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BERTRAND RUSSELL MEMORIAL MEETING

IN A WEEK when the news, such as we get of it, is dominated by three issues, the order of importance of which is a matter of opinion, the general election, the world cup and the Fleet Street newspaper strike, it is perhaps appropriate since none of these topics can easily be discussed from a freethought viewpoint that the front page of the FREETHINKER should be devoted to reporting the memorial meeting in honour of a man whose life provides perhaps the best example modern humanists have as to how humanism should be practiced.

Although June 8 was one of the hottest days this year, and thus not an ideal day for sitting still indoors for over two hours, the spacious Central Hall, Westminster, was well filled for the Bertrand Russell Memorial Meeting. As a testimony to Russell's agelessness all generations seemed to be represented equally. A number of elderly distinguished looking people were present, including Sir Julian and Lady Huxley, while at the other end of the concept which Russell rendered meaningless, the generation gap, there was an equally large number of mop haircuts, beads and maxi-dresses. The meeting was jointly sponsored by twenty-four organisations, in all of which Russell had played a part. These ranged from The Aristotelian Society to the Homosexual Law Reform Society, from Pugwash to the London Mathematical Society and from The Royal Society to the National Secular Society, including also the British Humanist Association, The Ethical Society and The Rationalist Press Association. Representatives of these formed a semi-circle behind the speakers platform.

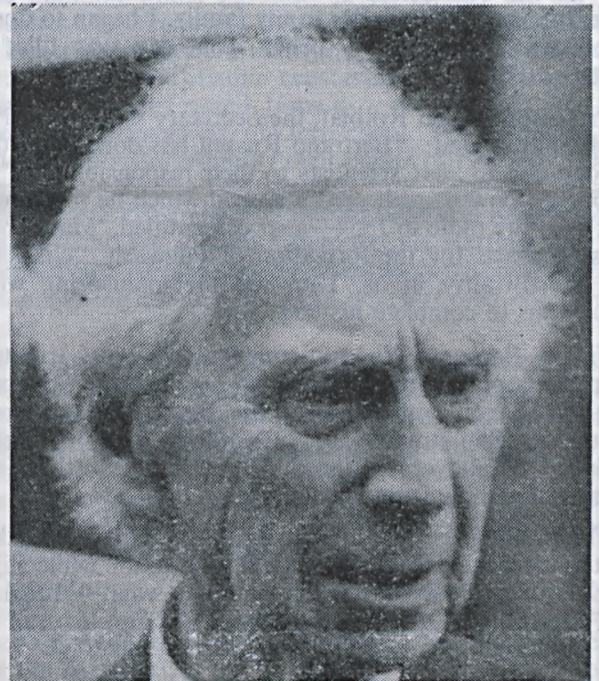
The meeting was chaired by Mr Rupert Crawshay Williams, a close friend and neighbour of Russell, who opened the meeting by inviting Mr Corliss Lamont, who had arrived at the last minute representing the American Humanist Association, to read a short message from his Association. Mr Crawshay Williams then made a short speech himself, in which he described his wife's and his own friendship with Russell as a "marvellous bonus to our lives".

The first speaker was Professor Sir Alfred Ayer, who explained briefly Russell's theories of being and knowledge and finished by countering the critics of Russell by putting his own considerable philosophical weight behind the statement: "I can assure you that Bertrand Russell was a very great philosopher".

Michael Foot, MP, spoke next and concentrated his attention on Russell's rebellious side. He quoted Russell's remark on being awarded the Order of Merit: "I have always held that no one can be respectable without being wicked but so blunted was my moral sense that I could not see in which way I had sinned". Mr Foot stressed Russell's love of England and quoted Russell's remark: "I cannot bear to think that England is entering on the autumn of life. It is too much anguish". He finished by saying: "A man who at the end commanded an audience all over the world was English to the core".

Sir Edward Boyle then spoke on Russell's contribution to education. He discussed Russell's own school, Beacon

Hill School, Russell's opinions on the functions of a teacher and Russell's success as a populariser of knowledge. Sir Edward gave us Russell's own words on the highly topical question of the autonomy of universities: "Universities are important as havens for dissenters—men who were they not employed by universities might well not be employed at all."



Professor Max Newman, FRS, the President of the Mathematical Association, delivered a somewhat specialised but nonetheless amusing talk on Russell's achievements in mathematics. Telling us of a complex problem involving "infinite numbers and infinite sets", Professor Newman recounted how Russell upset mathematicians by creating the problem and then solved it himself five years later. "This involved virtually rewriting the whole of mathematics which is what he and Whitehead did in *Principia Mathematica*."

