

FREE THINKER

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POLICE ACTION AGAINST *LITTLE RED SCHOOLBOOK* CONDEMNED

'NOT AN HYSTERICAL MANIFESTO OF PUPIL POWER'—DAVID TRIBE

"I hope fair-minded people will make every effort to find and read copies of this little book that are still available and join me in calling for its free and wide circulation", said David Tribe, president of the National Secular Society, in a Press statement following the seizure by the police of copies of *The Little Red Schoolbook*. This action followed a campaign by people like Sir Gerald Nabarro, MP, who described it as "disgraceful and immoral". The publication has been described as a revolutionary reference book but the publishers say it will cause trouble only in schools where trouble is already latent. The book was first published in Denmark two years ago, and editions have come out in several European countries. American, Spanish and Italian editions are planned. The British edition has been edited by a small group of children and teachers.

Sensible, Factual, Explicit

Mr Tribe said that parents and teachers are not likely to respond kindly to a book which begins: "All grown-ups are paper tigers". He maintained, however, that *The Little Red Schoolbook* "is not an hysterical manifesto of pupil power. It emphasises the importance of co-operation and stresses that where complaints are made by pupils, they should be made politely and in due form.

"Many important contemporary issues—corporal punishment, examinations, sex education, drugs and ways to make the school a real community—are dealt with sensibly and factually. Too factually for conservative tastes, for the section on sex (the best publicised, but by no means dominant portion), is highly explicit. So is the section on drugs; but these are not glamourised, the section in fact begins: 'Drugs are poisons which can have a pleasant effect'. It is this sort of down-to-earth treatment of public health problems in easy reference form which has long been needed. Organisations and publications which are useful for supporting aid and information are mentioned throughout the text.

"It is therefore disturbing, though it cannot, in the light of recent censorial activity, be surprising that the book and office records should have been seized from the publishers, Stage One. No doubt the title, with its echoes of the Chinese cultural revolution, and the earlier publications of this firm have aroused Establishment suspicion and suggested that there will be little public protest at the seizure."

Will Defend the Publisher

Marion Boyars, a co-secretary of the Defence of Literature and the Arts Society, told the *Freethinker* that the organisation will do everything possible to prevent the threatened prosecution, and if they do not succeed in this, "we will defend the publisher to the hilt with all the Society's resources".

Marion Boyars said she thought *The Little Red Schoolbook* a very responsible manual for schoolchildren and for

parents and teachers. "It is a very helpful guide to children to get on with each other, and to improve the quality of their own lives and that of society around them. Rather than making children assume a posture of thoughtless rebellion, it shows how they can assume a responsible position in society which is surely what all educationists and parents must welcome.

"The book is very frank, and deals in simple language with all aspects of life. It is written with an understanding of children, and should be a great help to anyone who is concerned with the younger generation. It is gentle, understanding, responsible and honest."

Mrs Boyars declared that if the Director of Public Prosecutions proceeds with a case against *The Little Red Schoolbook*, "he lays himself open to a charge of political interference, and could easily make himself and the whole process of law laughable. If a case is brought, support from the Establishment will be massive. Such a case could not possibly succeed, and would cost a tremendous amount of public money. It would also bring the obscenity laws into even more disrepute than they are in already.

"This book would never have been attacked if it had been published by a well-known publisher. One cannot help but feel that once again a case is being brought against a seemingly defenceless small publisher, with no financial resources, who is openly committed to Left-wing politics."

Victimisation

Grace Berger, chairman of the NCCL Children's Committee, suspects that the seizing of *The Little Red Schoolbook* was not really because of its alleged obscenity but, she told the *Freethinker*, "because it articulates an attitude on the part of children and young people which quite literally terrifies the authoritarian teacher or parent.

"The episode is alarming in many ways. There are the teachers who were involved in preparing the book and

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W. K. CLIFFORD AND THE SCIENCE OF MORALITY

ERIC GLASGOW

Probably it has become the easiest and safest assumption that W. K. Clifford (1845-1879), as one of the most original of all the great Victorian mentors, is too deeply wedded to the conditions and the circumstances of Victorian England to have much relevance or standing for the present age. No doubt there is much to commend that point of view, since it is scarcely possible to place much topical or urgent significance upon either his mathematical or his philosophical findings, as those have been enshrined for us in such books of his as the *Lectures and Essays* (1879), the *Mathematical Papers* (1882), and the *Common Sense of the Exact Sciences* (1885), which were all posthumous publications. Even their titles make them appear distinctly heavy and formidable volumes, and certainly not the sort which is likely to have much spontaneous appeal for the young of our own, less patient or exploratory times.

