

THE BOYS IN BLUE DEMONSTRATE FOR GOD SOME QUESTIONS FOR THE HOME SECRETARY

The last decade has been a trying one for God. Some said he was dead; Holy Mother Church has been shaken by dissention; divorce has come to Italy; much so-called permissive legislation reached the Statute Book; and the Rev. Ian Paisley would not keep quiet. So our father who art in heaven must have been mighty pleased last weekend when he peered through the clouds and smog which enveloped the fair city of Blackburn, and there beheld a mighty demonstration of the faithful. They had responded to a trumpet call from the Bishop of Blackburn, Dr Charles Claxton, and a blast on a policeman's whistle from the Chief Constable of Lancashire, Mr William Palfrey. The demonstration was a fine example of Christian manliness—in more ways than one. The organisers made it clear in advance that ladies would not be welcome, and one old man who displayed a placard expressing opposition was informed by some of the followers of gentle Jesus that he should have it wrapped round his neck.

Deterioration of Morals

According to the organisers, the aim of the demonstration was to "provide a means of showing to the world that, mindful of the need for a restoration of the standards of morality and of direction and purpose in life, those who claim Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour are determined by God's grace to call a halt to the deterioration of morals and standards typical of our day and age". The bishop is reported to have said that he originally intended to issue a Press statement, which would also be read in the churches. But the Chief Constable said he wanted a demonstration. How many other members of the Lancashire Constabulary were keen on the idea is not known, but there were disgruntled remarks from the lower ranks about lost rest days.

Who Pays?

No information was forthcoming about the number of extra police involved, and who is going to pay for their services. William Hamling, MP (Lab., Woolwich West), chairman of the Society for the Defence of Art and Literature and secretary of the Humanist Parliamentary Group, made this point when he spoke to the *Freethinker*. Mr Hamling said: "If people want to demonstrate that's all right so long as they do it peacefully. But I wonder how many policemen were called back to duty for this demonstration, and who is going to pay for it".

Mr Hamling went on to say that the movement to retain capital punishment was inspired by the police. "If the police start lobbying and demonstrating we may have to consider such activities more seriously. I should also like to know what discussions there have been in higher ranks of the police on such matters as the raid on the Open Space Theatre in London".

Questions for the Home Secretary

David Tribe, president of the National Secular Society, said he would be writing to the Home Secretary asking him to clarify a number of points. In a statement to the Press, Mr Tribe said: "It has been reported that the

Bishop of Blackburn, the Mayor of Colne, and the Chief Constable of Lancashire, together with a large contingent of police, took part in a recent demonstration in Blackburn on behalf of Christianity and in opposition to the 'permissive society'. The presence of the bishop will occasion neither surprise nor alarm. Every minority has the right to demonstrate, and no one can be censured for doing his job—whatever it is.

"But the presence of the other gentlemen is another matter. In their private capacities they are entitled to support any cause they like, but Press photographs suggest that they turned up at this event in full regalia. This is so serious a matter that I propose writing to the Home Secretary in the hope that he can clarify the position of public officials in this country.

"I propose asking him if he knows the religion of the Mayor of Colne and the Chief Constable of Lancashire. Are they Jehovah's Witnesses, opposed to blood transfusion in their areas; Strict Baptists or Free Presbyterians, in favour of full sabbatarianism and joylessness; or Roman Catholics, opposed to divorce, artificial family planning and abortion, and seeking a concordat with the Vatican to control the political life and educational policy of Britain? Which of these policies are the public officials of Colne and Lancashire trying to implement regardless of the will of the people? And, by the way who paid for this jamboree with its large contingent of uniformed police, bands and other persons usually hired?