Perhaps the speech which captured Russell's greatness most effectively was Lord Brockway's. Speaking slowly with a deliberation, seldom heard nowadays, but which is

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the mark of a professional orator, Lord Brockway recalled Russell's activities during World War One with the No-Conscription Fellowship, and of these said: "One of the saddest things I've found in Russell's Autobiography is this statement, 'At the end of the war I saw that all I'd done was useless. I'd not saved a single life nor shortened the war by a single minute'." Slowly raising his voice Lord Brockway continued: "Later in his life he saw, I think, that there had been some point, 70,000 Americans have refused to fight in Vietnam. . . . Their generation have said, 'Whatever government or adults may decide, we of our generation are not going to take part in war'. Bertrand Russell was their inspiration." During this, the octogenerian peer was interrupted more than once by rounds of applause from the audience. Lord Brockway ended by saying: "I was brought up by missionaries. There were three generations of missionaries in my family. I began to doubt. There was a gap in my belief. That gap was filled by Bertrand Russell."

Professor Joseph Rotblat, the Secretary General of Pugwash, told us that: "Bertrand Russell has done more than anyone else to alert scientists to their responsibilities." He recounted how Russell used a speech which he first broadcast over the radio in 1954—a speech entitled, 'Man's Peril'—as the basis for the formation of Pugwash. "His ideals are all still alive in us. They are the mainspring which inspires us to complete his task."

Finally Baroness Wootton contributed a witty tribute to what she termed, "the miracle that was Russell", punctuating her speech with some of the more amusing stories about him. She stressed Russell's role as a prolific writer, saying: "Whatever the need of the moment there was always something from Russell to turn to".

The meeting ended with a recording of Russell speaking on the subject of death: "I should wish to die while still at work, hoping that others will continue what I began to do . . ."

REFORM IS COSTLY

THE QUESTION, much discussed in these columns, of the Indecent Advertisements Act 1889 and the Venereal Disease Act 1917, has been somewhat resolved in a letter sent by a Miss Clayton of the Home Office to David Tribe, the President of the National Secular Society. Readers will remember that Mr Tribe, having been cautioned by policemen from the Home Office who took his name and address during a meeting in Lincoln's Inn Fields at which he distributed leaflets containing the unlawful words 'venereal disease', wrote to the Home Secretary asking when his prison sentence was likely to start so that he could plan his life accordingly.

Miss Clayton, writing presumably on behalf of Mr

Callaghan, offers no enlightenment as to whether Tribe and his three colleagues from the NSS who were cautioned with him, are to earn themselves criminal records or not. She characteristically passes the buck on the Home Secretary's behalf with the following somewhat surprising sentence: "I understand that neither you nor your colleagues have in fact been charged under these Acts and the questions raised in your letter are therefore hypothetical but since the Home Secretary has no responsibility for the enforcement of the law it would not in any case have been possible for him to comment on the possible outcome of any such charges".

However, Miss Clayton does clarify the position with regard to the law. Speaking of the two Acts she says: "In this particular respect (presumably venereal disease), neither of the Acts applies to advertisements displayed by local or public authorities or with the sanction of the Secretary of State. It is therefore, open to anyone who wishes to help people with these problems by means of advertisements to avoid the risk of prosecution by applying to the Department of Health and Social Security for such a sanction."

This ruling, we understand has just been established. That it has taken the prosecution of Richard Branson, the editor of *Student* and head of the Student Advisory Centre, Lady Birk's Indecent Advertisements (Amendment) Bill, which passed through the Lords but did not make the Commons before the dissolution of parliament, Mr Tribe and the NSS members satirical handling of the law and the attendant publicity which all three gained, to bring about

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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 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. Humanist Holidays. Youth Camp, the Wye Valley, late July and early August. Family Centre, Aberystwyth, Monday, August 17 until Tuesday, September 1. Full board just over £2 per day with reductions for children. Details from Mrs Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey. Telephone 01-642 8796.

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

North Staffs Humanist Group: Cartwright House, Broad Street, Hanley (near Cincbowl): Friday, June 26, 7.45 p.m.: "Objections to Humanists", The Rev Arthur Quinn (Anglican chaplain at Keele University).
South Place Ethical Society: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1: Sunday, June 21, 11 a.m.: "The Paris Commune in Retrospect", Richard Clements, OBE. Admission free.
West Ham and District Secular Group: The Community Centre, Wanstead (near Wanstead Underground): Thursday, June 25, 8 p.m.: Meeting.

THE SLAVONIC JOSEPHUS: THE EDICT OF CLAUDIUS THOMAS W. HOGAN

IF OUR premise is correct and the additions referring to Jesus, John the Baptist and the early Christians in the sixteen Slavonic manuscripts entitled *On the Capture of Jerusalem* are genuine we may well have a witness in Flavius Josephus to the origins of Christianity. The outcome, however, will be contrary to common expectation, for the result is a striking reversal. Origen, the celebrated Christian scholar, writing in the year 250 asserts on two occasions that "Josephus did not believe our Jesus to be the Christ". As a result of the foregoing proposition it would appear that the passage concerning the resurrection of Jesus in *The Jewish Antiquities* is an interpolation. As a consequence of this important discovery Drs Eisler and Brandon have carefully scrutinized Josephus' other work the Slavonic version of *The Jewish War* which is entitled *On the Capture of Jerusalem*, for Christian revision. The sum of the matter is that sentences unfavourable to Christianity must be his work; favourable propositions are additions to the original. Furnished with a compass we are now able to find our way through the works of Josephus.