Nor is it possible to discard the view that W. K. Clifford, since he delved so deeply and determinedly into the nature of reality, can never be regarded as anything other than a thinker's thinker, no matter how well he is presented, or how much we may be impelled towards his study, by the inspiration of the clarity and the fearlessness of his consistent thinking. Perhaps, indeed, it would be unfair to expect anything different from a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge—an academic institution which has always discerned and supported real mathematical genius—and an athlete and an orator as well. There can never be any doubt at all about the sheer and daunting intellectual ability of W. K. Clifford, evidenced whilst he was resident at Cambridge, from 1863 until 1871, as it was during the years thereafter, when he served, despite mounting ill-health, as the Professor of Applied Mathematics at University College, London, and attained, in 1874, the honour of FRS.

Quest for Truth

It is that huge and impressive structure of his intellectual stature—the utter honesty and dedication of his quest for truth and moral probity—which must still give W. K.

Clifford the enduring basis for his relevance and his meaning, even in our very different world of 1971. It is not his findings, but his methods, scruples, and attitudes, which should really concern us, here and now, and if we are able to discern his essential propositions in his elucidation of life we ought also to be able to counterbalance, to some extent, our own current flights from reason, and our own excessive preoccupations with emotional concepts and stimuli, which have become one of the major sources of both personal and communal confusions of our times.

W. K. Clifford must stand, consistently and resolutely, for the suggested primacy of reason, even over those regions of life, such as morals and religion, where the intrusions of any trenchant forms of thinking have always been most vigorously resented and opposed. That quality of calm and lucid inquiry and discovery will survive as the greatest and the most enduring of all his attributes. It was that feature which carried W. K. Clifford through, from his early studies of the Catholic Thomist System, to the more direct and personal influence of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, and later still, to much personal friendship and accord with the economist Henry Fawcett (1833-1884), whose eminence in the academic circles of Cambridge did not prevent him from being interested in a Republican Club, to which he contrived to introduce Clifford.

Those concerns for the more mundane and controversial matters of economics, social and religious life, even if it is fair to regard them as being never more than peripheral to the hard core of Clifford's studies in mathematics and metaphysics, do nevertheless help to redeem his more momentous thinking from its possible destiny, in the archives of some academic traditions. They must still show us that Clifford, despite his somewhat remote and rarefied ivory tower of the intellect and the spirit, fits easily and logically into a definite groove of Victorian society, which included also the very best of liberal and radical thinking. That confidence in reason, which flowed out from Clifford's

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remained anonymous because they felt they risked victimisation in their schools. It is a fact that many teachers who do try to change things in schools are quietly demoted or not promoted. Teachers and pupils do not need Mary Whitehouse, Gerald Nabarro or the police to tell them what they should read or what they should think.

"There is a growing feeling of resentment among many young people who simply do not accept that their ten years of compulsory schooling should take the form of processing them into obedient parts of a static society. Increasingly these young people are questioning the whole basis of adult autocracy in schools, and the seizure of *The Little Red Schoolbook* is perhaps a sign success, as well as a measure of the forces they are up against."

HTA Astonished

A few days before the book was confiscated the committee of the Humanist Teachers' Association unanimously decided to recommend it for consideration by teachers and everyone interested in education. Maurice Hill, secretary

of the HTA, said they were astonished to hear "that Mary Whitehouse disapproved of the book and that her private army, the police force, had confiscated every available copy".

Mr Hill went on to say that anyone aware of educational thinking over the past 20 years will find that the book is full of good sense. "It recommends the avoidance of harmful drugs and careless sex, disapproves of corporal punishment, tells pupils how to defend themselves legitimately against boredom and inefficiency, and advises them to think for themselves. Which of these ideas are so abhorrent to our society that the police are called in to protect us all from contamination?"

"Whatever our opinion of the contents of the book there is no excuse for this attempt at censorship on a serious contribution to educational discussion. I hope that when the legal farce is over, and the book is released to the public, the ignorant authoritarians and confused moralists responsible for this police attack on our basic freedoms, will be firmly advised to get out of the way and let the human race be about its business."

