 1931-1932: p. 17.

⁷ Gilmour, John. *British Botanists*. London, 1944: pp. 34, 33.

⁸ Von Martius, *l.c.*

⁹ Gilmour, *l.c.*

THE MYTH OF INDEPENDENCE

G. L. SIMONS

COLONIALISM is nasty. We all know that. And there are a number of reasons why it is nasty. One of the most important of these is that the raw materials of the country colonised are stolen by the colonial power. The underdeveloped country—for such they usually are—is systematically robbed of the bulk of its natural wealth. This has a number of consequences.

Balanced industrial development in the underdeveloped country becomes impossible. A certain labour demand is created by foreign capital and by the presence of an occupying power. But the status of the natives remains strictly one of servant to master and there are no systematic efforts to develop an industrial base for the benefit of the mass of the people.

The natives in the colonised country quickly learn to identify the cause of their misery with the presence of the alien power, and a nationalist movement is quick to grow. The power of these movements can be judged when one thinks of the treatment received by the British in Aden, the French in Algeria, the Dutch in Indonesia, and the Americans in Vietnam. In all these instances a relatively primitive guerilla machine developed to topple the forces of advanced nations equipped with modern weapons and all the other logistic facilities made possible by modern industry.

And so, one by one, the underdeveloped countries eject the foreign troops and begin to experience a period of what we in the West choose to call independence: one thinks of India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, and many other Afro-Asian countries. This—it would seem—is the end of the story. Freedom has been won and national pride has been restored. In fact this is far from the truth and there is an important sense in which the underdeveloped country is more enslaved than it was when foreign troops were sitting inside its borders.

For the important facts are that the bulk of the world's raw materials are 'acquired' one way or another by the developed nations, and that the majority of underdeveloped nations are not industrialising any faster now than they were when they were colonised.

In *War Crimes in Vietnam* Bertrand Russell remarks that America controls sixty per cent of the world's raw materials. This means that the standard of living of modern Americans is directly based on the natural wealth of the underdeveloped countries. And this situation is a positive

liability to the poor countries themselves. Many of them are rich in resources but they cannot use these for their own good since they are directly owned by US firms. The poor and deprived watch the railway wagons carrying, in thousands of tons, the rich ores for shipment to America so that middle and upper class Americans can enjoy their two or three cars in every garage, their televisions in every room, and striped toothpaste by the mile. This is the horrible truth about exploitation. A section of the American people enjoy an absurdly high standard of living by ensuring that millions of people in other countries are underfed, ill-clad, ill-housed and ill-educated, ageing and dying prematurely, and living their brief lives often in unspeakable squalor and misery.

In 1960, in his remarkable book *The Waste Makers*, Vance Packard underlined the growing dependence of America on foreign natural resources. Chapter 18, called 'The Vanishing Resources', is devoted to the growing shortage of ores, timber, oil, fresh water, etc., in *domestic supply*, needed by America to maintain both its current standard of living and its military preparedness. One quotation will illustrate the point (a headline in the *New York Times*, 9/12/58): *Dangerous Decline Found in US Natural Resources*.

This then is the situation. The high standard of living in the developed countries is based primarily on the control of the natural resources of the underdeveloped countries. In many instances, e.g., Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, and most of the Latin American countries, this control is assured by the physical presence of American military personnel—as soon as there is a threat of nationalisation of American assets, without consultation or compensation, the American military machine swings into action—either overtly as in the case of Guatemala, Vietnam, Dominica, Cuba, etc., or surreptitiously as in the case of Bolivia, Greece, Portugal, Argentina. The first method requires the skills of the army commanders, the second those of the CIA.

So much seems obvious—as indeed it is. But when a country wins nominal independence the position is often clouded—the foreign troops are out, but why do we still have a miserable life? Why are the living conditions so unchanged after independence? Unless one understands what Nkrumah termed 'neo-colonialism' the answers cannot be found. Here is a quote from the introduction to

Nkrumah's book *Neo-colonialism—The Last Stage of Imperialism*:

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.

This may sound an unlikely situation—and it is not one that we find in Western propaganda—but a close reading of world politics makes its truth inescapable.

By way of examples consider the relevance of the United Fruit Company to the overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954, and the role of the Sugar Producers' Association to the overthrow of Cheddi Jagan in the early sixties. Consider also the penetration of Africa by Western capitalism. These three instances are well described in *From Yalta to Vietnam* (Chapter 10) by David Horowitz, in *The West on Trial* by Cheddi Jagan, and in Nkrumah's *Neo-colonialism*.