Remarking on the above statement of Origen, Professor Brandon makes the following deduction: "Now if the original form of the Jesus passage contained an explicit repudiation of the Messianic claims of Jesus, it must necessarily follow that Josephus had regarded Jesus as a claimant to Messiahship, which accordingly means that there must have been certain aspects of the mission of Jesus and of Palestinian Christianity which caused him to view Jesus in this light".¹ Professor Brandon concludes that Josephus instinctively thought of Messiahship in political terms; he must, then, have regarded Jesus in this light.

The feature of the Slavonic Version which is most striking is how that the Ministry, Trial and Crucifixion of the Wonder-Worker recorded therein accords with this view. The chief significance of the career of the Wonder-Worker and the subsequent activity of his followers is regarded as political. There is, however, another manuscript reporting how the Wonder-Worker appears to spurn political kingship. The issue is thereby, unfortunately, placed in some doubt.

Another passage of significance from the Slavonic manuscripts relates to the period between AD 44 and 48. On this occasion we have purged Christian additions from the text in accordance with the general principle of Josephean studies: "Claudius again sent his officers to those kingdoms, Cuspius Fadus and Tiberias Alexander, both of whom kept the people in peace, by not allowing any departure in anything from the pure laws. But if not withstanding anyone did deviate from the words of the Law and information was laid before the teachers of the law, they punished or banished him, or sent him to Caesar.

"And since in the time of him many helpers of the aforementioned Wonder-Worker had appeared and spoken to the people of their master saying that he was alive although he had been dead, and 'he will free you from bondage' many of the multitude hearkened to their preaching and took heed of their directions, for they were of the humbler sort, some mere tailors, others sandal makers, or other artisans.

"But when these noble Governors saw the falling away of the people, they determined, together with the scribes, to seize them for fear the little might not be little, if it ended in the great.

"But afterwards for the deeds done by them they sent

them away, some to Caesar, others to Antioch for the trial of their cause, others to distant lands."

The political element in the above passage may clearly be discerned. It suggests that Christianity was proclaimed with a purely political message and a purely political aim. The authenticity of the above passage need not, however, remain in the hinterland of conjecture; corroborative evidence is afforded by an amazing archaological find. In 1870 a marble slab dating from the reign of Claudius (AD 41-54) was unearthed in Palestine. Professor Momigliano has dated it not later than AD 50. The Edict reads as follows: "Ordinance of Caesar. It is my pleasure that graves and tombs remain undisturbed in perpetuity for those who have made them for the cult of their ancestors or children or members of their house. If, however, any man lay information that another has either demolished them or has in any way extracted the buried or has maliciously transferred them to other places in order to wrong them, or has displaced the sealing or other stones, against such a one I order that a trial be instituted, as in respect of the gods, so in regard to the cult of the mortals. Let it be absolutely forbidden for any one to destroy them. In case of contravention I desire that the offender be sentenced to capital punishment on charge of violation of sepulture".

A question which naturally arises is why the Slavonic Josephus should come to light in Russia of the last century. Dr Eisler has suggested that the Slavonic Version which is partly free from Christian censorship was in the hands of Messianists who revered Jesus as a prophet and who survived the destruction of Jerusalem. They lingered for hundreds of years retaining their copies of *The Jewish War*. The translation into Old Russian took place in Lithuania between AD 1250 and 1261. The translator, a heretic priest, worked from two different manuscripts starting with one from which a certain number of copies were circulated and then acquiring a better one from which further copies were made.

Two pre-eminent authorities have supported Eisler's theory of the derivation of these manuscripts. In 1925 Dr Salomon Reinach, a great authority on the world's religions, called the Slavonic texts the rediscovery of the authentic texts of Josephus. Another distinguished convert was the principal authority on Josephus Dr St John Thackeray. He died before being able to make an exhaustive examination of the theory.

Opponents of Eisler's theory of the derivation of *On the Capture of Jerusalem* are at odds among themselves in order to account for the additions. It has been suggested that the manuscripts are a Christian forgery; on the other hand, it is suggested that the controversial fragments are Jewish misrepresentation against Christ. This clearly shows the difficulty in supplying an alternative hypothesis. Why did not the imagined Christian scribe attempt to parallel the Christian story? How is it that the supposed Jewish scribe allowed Christian interpolations to remain in the text? How should we account for an obscure battle tactic (three-pronged irons) which was employed at Bedriacum when such information could only be known to Josephus? And again, if the above Slavonic texts are forgeries of the Middle Ages, how are we to account for the Edict of Claudius which was not unearthed until 1870? A host of questions suggest themselves. To copy out the whole of Josephus to work in two vague additions would have been pointless.

¹ Brandon. *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*.