THE THREE STAGES OF THE DIALECTIC

ROBERT LOUZON

Robert Louzon, the veteran French philosopher who is now nearly 90, has published a remarkable work, "La Dialectique Scientifique". He is the author of important works on China and the era of imperialism, and many articles on an encyclopaedic range of subjects in the French radical journal, "La Revolution Proletarienne". Louzon has been closely associated with world famous writers like Georges Sorel, with whom he collaborated, and Albert Camus. F. A. Ridley, a friend of Louzon, has translated the foreword to "La Dialectique Scientifique".

"Dialectic" is truly a forbidding word and one that many stupid people make a habit of employing when they wish to pass themselves off as philosophers, as do also certain politicians for the purpose of justifying their crimes. It is for reasons of this kind that, amongst others, the authors of self-styled "Marxist" catechisms make a habit of using this term. Actually they use the term "dialectic" in all sorts of ways without ever defining it, for a word often becomes more impressive in proportion to its obscurity. The more incomprehensible it is, the greater becomes its impact, both upon the general public, and upon the people themselves who habitually use it in such ways. Does not every religion require its appropriate mysteries? Despite all this, the dialectic itself is a reality; its existence is visible everywhere. Moreover, it is not only a reality, but a very simple reality, at work everywhere in everyday life, as well as being used by specialists in all departments of learning, as also mathematicians in their abstract analysis. Accordingly, there is no reason whatever to be surprised that the existence of dialectical reasoning has been recognised by mankind ever since he began to reflect upon the existence and evolution of the world around him.

Whatever view one may take upon the general philosophy of August Comte, I think that one must inevitably accept his "law" of the three successive stages in the evolution of human life. When mankind first began to inquire into the nature of the universe around him, and then sought to explain its successive movements, he supposed at first that the universe is swayed by the activities of beings broadly similar to himself: by "gods" who direct the universe in much the same way as he himself directs his own personal affairs.

Such is the first form taken by the human intellect when it begins its quest for the ultimate realities behind "cause and effect". The sum total of existence owes its initial existence to the will of the gods. This is the religious explanation of the universe.

The Scientific Age

However as time goes on, this explanation appears too naïve for some inquirers at least, too anthropomorphic, and consequently fails to satisfy them. As a result, they plunge into abstractions. In their view the world is no longer governed by beings of a general similar character to themselves, but by abstract principles, such as "Love", as proclaimed by the Greek philosopher Empedocles; by Hegel's "Idea"; by the "Will" as announced by Schopenhauer. This mode of reasoning can be defined as the metaphysical interpretation of the universe.

Finally, man reaches the scientific age, in the course

of which, he abandons hope of even arriving at an understanding of "final causes" and limits himself to research into the unfolding of successive phenomena; which particular phenomenon is the cause of what other, and to what degree are its successive changes the motivating cause of any variations that can be traced into the resulting phenomena.

This is certainly a more modest ambition than that of seeking to disclose the "First Cause" of the cosmos. We have to content ourselves with partial causes and with partial explanations; though even that is better than nothing, and actually much more useful to us than abstract general causes. For while in actuality the supplications of religion produce no effect, and while the philosophic speculations are merely confessions of futility, science has taught us, up to the present at least, that similar causes always produce similar effects; and that as a result, we can always produce similar effects ourselves if we know how to produce their effective causes.

To sum up, these three successive explanations of phenomena, however much they may differ from each other, have a common basis, since all three recognise in effect that nature has a dialectical character. That is to say that phenomena result from the clash of opposing forces, which have an ultimate connection with each other. But whereas for the first two stages in human consciousness, this is merely a speculation, for the scientific view of the universe it is a proven fact.

A Powerful Influence

According to the religious interpretation the opposition between forces is indicated by the eternal conflict between the good god and the evil one, between god and the devil. Many such religious cults accept such a dualism: a dualism that found its most clear-cut form in Magians, the most purely Arian cult, the cult of the Medes and Persians of Iran of which Zoroaster was the prophet.

As far as the Magians were concerned, two gods existed simultaneously; the good Ormuzd and the evil Ahriman. Since the entire evolution of the universe can ultimately be reduced to the record of the eternal war between these two deities, both of equal power; a conflict in which each gets the better of the other alternately, but only temporarily, for the vanquished deity soon recovers and the eternal conflict starts afresh.

