

WELCOME FOR PROPOSALS TO KEEP OFFENDERS OUT OF PRISON

The report by the Advisory Council on the Penal System published last week contains many proposals which will be welcomed by those who have maintained that a term of imprisonment is often a totally unsuitable punishment for the law breaker, and of no value to society. These proposals are aimed at broadening the range of punishments and substantially reducing the prison population. The Royal Commission on the Penal System (1965) received submissions on the lines indicated in the ACPS report. The National Secular Society in its submission to the Royal Commission declared: "In the light of our general feeling about the desirability of minimising terms of imprisonment, we suggest that short prison sentences be almost entirely replaced by fines or probation. Particularly with professional people—where being unemployed especially means becoming unemployable—it is desirable to take every step to avoid imprisonment with consequent dismissal from work".

Commenting on the new report, David Tribe, president of the NSS said: "Although a determinist I have always believed that the notions of crime and punishment cannot easily be abandoned. But the important question about punishment is that it should be used creatively. Primarily this will mean concentrating on the reform of the individual. No longer can penal problems be 'solved' by capital punishment or transportation. Not only are overcrowded prisons themselves burdensome, but from the moment of entering prison every convict should be helped to see that he is still part of society and how best to adjust to his return to life outside".

Prison Population Increasing

The report was drawn up by a sub-committee which was headed by Baroness Wootton, who was a magistrate for 40 years and has expert knowledge of the problems caused by crime, punishment and rehabilitation. Welcoming the proposals in the report, penologist and writer C. H. Rolph told the *Freethinker*: "With a prison population of 40,000 which is increasing by about 800 every year we have now reached the stage where no prison-building programme could solve the problem of overcrowding. I believe that 30,000 of the 40,000 people in prison at this moment could be released immediately without the slightest social ill-effects. There is a good deal to be said for the periodic detention centres in New Zealand and some other countries. The convicted person is not locked away for a specific period of time. Instead, he has to work on some community project for, say, every weekend for 12 months. On Monday he goes back home to his family and job". Mr Rolph went on to say that he also agreed with the proposal that courts be empowered to disqualify a road traffic offender from driving at weekends.

Detention of Young People

One important outcome of the adoption of the proposals would be keeping young offenders away from the hardened convicts. Tony Smythe, general secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties told the *Freethinker* that there must be an 80 per cent reduction in the prison population. He says: "Certainly it is the impression of the NCCL in dealing with large numbers of prisoners, particularly young people in remand homes, is that confinement is totally

devoid of constructive purpose. And moreover, it is often imposed merely because there are no alternatives. Any measures which are designed to prevent people going to prison who would be sent there at the moment, are to be welcomed".



Baroness Wootton

CENTENARY OF THE RISORGIMENTO

NIGEL SINNOTT

In view of the continuing difficulty in forming a stable Government in Italy, and of the stormy passage of the proposed divorce bill in the Italian Parliament, it is perhaps a suitable occasion to look back to more hopeful times, and remember that 20 September is the centenary of the final phase of the unification of Italy, the entrance of the Italian army into Rome.

The *risorgimento* or "resurrection" had had its origin some 22 years before in 1848, the "year of revolutions" when revolts broke out all over Europe. In the autumn of that year Pope Pius IX fled the city of Rome, then the capital of the Papal States, and in his absence the Italian Nationalists declared a Republic early in 1849. The Pope called upon the Catholic powers to restore him, and this they obligingly did in the summer of the same year in the form of an expeditionary force sent by the then President of France, Napoleon Buonaparte (later Emperor Napoleon III). I have already told the story of the Siege of the Roman Republic in an earlier article,¹ but suffice to say that, despite the astounding heroism of the Republicans, the French were able to restore the Pope, though Garibaldi, the leader of the Republican army, who had marched out of the city rather than surrender, managed to reach safety (though his wife and many friends died, or were shot, *en route* if they fell into the hands of the Austrians).

Although the Roman Republic was so short-lived, it was "the loss of a battle, not the war". The heroism of the Garibaldini won their cause immense sympathy in America and the rest of Europe, especially amongst the liberals, and in Italy itself it helped to crystallize public feeling against the *ancien régime* of the Bourbons in Naples and of Pius IX and his creature, Cardinal Antonelli, in the Roman States.

The Thousand

The Italian peninsula reverted, for the most part, to its mediaeval ways for another ten years. Garibaldi, Mazzini and Cavour, the Italian nationalist leaders, however, had not abandoned all hope. In the early summer of 1860 Garibaldi and a band of his red shirts, immortalised as The Thousand—*I Mille* (there were slightly more than a thousand of them, in fact)—landed on the coast of Sicily and by early June had wrested the capital of the island, Palermo, from the troops of King Francis II of Naples. Garibaldi was declared Dictator of Sicily (the title had not acquired its unpleasant modern connotation!), and after consolidating his position and resting his volunteers, prepared to launch an invasion of the "toe" of Italy, which he did, succeeding by a clever feint. The Garibaldini, their ranks swelling with local recruits and Bourbonist deserters, proceeded to fight their way up towards Naples, until King Francis decided that he had had enough and fled to Rome for protection despite the fact that on one occasion he had telegraphed the Pope for his blessing five times in one day.