THE CELTIC CULTURAL PROBLEM

P. BERRESFORD ELLIS

THE IMPORTANT FACTOR behind Celtic nationalism is basically what I would term as a reaction to "environment sickness". Celtic nationalism is, in fact, part of a world movement and a reaction to a world sickness. All over the world there is a groping new individualism rising in revolt against the mass existence of our day. The revolt is against the tremendous drive of "big power" politicians towards a world state, a world government and a world language and culture . . . unity through uniformity where there are no national barriers. This is the "simplicist's" way of achieving world peace and co-operation by an attempt to destroy natural differences between men . . . the achievement of the fallacious dream of a *Brave New World*. This idea ought to fill those who know the importance of community environment with absolute horror. And yet we are fast approaching this state of affairs. Politicians already say that a European State (which inevitably would be centralised on Germany) is feasible within a short space of time.

Celtic nationalism, along with the struggle of other small nationalities to achieve cultural, political and economic freedom, is a reaction to this idea. In Europe we have Basques, Catalans, Galicians, Wends, Frisians, Flemings, Lapps, etc., who are struggling to preserve their national identity. In North America, the rise of the American Indian and Negro movements (which places a heavy accent on culture) is another aspect of the revolt against uniformity.

Celtic society is sick. The human person in the Celtic countries is a degraded person. The Celtic person is placed in an environment where he is taught that his human significance as a Celt is of no importance. Because his significance is degraded, he is also degraded. The Celt is taught that his significance in life lies in becoming assimilated as an Englishman or a Frenchman, that his culture is of no importance and that his only importance is as the material producer of material goods. Thus the Celt strives in many ways to overcome his centuries old inferiority complex by seeking to become more English than the English (or French in the case of Brittany). He becomes material in outlook and learns to meekly accept treatment meted out to material things.

After centuries of a vicious active persecution—a genocidal one—the final *coup de grace* being meted out to the Celt today is mockery, ridicule at the "provincial Celtic nationality". *The Observer* once admitted: "Over the centuries and until quite recently, the English treated the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh as the Germans have treated their Slav neighbours—with a mixture of ruthlessness and mockery." This mockery continues unabated today against Celtic culture and even the Celts have reached such a stage in their degradation that they too join in the sneers at their own individuality and seek to destroy it.

The greatest method of degradation is whenever the past history of society is neutralised—an important ecological factor. History and culture in the Celtic countries (with some degree of exception in the 26 county Republic of Ireland) is taught from an English Establishment or French Establishment viewpoint. Also, the scant attention given to the indigenous languages serves to cut the Celt off from the history of his society. The Celtic past is erased; neutralised. Therefore the Celt is degraded because his self respect is undermined by the persuasion that as a Celt he is no more than a human waste product, a gawky illiterate

provincial who should forget his "accident of birth" and become "civilised" and "internationalised" by becoming a good English or Frenchman.

This inferiority that the Celt is made to feel reveals itself in the way many Celts who are native speakers of their respective languages will pretend to outsiders that they have no knowledge of the tongue and insist on speaking English or French no matter how scanty their knowledge of these second languages.

The main purpose of Celtic nationalism is the restoration of a healthy community environment: a prime concern for the health of the individual human being. The basis of this healthy society depends on language and culture. The ideas and motivations underlying language restoration are so remote from the experience of the educated Englishman and Frenchman that they might find it difficult even to understand them. In our ever shrinking world the notion that a "minority" language is something worth working at and struggling for may seem, merely a piece of inscrutable mysticism.

It is often said that language is merely a means of communication. If it were true then the rise of the great variety of languages on the face of the earth would be one of the great catastrophes of human history. Language is *primarily* a means of communication, uniting two minds in common possession of an idea given and received. Because of this power to unite minds, in spite of the evidently material nature of the symbols used to convey ideas, language is more than a material means of communication.

Apart from man's material pursuits, his ever increasing struggle to dominate and exploit environment instead of trying to live in harmony with it, man pursues culture. By culture I mean its whole richness, that distinct quality and grace of living that is to the community what personality is to the individual. The main medium of mental cultivation is achieved by language; and diversity of language is absolutely necessary for a rich diversity of culture.

"If this ever growing uniformity of the material side of our life is not offset by a rich cultural diversification, then man will face an awful crisis of a deadly sameness and monotony of life, a frightening prospect of utter boredom of spirit which would deprive him not merely of the will to achieve but the very desire to survive." (*Language, Personality and Nation*, Martin Brennan.)

The more the individual, the community, and the national community, feel that they have something peculiarly their own to contribute to mankind the more they will have respect for themselves, respect for other people's nationality, and the more they will be heartened to develop that unique set of values which they possess. It would seem that diversification of language is the product of a very fundamental law of man's organic being. It enriches man in many ways.

Critics claim that languages are barriers but barriers need not be purely negative things; they can be surprisingly creative. Barriers to reproduction between originally interbreeding sections of plant and animal life have been the means of enabling these to diversify and produce that present rich variety of living forms. At a cultural level, a partial barrier of language can enable different groups to develop, diversify and enrich their own inherited cultures instead of having their individuality diluted and finally washed out in a common flat uniformity.

The language and culture of a people are that people's very basis for being. Language is a product of many centuries of human thought, a vehicle for all the wisdom, poetry, legend and history which is bequeathed to a people by their forebears. Rough hewn, chiselled and polished with loving care it has been handed down as a beautiful work of art—the greatest art form in the world—the noblest monument of man's genius.