This religion has exercised a profound influence upon the formation of Christianity. For Satan is only a variation of Ahriman, but with one important difference. For Satan is no longer god's equal but is merely his disloyal servant. This is certainly a very stupid speculation; for why should god go on tolerating the existence of this rebel, and in any case why should he allow him to continue to pursue unpunished his cosmic crimes? In this respect, Magianism is much more logical at least upon this particular point, but has upon several occasions exercised a powerful influence upon Christian circles.

Less than three centuries after Jesus Christ, an Oriental Christian named Mani, later Latinised in the West as Manichaeus, made an attempt to incorporate the Zoroastrian dualism into Christianity. This attempt failed, but

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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 sought and sold). For information or catalogue send 5p stamp to Kit Mouat, Mercers, Cuckfield, Sussex.

EVENTS

London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London, W8, Sunday, 18 April, 7.15 p.m. A speaker and discussion on "Medical Ethics".

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, 18 April, 11 a.m. Roger Manvell: "Crisis in Communication". Tuesday, 18 April, 7 p.m. Hilary Rose: "Can Science be Socially Responsible?"

THE FREETHINKER

1881 Founded by G. W. Foote 1971

90th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Readings: LAURENCE BECK
MOIRA KUEBART

Speakers: BRIGID BROPHY
BILL McILROY

Chairman: DAVID TRIBE

FRIDAY, 14 MAY, 8 p.m.

THE CLARENCE, Whitehall, London, S.W.1
(One minute from Trafalgar Square)

Admission free : everyone welcome

NEWS

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

J. T. Jones, who was elected president of the National Union of Teachers last weekend, is headmaster of the Davison Secondary School, Croydon, and has a record of long service in the NUT and education. He told delegates attending the NUT annual conference at Scarborough that the need is for an educational system which recognises the importance of skill by hand and brain, "the avoidance of waste of talent that has characterised the educational scene at all levels and, above all, to ensure a development of aesthetic values and social responsibility upon which will depend the quality of life of our people".

He said there is a need to regard the whole of education as a continuing process. The assumption that the age of 11 had some educational significance was no longer tenable, and the idea of comprehensive primary schools to that age, followed by selection and segregation, "related more to administrative convenience rather than to sound educational principles."

The 1944 Education Act laid upon the parent the duty to ensure that the child received education according to age, ability and aptitude. This, in turn, encouraged local authorities to adopt selection procedures which were based upon the concept of immutable inherited abilities which could be measured with some precision. The facts of education over the past 25 years have proved disastrous both to the concept of fixed inherited ability and to the reliability of selection as a basis for an efficient system of secondary education. The doctrine of inherited ability was something like the doctrine of original sin in that it was a prerequisite for subsequent argument which, as far as education is concerned, has been fallacious".

Mr Jones said that perhaps the greatest weakness of the 1944 Education Act was its failure to compel local authorities to make provision for nursery education. "Research has shown", he said, "that intellectual development and social attitudes in later life are closely related to the child's earliest experience. To continue to neglect the nationwide provision of nursery education is to invite educational failure and maladjustment for many children at a later stage."

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Although the Roman Catholic Church categorically declares that Catholic children must not attend "non-Catholic, neutral or mixed schools", there are 400,000 doing so in Britain today. There is a growing recognition by Catholic parents that poor teaching standards, authoritarianism and religious indoctrination are an inadequate basis for an educational or professional career. Misgivings have been expressed in Catholic circles about the role and value of Catholic schools and, in 1969, the *Tablet*, a Catholic weekly, published a number of extremely forthright letters on the subject.

A report entitled, *The Future of Catholic Education in England and Wales*, was published last week, and will

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provoke much serious discussion in religious and educational circles. It was prepared for the Catholic Renewal Movement by A. E. Spencer, who was head of the department of educational and socio-religious research at the former Cavendish Square Graduate College, London.

While it does not call for an immediate end to the Catholic school system, the CRM says Church schools may have lost their purpose, and that there is little evidence to suggest they achieve their objective. The maintenance of Church schools is a serious financial burden on the Catholic community, and it is suggested that the bishops may have wasted millions of pounds.

There is criticism of the current Catholic education structure, and the Report argues that Catholic schools demand docility and conformity rather than inquiry and creativity. It recommends that Roman Catholic education authorities should report on how they raise and apply their money. Catholic parents should not be persuaded to send their children to Church schools.