"Perhaps the Home Secretary can ascertain from the Chief Constable of Lancashire what he means by the permissive society. Is it, in his view (1) private habits, like styles of dress and sexual experience that he disapproves of; (2) recent liberal legislation which he thinks Parliament should not have passed; (3) the British rule of law, which he may wish to change? In Lancashire do the police enforce or make the law? Can people with long hair and beards, unmarried mothers, homosexuals, liberal booksellers, humanist groups, immigrants with a non-Christian

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THEOLOGICAL VICES

PETER CROMMELIN

With all due respect to the memory of Voltaire, it never was really necessary for Man to invent God. Although monotheism is generally considered to be somewhat more rational than polytheism, even the invention of the One Almighty God has never been morally justified by any strictly logical necessity or by any fully authenticated historical fact. The invention of the gods and of God must now be treated as an unfortunate human error that has stunted the moral growth and development of the one and only rational animal known to exist in all the vastness of astronomical space. It is certainly part of the duty of secular humanism to restore to Man his sense of dignity in the light of this fact.

Traditional theology is virtually dead, but its effects can still be sensed in various forms of authoritarian government that yields very very slowly to the pressures of democratic humanism. There are still doctors of divinity who would be quite willing to govern the world in the name of Almighty God. It is no doubt such theological potentates that Voltaire had in mind when he said that even in a godless world it would be necessary for rulers to invent gods. It was equally necessary to persuade a sufficient number of persons that theological inventions are not the work of the human mind but are supernatural "revelations" from "outside". But it must not be forgotten that mankind in general in its desperate struggle for existence was forced to invent many tools, instruments, weapons of offence and defence long before a few individuals in their lust for power found the time and leisure to invent the gods.

Attack on Rationalism

Theological vices, like all other human vices, are a deviation from the natural life and light of reason. Theology becomes a dangerous vice when the teachers and the taught permit theology to dominate the mind to the exclusion of all common sense and common humanity. Theology can then emerge as a very vicious force indeed. We must not be misled by the mass media into thinking of religion as being on the same level of popular entertainment as sport or politics. Religion is altogether more serious and more dangerous than either sport or politics. Religion really is an attack on the most essential of all human rights, the right to be a rational animal, the right to live according to reason. According to reason, Christianity is just as bad as any other religion that makes theological assertions. The Christian faith can, and sometimes does, induce a blind obedience to some biblical text or papal edict that can be dangerous to the sanity of the individual, and perhaps even more dangerous in its power to infect society. It is easier to spread religious bigotry than it is to spread scientific knowledge or philosophic wisdom. It might well be easier for the Pope to spread the notion that contraception is a sin, than it is for the doctor or the scientist to spread the notion that contraception is necessary.

As a relatively harmless example of theological vice I would point to the bad habit of swearing by Almighty God with Bible in hand. This form of legal oath introducing theology into the secular courts, and making a kind of mockery of religion, should be even more distressing to the believer than to the non-believer. As a matter of fact it is not only non-believers who refuse to take the oath. Secular humanists and religious fanatics have this much in common; they take religion seriously. It is an old saying

that extremes meet. The extreme believer and the extreme non-believer both object equally strongly to anything such as the legal oath that can reduce what should be an extremely serious act to the level of a mindless, thoughtless convention.

Beyond Criticism

Humanism is what religion ought to be, a kind of permanent vision of the real world, the physical universe, in relation to which there can be nothing supernatural or outside. There can be, or so I think, no shadow of doubt that all authoritarian governments however much they may profess to be anti-god, do in fact derive their way of thinking from a purely theological concept of authority as something divine and infallible, and beyond the reach of criticism either in the form of governmental self-criticism or in the form of subversive criticism from the subject. St Paul put it into words that "All Authority is from God". This is another way of saying that God is the invention of those who needed a foundation for their own authoritative power. Herein lies the very essence of theological vice. It undermines the foundations of secular morality. It makes a sin against Almighty God seem much more dreadful than a mere crime against humanity, such as unrestricted procreation or killing masses of people in a just war. The time has come when even those who believe in God must forget about their God, and begin to think a little more seriously about the world in which we live and move and have our being.

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THE HERETICS

Humanists, rationalists, freethinkers, agnostics and atheists are all heretics. They reject the established "truths" of traditional religion. Why? They claim they are using their reason and not their faith and emotions in considering religious questions, dogmas and doctrines.

A religious person also claims that he, too, is using his reason in being religious. He reads many religious books and refers you to St Thomas Aquinas and St Anselm of Canterbury as the great rationalists of traditional religion. The difference is that while religious rationalists postulate the "truth" of the "supernatural", secular rationalists reject such claim with, "only the natural, empirical or otherwise, exists in our world".

