

NUN-RUNNING SCANDAL HITS THE VATICAN

In many Roman Catholic countries it has always been an ambition of parents—for religious, snobbish and economic reasons—to present one of their offspring to Holy Mother Church. But with the increasing secularisation of society, freedom for young people to make their own decisions, and the decline in the number of committed Christians, the shortage of priests and nuns has become such a serious problem that it can no longer be solved by social and economic pressure. Serious problems often result in unorthodox attempts to find a solution, and one such attempt has landed the Roman Catholic Church in the middle of a rather murky scandal. This concerns a “nun-running” racket from the poverty-stricken state of Kerala in South India to convents in several countries, including Britain. Vatican spokesmen have claimed that the Press distorted and exaggerated the situation, but one Mother Superior admitted to a British newspaper that she had paid £3,000 for ten young girls. And it has been revealed that five nuns in a Hampshire convent had been bought for £260 each, the money having been paid into the personal bank account of one Father Cyriac Puthenpura. The Vatican has promised an investigation, and there have been demands for parliamentary debates in Old Delhi and Rome. A Dutch priest, Father Harry Haas, claims that the Vatican knew about irregularities concerning the recruitment of nuns for five years. Father Haas, who worked with the Catholic Foreign Student Service in Bonn from 1963 until 1967, says that girls were also brought to Europe from Korea, Hong Kong, Ceylon and the Philippines.

David Tribe writes: Every responsible citizen must be disturbed to note that, in its allegation of “nun-running” from India to European convents, the *Sunday Times* (23 August) has named Britain as a “host” country. This alleged trafficking is the sort of scandal to be expected in any organisation whose financial preponderates over its human support and which is controlled by men (and some women) who put organisational survival before human welfare. It is a situation for which non-Catholic as well as Catholic countries are in part responsible. By spinelessly submitting to every sectarian demand for economic support—the waiving of taxes and rates, maintenance of church schools, free propaganda on the broadcasting channels, maintenance of chaplains and the like—Britain is one of the many countries which ensure that ecclesiastical finances and real estate flourish out of all proportion to freewill contributions and manpower supplies from the faithful.

In a recent pamphlet *The Cost of Church Schools*—boycotted by the media—I drew attention to the fact that the public in England and Wales supports sectarian education to the tune of £300 million annually, and that where church schools are run by religious orders the Burnham-award salaries to the staff are paid to the order and not to the individual. (It has since been pointed out to me that I should have added that no tax is deducted from these salaries.) Some of this money is available for overseas “missionary” activities (in, say, Kerala), which in turn supply cheap labour to keep grandiose establishments in operation around the globe; so that, at a time when other bodies and individuals are obliged to contract their premises and activities, the churches—notably the Roman Catholic Church—expand into ever more luxurious establishments “to the greater glory of God”. When Catholic lay-women are entertained at London-area convents in the autumn, how many Indian novices—unpaid, because of their vow of poverty, unable to complain, because of their vow of obedience and the totalitarian system in which they work—will be active behind the scenes?

A distinction should be drawn between the organisation and individuals within it. Full credit must be given to the *Kansas National Catholic Reporter* (which also leaked the

report of the Vatican Commission on contraception, which the Pope overruled) for breaking this disturbing story, and to individual nuns who have been allegedly victimised for their devotion to the interests of truth and natural justice in defiance of their superiors.

Investigation Called For

The Vatican, which has stayed silent for the two years during which something of this situation has been known, now says the reports are “greatly exaggerated”. It may be so, though we have had similar responses ever since the genocide of the Albigensians in the thirteenth century. While the Vatican is conducting its own “investigation”, the National Secular Society calls upon the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster to reveal:

- (1) How many Indian nuns—and nuns from other countries in the developing world—are in British Catholic convents?
- (2) Under what circumstances were they brought in?
- (3) How many convents in Britain belong to those orders named in the *Sunday Times* allegations?
- (4) How much money do the religious orders annually send out of Britain for the support of “missionary” activities in Kerala—and other areas in the developing world?
- (5) How much public money is received by Catholic religious orders to run maintained schools and similar institutions?

At the same time, we call on the Home Secretary to order a full investigation into all convents in the United Kingdom and to provide facilities for officials from the Indian High Commission, and any other high commission or embassy concerned, to interview privately all their nationals who are in such convents and ascertain whether or not they came in by false inducements and are being held here against their will.

If no answers are forthcoming to these questions and no action is taken over these proposals, we call upon the European Commission of Human Rights to intervene.

YOUNG CITIZENS OF THE WORLD

PEGGY APRAHAMIAN

When the Woodcraft Folk was formed nearly 50 years ago it was so small that no one but its leaders really believed that this non-conformist offshoot of the Scout movement would survive. But survive it did, and is today a recognised part of the voluntary youth service in Britain. Peggy Aprahamian is a member of the National Council of the Woodcraft Folk and chairman of its Development Committee. Her article will be of special interest to freethinking parents and young people who often have difficulty in contacting groups of people with a similar outlook and attitude.