This report is to be welcomed, but it should be regarded by humanists and freethinkers as a cautious step in the right direction. Some of the more ecumenically inclined humanists have, in the past, been too ready to jump on any bandwagon, and issue statements on behalf of the movement which suggested that it should relax the campaign for a system of secular education and an end to State support for Church schools.

It will be a long time before a majority of Catholics accept even the moderate proposals outlined in the CRM Report. At the present time, however, Catholic schools continue to produce thousands of young people who are keen to reverse the liberal gains of the last few years, get on library committees and into the media to regulate what others may read or see, and agitate for more religious privileges. There are some liberal Catholic lay-men and even priests but, like the Christian social reformers of the 19th century we are continually told about by "with-it" clergymen and Christian Socialists, they are regarded with suspicion and hostility by the Church.

REPRESSION IN PORTUGAL

Avante (Forward), the leading Portuguese anti-Fascist journal, has been appearing regularly for 40 years, and is probably the only clandestine publication to have survived for so long under such conditions. It is a remarkable feat to publish such a paper in a country like Portugal where the secret police and their network of informers are a constant threat. *Avante* has provided guidance and hope for those who have lived under a dictatorship for 45 years.

It has required much courage and resolution to keep the paper in existence. Those responsible for it have to live an underground existence and have to raise the money to pay the printing and distributive costs. Time and again the police have caught up with them—several have died while under arrest—and announced that *Avante* was finished. But it has always reappeared.

Although there was a slight liberalisation following the death of Salazar, the Portuguese régime is fundamentally against culture and progress. Dozens of intellectuals have been arrested and lecturers and teachers have been dismissed. Writers have been persecuted, censorship is rigid and many books have been banned. Alves Redol and Aquilino Ribeiro, two prominent writers who died recently, were strong opponents of the Government. Another famous writer is also anti-fascist, and in one of his best books, *Wool and Snow*, vividly describes the suppression of a textile workers' strike. Other intellectuals have been driven into the illegal anti-fascist movement.

The Roman Catholic Church has backed the régime from the beginning, but now even some priests are defying the authorities of Church and State, and speaking out against repression and dictatorship.

FREETHINKER FUND

Following the almost complete stoppage of donations to the Fund during the postal strike a special appeal was made to help the *Freethinker* during a very difficult period. The response has been most disappointing; in fact the amount received during March was well below that of a year ago. It is often suggested that an increase in the number of pages and an advertising campaign would increase the paper's circulation and influence. We are well aware of this, but without the support of readers, the freethought movement and organisations whose work we publicise it is impossible to initiate such schemes. We urge those who have not yet contributed to the Fund, or introduced the *Freethinker* to a potential reader, to face the realities of the situation.

Our thanks to the following contributors: H. A. Alexander, 35p; J. Ancliffe, 45p; J. G. Burdon, 25p; W. F. Burgess, 45p; W. V. Crees, 45p; Professor G. Cunelli, 70p; S. M. Denison, 45p; G. M. Faulkner, 45p; A. Foster, 70p; A. W. Harris, 25p; J. Jeffery, 45p; J. McMahon, 20p; J. McPail, £1.20; Mrs M. Morley, 92p; R. B. Ratcliffe, 45p; Mrs W. Roux, 45p; F. M. Skinner, 8p; J. Sykes, 20p; Mrs L. Vanduren, 25p. Already acknowledged: £13.03. 1970 total to date: £21.73.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, London, WC1

FRIDAY, 30 APRIL, 7.30 p.m.

The National Secular Society and
South Place Ethical Society present

DEREK WILKES Tenor

MARIE-HELENE GEORGIO Soprano

SHEER PLEETH Pianist

Tickets 40p from

NSS, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1, and

SPES, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1

BOOKS

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF LONDON EDUCATION, 1870-1970

by Stuart Maclure. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, £2.10.

It could reasonably be maintained that in this century none of the world's capital cities has, on the whole, been better governed than London; and among its departments of civic government none has a more honourable record than that of education. It is right, therefore, that 100 years after the establishment of general elementary education the record should be set down. No one could have done this with more command of the material, more judgment in blending major trends with illuminating detail, and more skill in presentation and writing, than Stuart Maclure. In the face of such a book it is very puzzling that student teachers should so often proclaim that the history of education seems to them the most boring and the least useful part of their course. How can you be a teacher in a London school and have a feeling for what you are doing if you are not capable of responding to and enjoying a story such as this?