In August (1860) Cavour, Premier of Piedmont (Sardinia) arranged for an invasion of the Papal States from the north, taking most of them except for a small enclave around Rome itself which was still defended by French troops as part of a Franco-Vatican treaty. Otherwise, Italy was now in the hands of the nationalists from the Alps to Sicily, except the northern province of Venetia. Vittorio Emanuele II, King of Piedmont, was declared the first constitutional monarch of a united Italy.

Garibaldi now returned to his home on the island of Caprera, off Sardinia, but he had not forgotten that Rome, the natural capital of the peninsula, was still not in Italian hands. In 1862 he recruited another band of volunteers in Sicily, crossed over to the mainland, and proceeded to march on Rome. The Italian government, however, fearing trouble from France and Austria, sent regular troops to forestall this expedition. Garibaldi's party was fired upon, and their leader wounded, though he succeeded in organising a cease fire and was later, for a while, under arrest. In 1866, this time with the connivance of the King of Italy Garibaldi led an expedition against Austrian-held Venetia, but was ordered to withdraw when in sight of Trento (the regular army had suffered heavy losses). However, after Austria had been beaten by Prussia at the battle of Sadowa (Königgrätz) she vacated Venetia. Garibaldi despite being wounded again in the 1866 campaign, was not to be deterred for long; in the autumn of 1867 he led another unofficial expedition against the Pope's temporal capital, but with no more success. The Garibaldini, this time without adequate training or support, were no match for the French regulars who ended their advance at the battle of Mentana.

20 September 1870

However, time, and the tide of European politics were running out for Pius IX. In 1870 the Franco-Prussian War broke out, with the eventual surrender of Napoleon III at Sedan. As a direct consequence of the war the French garrison was withdrawn from Rome, and, to borrow a phrase from Irish history: France's difficulty was Italy's opportunity. The government ensured that Garibaldi was kept well out the way, then sent Generals Cozenz and Bixio against Rome itself. Nino Bixio must have relished the mission, as he had been a leading light in the defence of the city in 1849. On 20 September, 1870, the Bersaglieri under Bixio made a feint attack against the Porta San Pancrazio (where, twenty-one years before their compatriots had fought and died in droves during the Siege), then Cozenz's men forced an entry near the Porta Pia, the Pope's personal gate into the city. Thus Rome became the capital of a united Italy, and Pio Nono retitled himself "the prisoner of the Vatican".

The Aftermath

The sequel, as we all know, was as tragic as the *risorgimento* was heroic. It seems incredible that the Italy of the Garibaldini should, within two generations, have started along the tawdry path of empire-building in Africa, and that the grandchildren of The Thousand should have cheered through the streets of Rome *Il Duce*, Benito Mussolini, the one-time socialist and atheist who, in 1928, signed the infamous Lateran Treaty with the Vatican. (It is even more infamous that this treaty was not revoked after World War II when Italy declared for a republic.)

It is not my intention here to deal with the role of the Catholic Church in Italian politics; it is too well known, and I have listed some of Garibaldi's views on the subject before.² As for Pius IX, it might be said, in mitigation, that his intentions were reasonably progressive at the beginning of his reign, but that he had fallen into "bad hands", those of Cardinal Antonelli, who died leaving "a fortune of £4,000,000 and a natural daughter, the Countess

(Continued on back page)

GOD CAN'T SAVE SOUTH AFRICA

BILL HUGHES

If Christianity were concerned about peace and goodwill, and the brotherhood of man, it would not matter too much about all the fantasy and superstition that accompanied it. When religion imposes itself upon the physical world and contributes to human suffering is when atheists rightly condemn it. Were Christianity to remain a purely abstract indulgence and played no part in ordering a society, it could be tolerated.

The churches in South Africa play a large part in supporting the existing society of racial segregation and exploitation firstly in their own organisation and directly to the Government. The near fascist nature of religion in South Africa is mainly due to the old Boer settlers whose interpretation of the Gospels was of the hell fire and damnation variety, and when later English settlers came to the Cape and Natal, the Dutch became (perhaps with some justification) fanatically nationalist and wished to preserve what they had built up with their own sweat and initiative. It riled the Boers to think that the English colonists were going to take over the country which they (the Boers) had "civilised" and turned to productive use. The Anglicans, while more "liberal" theologically and socially, nevertheless found that racial separation and the use of black men as cheap labour were convenient. European liberalism became remote, and once the English became established in South Africa, thoughts of reform, humanity and so on that at least stirred in a few churchmen's minds in 19th century England were relegated to oblivion.