If possible it is desirable to exercise economic and political control over the raw material area without military presence or intervention. When the troops are involved, nationalism swells and the occupying power is made uncomfortable. If the troops are evacuated and the control maintained through a bourgeois parliamentary system and a bourgeois political leadership in the exploited country then nationalism does not have an easy focus, and a fair degree of political insight—something not possessed by most people—is necessary to understand why the countries continue to be milked after the troops have gone home.

Western 'aid' is one means of maintaining the political control—a means which has the gloss of charity and genuine assistance. Western aid, a confidence trick, has various forms—sometimes it merely means propping up a corrupt military machine, as in South Korea, South Vietnam and Formosa; sometimes it is a straightforward business investment where a profit return is expected; sometimes it is a loan of capital at current interest rates; and sometimes—and this is what is always stressed by Western apologists—

it results in the building of universities. But think for a moment what this last thing means.

One of the great sources of trained personnel for the Western developed countries is the underdeveloped world. The poor countries particularly bemoan the fact that so many of their graduates emigrate to America and Western Europe. This means that a substantial part of Western aid is earmarked for the training of bright men and women in poor countries for subsequent life-long service, not in the poor countries, but in the rich ones. Thus a chunk of Western aid becomes merely an extension of the American education system. As well as stealing the rich ores from poor countries the US steals also their brightest individuals—of what benefit is this form of aid to the millions of homeless on Calcutta's streets or the children who eat bark in Brazil?

There is now more British investment in India than there ever was before Indian 'independence' but there is general agreement that India's problems are growing, that she is falling behind, that in many regions—and some people say nationally also—the per capita income has actually dropped.

Remember one thing—if money is invested in an underdeveloped country it is because the investor expects to make a profit, i.e. he puts in less than he takes out. In terms of return on capital, it is almost twice as profitable to invest in the underdeveloped world than in the developed world. Standard Oil, for instance, with one third of its capital invested in poor countries derives two-thirds of its profits from them. Between 1950 and 1965 the total flow of capital on investment account to the poor countries was nine billion dollars whereas the outflow was over twenty-five billion dollars.

Western capitalism is systematically robbing the poor countries and nominal political independence, in itself, makes no difference whatsoever.

A BRIEF SOPHISTRY ON IMMORTALITY

NICHOLAS GRIFFIN

"You cannot fool all of the people all of the time" is analytic.—J. L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, p. 81.

THE READER ought to be warned that this short note is entirely disingenuous. It seeks to apply to the concept of immortality, or, more precisely, of life after death, the current philosophical method of ordinary language analysis and thereby to find it conceptually confused. But I have little belief that ordinary language analysis can satisfactorily solve philosophical problems, so I don't think that this paper does anything to solve the problem of immortality. However, it seems to me that ordinary language analysis is important in reformulating philosophical problems more clearly and thus helps to clear the ground for their solution. After my brief analysis, I hope to show how this applies to the problem in hand.

The analysis is this: we apply the term "living" to animals and plants before they have died; and conversely we apply the term "dead" to those that are no longer living. The conclusion is clear: to call a thing "dead" implies that it is not living; and to call a thing "living" implies that it is not dead. This bare minimum of meaning is unquestionably part of the ordinary language analysis of "life" and "death" and hence, in ordinary language, the concept "life after death" is a contradiction in terms, as it plainly appears to be. At this stage the reader is likely to reply that we are

merely arguing about words and have precisely missed the point. Of course, this is true, but the ordinary language analysis is also correct. "Life" and "death" are ordinary terms and mean what they ordinarily do, and the believer in immortality has no right to misappropriate them. Life and death are what people call "life" and "death": in this sense you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

Thus we have a correct analysis, but one which completely misses the central, factual core of the problem of immortality. However, although we have not solved the problem of immortality we have contributed to its solution a little for it can now be seen that it has been formulated in a way that is self-contradictory and will need to be reformulated if it is to survive. Because we call once living things "dead" after they have died, any question about their state when dead is not a question about whether or not they are still living (for that is contradictory) but a question about the nature of death. Thus the question "Is there life-after-death?" should be reformulated as "What is death like?" for whatever sort of state death is, it will not be like our present life because our present life presupposes our not being dead. Seen in these terms the question of immortality loses much of its emotional significance, for it is not clear why we should be delighted by the prospect of an eternal existence radically different in nature from that we at present experience.