A measure to give us general elementary education was late in coming in this country, delayed especially by the jealousies of the religious bodies, not only of each other but of the State, lest a system should be set up that lessened their hold on the minds of the young. The Act of 1870 was not, in fact, a very bold measure: it only empowered the State to remedy deficiencies in the provision of elementary education where the religious bodies had not provided. Nevertheless it was the decisive first step. London was seen from the first to be in a special category; and the London School Board soon proved itself rather more than *primus inter pares*. Its membership, by any count, was distinguished, and it is rather remarkable that its one avowed agnostic member, Professor Huxley, was made president of its curriculum committee. At least as remarkable, since the first subject of instruction to be listed was The Bible and the Principles of Religion and Morality, was his willingness, while retaining his own explicit views, to regard himself as elected to administer the Act. On neither side were the Victorians quite as rigid as we sometimes preen ourselves as supposing.

Splendid as the record of the London School Board was, it was undoubtedly right that at the beginning of the new century its work should be taken over by the newly constituted London County Council. The secret of the leadership given by London lay above all in the readiness to investigate even though investigation might show that in many respects London was, at the stage of the investigation, behind rather than in advance of the rest of the country. London slums—and therefore the health of schoolchildren and many other social problems—were especially bad; the number of elementary school leavers going on to the secondary schools in the 1920s was only two-thirds of the national average; fees were still being charged in London secondary schools when Manchester, Salford and Sheffield had abolished them. But London set out to correct these things. It was Bradford that saw the real start of nursery schools, but London that gave the McMillan sisters their later scope. It was London that appointed the first educational psychologist, in Cyril Burt.

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It was London especially that established the solid "three-decker" school building in place of the slum schools that preceded it; and London was among the leaders (though certainly not the only one) in replacing this by the lighter, more open kind of school building that we expect now. London, again, has always been proud of its many kinds of provision of further education, both for young school leavers learning a trade and for more general adult education. Not least, in the difficult days of the 1930s the thinking began which led London to insist after the war on the "comprehensive" secondary school, a term coined by Harold Shearman of the Education Committee.

The work of providing London with a genuine public educational service has always been handicapped by our national readiness to compromise that in other ways is such a virtue. The voluntary schools were there and were brought in a measure within the state orbit at a cost, both to funds and to principle, which many feel to have been excessive. More recently, the logical impossibility of having a school that is comprehensive with the continued existence not only of private schools but of aided grammar schools is obvious; and has been a cause of much exasperation by the comprehensive school heads. But this, for good or ill (and there is something of both), seems to be our way.

In Maclure's first-rate book (not least for its illustrations as well as the text) there are only a few minor things to criticise. It is a bit hard to say of R. H. Tawney that his patience with committees was quickly expended. As one who did serve with him on quite a few I rejoiced in his occasional caustic remark. But no man who was such a creative scholar and thinker, and "ought" to have given himself to that, can out of sheer social conscience have so given his time and energies to committees that went on and on and on. And—a small but interesting point—the body that gives degrees other than those of universities is the Council for National Academic Awards, not the National Council for Academic Awards. Maybe there ought to be a Council with functions corresponding to the latter title, but those who still value the independence of universities will say it is just as well there isn't.

LIONEL ELVIN

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF GOD

by Michael De-la-Noy. Citadel Press, £1.75.

Some years ago I knew Michael De-la-Noy slightly as one of Lord Beaumont's charming and liberal editors, and I have also had friendly encounters with some of the bishops named in his exposure. Once, doing research, I shared a table in Lambeth Palace library with the arch-hero, or arch-villain, of the piece, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and he seemed positively to exude Pickwickian benevolence. I have also read some of the arch-episcopal writings. Mr De-la-Noy finds them, on the whole, scholarly rather than readable, whereas I formed the contrary view. It was therefore with considerable interest that

REVIEWS

I turned to this very frank account of familiar Anglicans and their bust-up. I almost called it a *cause célèbre*, but then felt that would be to fall into a trap that the author, understandably enough in view of his involvement, enters. Already 99 per cent of those who read newspaper pieces like "Primate Sacks Author of Sex Stories", and a proportion of those who wrote them, are likely to have forgotten all about them. The Church of England has survived worse publicity than this.