Therefore, the heretics are also naturalists in the sense that, "only nature, empirical or otherwise, exists in our world". A secular humanist is a naturalistic humanist. He believes only in the existence of nature. He is therefore an atheist. A secular rationalist bases his arguments on reason, science and naturalism. He is also an atheist. A freethinker reasons with a mind free from religious dogmas and doctrines. He is also a secular rationalist, and is therefore an atheist, too. An agnostic is a careful thinker—more careful than his fellow heretics. He rejects the God of traditional religion as merely imaginary; but, he says, it is possible there is some kind of God in the unknown. He is technically or literally *not an atheist*; but for all practical purposes he is one, especially when considering the religious claim that Yaweh or Jehovah is the only true God.

Atheists deny all kinds of gods as mere figments of the imagination. Many people mistake atheists for Communists, for the reason, they say, that Communists do not believe in gods. With this kind of thinking, anyone who does not believe in fairies and mermaids can be mistaken too for a Communist, for the latter does not believe also in such imaginary entities.

CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS

Publication by the National Council for Civil Liberties of its discussion paper on the rights of school children, and raising a number of important and controversial questions, is very welcome. It reminds us that there are still petty, authoritarian heads who cane children for stupid and trivial offences, and judge a boy's worth by the length of his hair.

The report states that "corporal punishment, ideally, should be abolished by law immediately, but failing that should be phased out". One wonders why it should call for anything less than its immediate abolition in all schools for handicapped children, and all girls' schools.

Another welcome statement is "compulsory religion should have no place in State schools"; so is the proposal that, while it continues, schools and local authorities should publicise the right of withdrawal. It seems strange that the NCCL should have failed to ask for the extension of the right of withdrawals to at least senior school pupils themselves. At present all rights, even for 18-year olds is vested in the parents. As for the statement: "Religious instruction by qualified specialists should be provided for

GONZALO QUIOGUE

The Development of Man

Many millions of years ago, according to F. Clark Howell in his book, *Early Man*, the proconsul and the drypithecine roamed in Africa, Asia and Europe. These were primitive apes, the common ancestors of modern apes and men. They gradually evolved by mutations through millions of years in successive stages of primate developments called oreopithecus, ramapithecus, australopithecus, paranthropus, homo erectus and finally, early homo sapiens, the first humans. They believed there were invisible good spirits and bad spirits. If they caught many animals and fish the "good spirit" helped them. And if sometimes they could not obtain food the "bad spirit" frustrated their efforts. Any unfavourable events like sickness, death, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons and floods were attributed to the "bad spirit", the "good spirit" caused all the good happenings.

As men acquired knowledge and became civilised they replaced the spirit-idea with the God-concept. There were the Greek and Roman gods, although not even the present-day Greeks and Romans believe in them.

About 6,000 years ago, according to religious books, God revealed himself to man. You must have faith that this really happened if you want to have the image of a religious conformist and be more acceptable to the circle of good and nice people. Jehovah is a "true God". To say otherwise is to offend the believer. Why offend people? But then, the Pope probably offended people when he recently demoted a number of alleged saints. Why are there many clergymen nowadays who openly declare that "God is dead"? The Pope has to visit foreign countries to counteract the decline of traditional religion caused by the advance of humanism, secular, and freethinking ideas. As man's knowledge expands he discards falsities. It is a part of the dynamic, progressive changes in nature and can neither be stopped nor deflected.

MARGARET McILROY

those who want it"—of course, *but not in schools nor at the expense of the whole community.*

School Uniforms

I feel that the case for wearing school uniforms is today stronger than ever. Many youngsters are spending fantastic amounts on clothes, while others cannot possibly match this. A smart, attractive and practical uniform which needy children can be assisted to buy, prevents girls competing to wear a different dress each day.

However, there is a clear distinction of principle between insistence on the wearing of a uniform, which a youngster can go home and change out of, and the imposition of a hair style which he is stuck with out of school.

Participation

School councils are a good idea, although it is doubtful how much real authority they are likely to be capable of

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FREETHINKER

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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.