During the early years its progressive but sectarian outlook, narrowly cranky adherence to the joys of the open road and food reform, archaic terminology and the off-beat fancy dress which it adopted for its physical image, set the Woodcraft Folk aside as a minority organisation. But there is something about a determined and principled outlook which is not easily put down or ignored. The exclusive crankiness was modified; conferences hitherto held in the open air were transferred indoors, the fringed and decorated jerkins gave way to trim green shirts, sausages appeared openly on camp menus, and the mumbo-jumbo Anglo-Saxon and North American Indian terminology was largely replaced by the normal language of similar organisations.

Recognising the working-class nature of its educational philosophy, co-operative educational committees, trades unions and Labour Parties began to acknowledge the Folk in various ways. We still treasure and use an old banner which reads: "Workers, your children's place is in the Woodcraft Folk". Internationally our movement was welcomed by similar organisations in Western Europe and friendship exchanges began, via camps and homes. In 1949, the Folk led the way in the formation of a children's international called the International Falcon Movement, in which it still plays a leading role today campaigning for wider contacts on both sides of "the Iron Curtain".

In Britain today the Folk is recognised by the Department of Education and Science and is a registered charity. It has become the main children's auxiliary of the co-operative movement, and it develops numerically and culturally with districts and groups all over the country. Since the end of the war we have extended our friendship work with the so-called Communist countries and their great state-aided Pioneer movements, finding in them the same desire for peaceful exchanges as we have always found with children's organisations in other parts of Europe.

Challenge to the Establishment

The Woodcraft Folk remains a minority organisation in Britain, when compared with the mass Scout and Guide movement. But its unique and challenging character and its rate of development promise mass growth. It is likely to represent, in the near future, a serious challenge to those organisations of the Establishment which have for so long held the field in children's work. Their appeal diminishes at the same rate as the demand for socially and educationally progressive children's organisation increases.

The appeal of the Woodcraft Folk lies in its international outlook, its broad secular and co-educational basis, and its insistence on the right and responsibility of its members to participate socially and educationally in the changing of a society which so many find unacceptable to the finer aspirations of modern man. In a world where war is still considered a legitimate method for resolving man's differences—if mass extermination of life and natural resources can be called a method—an organisation whose declared

motto is: "Span the World with Friendship" has obvious appeal to those who believe in peaceful co-existence. The practical expression of internationalism, in which all our members are invited to take part, is demonstrated in reciprocal exchanges between young people's organisations in any part of the world.

I have just returned from taking an active part in an international camp, held in Essex and organised by the Folk. Here the young people of sixteen nations built a community overnight in which all shared the domestic, recreational and cultural facilities. That community could be compared with the headquarters of the United Nations and its predominantly youthful population was an exuberant example of peaceful co-existence in a world where millions of adults cannot always co-exist in neighbourhoods, let alone nations without resorting to violent and anti-human acts.

Anyone wishing to join the Folk may do so, from the age of 6 to 90. The family character of our movement is marked, the number of children of course dominating the number of adults. Our generation gap takes no more serious form than healthy debate between young and old. To watch our children, adolescents and adults dancing together is to see, in miniature, an integrated society, especially when one notices that black hands are linked with white in this dancing.

No Segregation

Our boys and girls work, camp and play together, without any sex segregation. I have often been asked by leaders of segregated movements how we manage to maintain discipline in these circumstances. The answer is simple. Any youth organisation worthy of its name should be a reflection of the social organisation of which it is part. The family in society is not confined to a single sex, and it does not fall into chaos because its members happen to be both male and female!

The youth organisations of the Establishment are generally tied by loyalties to church or state which seriously restrict the freedom of the young individuals who join them. Membership of a given church and participation in religious services and ceremonies are all too often a condition of membership. The "unattached" group is an exception. If you add to this drawback the (unwritten) demand for acceptance of an ideology associated with an unquestioning allegiance to the status quo, you have a classic example of the fettering of ideas and ideals, so contrary to the mood of youth today.

The Folk imposes no such conditions on its members, other than that they shall accept the principles of an organisation which bases its outlook on the brotherhood of man, the questing mind, and a determination to exist and grow within its own democratic structure. We regard religious belief as a private matter and it has no place in our education. We are, in fact, at one with those who seek to free all education from religious influence and teaching, and all those who believe that society must be critically questioned if it is to survive.

Encouraging Creativity

Finally, readers will want to know why we believe that our cultural educational programme is so much richer and satisfying than any other in the youth movement. We have always believed in the wisdom of keeping our country's cultural heritage alive for its latest heirs. To this belief we add our determination to provide our children with experiences which encourage natural creativity. At our 1970

(Continued on page 284)

MARX AND NIETZSCHE: SOME COMPARISONS

MARTIN PAGE

Just as Communists have committed terrible atrocities in the name of Karl Marx, so Friedrich Nietzsche became as dynamite in the hands of the Nazis who barbarised Europe. Just as Marx said: "I am not a Marxist", so Nietzsche prophetically declared: "Mine enemies have grown strong and have disfigured the face of my teaching, so that my dearest friends have to blush for the gifts I gave them".