A secularist's first impulse is to back any victim of establishmentarian persecution, especially where his chief peccadillo is writing frankly about sex. For one reason or another, finding a publisher for the book was apparently a problem, and from my own experiences trying in vain to expose diocesan junketings, I can sympathise with the author on this score. The full account, however, with the sort of irritatingly trendy title that all Christian radicals feel obliged to give to their books, is as much a comment on the world of public relations as on the world of religion. It may be apposite to note here that one of the few words misspelt in the text is "anoint".

There are many shrewd observations that few impartial observers will question: the thumbnail sketch (a suitable size) of the Bishop of Southwark; the remark that the Archbishop of Canterbury has "not much competition" in intellectuality on the episcopal bench, and the general assessment that "the intellectual and pastoral abilities of the bishops reflects pretty fairly the age of mediocrity in which we live". The behind-the-scenes glimpses of life in Lambeth Palace will be novel to most readers but have a ring of truth, though many will feel that too much attention is given to the personal idiosyncrasies of its incumbent. Some of these clearly affect his pastoral ministry, but the way he walks is hardly germane (even if it makes him accident-prone). We also find complaints and a general tone which merely show how far apart are the worlds of PR and ecclesiasticism and reflect an unreasonable demand that the Church should adjust to its image-builders and not the image-builders to the Church.

Mr De-la-Noy was the Archbishop's personal press officer and had an ambivalent position at the Church Information Office. He was also a good generation younger than the average diocesan bishop. Is it therefore a real grievance that only one of them sought to be addressed by his Christian name? Can Dr Ramsey be blamed for not reaching for his telephone and asking the then Prime Minister to give his secretary a life peerage? Was an Anglican PR man, ever conscious of the way his employers' innocent actions would be misinterpreted and cause embarrassment, wise to write, under his own name, an intimate account of an Earl's Court transvestite for *New Society*, and preach a broadcast Lenten sermon, in Hove of all places, which included a theological questioning of the official view that "sexual relations are morally permissible only within the marriage of heterosexual partners"? Candidly he admits that probably he was not. Yet these are pointers to a more fundamental attitude.

The reader's first misgiving comes in the Preface. After being commissioned to write "a journalistic pen-portrait of the Archbishop" the author was sacked and "clearly it

became impossible to write the sort of book which originally I had had in mind". Why? Did Mr De-la-Noy propose to offer a glowing tribute to the Archbishop's warm, outgoing, spontaneous Christian love of his fellow-man, but after dismissal became aware for the first time that Dr Ramsey was really remote and insensitive and likely to refer to the problems of individuals only when his press officer shoved little notes under his nose? Coming away from personalities we can see that the author was trying to project an image of the Church that had never had any relation to reality: that Jesus came solely to preach the social gospel, that God loves our genitals as much as, if not more than, he loves the rest of us, that the Christian message is "love, hope and forgiveness". Eventually the Church had the courage of its reactionary convictions and dismissed its optimistic press officer. Whereupon he discovered that it has always loved itself better than anyone else, "is not remotely worried about the real problems that worry ordinary people" and that its "hypocrisy and cowardice" are "really frightening". However much they may sympathise with the author, secularists are likely to say they could have told him and regret that he should have wasted so much of his time and the world's trying to manufacture a PR image to the contrary.

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W. K. CLIFFORD AND THE SCIENCE OF MORALITY

(Continued from page 122)

more academic expositions, created a resounding impression in the fields of social studies, philosophy, and morality; and it is for that reason—the lasting implications of the applied consequences of Clifford's intellectual inquiries—that he must not deserve to be remembered today, as a distinctively creative flavour, in the recent evolution of some of the most needful of our contemporary concepts of social law and morality, and the unprejudiced application of reason, and the chief and the most reliable means of tackling the problems and the pressures which are inherent in the organisation of any sort of "New Society".

Nature and Validity of Morality

Probably the most essential and creative of all W. K. Clifford's ideas came to him quite late in his cruelly shortened life, even after the year 1874, when he operated largely as a prominent member of the Metaphysical Society. Then he tried hard to solve the perennial problem of the relationship between mind and matter, and he became concerned especially to work out the meaning of morality, not in terms of any religious dogmas, but in terms of the "social factor" and the "tribal judgement". That was a course which did a great deal to ventilate the whole subject of the nature and validity of morality, endeavouring to set it upon a reasonable and scientific basis, and refusing, with some disarming amiability and lucidity, to set apart certain personal or religious beliefs, for any privileged consideration, outside the operations of the accepted philosophical criteria of truth and acceptability. Clifford was not alone in that quest of course; but he was certainly amongst the most prominent and memorable of those who did so assiduously, at the height and the climax of the Victorian optimism in reason and humanity. So, at any rate for those who still admire and assimilate even that dated and worn optimism, it is still quite useful and stimulating to reconsider his thought even so many eventful years later.