Religion Hoodwinks Apartheid Victims

Today the Bible-punching ideology of the old Trekkers

still dominates the land. Such is the fanaticism of this that thousands of black Africans and Coloureds have been hoodwinked into the churches and accept a completely servile and humiliating position in them. The Dutch Reformed Church has approximately 600,000 black African and 500,000 Coloured members, so the extent of indoctrination is pretty appalling. The Methodists also have large black and Coloured membership and actually pass resolutions such as that in 1960, part of which is: "The Conference resolves to proceed with the removal of racial demarcation from its official records and legislation". Deeds have not followed words, however liberal they may seem on paper. No religious organisation can permit what after all would only be branded "Communism" if the races were allowed to mix. In fairness to those who do have scruples about apartheid in South Africa, their situation is extremely precarious. They must work underground and even suspects can be detained for 90 days without trial—an unthinkable situation for English readers. If this occurred in Britain there would be large scale protest.

Such is the almost complete hold that apartheid has over South Africa that even the Progressive MP Helen Suzman was moved to denigrate the modest proposals of the World Council of Churches to help liberation groups. It is strange to think that once Christianity was a subversive movement helping to liberate Palestine from the Roman occupation and today it is one of the chief props to authoritarian regimes all over the world. White South Africans are the complete opposite to anything that Christ (if he existed) is alleged by Christians to have stood for. God, and his ecclesiastical minions, will never remove the evils of South Africa if the record and actions of the churches there are any guide.

ABOVE ALL LIBERTIES

MARTIN PAGE

Only those blinded by the crudest political fanaticism could have failed to have been moved and shocked by the recent BBC Television programme which powerfully evoked and ably explored the tragedy of free thought in Russia today. It consisted largely of interviews with leading Russian writers, intellectuals and thinkers who have been imprisoned or condemned to mental hospitals, or had their writings banned outright or emasculated by the Russian bureaucracy—sometimes in violation of the Soviet constitution itself—because their ideas were too heretical or too advanced for the ruling class.

The condemnation of sane, intelligent and honourable men to lunatic asylums because their crime is that, loving their country and being profoundly concerned about the way Russia is going, they dare to voice criticisms of contemporary Russian society, is not only a tacit admission by the ruling class of its own moral and ideological bankruptcy, not only a grievous blow against the very concept of free thought. It is an act of barbarism to be resisted and condemned by all civilised men who cherish truth and tolerance based on freedom of criticism and enquiry. The courage and outspokenness of those Russian dissentients

like Vladimir Bukovsky, Andrey Amalrik and Pavel Yakir who insisted on being filmed—despite the likely adverse consequences—are encouraging in the interests of human nature and deserve the highest praise; their fate now seems highly problematical. The growth of the "underground" literature of protest in Russia—tragic though some of its repercussions may be—provides ground for hope by virtue of its repudiation of totalitarianism and its concern for a more just and democratic society. A significant number of the dissentients—men like General Grigorenko, Pavel Yakir and Pavel M. Litvinov—command respect and influence within the ranks from which they have sprung, and such rebels may be thought to be voicing and ventilating, in a highly articulate manner, a deep-rooted frustration and *malaise* felt by the mass of the population. These factors might suggest that we may be confronted with the preliminary birth-pains of another Russian Revolution. At home, John Gollan, secretary of the British Communist Party, condemned the trial of the Russian writers Daniel and Sinyavsky, which stimulated much of the present unrest. Perhaps Mr Gollan built better than he knew.

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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 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. Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds. Exhibition of drawings and paintings by Oswald Blakeston; until 20 September.

London Young Humanists. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, 20 September, 7 p.m. Nigel Sinnott: "The Risorgimento, Humanism and History".

BESIDE THE SEASIDE

After the TUC's six-day meeting at Brighton the next big gathering of the Left is at Blackpool where the annual conference of the Labour Party opens on 29 September. The agenda includes a wide selection of motions ranging from a proposal to make 1 January and 1 May public bank holidays (Ealing South), to a call on the Government to end its ban on advertising by public bodies in the *Morning Star* (Leeds East).

The motions on education include the usual expressions of belief in comprehensive schools, the need to expand the nursery services and improvement in teachers' salaries. There are several which suggest that opposition to the privileged position of the churches in the educational system is spreading in the constituency parties. Runcorn "would like to see moral and religious education treated as separate subjects in county schools and that both be studied in an atmosphere of open inquiry". Birmingham (Edgbaston) wants the National Executive Committee to set up a working party to examine the implications of statutory religious instruction and worship in State primary and secondary schools". Wandsworth (Putney) bluntly calls for "an end to compulsory religious education".

Bristol Central and Wirral constituency parties and the Socialist Medical Association call for the implementation of a free family planning service.

NEWS

HONOURABLE SUBVERSION

Reaction in South Africa to the decision by the World Council of Churches to contribute funds to fight racism is predictable enough. And while we honour those brave individual Christians who have stood out against apartheid—and often forced to leave the country for doing so—the attitude of the organised Christian majority to the WCC is worth noting.

The South African Council of Churches have strongly protested against the decision, and the Anglican Archbishop of Johannesburg said the Council would probably withdraw its support from the WCC. "It is quite intolerable that money can be given in the name of religion to subversive movements", he is reported to have said. The "subversive movements" which have so far received grants are the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines (Australia) and the International Defence and Aid Fund (Britain). The former got £4,166 for legal action to support aborigine land rights; £1,250 went to the Defence and Aid Fund to help the relatives of people who had been executed, imprisoned or banished for opposition to apartheid.