The repression of the small languages is due not only to a cynical expansionist policy but also to a lack of understanding of the values enshrined in small languages. It is generally believed that a language that does not possess a rich literature is a poor vehicle of expression. Eduard Sapir (*Language*) states: "The most primitive South African Bushman expresses himself with the help of a rich symbolic system which in essence is quite comparable to the language of a cultured Frenchman". "Many primitive languages have a richness of forms, a wealth of possibilities of expression which surpasses anything known in languages of a modern culture."

Language, though and culture are inseparable. No idea can exist without linguistic expression. Language and thought are but two aspects of the same thing. To change one's language is tantamount to changing one's mentality. What humanist would dare to say that any single existing culture is so inferior that it should disappear, that mankind would gain by its disappearance?

This, then, is why the peoples of the Celtic countries are

struggling to recreate a healthy society by the restoration of the Celtic languages. In attempting linguistic revivals there are many examples to follow throughout the world—Finland, Norway, Faroes, Hungary, Bohemia (Czech part of Czechoslovakia), Korea, Albania, Lithuania, etc.

By the name Celts, incidentally, I use the term as Professor Eoin MacNeill uses it . . . that it is indicative of linguistic groups not of race, i.e. people who speak a Celtic language or were known to have spoken a Celtic language. I state this merely to reject the accusation of L. Beverly Halstead (*FREETHINKER*, May 2) who seems hell bent on turning the problem into "racialism".

In the case of the populations which are recognised to be Celtic it is particularly true that no distinction of race is found among them. And this is true of them even in the earliest times of their history. Likewise there is no existing Latin race, no Teutonic race, no Anglo-Saxon race. Each group to whom these names are popularly applied is a mixture of various races for the most part the same races though not in every case in the same proportions. What there are, however, is a number of linguistic groups who are speaking (and who have spoken) a Celtic language since recorded history and it is by this linguistic criterion only that we recognise them as Celts.

These Celts are second class citizens whose only choice of progression lies in becoming assimilated as Englishmen or Frenchmen and discarding their own identity, individuality and humanity.

LIFE STYLE OF AN IMMATURE 13 YEAR OLD

PAUL ROM

WHEN WE SAY: "This boy has a good constitution", we mean that his body is healthy and strong.

A further meaning of "constitution" is that of mental character, something similar to what Adler called life-style.

In another sense, the term "constitution" refers to the fundamental principles according to which a state is governed.

Being faced with the task of re-educating a child who is considered a human misfit, we must first be clear about his hidden mental constitution. This may be in striking contrast to his physical constitution, for it is not true that in a healthy body there is always a healthy mind. The re-educator will try to identify himself with the child: if I were he, how should I see, hear, smell what is around me? Would I be misled by certain sensations and experiences to form wrong opinions about myself and the world around me?

The re-educator then has a double task: firstly, he must lead the child to the understanding of the errors which have guided him when he developed his mental constitution or life-style. Secondly, he must show the child that he is pursuing a self-ideal which does not agree with the communal living of man. Furthermore, the young misfit must be encouraged to attain thoughts and attitudes which make for a life of self-fulfilment and of contribution to the common good. All this implies that the re-educator understands the child's primitive way of expressing himself physically and in words and is able to communicate with him meaningfully.

I shall discuss the erroneous constitution of a boy of thirteen years of age, the only son of a decaying middle-

class family in a Balkan capital, who, long ago, engaged me as a preceptor.

At that moment, the boy was strong and handsome; but he had never been sent to school because he was said to have suffered during the first years of his life from "physical weakness". The nervous parents treated the boy with no consistency at all: a total indifference towards him alternated with excessive spoiling. They never expected a reasonable effort from the child, and an old housemaid, a sort of slave, was always at his service. At the age of thirteen the boy behaved like a self-willed baby.

An over-protective grandmother and a good-for-nothing uncle lived in the same flat. Being the victims of crass exploitation young servant maids rapidly succeeded each other. The boy behaved as if he had drawn up the following 'Constitution':

- (1) I have no duty or obligation.
- (2) The others must ceaselessly be busy with me in ways which I determine. Should anyone ask me to do something I don't fancy, I shall always find someone else who is not so cruel as to expect me to do something considered as reasonable.
- (3) The means to guarantee that my will will be done are: To command; and if someone does not obey my orders, to spit, stamp my feet, gnash my teeth, throw things on the floor or out of the window, to pull people's hair, bite them, masturbate, refuse to eat at meal times; destroy objects or threaten to do so; make scenes in public (shout, curse, refuse to walk, throw myself on the ground, take objects by force from stalls in the street); to provoke endless sterile arguments and flatter certain strong people who fall for it (embrace them, kiss their hands); to show readiness to do something reasonable (for instance, to wash my hands), but at moments when there is no need for it and when it will disturb other people.