EVENTS

Leicester Secular Society, Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester, Sunday, 10 January, 6.30 p.m. Martin Page: "Nietsche, Marx and Humanism".

Merseyside Humanist Group, Ethel Wormald College, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, Wednesday, 13 January, 7.30 p.m. Nicholas Walsh: "Justice and Humanism".

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, 10 January, 11 a.m. John Lewis: "Marx and Spencer". Tuesday, 12 January, 7 p.m. Michael Duane: "Education: For Conditioning or Fulfilment?"

Exhibition of paintings, drawings and collages by Oswald Blakeston, at Jacey Galleries (Studio Gallery), Oxford Street, Marble Arch, London, W1. Daily, 10 a.m.—5.30 p.m., until Tuesday, 6 February.

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NEWS

CLEMENCY

Appeals for clemency from all parts of the world to Spain and the Soviet Union helped to save the lives of six Basque nationalists and two would-be plane hi-jackers.

Now comes the news that the Italian Government is to propose a motion in the United Nations calling for the abolition of the death penalty throughout the world. It will also demand that penal processes are made more humane. There is no death penalty in Italy, and proposals to abolish life sentences are being considered by the Italian Parliament.

TEA BAGS

There has been a storm in a teacup involving the Mothers' Union and Brooke Bond, the tea firm. It was all over a television advertisement which showed a vicar shopping in a supermarket and being advised by the assistant to buy tea bags. He answers: "I don't think the Mothers' Union would like it". This greatly upset the ladies of the MU who claimed the advertisement suggested they were behind the times. Following complaints, two brave men from Brooke Bond met representatives of the Union and the matter has been settled—after Brooke Bond agreed to have the film sound-track altered at a cost of about £500.

One member of the Mothers' Union is reported to have said: "I saw red. This parson filled the screen, thrust his thumbs in his waistcoat pocket and said the Mothers' Union would never agree to tea bags. It implied that we are old fashioned, stick-in-the-mud, and unreceptive to new ideas . . . we are no longer a lot of old fuddy-duddies".

Even the Mothers' Union has to move with the times, and we accept that they are no longer a lot of old fuddy-duddies. But it would be interesting to know in how many branches a genuinely cordial welcome is extended to divorced and unmarried mothers. And it may not be without significance that instead of a Mothers' Union, many Anglican churches have what is described as a Young Wives' League.

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

When she delivered her presidential address at the annual conference of the Catholic Teachers' Federation in Birmingham, Miss M. Freeman said that children have become a target for concentrated commercialism. She added that it was a tragedy they were not always able to discern that the emphasis on the importance of youth is merely a means to obtain their money, regardless of the false attitude created.

Miss Freeman's comments were apt, but we would point out that it is not only the public relations boys who are directing their propaganda at young people. The Roman Catholic Church is now recruiting children for its campaign against the Abortion Act. They have been formed into an organisation known as the National Youth Right to Life Campaign, and 500 of them took part in a march through Manchester where they laid a wreath at the cenotaph "for victims of the Abortion Act".

AND NOTES PUBLICATIONS

Roman Catholic opponents of abortion law reform conducted a dirty, unscrupulous campaign, so it is not particularly surprising that they do not hesitate about involving children who cannot possibly know the arguments for and against reform, or of the great anguish that makes a woman consider the possibility of abortion.

Perhaps the time will come when a demonstration is organised in memory of the millions who die, or live short, hungry lives because of Catholic opposition to contraception.

BROADCASTING COMMISSION

The Church of England has set up a commission on broadcasting under the chairmanship of Sir William Hart. It was decided at the final session of the Church Assembly in July that the commission would consider the structure of broadcasting in Britain, acceptable programme standards, religious broadcasting, the religious advisory systems, and training for religious programmes.

SUNDAY IN ULSTER

There are more sabbatarians and born-again Protestants to the square mile in Ulster than in any other part of the British Isles, and when three members of the Lord's Day Observance Society recently undertook a speaking tour of the province they found much to make them rejoice. But, according to a report in the society's journal, *Joy and Light*, they were also alarmed by some developments. It seems that the wicked sinners over there are trying to get a Licensing Bill through Parliament, and if successful it will mean that people will be able to buy drinks in hotels restaurants on Sunday. And although public houses will not be open, it is feared that some proprietors will get round the law by turning one of their rooms into a restaurant.