It is not only the African majority that suffers under the Vorster régime. There are scores of petty restrictions which make life difficult for all but the most devoted adherents of apartheid, and we had an example of this in a letter which arrived at the *Freethinker* office last week. A prospective reader in Cape Town wrote for a sample copy, and added:

There is one little difficulty which may arise. As you may know, there is a very strict censorship of all publications and films of an unorthodox or nonconformist nature in South Africa, though, now and then, books by Lord Russell, Sir Julian Huxley, Hector Hawton and other Humanists pass unnoticed by these officials. It might help, I suppose, if the *Freethinker* were to be sent in a plain wrapper, or if the normal wrapper were not too blatantly obvious, as I am not hankering after martyrdom unless it is absolutely unavoidable. The penalties for being found in possession of "undesirable" literature are heavy.

The action of the World Council of Churches is a reflection of the growing realisation throughout the world of the danger and evil of apartheid. We shall soon publish an article which shows how Britain is involved in this system of repression and discrimination.

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?

... the Post Office so far as the *Freethinker* is concerned. The increase in postal charges which was recently announced together with other costs are going to add greatly to our problems. We are going to depend much more on the generosity of readers who donate to the Fund, and deeply appreciate the kindness of readers like an old age pensioner who writes: "Kindly accept my small donation of £1 for the *Freethinker*. I have been receiving it since 1919, and look forward to my issue each week".

The following donations are acknowledged with thanks: Mrs Bennett 3/6; W. F. Burgess £2; J. Buchanan £2/18/6; J. W. Arkell £2; T. W. Lines 10/6; W. Gerard £2/18/6; G. J. Davis 8/6; J. Sutherland 16/10; S. Venning 7/-; D. Molyneux 9/-; Mrs W. Mawson; 4/-; W. V. Crees 9/-; J. Styles 4/-; D. C. Greene 18/6; R. S. Meredith £1; W. Parry 10/-. Already acknowledged: £103/3/8; 1970 total to date: £119/1/6.

S AND NOTES

CATHOLICS AND FAMILY PLANNING

The Catholic Renewal Movement leaflet, *Catholics and Family Planning*, which was published last week, has caused mild controversy and discussion among the faithful; five years ago it would have raised hell. There is nothing ambiguous about the advice given to Catholics: "Make your own decision, get the help you need, then stop worrying. There is no need to consult a priest or to mention the matter in confession". Pope Paul's encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* (1968), "deserves serious and respectful attention", but the CRN says it is not infallible and refers to the hundreds of bishops, doctors and theologians who have expressed disagreement with the pope, and urged Catholics "to make their own conscientious decision in this very private matter". The leaflet—100,000 copies of which are to be distributed—is published with the assistance of the Family Planning Association. What will the Lamp Society say?

Archbishop Dwyer of Birmingham issued a rather subdued Press statement declaring that the leaflet had neither the approval nor the support of the RC church. He reiterated that Church teaching is still that artificial contraception is wrong in principle. "This does not exclude understanding and charity towards individual couples who find difficulty in observing it".

Such a conciliatory tone would have been unthinkable a few years ago. Then—and now in countries where Holy Mother Church's teeth haven't yet been drawn—birth control was described as "murder", and efforts to open family planning clinics were opposed. London Transport bowed to religious pressure, and removed posters advertising the Family Planning Association.

There are many reasons for the climb-down by the Catholic hierarchy on this question; and one of them is given in the CRN leaflet: "In 1967, a Gallup poll in Britain found that 62 per cent of practising Catholics thought that there can be good reasons for the use of contraceptive methods of birth control in marriage". This only confirms the belief held by many that large numbers of Catholics were ignoring the teaching of the Church and opting for a more reliable form of family planning than Vatican roulette.

It is clear that in future Catholics will concentrate their fire on abortion. Abortion will replace family planning as "murder" and the Abortion Law Reform Association becomes the devil's agency in place of the Family Planning Association. But it is also clear that British Catholics will tend to make up their own minds on social questions, and this tendency will be greatly accelerated when the nation's children are educated together in state schools, and not in part-time churches.

NEW BOOK ON GREEK MYTHS

Edward Blishen (whose review of *Tussy is Me* is on page 302) is co-author, with Leon Garfield, of a new book, *The God Beneath the Sea*, which will be published by Longman next month. In this work, Blishen and Garfield set out to provide a new version of the Greek myths. This is not just a collection of separate legends; they make out of these ancient stories, a piece of fresh, continuous fiction. The illustrations are by Charles Keeping.