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LIFE STYLE OF AN IMMATURE 13 YEAR OLD

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(4) I shall defend my position against all attacks as it is the practical result of ten years of training. I should reinforce my established tyranny if a party were to obtain a majority and to apply rigorously a programme destined to transform my heroic autocratic constitution into a despicable democratic one.

The fact that this boy had developed a style of life in which all details of the pattern were consistent with his goal of domination is a proof that he was intelligent. This "intelligence" certainly did not agree with common sense. Adler called it "Private Intelligence".

The following incidents which I experienced with him are further proof of this "private intelligence".

First, when I started my employment as re-educator, the boy had been kept at home for four months since there was no one who was not afraid to be with him in the street. I took him by bus out of town and then had to tolerate his forceful behaviour in taking my arm with both his hands, refusing to walk along and thus "chaining" me to himself. In a meadow I gently released my arm so that he was obliged to stand alone on his own feet. I moved away a little and laughingly invited him to catch me. He made a few steps alone, but finding that this was too much for him, he suddenly bent down to pick up a flower which he then offered me. For a moment I had the illusion that all my friendly efforts had succeeded in softening the absolute self-centredness of the boy; but quickly I understood that he meant to catch my hand which would grasp the flower and to make himself my master by clinging on to me.

Secondly, when I tried to put him in contact with a few boys who were playing near us in the same meadow, he at once told them "Goodbye!"—thus expressing the view that they held no potential as slaves for him, since they were too independent.

Following Adler's advice never to fight with a child (having no responsibility he is sure to win!) I tried dis-tracking him from violent situations. I also trained him in such social skills as catching a ball and throwing it back to me.

Anything that seemed to disturb him could trigger off his reaction of pulling the hair of the nearest person whom he saw as a slave. He tried it with me one day when the bells of a nearby church began to ring. I laughed, reciprocated his hair-pulling so as to make him feel like myself and said: "That's a nice little game you have invented. We must play it from time to time!" He never started it again and from then on was unable to be cross with me, for I had not disturbed his neurotic habit aggressively.

When he pulled his mother's hair, she would scream and brutally pinch his arm, not being aware that thus she was adding a new weapon to his armoury.

Soon, the financial misery of this family could no longer be hidden and I had to leave the job. Only small improvements in the boy's behaviour, which were however, noticed by the neighbours, had been achieved.

It is conceivable that in economically more favourable conditions, with long and patient effort, all the members

of this family could have been brought to sufficient understanding of the child's attitudes and to a sufficient level of co-operation with the re-educator to change the child's life-style. Creating a democratic family atmosphere, holding regular family council meetings where increasingly responsible members discuss problems and arrive at nearly correct solutions, is a method often described by Adlerians. But economic conditions can be so unfavourable that its applicability becomes an illusion.

Caning schoolmasters, Behaviour Therapists, and Psychoanalysts would not care to understand the unique child in the total context of his existence. Adler's is an *understanding* psychology and the goal of his therapy is not the adjusted person but the contributor to the formation of a less alienated society.

REFORM IS COSTLY

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an alteration to a formerly unethical law is not a good advertisement for the workings of British justice. This reform, though minor, has been costly—costly in terms of the health of VD sufferers; costly for the public who have to pay for the machinery of the law to crank round, condemn a man, and then alter the law because his prosecution was clearly ludicrous; costly in terms of governmental prestige; costly in terms of the nerves of the NSS offenders who still do not know whether they are to be brought to trial or not; and lastly costly to Branson, who had to pay an £8 fine for the privilege of being instrumental in changing the law.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

THE TEMPLE, DALE STREET, LIVERPOOL

Saturday, 27 June, 8 p.m.

SOCIAL EVENING

Licensed refreshments available

TICKETS 3/6 (including buffet) in advance from
Mrs M. CLOWES, 26 Speedwell Drive, Barnston,
Heswall, Cheshire, L60 2SZ, or
NSS Head Office. *Everyone welcome*

Sunday, 28 June, in two sessions at 10 a.m. & 2 p.m.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Only members of the Society and representatives of affiliated organisations admitted. Group representatives must also be members of the NSS; current membership cards to be presented at the door.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

103 Borough High Street, London, SE1. 01-407 2717

Review

JEROME GREENE

Why I Am Not a Christian: Bertrand Russell (National Secular Society Memorial Edition, 3s).

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY have brought out a Memorial Edition of the oft-reprinted talk which Bertrand Russell entitled 'Why I am not a Christian' and delivered to the South London branch of the National Secular Society in 1927.

In a brief introduction Antony Flew draws the reader's attention to the particularly perceptive parts of Russell's monologue and fills in what the passage of time has shown to be gaps in the great man's assessment of Christianity.

David Tribe, the President of the National Secular Society, contributes an even briefer Preface, in which he pays homage to Russell, styling him: "a Great Victorian whose passion had passed undimmed and unafraid into the 1970s and whose ideas had developed and advanced in almost a century of self-fulfilment". He stresses what for this reviewer was Russell's greatest strength, the fact that he never ceased to be angry and thus remained young all his life. "Both rationally and instinctively he knew those longings and agonisings that most affected each succeeding generation. In an age of youth-cultism and an ever widening generation gap he bridged the gulf of years and spoke for and to the young and the young in heart."