Declared Marx: *The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-contempt, abasement, submission, dejection, in a word all the qualities of the canaille.* Declared Nietzsche: *Christian is the hatred of the intellect, of pride, of courage, freedom, intellectual libertinage; Christian is the hatred of the senses, of the joys of the senses, of joy in general.* Nietzsche regarded Christian morality as "slave morality", whereas Marx wrote: "The social principles of Christianity justified the slavery of Antiquity, glorified the serfdom of the Middle Ages and equally know how to defend the oppression of the proletariat". Marx also said: "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world". And decades before the decline of religious belief in the affluent society, Nietzsche wrote: "People to whom their daily life appears too empty and monotonous easily grow religious; this is comprehensible and excusable, only they have no right to demand religious sentiments from those whose daily life is not empty and monotonous".

European Culture

Nietzsche identified democracy with mediocrity; yet in their aim to provide greater opportunities for the flowering of creative individuality, democrats and socialists were closer to Nietzsche's purpose than he realised. Both Marx and Nietzsche appreciated the efforts of socialists to remove national animosities. Both were internationalists who thought primarily in terms of Europe and who were themselves profoundly indebted to the heritage of European culture. Marx believed that the international socialist revolution would be set in motion by the most advanced capitalist countries—that is, by those of Europe, on which he concentrated his attention. Nietzsche admired Hellenist culture, the Renaissance and such universal men as Goethe and Montaigne; he stressed the importance of the "good European" and dreamt of "the amalgamation of nations" in an united Europe. Marx had exclaimed: "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism". Nietzsche declared: "The greatest modern event—that God is dead, that the belief in the Christian God has become unworthy of belief—is beginning to cast its first shadow across Europe". Thus the bankruptcy of Christianity assumed for Nietzsche the importance in the metaphysical sphere that the rise of communism assumed for Marx in the social sphere. Nietzsche's anguish at the death of God was about as great as that of Kirilov in Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*.

Nietzsche and Engels agreed that Greek art and science were made possible by slavery, though Nietzsche also believed that "every victory on the part of knowledge is the result of hardness towards oneself". Marx was aware of the Hegelian implications in the work of Heraclitus, whose influence was doubtless discernible when Nietzsche spoke of war metaphorically, which he often did. For Marx, Greek art exerted "an eternal charm" because it was an expression of "the social childhood of mankind". Nietzsche gave a more mature and existentialist explanation of the Greek art that flowered from Greek mythology: "The Greek knew and felt the terror and horror of existence. That he might endure this terror at all, he had to interpose

between himself and life the radiant dream-birth of the Olympians. . . . It was out of the direst necessity to live that the Greeks created these gods". Marx had said: "Greek art and epic are bound up with certain forms of social development"—a view later developed by Trotsky. But in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche gave few hints of the social conditions under which Greek drama flourished. Marx recognised that "man as a sentient being is a suffering being". Yet for him self-fulfilment in communist society would apparently be achieved by an absence of suffering. Nietzsche believed that, if we are to affirm life and achieve fulfilment, suffering has to be accepted as an ineradicable characteristic of existence. For him "the highest type of free men would have to be sought where the greatest resistance has continually to be overcome".

Science and Reason

Marx was inclined to regard science as socially important only because it helps men to satisfy their needs; whereas Nietzsche seemed closer to the modern perception of the dangers of worshipping science as "a universal panacea". Said Nietzsche: *For scientific discoveries like those of Darwin, a certain narrowness, aridity, and industrious carefulness (in short, something English) may not be unfavourable for arriving at them.* He also exclaimed: "The influence of environment is nonsensically over-rated in Darwin". At the same time, Nietzsche, who deeply resented the "hairy garments of our ape genealogy", may have under-rated the profoundly anti-Christian significance of Darwin's work; and the Darwinian "struggle for life" was complemented by Nietzsche's "will to power", which he himself associated with "all active energy" and the "principle of life". Nietzsche showed appreciable insight when he declared: *Over the whole of English Darwinism there hovers something of the suffocating air of over-crowded England.* Marx wrote: *It is remarkable how Darwin recognises among beasts and plants his English society with its division of labour, competition, opening up of new markets, inventions, and the Malthusian struggle for existence.* Marx, who wanted to dedicate *Das Kapital* to Darwin, welcomed *The Origin of Species* as providing "a basis in natural science for the class struggle in society"—yet he apparently believed that capitalism could not adapt to survive.

Marx believed that under communism men would be guided by pure reason; whereas Nietzsche laid a pre-Freudian emphasis on the primordial Dionysian impulses surging beneath the surface of rationality. Nietzsche thus pointed to the previously under-rated role of the non-logical, and to the limitations of what Pareto subsequently termed the class of logical actions, Marx faced the dynamic forces of history; Nietzsche confronted the no less impersonal forces of an alien universe. If Marx descended into the human vale of blood, tears, toil and sweat, Nietzsche suppressed any pity in his heart for the toiling masses and turned away towards the Olympian heights. Unlike Marx, Nietzsche regarded exploitation as a permanent feature of human history, declaring: "Exploitation does not belong to a depraved, or imperfect and primitive society: it belongs to the nature of the living being as a primary organic function".

Germany and the Modern World

Nietzsche supposed himself to be of Slav origin and was one of the most trenchant critics of Germany and the

(Continued on back page)

FREETHINKER

editor: WILLIAM McILROY

103 Borough High Street,
London, SE1

Telephone: 01-407 1251 (editorial)
01-407 0029 (business)

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Board.