PUBLICATIONS

TITLE	AUTHOR	Price	Post
RI and Surveys	Maurice Hill	1/0	4d
Religion and Ethics in Schools	David Tribe	1/6	4d
Religious Education in State Schools	Brigid Brophy	2/6	4d
Ten Non Commandments	Ronald Fletcher	2/6	4d
The Cost of Church Schools	David Tribe	4/0	6d
A History of Sex	G. L. Simons	9/0	1/0
Humanism, Christianity and Sex	David Tribe	6d	4d
103: History of a House	Elizabeth Collins	1/0	4d
Freethought and Humanism in Shakespeare	David Tribe	2/0	4d
The Necessity of Atheism	Percy Bysshe Shelley	1/6	4d
The Secular Responsibility	Marghanita Laski	2/0	4d
The Nun Who Lived Again	Phyllis Graham	6d	4d
An Analysis of Christian Origins	George Ory	2/6	4d
New Thinking on War and Peace	A. C. Thompson	1/0	4d
A Humanist Glossary	Robin Odell and Tom Barfield	3/6	6d
The Vatican Versus Mankind	Adrian Pigott	4/0	1/4
Evolution of the Papacy	F. A. Ridley	1/0	4d
Lift up Your Heads	William Kent	5/0	1/0
James Maxton and British Socialism	V. S. Anand and F. A. Ridley	4/0	6d
The Bible Handbook	G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball	7/6	1/2
What Humanism is About	Kit Mouat	10/6	1/6
The Humanist Revolution	Hector Hawton	10/6	1/6
Pioneers of Social Change	E. Royston Pike	10/6	1/6
The Golden Bough	J. G. Frazer	20/0	2/6
Religion in Secular Society	Bryan Wilson	15/0	1/3
The Humanist Outlook	Various	35/0	2/2
100 Years of Freethought	David Tribe	42/0	2/2
Catholic Terror Today	Avro Manhattan	12/6	1/6
Materialism Restated	Chapman Cohen	5/0	1/4
The Martyrdom of Man	Winwood Reade	10/6	1/9
Morality Without God	Chapman Cohen	6d	4d
Catholic Imperialism and World Freedom (secondhand)	Avro Manhattan	15/0	2/2
From Jewish Messianism to the Christian Church	Prosper Alfaric	6d	4d
Man His Own Master	Archibald Robertson	2/6	8d
The Outlines of Mythology	Lewis Spence	2/6	8d
The Dead Sea Scrolls	John Allegro	5/0	1/0
Age of Reason	Thomas Paine	3/6	4d
Rights of Man (paper)	Thomas Paine	7/0	1/4
Police and the Citizen	NCLL	4/0	5d
The Hanging Question	Edited by Louis Blom-Cooper	15/0	1/0
Rome or Reason	R. G. Ingersoll	1/0	5d
Thomas Paine	Chapman Cohen	1/0	5d
Morals Without Religion	Margaret Knight	12/6	1/2
The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism	Bertrand Russell	6/0	1/0
Why I am Not a Christian	Bertrand Russell	3/0	6d
Impact of Science on Society	Bertrand Russell	6/0	1/0
Mysticism and Logic	Bertrand Russell	6/0	1/0
Authority and the Individual	Bertrand Russell	7/0	1/0
Political Ideas	Bertrand Russell	6/0	1/0
The Conquest of Happiness	Bertrand Russell	9/0	1/2
Marriage and Morals	Bertrand Russell	8/0	1/2
Bertrand Russell's Best	Edited by Robert E. Egner	15/0	1/6
Humanism	H. J. Blackham	5/0	1/0
Comparative Religion	A. C. Bouquet	8/0	1/4
William James and Religion	Gabriel Richard Mason	1/0	5d
What is the Sabbath Day?	H. Cutner	1/3	6d
Human Rights	Peter Archer	3/0	5d
Marriage and Divorce	Various	9/6	1/4
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BOOKS

TUSSY IS ME

by Michael Hastings. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 40s.

It's a task only the stoutest-hearted of writers would have attempted: to tell as fiction—as “a romance”, indeed—the story of Marx's youngest daughter, Eleanor, and so the desperate tale of her self-destructive relations with Edward Aveling. To begin with, such a history abounds in vast characters, all of them already richly written up, by themselves and others: it's no light thing to have in your cast, beside Marx himself, Engels, Bernard Shaw, William Morris, Charles Bradlaugh, Annie Besant, Olive Schreiner, Havelock Ellis . . . To suggest the everyday, domestic selves of these monuments—as difficult as to set statues walking. . . . Then there's the dense period detail to manage: and events that have become tidy history to restore to the disorder of life. And finally, there's the massive central tangle to make sense of—again, to make *living* sense of. This last must have been the most strenuous of Mr Hastings' challenges. Invention—that is, the attempt imaginatively to understand what shaped Eleanor's existence—must move within the awkward confines of what is historically known: and much of that is baffling.

Mr Hastings' title embodies one of the main clues on which he works: “Tussy” was Marx's name for his favourite daughter: early in her life he said of her, “Tussy” was Marx's name for his favourite daughter: early in her life he said of her, “Tussy is me”. His wife was ailing, his other daughters married: Eleanor served him, as research assistant, as amanuensis, later as housekeeper, nurse. The story begins with a touching account of their closeness, when she was still a child: with the high spirits of the young Marxes—sabotaging, for example, a weekend “shoot” at a country house. With, also, Eleanor's early sexual experiments: she was passionately disconcerting to her first lover, Mr Hastings brings vividly to life this “learned, humorous, explosive family group”. His Marx is both big and small enough—a “tired, boil-ridden” man with “a pleasant chaotic spirit”—and the portrait is matched by a complicatedly attractive one of Engels, the “General”, Marx's provider. The novel grows, now, as dense as life; and out of the thickening account of revolutionary activity, drawing to it that gifted motley crew of socialists of many varieties, atheists (including the founder of the *Freethinker*), Darwinians, poets, sexual reformers, actors—out of it grows, heavier and heavier, the story of the painful development of Eleanor the woman, proud of her father and oppressed by being his daughter, taken at last into a common-law union by Aveling—who, she imagined, wanted her for herself, but who, as Mr Hastings portrays him, is driven by a hatred of her parentage and of the legend in which it mantles her as much as he is by his simple, cold, appalling lack of conscience . . . his being, as he frankly admits, “a bastard”.