BOOK REVIEWS

DENIS COBELL

MAURICE HILL

Shaw—"The Chucker-Out": Allan Chappelow (Allen and Unwin, 75s).

THE TITLE of this book was provided by Shaw himself; the photograph of him standing on the doorstep of his home at Ayot St Lawrence which graces the dust-cover, is aptly entitled "The Chucker-Out". Shaw was a renowned iconoclast, and not least in his rejection of religious dogma. He was a little less successful in promoting positive ideas to replace those he would throw out, but nonetheless his witty prose collected here by Mr Chappelow makes entertaining reading.

Mr Chappelow's achievement is remarkable. He has assembled much material, and many of Shaw's essays from hitherto unpublished papers; his labour of love has inevitably kept him in the reading room of the British Museum for many years, while he earned his bread and butter employed in restaurants, hotels and as a nightwatchman. The book is intended as a companion volume to the author's earlier work, *Shaw The Villager*.

Bernard Shaw did not profess to be a Christian, because he considered it too high an order for him. On his ninety-second birthday, in a preface to *Farfetched Fables*, he wrote some amusing remarks on the doctrine of transubstantiation in the Mass. As a freethinker he thought he was more entitled to believe in the transfer of bread and wine to living tissue than the pious! If swallowing and digestion were not the performance of this process, what was, he asked?

Shaw had a particular admiration for Bradlaugh's intellectual honesty and opposition to the hypocrisies of the British parliamentary system. Though there is of course a certain inconsistency in Shaw, which was especially well demonstrated in his political opinions. His thinking was at times muddled, and he attempted to conceal this with his wit. His vanity he attributed to his artistic temperament. But there is a lot of good 'common-sense' in what Shaw had to say about society, and these collected essays cover a wide range of topics where Shaw sought to dispose of "accepted ideas" which he thought both hypocritical and dangerous to humanity. Shaw went too far in his condemnation of the common man's ability to think things out for himself, he accepted too readily the need for an élite amongst intellectuals, whom he thought should govern the people. This road leads to fascism—a criticism Shaw could never understand.

Shaw should have seen that it is the effect of an élite which creates confined thoughts in the common man, and the removal of this restriction should be sufficient for reason to prevail. The subordination of masses of people to whatever ideology, can never be done in the name of freedom, because it depends upon repression and dogma, and sometimes violent assault on non-conformists—just those things which Shaw hated most and wished to halt.

One quotation from a lecture by Shaw on Christian Economics may interest readers of this journal: "Shall we try to found Christianity in this country? Is it worth doing? Is it worth undoing the work of the Crucifixion, after this lapse of 2,000 years, during which Christianity has been suppressed—and suppressed by organised and armed force; and during which all the religions calling themselves Christian will really not bear examination from a Christian point of view? . . . My friend Mr Foote, the editor of the FREETHINKER, will tell you unhesitatingly all you can attempt, if you cling to this name, will be to contrive historical Christianity; and he will tell you a number of terrible things about historical Christianity". The truth of this indictment is seen easily in the vaporous work promoted by the 'South Bank' churchmen, in the name of 'Christian Humanism'—a contradiction of terms if ever there was!

During the First World War Shaw said that all the churches of Europe should close their doors until the war was over and stop supporting the bloodshed in the name of God. He argued the illogicality for both sides to pray to a common Father for victory.

In the course of a short review it is impossible to give anything but a very brief account of this book's five hundred odd pages. It contains a rich assortment of Shaw's views on subjects I have no space to discuss—sex, theatre, socialism and pacifism, and Shaw's plea for a new alphabet. I hope this 'dip' into it is sufficient to whet the reader's appetite.

Wilhelm Reich—*A Personal Biography*: Ilse Ollendorff Reich (Elek Books, 42s).

WHEN DR BENJAMIN SPOCK was sent to gaol recently for opposing the American war against Vietnam, reports appeared in the British press, and some of us were able to express our surprise at this extraordinary treatment of a great and humane man. But few of us who were about in 1956 were even aware that Wilhelm Reich, the world-famous psychologist, had been arrested in America and was later sentenced to two years in prison—where he died eight months later.

The charges against him concerned the distribution of 'accumulators' and literature alleged to be claiming 'cures'. In fact, he seems to have been persecuted with great malice and bitterness—and dishonesty—because of his advocacy of freedom from sexual inhibition. Such punitive reactions to honest recognition of the human need for orgasmic fulfilment are exactly in accord with the theories for which he was persecuted.