Already the devil walks abroad in some areas where there are Sunday cinemas, games and even public baths. Who will call a halt to this depravity? According to *Joy and Light*: "These things will not be forsaken until Jehovah walks through the land, when the Sabbath is revered and the commandments of God obeyed".

OBITUARY

Mrs Ellen C. Trask, a *Freethinker* reader and member of the National Secular Society for many years, has died in London. She had been in poor health for some time.

Although much of her time was devoted to caring for her husband, who was grievously wounded in World War I, Mrs Trask did a great deal of voluntary work. She worked in a part-time capacity at the *Freethinker* office for several years. Her husband died four years ago, and our sympathy is extended to her niece, Mrs Muriel Allnutt.

The editor of the *Freethinker* conducted the secular committal ceremony at South London Crematorium on 1 January.

TITLE	AUTHOR	Price	Post
Humanist Anthology	Margaret Knight	10/6	1/6
Rebel Pity: The Life of Eddie Roux	Eddie and Win Roux	45/0	2/0
RI and Surveys	Maurice Hill	1/0	4d
Religion and Ethics in Schools	David Tribe	1/6	4d
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The Golden Bough	J. G. Frazer	20/0	2/6
100 Years of Freethought	David Tribe	42/0	2/2
Catholic Terror Today	Avro Manhattan	12/6	1/6
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BOOKS

THE ENEMY: NOTES ON IMPERIALISM AND REVOLUTION by Felix Greene. Jonathan Cape, 48s.

Even the least alert among us have some awareness by now that the world we live in has gone radically wrong. But the wrongness is so basic in kind and so global in scale that few people can be well informed enough to give an adequate account of it. To sketch the general nature of what such an account would have to be is the huge task that Mr Greene sets himself. The book he offers, while stressing its tentative character, shows most of the qualities essential for so ample an endeavour. It is knowledgeable, long-headed, freethinking, Argus-eyed, humane, compassionate, modest.

It consists chiefly of material drawn from most parts of the earth, with special reference to America. Throughout, however, there runs a logical thread of social philosophy and strategic appraisal. Mr Greene's conclusion is that the USA is heading for disaster. So appalling are the social evils dragging it down, so many are the millions of Americans who, despairingly ashamed not merely of their Government's policies, but also of the inner decay of their country's way of life, are now in open rebellion against the society of which they form a non-consenting part. If the US goes, the NATO rump will lack power to shore up the American system across the world. It is by no means too early today for men of insight and goodwill to start considering how the forthcoming power-vacuum may and should be filled, and a new order set up to replace the chaos.

"Heading for disaster" is not a precise phrase. What are we to understand by it? Leaving the overhanging nuclear possibility aside for the moment, Mr Greene mentions two other leading possibilities, both of which, though mutually inconsistent, are already partially realised in the US. The first is the conquest of the country by a form of fascist terror many times more thorough, and technologically more advanced than Hitler's. This would provide a setting in which man, anywhere within the effective beaten zone of Americanism, could be programmed into non-man, and all that is human in us could be surgically excised—a general humanitectomy for our population. The opposed possibility is social disintegration carried to a point where it arrests or cancels the normal functions of an articulated society—administration, garbage collection, education, medical care, power generation and distribution, water supply, manufacture, and so on.

Mr Greene regards either prospect as unattractive, and as therefore calling for forestalling action. He is not alarmist or shrill. He sees himself as a sensible and steady member of the crew of a sinking ship. He wants to sit down calmly and talk the situation over constructively with others aboard who have something helpful to contribute and are determined not to lose their heads. He invites us, in effect, to join him in what H. G. Wells would have called an Open Conspiracy. One can extract from his book the main heads of an agenda.