It's such a big, brimming story, and Mr Hastings certainly fills his pages with the bustle of it, out of which was to come in the end such a reshaping of the world. There are set pieces of great vigour: the account of the Battle of Trafalgar Square, for example. His main intent, we gather from a prefatory note as from the novel itself, has been to correct the view, which he holds to be a vulgar one, that the story of Edward Aveling and Eleanor Marx is “a socialist tragedy”. Those who use such a phrase, he says, “seek only to undermine and denigrate the true valour with which they fought for their Cause”. And this seems a merely just opinion. Bernard Shaw, as reported by Hesketh

FREETHINKER

Pearson, has attested that Aveling (who was in Shaw's mind when he drew the portrait of Dubedat in *The Doctors' Dilemma*) had “an incorruptible integrity as a militant atheist . . . a Darwinian and a Marxist” and “would have gone to the stake rather than deny or surrender a jot of his convictions”. Outside the disgraces and distresses of their private lives, if it's possible to split human beings in this way, both Aveling and Eleanor were dauntless fighters: and such a phrase is given precise reality by detail after detail of Mr Hastings' story. Yet in the last analysis, he does not perhaps quite convince us: he does not, that is quite permit us to emerge from the novel—from those last chapters, and especially from the account of Aveling's own purchase of the prussic acid with which Eleanor kills herself—feeling that what matters most about them is their heroic quality as pioneers of the Left. I suspect that he leaves rather late his attempt to lay the valiant Aveling alongside the monster. By the time we reach these closing pages, we have known Eleanor so long and so closely, in all her distress of flesh and spirit and her terrible decline—and we must be so appalled by Aveling's cruelty—that we can't achieve the judicious detachment Mr Hastings would ask of us. History falls away, and we are left with an unbearable private story of a woman who felt it was “over-much” to be fathered as she was, and of a man who either destroyed her hideously or—we fall back on another possibility implied by the author—helped in full awareness to quicken the forces of self-destruction at work within her.

But even if there's something in this feeling I had when I finished reading—that the aim of the novelist is spoilt by the sheer painfulness and unresolved ambiguity of the story—it would be ungrateful to Mr Hastings not to repeat that he has brought to life, and to vigorous and plausible life, a very difficult page of history. The period properties are extraordinarily well managed, and there are scores of scenes of the kind that remain in the memory when the whole course of a novel may be forgotten. And comic, gay scenes, too: one, for instance, between Olive Schreiner and her most curious lover, Havelock Ellis, that is wildly funny. Mr Hastings confesses in his foreword to his few not very important interferences with historical fact. He employs words oddly at times: “ravage”, for example, is used throughout for “ravish”—it is even put into the mouth of that most meticulous of stylists, Bernard Shaw. But this occasional oddity is the small price one pays for a general individuality and sensitiveness of language: part and parcel of Mr Hastings' obviously passionate, and so often successful, attempt to give a living account of a fragment of history that so easily, like Marx himself, might have been turned into “some kind of . . . stony edifice”.

EDWARD BLISHEN

MEMORIAL EDITION

WHY I AM NOT
A CHRISTIAN

BERTRAND RUSSELL

Preface DAVID TRIBE

Introduction Professor ANTONY FLEW

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REVIEWS

COMPUTERS, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

by F. H. George. Pemberton Books, 30s.

Q. What have the following in common? Scientific method, technology, semantics, philosophy, ethics, computers and computer programming, "intelligent" machines, cybernetics, organ transplants, mathematical logic, the industrial revolution, systems analysis, production control, automated education, social engineering and 4d a page.

A. F. H. George's new book.

Despite the fairly superficial treatment of a large number of topics, Professor George still manages to make his latest effort in computer books well worth reading, provided the reader doesn't mind his staccato style and high price. Offering a quick guided tour of computerland, Professor George makes all the right noises about the need to apply scientific principles to the automated society now developing if technology is to add to human happiness rather than detract from it; and he points out that cybernetics (the science of control) can be used to regulate social evolution and do away with the chaos of the market place.