The *Freethinker* can be ordered through any newsagent, or obtained by postal subscription from G. W. Foote & Co. Ltd. at the following rates: 12 months, £2.1.6; 6 months, £1.1.0; 3 months, 10s 6d; USA and Canada: 12 months, \$5.25; 6 months, \$2.75; 3 months, \$1.40.

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 St., 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.

EVENTS

Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds, 24 August—20 September.

Exhibition of paintings and drawings by Oswald Blakeston. London Young Humanists, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, 6 September, 7 p.m. Elaine Brace: "Nationalism, Catholicism and the Irish Language".

Sutton Humanist Group, Trinity Methodist Hall, Hill Road, Sutton, Surrey, Saturday, 12 September, 10 a.m.—1 p.m. Book sale. Information from Mrs M. Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton. Telephone: 01-642 8796.

(Continued from page 282)

Camp of Nations in Essex we offered all our campers a choice of activities, in five specially equipped and staffed centres where artists, craftsmen, actors, writers, singers, scientists, dancers and musicians could create, learn and experiment to their hearts' content. This very modern and Open School, as we liked to call it, was an unequivocal success and the end-products of craftsmanship, theatricals, poetry and collective discovery were a revelation to all.

It would be dishonest to imply that all our work goes smoothly. Our army of mature leaders and specialists always needs recruits. The level of leadership and facilities varies tremendously. The impact of the undesirable and corrupting influences of society is often serious and sometimes damaging.

But together we maintain a stream of progress which will not be quenched by the cheeseparing of local and national authorities, nor by the disapproval of reactionary educationalists. Our large and varied band of voluntary workers is united by a common purpose and determination to safeguard and encourage all that is splendid on the face of the earth, in man and nature. I believe, after more than 14 years of consistent work with the Woodcraft Folk, that we are the young people's organisation of the future.

The general secretary of the Woodcraft Folk is Mrs Margaret White, 13 Ritherdown Road, London, SW17.

NEWS

TAKE NO THOUGHT . . .

The Church Commissioners have been taking steps to reduce their contribution to the tax collector, and greatly increase their income from property. They are doing so by buying out their private enterprise partners in certain major developments, and, as sole owners, will have the entire income tax-free. This is because the Church Commissioners are a charity.

The Church of England owns land worth £321 million which yields an income of £7 million. It also has interests in more than 20 companies involving a further £40 million worth of projects.

BLASPHEMY COMPLAINT

A complaint has been lodged with the Director of Public Prosecutions about *Council of Love*, the play now running at London's Criterion Theatre. Several scenes take place in heaven with God, Jesus and the Virgin Mary, and an odd assortment of angels who seem rather bored by eternal



Warren Mitchell

bliss. There is a splendid orgy—in the papal court, not heaven—presided over by the Pope. A Mr Geoffrey Russell considers the play to be blasphemous, as did the German authorities who imprisoned its author, Oscar Panizza, at the turn of the century.

Warren Mitchell plays what David Tribe described as "splendidly seedy Satan" (*Freethinker*, 29 August), and Peter Bayliss, Lally Bowers and John Trigger appear as God, the Virgin Mary and their ever-complaining offspring.

S AND NOTES

MEDICAL SUPPLIES CONFISCATED

The Medical Aid for Vietnam organisation has received an encouraging report about the result of their work from Dr Malcolm Segall a paediatrician at St Thomas's Hospital, London, who recently spent three weeks in Cambodia and Vietnam. Dr Segall reports that the supplies sent from Britain have undoubtedly saved lives.

At the same time MAV heard that £6,000 worth of urgently needed drugs, together with a further £7,000 worth of drugs and surgical instruments sent by British and Canadian Quakers, have been confiscated by the pro-American regime in Cambodia. This was the biggest consignment of aid sent by MAV, and its possible loss is a crushing disappointment. Urgent representations have been made to the International Red Cross and the United Nations to secure its release or distribution to the Vietnamese refugees in Cambodia. Meanwhile, alternative routes are being worked out for future supplies.

Lord Boyd Orr is president of Medical Aid for Vietnam; further information is obtainable from 36 Wellington Street, London, WC2.

LIBERATION

Women's liberation is a topic of debate and controversy at the present time, although the one-day national strike in the USA was hardly an unqualified success. It was arranged to take place on the 50th anniversary of the 19th amendment which gave American woman the vote. From a practical point of view it was not the best time for such an exercise as many of the ladies were on holiday. Many of the sponsors were respected and responsible campaigners for equality, but of course much of the publicity went to such bizarre outfits as the Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy, the Redstockings and the Radical Lesbians.

Here in Britain plans are being made to commemorate a real liberator and social reformer, Marie Stopes. This follows a highly successful BBC documentary on her crusade to bring contraception to the working class, and the first Memorial Lecture will be held on or near 17 March, 1971, the 50th anniversary of the opening of Britain's first birth control clinic in Holloway Road, London. The lecture will be held at York university. It seems a pity that it could not have taken place in the area where Marie Stopes launched that courageous venture.

GOING DOWN?