One of his most loyal friends and supporters was A. S. Neill of Summerhill, who wrote to him: "The fact is that you are being crucified fundamentally because you are the first man in centuries who has preached pro-life-ness, because you were the one and only man to assert the right of adolescence to love completely".

Twenty-three years after Hitler's burning of the books in Germany, the works of Wilhelm Reich were burned by government agents in America.

Ilse Ollendorff Reich, his second legal wife, has written an interesting and intimate account of his life, including his break with Freud, his various marriages, the development of the orgone theory, and his final paranoid fantasies—or so they still seem—about impending attacks on earth from outer space.

For a full understanding of Reich's theories one must look at his own works; particularly recommended is *The Sexual Revolution*, which is a landmark in human progress, and likely to have a fundamental effect on the reader's outlook on life. There would be advantages in reading that first, and then coming to the biography. Mrs Reich does give some useful and pithy summaries, however:

"Reich's theories hold that sexual energy is being built up in the body and needs release through orgasm, involving the total body. If the natural release of the energy is inhibited for one reason or another, stasis of the energy sets in, giving rise to all kinds of neurotic mechanisms."

Orgasm is not enough. The *totality* of the orgasmic experience is a vital factor in physical and mental health; and most people are not even aware of the extent to which they fail to approach it.

Though at one time a member of the communist party, Reich found in Russia the same bourgeois moralistic attitudes to childhood sexuality as in capitalist countries. Finally, he found himself hounded by both communists and fascists, since all were doctrinaire opponents of sexual honesty. "Sexual repression leads to submissiveness to authoritarian family and authoritarian state, the breeding places of mental illness and totalitarianism." The relevance of these ideas to contemporary happenings in our own society is clear. Many of our young people who feel themselves sexually liberated are also able to break from authoritarian restraints and are in open revolt against paternalism; and one of the greatest fears of the authorities is of free sexual enjoyment for the young, even when it is safe. Indeed, for an understanding of the revolutionary changes about to take place in our society, one must read at least Alex Comfort: *Sex in Society and Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*; Erich Fromm: *Fear of Freedom and The Sane Society*; and Reich's *The Sexual Revolution*. Authority, religion, and suppression of the young (often called "education") are in conflict with democracy, humanism, genuine education, and sexual freedom.

Reich was many years ahead of his time, and his life was one long struggle against hostile and often irrational criticism, which he came to call the Emotional Plague. This involved expulsion from the communist party in 1933, flight from Nazi Germany in the same year, expulsion from Sweden in 1934, prolonged persecution which drove him from Norway in 1939, and finally a long and bitter campaign against him in America culminating in imprisonment and death. Until close to the end he retained a burning optimism in pursuit of what he believed to be the truth.

"He wrote about moralistic man within a culture that makes bombs and poison gas, that tolerates prisons and politicians, and he believed that this world was destroying itself." He may be right.

LETTERS

Thomas Paine and stuffed breeches

IF I AM GUILTY (for what would be the first time in more than six years as a professional journalist) of misreporting Mr Brunel in my account of the NSS day in Sussex, I hope he will accept my sincere apologies and grateful thanks for putting me right.

However, I make my living by, among other things, accurately reporting speeches, and after reading Mr Brunel's published letter (October 18), I again referred to the shorthand notes which I took verbatim. They confirmed what appeared in the published report.

On the other hand, I cannot believe that Mr Brunel would make inaccurate statements about Thomas Paine. I must thank Mr Brunel for excusing my alleged errors by virtue of the heavy traffic. My own might be that I photographed him while he was speaking, relying upon others to "listen" for me meanwhile.

When preparing my report I was in a little doubt as to the correct name of the restaurant, so I referred to the advertisements for the outing in back issues of the FREETHINKER, all of which called it the Bull's Head, erroneously as it now appears.

But what a pity it is that the cartoon referred to did not, after all, hang in a House of Commons loo! The idea of stuffed breeches with their pants down contemplating stuffed breeches rather appealed to me.

ERIC WILLOUGHBY.

Heythrop College

MR TRIBE, who opens his letter by insinuating that "I sold out" secularism whilst he was away on holiday—surely a cowardly crime!—has succeeded only in showing his almost unlimited ignorance of the way universities conduct their affairs in this country.