This emphasis on neat and orderly regulation is, indeed, a characteristic of those who work in the computer field. Computer programming calls for a tidy, logical and disciplined mind, and computer people often dream of harnessing the power and versatility of their machines and their trained minds, working together in partnership, to solve a whole range of social problems. In education, for instance, Professor George makes out a strong case for teaching machines and programmed instruction (National Union of Teachers please note), to supplement the human teacher in the classroom, particularly in scientific subjects and mathematics. Programmed instruction breaks down the teaching process into a logical sequence of question-and-answer which makes sure that the student fully assimilates each part of his subject before proceeding to the next. Whilst the claims Professor George makes for the technique are perhaps exaggerated, there is no doubt that automated education will become increasingly necessary to cope with the "knowledge explosion" of the future.

Progress in automation is largely a function of computerisation. Since there is still an aura of mystery surrounding these machines and their uses, there is a need to explain to the general public just what a computer can do (and what it can't). Chapter three of the book provides just such a readable, if light, introduction for the general reader, and (unlike most elementary introductions to this subject) does not lead one to think that computers are brainless beasts who can do only what they're told to do. One of the features of the computer that most people find staggering is that the machine can "learn" from experience to perform a given task better. In the sphere of games-playing programs, for example, one draughts-playing program has already reached expert level, and chess-playing programs show continuing improvement.

More significant than games-playing is the contribution which computers can make to the management of industry and society. The aim of research in so-called "machine intelligence" is to build a cybernetic machine, that is, one

which simulates human intelligence and behaviour. Specifically, the problem boils down to devising a way of making the machine respond flexibly to its inputs and modify its final outputs—so that you would never again hear of the computer which sent out a gas bill for nine million pounds rather than nine. Techniques for inducing this kind of "intelligent" behaviour in the computer are already considerably advanced, one example being automatic production control in industry in which the controlling computer complex adapts the entire productive process as required with minimal human intervention.

Another compelling, if macabre, chapter in the book deals with biological simulation and organ replacement. Here the aim is to simulate the workings of, say, the human liver or kidney on the computer to facilitate the development of model organs which could be used to replace their defective natural counterparts. Ultimately, there seems no reason why a great deal, perhaps all, of the human nervous system could not be simulated on a computer, which would be a giant step towards constructing an artificial brain and carrying out a whole variety of tasks which at present human beings reserve to themselves.

As the introduction to the book by David Stewart points out, Professor George is one of the few polymaths around these days; and his breadth of knowledge is at once the main strength and weakness of the book. Strength, because Professor George is equipped to point out the computer applications now possible in many diverse fields; weakness, because his inadequate knowledge of classical philosophy leads him to commit several blunders of the type long ago denounced by David Hume—the idea that you can deduce what ought to be from what is. Thus, on p. 23, we read:

...we should no longer look to the philosopher-qua-philosopher for guidance in practical and everyday matters, or in ethical and social questions. Instead, we should look to the scientists to see what it is that science provides by way of guidance based on previous experience, and in terms of the purposes which people have.

If Professor George's acquaintance with philosophy were a little deeper, he would have realised that no description of human behaviour, however full, by the social scientists he espouses can possibly provide a basis for saying how people *ought* to behave. In point of fact, the principal criticism of this book must be that Professor George's enthusiasm for science often blinds him to the dangers inherent in his fully automated society, which he sees as virtually inevitable. The rise of behaviourism is no accident in an era of centralised, bureaucratic National Plans; once you see that large sectors of society can be computerised and controlled by the stimulus-response technique, then why indeed not resort to full-scale social engineering—the only problem is whether people actually want what the planners think they ought to want. Clearly, as the book emphasises, we shall get nowhere by turning our back on the scientific investigation of society; but the danger is that, all too often, bright young men in computers come to see the machines as real, and the human beings as the abstractions. As we move into the glittering technological future, controlled at every turn by the social scientists that Professor George would mass-produce, let's not forget democracy and what people want; whether the politicians would listen to the people, Professor George, or anyone else is, unfortunately, another matter entirely.

PHILIP HINCHLIFF

THEATRE

SAINT JOAN. Mermaid Theatre, London.

The political and ecclesiastical intrigues that first condemned, then rehabilitated, the Maid of Orleans are convincing enough. But even after an extensive exploration of Jeanne d'Arc territory last year I still have no clear impression of the real Joan. Somehow the story doesn't add up. Imagine a simple country girl turning up at Buckingham Palace, even during the dark days of the Battle of Britain, asking to be put in charge of the armed forces. Granted that combat is more advanced today, so too is the status of women. We may assume that Joan was neither witch nor saint but schizophrenic. What we have then to explain is why she was promoted by the powers spiritual and temporal. Her advantages as a fall-girl would seem to be more outweighed by her inconvenience as a popular female Rasputin if she were successful and as an incredible miscalculation to be explained away if she were not. "Mediaeval superstition" covers a multitude of sins but, as Shaw's sophisticated dialogue cleverly brings out, warfare was as coldly calculating then as now.

What sort of person was the Maid? The radiant, mellifluous, "saintly" *ingénue* of the usual play or film (whoever's script is used), a roystering peasant girl, a ferocious butch lesbian or a strident madwoman? For my money I found Angela Pleasence's Joan, revealing less of the first and more of the other three, the most convincing portrayal I have seen. There is a marvellous contrast between her first entrance in red rambustiousness and her entrance for the trial in brown bewilderment.