News of the possible demise of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's monthly, *Sanity*, is depressing. It is yet another reminder of the precarious position of "small" journals which are not backed by advertising revenue or substantial subsidies. *Sanity's* circulation has fallen to 6,000, and there is a loss of £150 on each issue. Whatever views *Freethinker* readers may hold about the CND and its activities, I am sure they will join me in wishing them well in their efforts to save this important and stimulating radical monthly.

NEW GROUP TO FIGHT ABORTION

A new anti-abortion organisation called LIFE was formed recently, and religious journals obligingly opened their correspondence columns to its founders to announce the good news. LIFE has published a booklet written by the organisation's general secretary, Martin Mears, and entitled *Abortion: a Crime*. No doubt it will be a best seller at RC church book tables and shops where Catholic Truth Society pamphlets, bleeding heart pictures and rubbishy religious trinkets are prominently displayed.

Alexander Clarke writes: Abortion: a Crime is a rather refreshing booklet of a Catholic fundamentalist no-holds-barred variety. No nonsense here about women having any rights over their own bodies. Abortion is sinful even where the potential mother is dying. Many prominent Catholics believe this too, but are too sophisticated to say so in public.

Mr Mears answers all the arguments commonly put forward in favour of abortion law reform. These he lists as follows: (1) *A step in the emancipation of women*. Not true, because "how can it be right to achieve one's own 'emancipation' through the destruction of someone else's life". This message should go down well in South Africa, Greece, Spain, Portugal and other countries where brutal oppression reigns. (2) *Incest, rape and sexual assault*. In Mr. Mears's cosy world these things do not exist, so why legislate against them? (3) *Seriously adverse social conditions*: Either, says Mr Mears, the conditions are exaggerated, or, if they are not, what is required is "such moral and material assistance as will make the burden easier to bear". (4) *The defective child*: There is always the chance that it will be normal. (5) *The proposition "that it is better that a child should not be born at all rather than be born unwanted"*: Mr Mears comments that even on a superficial level this argument is worthless. (6) *Discrimination against the poor*: The answer to this one is to prevent the rich obtaining abortions, not to permit the poor to have them also. (Mr Mears forgets to mention how this will be achieved.)

Having polished off the arguments, Mr Mears goes on to get himself into a real old muddle over the abortion statistics. Still, better men than he have come to grief over these (and women too, if one takes into account the various utterances of Mrs Jill Knight, MP). He accuses the Abortion Law Reform Association of exaggerating the estimates of criminal abortion, which he is sure are far below the usual estimate of 100,000 a year before the Act. "One would have thought that people who had carried out an illegal abortion would be somewhat reluctant to publicise the fact", he opines. You would indeed! And this fact suggests that the existing estimates are too low rather than too high. Mr Mears, for reasons that are obscure, seems to think it is the other way round.

Although this booklet is slightly dotty and extremist, it would be wrong to dismiss it entirely. Powellism is significant, because Enoch Powell expresses the real convictions and prejudices and fears of people who are too inarticulate or timid to speak out themselves. In the same way, organisations and individuals express the hatred and fear of women, the desire to punish sexual enjoyment, and religious fanaticism that deep down are the real reasons why large numbers of them are rather unhappy and unfulfilled people who still wish to see humane social legislation restricted, and if possible, destroyed. The black forces in our society will not simply disappear if we ignore them. They need to be watched and contained.

BOOK

DIVIDED ULSTER

by Liam de Paor. Penguin Books, 5s.

The attitude of many people in Britain to the recent sequence of violence and tragedy in Belfast and Londonderry seems to be one of boredom or incomprehension; "Ulster, like the poor, is always with us", or, as an ultra-Tory English relative once wrote to me (despite the fact that she had married an Irishman): "The Irish are rioting again—they love it!" I think that this book has been written not so much to persuade Orangemen of the advantages of a united Ireland (a rather forlorn hope), but to focus in the minds of the British public the fact that the ultimate authority, and therefore responsibility, in the Ulster question lies in their hands, and that they can no longer avert their gaze and walk past the Northern Ireland situation on the other side of the political road.

The author's basic contention is that, despite superficial appearances, the enmity and suspicion in Northern Ireland are the historical product of a colonial situation, and not, at root a religious one. He gives a detailed résumé of the history of Ulster from earliest times, though dealing in particular with the period following the plantations (circa 1600) and where relevant bringing in the other provinces of Ireland by way of comparison.

To explain how Ulster, which before the plantations was the last redoubt of the Gaelic culture, was subsequently transformed into the last line of defence of an essentially Anglo-Scottish Unionist squirearchy and their Orange Order retainers, is no simple task, but the author succeeds well enough. He deals with the situation of Ireland after the victories of William of Orange, when Catholics were stripped of virtually all political and property rights, to the 1798 rebellion, when the origins of the present differences between Ulster and the rest of the island began to manifest themselves. Thereafter, de Paor writes of the growth and influence of the Orange Order and its increasing use by the landed Unionist squirearchy to combat the effects of Catholic emancipation and the rising tide of Home Rule agitation, culminating in the paradoxical situation whereby the "loyal" Unionists were, by 1913, prepared to take up arms against HM Government if it established a Home Rule Parliament in Dublin.