Clifford, at least, dispels the common notion that all philosophers are dull. What he revealed in person as a man, he displayed also as a writer. The titles of so many of his books—testimonies, rather, of the deep academic aspirations and allegiances of the Victorian age—conceal, for the cursory observer, how much those volumes do contain of wit, poetry, art, inspiration, and beguiling literature. Scientific as his approach always was, W. K. Clifford could never shake off the Victorian's saving gifts of grace, thoroughness, cultivation, and some resourceful humility: so, like others of his sort and calibre, he tended always, even in his writings, to disclose the best of "Christian" virtues, even as, implicitly, he did not accept the dogmatic assumptions of the Christian revelation.

Lines of Guidance

The resemblance to the career of Bertrand Russell cannot be overlooked: only W. K. Clifford was always more firmly chained to the academic demands of mathematics and metaphysics, and he did not live long enough to have any old age, to be spent, perhaps, in some more persistent pursuit of the social and moral implications of his arduous acceptance of the primacy of reason. The shortness of his years meant that, inevitably, he began much more than he could finish. Nevertheless, his ideas were, and have remained, memorable, promising and creative. He fore-

shadowed Einstein's theory of relativity; in philosophy, his notions were later furthered by Karl Pearson; and his moral ideas, perhaps the most immediately significant of them all, were not lost on later thinkers, such as Henry Sidgwick and Leslie Stephen.

Indeed, W. K. Clifford's permanent importance in providing much for the armoury of ideas and principles of the British "Agnosticism" of the Victorian age has probably not even yet been properly appreciated: his enlightened probings in the directions of some newer and saner sort of morality, anchored to social rather than domestic or dogmatic considerations—although he was not given the years in which to develop or to pursue them to their logical conclusions—laid down some very precise and acceptable lines of guidance for other Victorian thinkers and their successors, including Bertrand Russell, Leonard Woolf, G. E. Moore, Lowes Dickinson and E. M. Forster. That he should still be in some direct line of generation with such distinguished Britons ought surely to provide W. K. Clifford with the best and the most compelling of all his present claims upon our attention and study.

THE THREE STAGES OF THE DIALECTIC

(Continued from page 123)

Manicheism henceforth became the personification of evil in the eyes of the Church of Rome. This dualistic creed continued to reappear on a large scale during the Middle Ages, with the "Cathars" who appeared under different names in many European countries. Their principal stronghold was in the South of France where they were ultimately destroyed during the so-called Crusade against the Albigenses.

The Ultimate Stage

Among the philosophers, dualism assumed a different form: there was no longer any question of a war between two gods, the good versus the evil, but of an opposition inherent in all phenomena and automatically producing a corresponding opposition. The first example of this is to be found in Greece. During the sixth century before our era, Heraclitus of Ephesus declared that, "all things derive from strife and necessity". At the beginning of last century, Hegel and the Hegelian school declared that the conflict between every idea and every phenomenon and its opposite; between the "thesis" and its "antithesis" to be the necessary prerequisite to every form of existence.

Similarly, just as it occurred in the alternate defeat of Ormuzd and Ahriman, who reduced each other to temporary defeat was impotent, so the final development of the thesis versus the antithesis led to the eventual appearance of a "synthesis", within which the antagonism ceased, but here to only for a time, since the development of the synthesis itself inevitably produced its inherent antithesis.

Finally, we come to the ultimate stage, that of Science. Science no longer proclaims antagonism between opposites as a principle, but discovers it in the degree, and to the precise extent that it investigates the phenomena themselves. About the year 1900, after a century marked by a stupendous development of the physical and chemical sciences, this discovery can be said to have been definitely established as a result of the study of the chemical equilibria, and was definitely formulated in the form of a scientific "law" by Henry le Chatelier.

Translator's note: As Louzon concludes his foreword by a brief survey of the contents of the booklet itself, which is too long for translating, it may be convenient to close at this point.