In my original letter I challenged Mr Tribe to produce the evidence to justify his accusations on two points, firstly that the University of London, in admitting Heythrop College as a School, "collapsed before sectarian pressure"; secondly, that in doing so, it had concluded a "secret deal", i.e. had concealed facts which it should have made public.

He has totally failed to produce any real evidence on either point. On the first, all he can do is to flourish the sinister name of "Archbishop Beck" before which, it appears, we all must shudder and depart our separate ways. I can assure Mr Tribe, however, that this clerical bogeyman has in no way overwhelmed the Senate by his "stage-managing" abilities. The Senate reached its decision on strictly academic grounds.

On the second point, Mr Tribe's position is, frankly, a little ridiculous. In effect he complains that the University did not canvass the whole issue publicly before reaching its decision. I must point out that, although it is a public institution, it is under no sort of obligation to do so. The University is governed by its Statutes and these are made as a result of the University of London Act, 1926. The procedures for admitting a School to the University are therein defined in detail and were followed exactly in the Heythrop case as in all others.

But who is Mr Tribe to question all this anyway? Does he himself come into court with clean hands? I hardly think so. He induced the annual meeting of the NSS to pass his resolution attacking the University for its decision. In doing so, he failed even to notify the members of the Society that such a proposal was to be made. He seeks to excuse this by calling it "an emergency motion". I don't know what the "emergency" was supposed to be but, on Mr Tribe's own showing, he was aware of the matter on July 25. The AGM was held on August 3. There was therefore a clear week in which to circularise the members of the NSS with the terms of the motion. If I chose to adopt Mr Tribe's own mode of argument, I could accuse him of holding a secret conclave on the issue and of arrogantly treating the rank-and-file members of the NSS with contempt. And with greater justice, for the members of the NSS are entitled to know in advance what is to be proposed at their annual meeting, whereas Mr Tribe has really no entitlement at all to be informed in advance of the academic issues arising in a University of which he is not a member.

The admission of Heythrop as a School of the University makes no difference whatsoever to any "guaranteed support from the rates for Heythrop students" which they may enjoy. It has always been open to Heythrop to prepare its students for external degrees of the University and grants are given to students for such degrees on exactly the same basis as to those who study for internal degrees. In becoming a School of the University, Heythrop will be subject to the regulations for degrees in the Faculty of Theology, its students will be examined by examiners appointed by the

University and will enjoy no "privileges" which are not open to all other students of the University in all other Schools.

London, in common with other universities in this country, is a secular university—but not a secularist one. It is committed neither to Christianity nor to Atheism. It seeks to treat all kinds of Christians equally as far as theological studies are concerned. Whether Mr Tribe or anyone else agrees or not, theology is regarded by universities as a proper and acceptable field of study. If the NSS set up "an institute of atheism" and could do so with the same level of academic attainment as Heythrop has done in its own sphere, I see no reason why such an institute could not be accepted as a School of the University. The decision would be taken on academic grounds and academic grounds only.

What Mr Tribe is really suggesting is that universities in this country should adopt exactly the same attitude to "a Jesuit in a Jesuit college" as the Rev Ian Paisley would do. They are to be treated as pariahs beyond the academic pale. Their students are to be denied the rights and privileges which all other students, including the Methodist, Anglican and Congregationalist students in the existing London theological colleges, enjoy. This is to be done, not because of any valid academic reason, but just because we don't like Jesuits. I suggest that intolerance of this kind is wholly contrary to the principles of Freethought.

Mr Tribe knows well enough that I have no "personal contempt" for him but I am bound to contest these narrow, ill-informed and undemocratic views. In doing so, I hold no brief for Jesuits or indeed for any other Christian denomination. There is no difference of opinion between Mr Tribe and myself on the nature of the Catholic religion or the Jesuits who practise it. What I am not prepared to swallow is the view that secularists should practise the same sort of intolerance towards Catholics that they themselves practise towards others. Mr Tribe's spiritual home appears to be the Orange Order in this controversy.

J. STEWART COOK.

HUMANIST UNITY

THE ALL IRELAND HUMANIST CONFERENCE held last weekend at Carrickmacross, County Monaghan represents a considerable achievement on the part of its organisers. More than anything they have given empirical proof of the fact that humanism can unite where religion does the opposite and worse. A report of the conference will appear in the FREETHINKER next week.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

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Speakers:

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LOUIS BLOM-COOPER

DAVID TRIBE

The Rt. Hon. KENNETH YOUNGER

Chairman: C. H. ROLPH

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