Perhaps the most fascinating part of the book is the author's account of how Carson and his henchmen, by manipulating the Officer Corps in the British army, and also Parliament itself, were able to abandon their Unionist allies in the rest of Ireland and set up their own government in the one area which was both large enough to be viable, and small enough to contain a Unionist majority, the six north-eastern counties. Thus Ulster was carved into two: Northern Ireland, ruled internally from Stormont, but still part of the United Kingdom; and the remaining three counties (Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan) which passed to the nationalist government in Dublin. The Unionist leaders maintained their authority by the age-old expedient of "divide and rule"; keeping the working-class Protestants (who were by now often no better off than the Catholics) "loyal" by raising the spectre of "popery" and gerrymandering electoral boundaries.

Freethinker readers will be interested to read de Paor's account of the sad fate of non-sectarian education in Northern Ireland, and of flagrant appeals to employers by

FREETHINKER

Unionist leaders during the 1930s to exercise religious discrimination in choosing their employees. By way of balance, he mentions the influence of Catholicism in the other part of Ireland; particularly the clauses in the 1937 Constitution banning divorce, and the rumpus in 1950-51 over Dr Noel Browne's proposed Mother and Child Health Service. He makes no mention, curiously enough, of the literary censorship or the ban on the import of contraceptives.

Finally, there is an account of the Civil Rights Association and the split in the Unionist camp between the hardliners and the "new look" Unionists, typified by Terence O'Neill. The author gives a particularly detailed account of the Burntollet ambush (1968) and the resulting violence in Londonderry and Belfast to the end of 1969. It is a pity that there is no index which always justifies its existence in a book of this kind.

It is almost impossible to write an "objective" account of contemporary history, and particularly so in the case of Ulster where loyalties are so sharp. Rather than attempt the impossible the author has written an incisive indictment of the Union régime to which, in some places at least, there can be no honest reply save "guilty". The book is not without humour, imagination, and plenty of apt quotations. It will be of particular value in understanding the background of the Ulster troubles to readers who have no previous background of the Ulster troubles to readers who have no previous knowledge of Irish history. Cynical at times though the British may be of their politicians, they are generally proud of the democratic standards set by Westminster; de Paor has brought the Stormont skeleton out of the cupboard for all to see: "Perhaps, this time, enough people will begin to realise how few they are who derive any benefit from the dividing of Ulster".

NIGEL SINNOTT

PAMPHLETS

CONSERVATION—THE FOURFOLD WAY

by C. Jeffrey. The Conservation Society 2s 6d.

This booklet is really a basic handbook for anyone interested in the preservation of the environment. It has no literary pretensions but is packed with concisely stated information on the various aspects of the problem.

The text is divided into three sub-headings, each relating to environmental deterioration—Causes, Consequences and Cures. Within the headings, the information Mr Jeffrey gives is linked by reasoned arguments which, although the actual writing is rather ponderous, does enable the reader to follow the whole train of thought of the conservation movement. It is well worth the modest price and contains a useful bibliography for further reading.

Conservation—The Fourfold Way is obtainable from the Conservation Society, 21 Hanyards Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire.

ALASTAIR SERVICE

REVIEWS

JAMES MAXTON AND BRITISH SOCIALISM

by V. S. Anand and F. A. Ridley. Medusa Press, 4s.

This pamphlet about "one of the most colourful figures ever thrown up by the British Labour Movement" is valuable more for its analysis of the decline of socialism in Britain than for what it tells us of James Maxton. Today there is still a small coterie of admirers of Maxton, mostly living in his native Scotland; but in his heyday he was recognised oratorically as the "biggest draw in the House of Commons". This should surely have allowed him a greater eulogy as a House of Commons man than *The Times* saw fit to bestow on Michael Foot recently.

Yet this sort of individual prowess in parliament seems always to accompany an equal ineffectiveness outside it, for those advocating socialism. Now, as then, Westminster is so often out of step with feelings throughout the country. The recent CS gas incident gave overwhelming evidence of this; beyond the staid comments of Fleet Street, most people seemed to think that a dose of their own medicine, or at least a sniff of their own gas, was not such a bad thing for MPs, and treated the affair as a schoolboy looks at a practical joke played on his master.

Maxton was born in 1885, and his first political interest at Glasgow University was with the Tories. When he made a break with them he went straight over to the "ultra Left" and joined the Independent Labour Party in 1904. He quickly achieved fame as "emperor of the soapbox" within that party, and was elected MP for the Bridgeton division of Glasgow in 1922, and so remained until his death in 1946.

When the ILP disaffiliated from the Labour Party in 1932, it was Maxton more than anyone else who helped to keep the faith of socialism alive within that small party. If Maxton heard some of the recent overtures to the Labour Party, made by members of the ILP, he would undoubtedly turn in his grave! Maxton's most famous contemporary and fellow-countryman, Sir Harry Lauder, whose centenary is being widely celebrated this year, used to sing "Keep right on to the end of the road". Maxton, "conscience of the British Labour Movement", did just that: but what a road! This road has now been lost completely by the Labour Party, whose state planned capitalist politics are hard to distinguish from their Tory counterpart. It is difficult to see this situation changing and reviving towards a socialistic vision, except by people outside the Labour Party.