The first problem is how to supplant the present socio-economic system in the US by some alternative which will allow us to become human again. (This requires a preliminary cooking of the fascist goose.) No one can tell yet what institutional forms an effective alternative may assume, particularly as they will be bound to differ widely in different parts of the world. But we do already know

FREETHINKER

that the organising relations informing them will be grounded in the co-operative, not the competitive, principle. To establish a change of this magnitude it is not enough (though of course it is necessary) to be anti-system. More insufficient still are appeals to the liberal conscience. The liberal conscience limits itself to the contemplation of reform through existing institutions. That limitation puts it out of court, in a multi-dimensional crisis like the present, where the crucial point is precisely to dismantle existing institutions, and set up in their stead others designed according to contrary standards.

In the second place, since the existing American system is global in its effects and influences, its replacement has to be co-ordinated on a global basis also. Which means, in brief, that anti-Establishment elements in the west have to join in debate with the socialist countries and the Third World concerning a global plan. The plan would draw up a model, or a series of models, of the alternative structure of government and economy. A model would serve in any part of the world as a do-it-yourself kit for the locals.

A short review can do no more than sketch the main issues Mr Greene raises. The book itself is full of pregnant ideas about how they might be handled, and about our own present inadequacies as handlers (if one is permitted to use the term "ourselves" to cover everybody who is anti-system). I give an example or two of his insight. He urges the need for each of us to carry out a cultural revolution in himself, casting aside the fatalism and cynicism (the ideology of pessimism) to which the system has conditioned us, and truly swearing allegiance to something larger than ourselves. He implores us to grasp that American fascism has already scored two brilliant and complete triumphs over the American people, namely the adoption of anti-negro discrimination as state policy, and the universal acceptance of the label "red" as involving total excommunication.

The real paradox of America, he insists, is that while it actively cultivates all the vilest and most subhuman features of our life, the range of individual differences is so wide there that the country simultaneously encompasses much of what is highest in the current world-culture. The former tendency predominates now. It will continue to do so, Mr Greene thinks, so long as American power remains in unqualified commitment to world counter-revolution.

Where do I come in? Which side do I wish to be on? Nobody alive in the world today can duck these questions. The gesture of ducking is itself a vote for the subhuman cause.

LEONARD BARNES

THE COST OF CHURCH SCHOOLS

By DAVID TRIBE

Foreword: MARGARET KNIGHT

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REVIEWS

THE NEW PRIESTHOOD: BRITISH TELEVISION

TODAY by Joan Bakewell and Nicholas Garnham.

Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 50s.

The obvious things about television—that it is, or can be, contemporaneous; that it is audio-visual (not, as McLuhan would have us believe, audi-tactile); that it reaches, or can reach, every home—are so dramatic that a mythology has grown up about it which engulfs parishioners and priests alike. In their enthusiasm few have observed how great are the medium's limitations. Despite continuing technical advances it remains poor in both sound and vision, diminishing artistically and emotionally, and distracting to the dialectic of good conversation (even if good conversationists are invited into the studio). It is generally regarded as a unique medium for information, but, dependent as it is on vision, it has proved the least trustworthy and the most superficial. Every "story" must break at once, in the interests of electronic "immediacy", deprived of even the modicum of cross-checking, research and analysis open to a daily newspaper, its subject more or less anonymously shot, edited and censored, its message evanescent, unable to be re-read or tape-recorded in the home or challenged with counter-documentation. For the ordinary viewer a television programme leaves not a wrack behind; after mass the tabernacle holds neither god nor wafer. And rarely does he have the recollection of a mystical vision, for the affairs of the real world, either its sudden crises or its slow deliberations, have a knack of avoiding television cameras. Apart from the vulturine display of lifeless aftermath (bits of wreckage on mountains or poker smiles at the doors of conferences), all we actually see happening on the box are its own non-events, or the hired performers and exhibitionist volunteers who gratify the televisual hierarchy by turning serious demonstrations into senseless but camera-worthy punch-ups. In short, despite the spasms of inferiority that at one time threatened to immobilise the concert-hall and the cinema, the lecture-hall and the theatre, the magazine and the newspaper, as they stared impotently at the electronic newcomer, it is unable to do anything as satisfactorily as they. Theologians of culture talk of its civilising role, hotgospellers of disaster warn of its diabolic potentialities. The truth would seem to be that it fills time agreeably or disagreeably but has little impact and less influence of any sort at all.