Shaw was one of the first dramatists to make inquisitors "human", and Antony Brown and George Benson bring understanding to their roles. John Tordoff as the Dauphin (later Charles VII), Bruce Purchase as the Earl of Warwick and Barry Linchan as the scheming Archbishop of Rheims are most convincing. The rest of the cast double up a lot without embarrassment. Apart from the Epilogue, Bernard Miles's production is dexterous and imaginative. Shaw seldom knew how to end his plays and only spotlight *panache* or dream-like surrealism can save the end of this one.

DAVID TRIBE

LETTERS

It is sad that Dr Spock should sully his reputation among decent people by adding his voice to the dreary chorus of anti-feminist dogmatism—"penis envy", "women's proper role of child-rearing" and all the other rubbish. It is sadder still that Margaret McIlroy (*Freethinker*, 29 August) is not more critical of such absurdities. What is the point of rejecting a Gospel which at least claims inspiration from God, only to fall for the Gospel according to Freud, inspired by the dirty mind of a Victorian male chauvinist? We do not pay sixpence for eight small pages of the *Freethinker* to read about "child-rearing as an exciting and highly-skilled job of enormous social importance": people who want claptrap like that get much better value having the *Observer*.

For sheer absence of thought, free or otherwise, the following passage from the review takes the biscuit:

He is well worth attending to when he points out what the movement to sexual licence can cost young women . . . young men usually have their first sexual experience with girls they do not love or plan to marry, whereas most girls say their first experience was with a man they loved. As these young people are largely talking about the same relationships, it is clear that for many girls their first love affair leads to a sad disillusionment.

Presumably "relationships" here is a euphemism for activity or experience. No, the young people were NOT largely talking about the same experiences—why on earth should they have been? Surveys (e.g. Kinsey on males) confirming what most people already knew, show that most American males are deflowered (if that is the right word) by an experienced woman. Given that some disappointment in love does occur, why should it be any more "costly" after copulation than without copulation? In the former case the woman will at least have enjoyed a pleasant and educational experience, one which is worthwhile for its own sake; if she remains a virgin she will have had nothing. The fact is, of course, that American girls (but not boys) are taught that sex with "love" is OK but sex just for fun is bad—and many of these girls do as their elders tell them. Girls brought up to sexual freedom do *not* have their first experience with a man they "love"; like the majority of boys, they have it for pleasure, to gain experience, to feel grown-up, with a male willing to co-operate on that basis.

Unsubstantiated allegations about the "cost" of sexual freedom are not distortion, exaggeration or misunderstanding, they are simple, blatant slander. Traditionalists always claim there is some "snag" to sexual freedom that we haven't thought of. The trouble is, they themselves can't think of it either, because it doesn't exist. There are no snags to sexual freedom; there are only advantages, particularly for women.

CONNIARE KENSIT.

Breaking Free

Mr Charles Byass is right to point out that the statement "I am what I have chosen to be" appears to contradict the far more important statement that: "What I am is determined by what I think". It matters to none except myself whether I am what I have chosen to be. Yet as a matter of fact no amount of free will would have enabled me to liberate myself from Roman Catholicism so long as my mind remained dominated by the Roman Catholic faith. It was only "after" I had intellectually lost my faith that I was in a real position to leave the Church. But even then I might have gone on indefinitely pretending to be a Roman Catholic, and without something that I must call my own free will, I could never have become what I have chosen to be, a freethinker.

PETER CROMMELIN.

CENTENARY OF THE *RISORGIMENTO*

(Continued from page 298)

Lambertini, fighting for it".³ It would be ungracious, however, not to mention some of the brave priests who sided with the liberals, particularly Father Pantaleo, the "Red-shirt Friar" of the 1860 Campaign, and the gallant Ugo Bassi who died with Vatican connivance, at the hands of an Austrian firing squad in 1849.

Since the last World War the Italians, as fighting men, have had a poor reputation in this country, but that is not the whole truth. It may well be that they were half-hearted in realising the expansionist dreams of *Il Duce* in the Libyan desert, but we should not forget that other Italians fought in the anti-fascist resistance (the "Garibaldi" brigade captured Mussolini) and others for the republicans in Spain. Several books have recently been published on Garibaldi and the *risorgimento*,⁴ but it is still well worth reading the three monographs on the Italian struggle for freedom by George Macaulay Trevelyan,⁵ which amply demonstrate the courage of which the Italians were capable, even if perhaps these books are too partisan for some historians. There is hope yet that modern Italy may remember the words of Giuseppe Garibaldi: "Libertà non tradisce i volenti" (Liberty does not fail those who are determined to have it).

¹ Sinnott, N. H. 1969. "The Siege of Rome." *Freethinker* 89: pp. 236-237 (July 26).

² Sinnott, l.c.

³ McCabe, J. [n.d.] *A History of the Popes*, 2: p. 121. Auckland (N.Z.).

⁴ E.g. Hibbert, C. 1965. *Garibaldi and his Enemies*. London.

⁵ Macaulay, G. M. 1970. *Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic*; 1909 *Garibaldi and the Thousand*; 1911 [1926] *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy*. London.