As the authors of this pamphlet rightly point out in their prologue, "the age of colourful agitators has now given way to the more drab, though no doubt equally indispensable age of the administrators and the technocrats". But whether they were equally right in believing, as opposed to popular delusion, that Maxton's was an "heroic age" for socialism in Britain, I would question. Surely the failure of Maxton and others was due to their false premise that Parliament was a useful body. They wasted too much energy in the House, when they should have been amongst the people. Socialism is not an individualistic political power philosophy, but as Maxton and the ILP proclaimed, an "international co-operative common-wealth". Their oratory may announced this, but the practice eluded them and us.

This pamphlet draws heavily on the historical knowledge

of the socialist movement possessed by one of its co-authors, also well known to *Freethinker* readers—F. A. Ridley. His memory and ability for providing an apt quotation is unmatched. If there is one criticism of this pamphlet, it is that its size and price compare unfavourably.

DENIS COBELL

ROOM FOR GROWTH: A Re-assessment of Regional Policy, by John Speirs. The Bow Group, 6s.

This relatively liberal re-assessment of recent regional policy in Britain might recall the verdict of an Oxford don on an undergraduate's essay: "Good as far as it goes". The author is, however, less than fair when he accuses the former Labour Government of being so obsessed with the problems of the development areas that it failed to comprehend the wider regional problems still facing Britain. For our "sins", it was a Labour Government that drew up a National Plan, that set up the Economic Planning Councils, and that was one of the commissioning bodies of the "Strategic Plan for the South-East", which was released to an unsuspecting world just after the General Election.

It is a curious defect of *Room for Growth* that its author ignores the very concept of a National Plan to which regional structural plans can meaningfully be related. His single specific allusion to the crucial problem of pollution and environmental degeneration is, alas, all too brief: like a bikini, it shows what is interesting and hides what is important. Among Mr Speirs's more heterodox proposals are: the division of Britain into four categories of areas—development, intermediate, neutral and congested; the creation of elected regional councils with a greater say in the policies applicable to their regions; the abolition of Selective Employment Tax and of office development permits; the introduction of a payroll tax (at a rate of 5 per cent of total labour costs) to be levied on all firms in the congested areas. At a time when the English domestic scene is still marked by consensus politics and apathy, it is significant that Mr Speirs's proposals concerning a payroll tax and his division of Britain into the four areas referred to have been largely absorbed by the subsequent Labour Party report, *Regional Planning Policy*. Mr Speirs's apparent concern for a balanced economy and fairminded regional policy, under which different areas would receive aid and assistance according to the scale of their diverse needs and problems, will be welcomed by all who seek more rational use and more equitable distribution of human resources. How far his recommendations will be implemented remains to be seen.

MARTIN PAGE

Sunday, 13 September, 1970

Visit to
PEMBROKE LODGE, Richmond

(Home of Bertrand Russell)

and

DOWNE HOUSE

(Home of Charles Darwin)

COACH LEAVES CENTRAL LONDON 10 A.M.

Cost (coach fare, lunch, admission to Downe House) 27/6

Bookings to the Organisers:

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

103 Borough High Street, London, SE1

Telephone: 01-407 2717

LETTERS

Secular Weddings

I was pleased to read that Essex Humanists are continuing the good work of ensuring that local register offices are commodious and pleasantly decorated for the purpose of weddings. Five years ago the Richmond and Twickenham Humanists made representations to their local authority on just this point, with exceedingly good results.

Humanists living in the London area (or beyond) and whose local register office is past redemption may like to bear in mind that it is also possible to have a civil wedding at Conway Hall, the home of South Place Ethical Society. The General Secretary of SPES usually officiates, but any other member may also act in this capacity. Such a wedding has two advantages: the couple can choose the layout of the ceremony to suit their individual tastes, and it is possible to decorate the library of the hall beforehand. This removes the "assembly line" atmosphere in some busy register offices.

Marriage will continue to be fashionable for a long time yet. However, it is time that the Humanist / Freethought movement did something positive to end the hypocrisy of many non-Christians tripping up the aisle for a church wedding.

NIGEL SINNOTT, *Hall Manager*,
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1.

Church Schools

I was amazed at the contents of Joseph O'Connor's letter (*Freethinker*, 22 August). How he can have the audacity to compare the Spanish inquisition with repugnance against church schools is beyond me. It is, of course, completely outrageous to claim that the teaching of Christian beliefs leads to "brotherly love", unless history and experience are comprised of lies and illusions. Has Mr O'Connor not heard of the Crusades, anti-semitism, pogroms, slave-trading by the most Christian countries, Hitler and his henchmen? Apart from the various denominations who in their innermost hearts hate each other's guts, what about the ludicrous spectacle of the same Church blessing the flags of the respective warring countries at the same time as their Christian armies are at each other's throats? What about the present set-up in Northern Ireland? Perhaps Mr O'Connor would also kindly explain what he means when he says "every human being is created by God and redeemed by Christ", because it would be interesting to learn why God creates beings in such a way that they must subsequently require redemption. Is God a pawnbroker manufacturing creatures for the express purpose of holding them in pawn until the ransom he demands is paid? What satisfaction does he get out of it all? Please Mr O'Connor, do come off it. Think and believe whatever you like, but if you have anything to communicate, do first make sure that the language you use can cope with whatever it is you are trying to say.