The first impression of *The New Priesthood* is that, like the Bench of Bishops or a gorgeous television cabinet, its appearance is more exciting than its ministry. Designed by Jonathan Miller (it must surely be, pant devotees, *the* Jonathan Miller), the jacket is a glistening surge of black and silver that breaks open to show pages limp with "war-time economy" discolouration and unloved by either notes or index. With a minimal introduction we are swept into a current of interviews, all stopping short of the really incisive question and the really revealing answer. How, we say with a tremble of recognition, like a television discussion programme. But what debunking of mythology can be expected from a rural dean and a deaconess?

Yet if we struggle to the end we do reach, if not the beatific vision, at least an expanded insight and a revised decalogue. The authors, we discover, have after all researched the hagiology of the BBC and ITA and do have

interesting responses to make. True, there is little of the fundamental agonising I began with, no proposals to increase the objectivity of the medium in the realm of ideas, no facing up to McLuhanism with either adulation or hostility. Yet we do look in on off-camera conflicts, plumb the liturgical secrets of scheduling, take afternoon tea with "public service" and commercial bishops as we listen to their self-congratulatory chat about their "liberal humanist" values and descend into the crypt where the verger tells us how the edifice is heated. We even have, in the person of Barry Took, a latterday Cardinal Newman, who in the interview swears his undying vows to Television Centre, which "is where it is", but moves over to London Weekend just before the book goes to press.

While loath to disestablish the BBC, the authors recognise that it is impossibly over-centralised and suggest the hiving off of semi-autonomous production units, the separation of radio and television, and a recognised demarcation between information and entertainment. On behalf of the free churches they would make the ITA the revenue-collecting body and nationalise the programme companies. As for independent thinkers and minority views (save religious ones) *extra ecclesiam naulla salus*.

DAVID TRIBE

HENRY SIDGWICK—SCIENCE AND FAITH IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

by D. G. James. Oxford University Press, 16s.

This is a small but exceedingly thorough and original book, which contains the 39th in the series of the Riddell Memorial Lectures, which would have been delivered by Dr James at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in April 1969, had it not been for his untimely death four months earlier. There was much room for a new study of Henry Sidgwick, one of the most attractive and constructive of all the Victorian rationalists: although the best of his major works, such as his *Principles of Political Economy* (1883), *Elements of Politics* (1891), and *The Development of European Polity* (1903) are still widely read we do not have for Henry Sidgwick himself, a document which is really comparable with the *Memoir* of his wife, which was written by her niece. Indeed, the best concise summary of Henry Sidgwick's life and thought, is probably that by Leslie Stephen in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1901).

This new book supplements with much perception, all the stages from Sidgwick's education through the resignation of his Fellowship in 1869, securing the abolition of religious test in the University (1871), and his appointment, in 1883, as the Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy, to the sequence of his formative books from 1871. It is timely that this new study should have been made available as some commemoration of the centenary of Gladstone's important University Tests Act of 1871, which removed the basic source of Henry Sidgwick's frustration at Cambridge. It most eloquently endorses a great Victorian's earnest regard for truth, and his almost overwhelming concern for moral imperatives, even if he could exhibit no facile or convenient orthodoxy or conformity. In both of those respects this is a book which has a message for today which seems to be to be peculiarly heartening and important.

This little volume is also noteworthy because it offers us almost as much new light upon the galaxy of his distinguished associates, as it does upon Henry Sidgwick himself. There is much to be learnt that is both significant and relevant about such central Victorian figures as Arthur Hugh Clough who had similarly resigned from an Oxford Fellowship in 1848, A. J. Balfour, Sir John Lubbock, F. D. Maurice, James Martineau and F. W. H. Myers, one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, in 1882.

Perhaps one may sometimes be forgiven for admiring and resting upon the peaks of the Victorian intellect, and for suggesting that—especially now that we have lost Bertrand Russell—it is not easy to find their like amongst those of our own generations. It should be a sufficiently generous tribute to discover, in this new and very discerning assessment of Henry Sidgwick a full and reliable reminder of the lasting value and quality of the best of Victorian thinking, as it tried to come to grips with the realities of truth, sincerity and social justice.