Stating that it is appropriate that the NSS should once again reproduce this renowned essay, Tribe recalls various incidents involving Russell and this pamphlet which have occurred over the years since Russell first spoke it.

These two appetisers are followed by the main dish. What can one say? First of all Russell gets his definition of 'Christian' tight, concluding that in order to explain why he was not a Christian he must explain why he did "not believe in God and immortality" and also why he did "not think that Christ was the best and wisest of men . . ."

Russell goes on to tackle "the existence of God". He systematically refutes 'the first cause argument', 'the natural law argument', 'the argument from design' and varying forms of 'moral arguments'. Russell concludes this section of his talk by saying: "Of course I know that the sort of intellectual arguments that I have been talking to you about are not what really moves people. What really moves people to believe in God is not any intellectual argument at all. Most people believe in God because they have been taught from early infancy to do it, and that is the main reason."

"Then I think that the next most powerful reason is the wish for safety, a sort of feeling that there is a big brother who will look after you. That plays a very profound part in influencing people's desire for a belief in God."

He goes on from here to discuss Christ. He begins by enthusing over certain maxims which Christ laid down, and showing that many Christians do not practice them, and goes on to show that despite these excellent teachings, Christ was not superlatively wise. That he was not superlatively virtuous either Russell asserts with a relatively long and rather amusing passage, in which he shows a belief in hell to be in compatible with virtue.

Russell next refutes the argument that religion makes men virtuous. He writes: "You find as you look round the world that every single bit of progress in humane feeling, every improvement in the criminal law, every step towards the diminution of war, every step towards better treatment of the coloured races, every mitigation of slavery, every moral progress that there has been in the world, has been consistently opposed by the organised churches of the world." Antony Flew with hindsight quite correctly tempers this assertion in his introduction. However, there can still be no denying that at the time he spoke Russell was right, and that in the majority of cases he is still right.

Having established that religion is basically founded on fear, Russell concludes with an exhortation to his audience to rely on science and their own intelligence: "Science can help us to get over this craven fear in which mankind has lived for so many generations. Science can teach us, and I think our own hearts can teach us, no longer to look round for imaginary supports, no longer to invent allies in the skies, but rather to look to our own efforts here below to make this world a fit place to live in, instead of the sort of place that the Churches in all these centuries have made it . . ."

"A good world needs knowledge, kindness, and courage; it does not need a regretful hankering after the past, or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long ago by ignorant men. It needs a fearless outlook and a free intelligence. It needs hope for the future, not looking back all the time towards a past that is dead, which we trust will be far surpassed by the future that our intelligence can create."

The Memorial Edition of *Why I am not a Christian* finishes with the reproduction of two messages which Bertrand Russell sent to the National Secular Society, the first on the occasion of Secular Education Month in November 1964, the second for the Society's centenary in 1966.

Film Review

LUCIE DANSIE

Kes (Academy One, Oxford Street, London, W1).

THE ONLY DIFFERENCE between this film and the most mundane soap-opera is the quality of direction, photography and editing, and the introduction of a kestrel into the otherwise stereotype lives of the principal characters. And what a difference these two factors make—the former continually delighting the eye, the latter giving point to what would otherwise be an everyday story superbly drawn.

If you take the life of an average British working-class school-boy, you can create a picture of misery, meaninglessness and monotony, occasionally punctuated with spurts of elation, caused perhaps by a football match or a new girlfriend. However, if you take that life, inject into it something worthwhile and meaningful—something for the boy to become creatively involved with—and then having thus drawn from him the soul, or creative ego—call it what you will—which in so many lies dormant, or is stifled by society for ever, take away from him the source of his awakening, you have a film which will rouse emotions and educate.

Kes tells of a fifteen-year-old schoolboy's life in Barnsley, his widowed kind and slightly promiscuous mother, his bullying elder brother, his paper round, his petty blameless pilferings, his mechanical defeated schoolmasters and his kestrel.

But even with the help of the kestrel it requires a good director to create a reasonable film out of something which is fundamentally very ordinary indeed. But here we have Kenneth Loach, whose obvious claim to the title 'the master of the mundane', will surely soon carry more kudos with the film-going public than even Hitchcock's title, 'the master of the macabre'. Loach, with the help of a Barnsley schoolboy, named David Bradley, has created a film which, if you're a woman and not too hardened, will make your tears flow, and flow for British schoolchildren instead of Gregory Peck or Norman Wisdom. All must see this, and those who are tired of either sex or celluloid gimickry must see it at least twice.

MEMORIAL EDITION

**WHY I AM NOT
A CHRISTIAN**

BERTRAND RUSSELL

Preface DAVID TRIBE

Introduction Professor ANTONY FLEW

PRICE 3/- (plus 6d postage)

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

103 Borough High Street, London, SE1

LETTERS

The Social Morality Council Report

ONE SMALL COMMENT on Maurice Hill's letter, because I think it shows a persistent misunderstanding. I likewise 'oppose the teaching as fact of the Christian story of the Virgin Birth'. This is not in question. Even the highly Anglican Durham Report says explicitly: 'To press for acceptance of a particular faith or belief system is the duty and privilege of the Churches and other similar bodies. It is certainly not the task of a teacher in a county school. If the teacher is to press for any conversion, it is conversion from a shallow and unreflective attitude to life'.