H. RICH.

Schopenhauer

Messrs Payne and MacDonald (*Freethinker*, 15 August) both accuse me of misunderstanding Schopenhauer's concept of will. Mr Payne, unfortunately, does not point out to me where I have erred, except to say that I have misunderstood the connection between Schopenhauer's philosophy and certain (unspecified) "immortal truths" of Kant. Mr MacDonald is more specific.

Where I think Mr MacDonald errs is in failing to realise just how radical Schopenhauer is. One of the respects in which Schopenhauer's doctrines are related to those of Kant is in the notion of a *ding-an-sich*, which Schopenhauer equates with the will. This means that the essential nature of every object is the will, or, as Mr MacDonald puts it, "all products of nature . . . are manifestations of the will". Now clearly, as Mr MacDonald also says, there is "nothing wrong in talking about an individual manifesting his will to live". What Mr MacDonald doesn't seem to realise is that there is a difference between my being a manifestation of a will and my manifesting my will; and that the former is absurd whilst the latter is not. The first reason why the former is absurd is that a will might be manifested by someone but it is simply not the sort of thing of which a person might be a manifestation. A will cannot manifest a person; nor can it be identical with the essential nature of a person (though a person might have a willful nature). The second reason is that a will must always be possessed, it must be the will of something—"X's will"—and that to talk of X's will presupposes that X exists, and thus the will cannot be the essential "X-in-itself" which Schopenhauer claims it to be. Now, it seems to me, that Schopenhauer himself was more perspicacious than Mr MacDonald in perceiving this problem and that he introduced the notion of the Cosmic Will in an attempt to overcome it. From this stage on, as I sought to show, his philosophy degenerates into pure mysticism.

My reference to "flowery rhetoric" was not intended as a comment simply about Schopenhauer's style, which is innocuous compared with Nietzsche's, but as a comment on Schopenhauer's whole manner of philosophising. Nonetheless, I will leave readers to form their own opinion about the style of a man who could write:

Death is the great reprimand which the will to live, or more especially the egoism, which is essential to this, receives through the course of nature; and it may be received as a punishment of our existence. It is the painful loosing of the knot which the act of generation has tied with sensual pleasure, the violent destruction from without of the fundamental error of our nature: the great disillusion. (The World as Will and Idea, translated by Haldane and Kemp.)

Mr Payne's other point may possibly be better founded. My source for claiming that Schopenhauer thought the Holy Ghost dictated to him was Russell's *History of Western Philosophy*—it is possibly a Russellian exaggeration of something else Schopenhauer said. It cannot be doubted, however, that Schopenhauer—far from exhibiting the Stoicism he preached—was extremely conceited and thought his own work of immense value.

The details concerning Russell's alleged advocacy of dropping the bomb on Russia can be found, *inter alia*, in his *Autobiography*, and in *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare*.

NICHOLAS GRIFFIN.

This correspondence is now closed.—Editor.

MARX AND NIETZSCHE: SOME COMPARISONS

(Continued from page 283)

Germans; whereas Marx apparently believed in the innate superiority of the Germans to "the Slavonic riff-raff" and referred approvingly to "the historical tendency and the physical and intellectual power of the German nation to subdue, absorb and assimilate its ancient eastern neighbours". Marx, unfortunately, was contaminated by Pan-Germanism, whose advocates Nietzsche condemned as follows: "They are *authorities* whom every thoughtful person rejects with cold contempt". After Prussia's armistice with Denmark over the Danish duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, Marx railed against "betrayal of the honour and interests of Germany" and exclaimed: "The real capital of Denmark is Hamburg, not Copenhagen". War between Prussia and Austria followed disagreement as to which of them should rule Schleswig-Holstein; and at the time of Prussia's victory over Austria at Sadowa, when the Austrians appealed for French aid, both Marx and Nietzsche seemed distinctly hostile to the French. Yet within four years Nietzsche categorically and definitively reversed his attitude—a change of heart that was conceivably stimulated by his failure to join a Berlin Regiment of the Guards as well as by a horse-riding accident that cut short his military service.

Marx did not foresee the rise of the mass media; whereas Nietzsche was highly critical of the pseudo-education purveyed by journalists in an age characterised by the early development of mass society, Nietzsche wrote:

Nowadays, when the State has a nonsensically oversized belly, in all fields and branches of work there are *representatives* over and above the real workman: for instance, in addition to the scholars, there are the journalists; in addition to the suffering masses, there is a crowd of jabbering and bragging ne'er-dowells who *represent* that suffering—not to speak of the professional politicians who, though quite satisfied with their lot, stand up in Parliament and, with strong lungs, *represent* grievances.

Nietzsche also said: "What people want now, what the whole world is seeking, is easy circumstances, that comfort which gives satisfaction to the senses. Consequently, the world is heading towards a *spiritual slavery* such as it has never known before". With those prophetic words, Nietzsche posed one of the great problems of the twentieth century.