The book has been edited from the incomplete draft which was left by D. G. James, but it betrays remarkably few signs of deficiencies in its composition. It is balanced, careful, and integrated so that one can readily accept it as a finished assessment of a great Victorian philosopher. But the reference, on page 27, to "Edward Gurney" would appear to be in error for "Edmund Gurney", one of the first Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, under the "Liberal dispensation" (1872), and a co-founder of the Society for Psychical Research. He is correctly so named, on page 42 of the book.

ERIC GLASGOW

CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS

(Continued from page 11)

undertaking when a majority of pupils are likely to be always under 15. One may hope that an extension of opportunity for democratic decision may result in greater interest in discussion of serious topics. But business meetings of organisations are invariably badly attended, and it is doubtful if more than a small minority would participate in any useful way in the running of the school. Of course there are certain matters—such as the design of school uniforms—where decisions could reasonably be entrusted to the pupils themselves.

Discipline

A weakness of the NCCL report is a disregard for problems of discipline—restraining a minority of children from anti-social behaviour. The authors are, rightly, very much aware of repression by authoritarian heads of senior pupils with anti-establishment ideas. The real problem that teachers face is handling youngsters who terrorise their schoolmates, or create a classroom atmosphere in which only fierce repression can ensure enough quietness for a teacher to teach.

The absence of facilities for remedial and special education for pupils who need it, makes matters far worse than they would otherwise be.

Children Have Rights, National Council for Civil Liberties, 152 Camden High Street, London, NW1, 3s.

(Continued from front page)

background, and others of whom the Chief Constable of Lancashire may disapprove, be assured of the same impartial treatment as God-fearing Christian conformists?"

Wasting Police Time and Public Money

There are a few other observations which may be appropriate in view of police participation in the Blackburn demonstration. We confidently predict there would be an indignant outcry from the conformists if a policeman, or a group of police, demonstrated in support of students, coloured people or trade unionists. It is unlikely that such a phenomenon will come to pass, for the police have never been renowned as champions of liberal causes.

Although magistrates, councillors and other local worthies are always standing by with a pail of whitewash when the police are accused of improper behaviour, enough cases have reached the courts to convince all but the most credulous that the boys in blue are not the paragons of virtue we are led to believe.

We constantly hear complaints about policemen being overworked. No doubt many of them are—and it is not for financial gain that they work tremendously long periods. But this is only another reason why policemen should not waste their time and public money on demonstrations to boost Christianity, and in raiding book shops and theatre clubs whose patrons consist entirely of adults.

Violence

The "permissive society" is continually being cited as the cause of all the country's ills, from absenteeism in coal mines to violence at football matches. If a visitor from another planet arrived in Britain, and listened to the law and order brigade pontificating about the upsurge of violence in society, he might be forgiven for thinking that such a problem never existed prior to 1960. Certainly he would not realise that the police were responsible for some of the most serious outbreaks of violence, as the people of Chicago, Londonderry and Paris well know. And unfortunately there is reason to believe that in Britain the police are irresponsibly encouraging people to "have a go". The majority of those who support the concept of the tolerant, civilised society are opposed to violence—whether it is in the streets or behind closed doors in a police station.

The day before the Blackburn demonstration Miss Kathryn Davies, a research worker at Granada Television, inserted this advertisement in a local newspaper: "Priests and Police Have no Monopoly of Morality". These sentiments are endorsed by history.

LETTER

Hunting

The realistic campaign by the League Against Cruel Sports to encourage farmers to forbid hunts to use their land for anachronistic and destructive bloodsport deserves support—and I think will be successful.

In feudal days (and indeed until recent times) the farmers (most of the them tenant farmers) did not dare to say "no" to their "betters" on horseback. Those days are over, and it only requires farmers and other landowners to wake to the situation for hunting to be so confined that it must cease. The League itself owns 500 acres of wild life sanctuaries and three miles of river bank; woe betide hunts if they trespass there! GWENDOLEN BARTER.