To give some understanding of beliefs which are held by some and have some standing, and not to the exclusion of other beliefs, is not the same thing as 'the teaching as fact'. This is precisely what an open approach to RE repudiates. Mr Hill and others may think this kind of openness on the part of RE teachers is just not possible. I have recently been about the country talking to RE teachers on DES or county in-service courses, and I am satisfied that many of them understand and unreservedly accept it. Moreover, all the indications are that it is now official policy, in professional circles, and the Durham Report reflects just that.

H. J. BLACKHAM.

IN HIS PIECE on 'The SMC and Moral Education' (FREETHINKER, June 6) David Tribe says that I have stated the available choices to be 'old-style RI, RE-ME, and legislated secularity'. This is not quite correct. My third choice was the situation in which no claims were made for the social/moral/religious area at all. My point was that, if no claims were made, opportunities for the pupils to explore this area would be likely to be driven out by the competitive grind for specialist attainment characteristic of, at least, many 4th and 5th 'examination' forms at present. 'Legislated secularity' is not a realistic *political* choice—and it is political choices we are particularly concerned with now that a new Education Act is taking shape.

The Durham Report has virtually eliminated 'old style RI' while, regrettably, hanging on to compulsory worship. So the main issues become to assure genuine openness in the social/moral/religious education in the curriculum, and to secure pupils and teachers from the democratic anomaly of compulsory worship. In terms of personal/social dynamics the whole matter of moral education is much simpler than the academics and the theologians are allowing it to be. The only two assumptions we need to make are that man is a potentially moral and creative creature, provided that he grows up in a humane, understanding environment, and that democracy—social, not just political, democracy, of course—is the most fruitful social system. Those two assumptions accepted, and put into practice, educationally, and all the rest of moral education flows from them. ME becomes, *primarily*, the experience of being personally valued and involved within a purposeful, friendly, caring, democratic community. Such experience is simultaneously moral education and induction into a democratic society. Caring, considering, evaluating, co-operating are equally the basis of moral maturity, democratic society, and the good school.

JAMES HEMMING.

The Ban on Scientologists

MAY I through the medium of your excellent newspaper bring your attention to a very serious scandal that is happening right now in this free country of ours, the banning of L. Ron Hubbard, his wife and children and also students from abroad, from entering into the UK, without any grounds, charge or possibility of one. No doubt Mr Callaghan was hoodwinked into this shocking business. All the people associated with Scientology have been very law-abiding. Therefore the Home Secretary is taking advantage of the situation and it is his duty to prove his case. Mr Kenneth Robinson and Mr Callaghan should be ashamed of themselves for banning Mr Hubbard from this free England, and for not examining the truth. This whole business is a rather dirty mess of vague and false allegations, and this makes the government an eternal disgrace to the people who put them in power. The government is striking at the fundamentals of democracy and a decent way of life. People are free to choose their own religion. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own and return to his country. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. I wonder if the government have something to hide? I know we haven't. Such arbitrary action without justification cannot be tolerated in a democracy. Scientologists are not cranks. We have a grievance, and we do not wish to be persecuted any longer.

An extract from the Rt Hon Quintin Hogg, QC, MP, writing on a New Charter of Individual Rights: "It is the arbitrary rule of the modern parliament itself which needs consideration. Every other country—including those Commonwealth countries—have insisted on safeguards of this kind, and in theory we are committed to it. Admittedly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which we put our name was not intended to be enforceable. But the European Convention—which embodies many of the same rights—is enforceable, and we are party to it." M. TEDESCHI.

Bertrand Russell's Last Words

WITH REGARD to J. Ross's letter (June 6), the following 'assessments' taken from Bertrand Russell's message may be questionable in that they seem to overlook Israel's position as a threatened state, but that they are "so horribly wrong" surely needs some further explanation.

(1) "The tragedy of the people of Palestine is that their country was 'given' by a foreign power to another people for the creation of a new state."

(2) "A permanent just settlement of the refugees in their homelands is an essential ingredient of any genuine settlement in the Middle East."

(3) "Justice requires that the first step towards a settlement must be an Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied in June 1967."

CHARLES BYASS.

Uninformed opinion ?

HAVING READ Barbara Smoker's rather ill-reasoned criticism of 'Q' (May 30) I consider it a strong probability that she had not read the 'Q' manifesto. Indeed the probability strikes me as far stronger than that Mr G. F. Westcott had not read the Social Morality Council's Report when he wrote to you criticising it (April 25), a fault of which Miss Smoker accused him in no uncertain terms (May 16). Had Miss Smoker read the 'Q' manifesto or am I right in assuming that she has dual standards, one for herself and another for the rest of mankind? T. WAITS.

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