

CHURCH LEADERS WANT SEGREGATION TO CONTINUE IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

Scotland's Roman Catholics are amongst the most bigoted and sectarian in the United Kingdom, and Holy Mother Church is determined they shall so remain. Whilst some English Catholic parents are beginning to seriously question the rightness of denominational education, and even sending their children to State schools in defiance of the priest, it is a different story in Scotland. Church leaders are digging in their heels in order to ensure that every Catholic child shall be educated in a Church school. They seem to be oblivious to the educational, financial and social folly of their policies, despite the tragic lesson of the religious war in Northern Ireland and the fact that Catholic-Protestant animosity is never far below the surface in many Scottish communities. In a memorandum issued last week the Scottish Catholic Education Commission and its president, the Bishop of Motherwell, spoke out strongly against the idea of mixed Protestant and Catholic schools in Scotland.

Secular Humanists Blamed

The Commission had been asked to submit evidence to a Labour Party sub-committee on desegregation which had been formed after the party's Scottish conference this year where it was claimed that the present system caused social problems and was "a wasteful use of teachers and finance".

The Catholic Education Commission claims that desegregation of schools would cause a social division because of the resentment of Catholic parents. It would also lead to a shortage of teachers because many Catholics would leave the profession. And they warn of a backlash at the polls because of dissatisfied Catholic voters.

John McKee, the Church's education officer, said the Commission's statement was not an attack on the Labour Party. He added that it was directed against "that small group of secular humanists who are using the party to achieve two things. They want to abolish Catholic schools, and having done that, to abolish religion from all schools".

John Pollock, chairman of the Scottish Labour Party and also chairman of the education sub-committee, said they would take the views of the Roman Catholic Church seriously when making their final report. He added: "We must look at what is desirable for the whole community. And the Labour Party does not take decisions related to their effect at the polls. We have never shirked our duty in taking decisions which we think are right, even though they are unpopular".

Getting Them Young

The Commission's claim that desegregation would cause social division is partly true. After a lifetime of indoctrination and propaganda about the alleged superiority of Church schools some Catholic parents may have misgivings about sending their children to State schools. They would eventually realise that their fears were groundless,

and certainly the next generation of Catholic parents would have no qualms about having their children educated with, and by, non-Catholics.

What the Church authorities fear is that if they lose their captive audiences in the classroom they will, in many cases, lose all contact with them. If children did not have to face the ordeal of explaining to the priest on Monday why they did not attend Mass on Sunday, youthful attendance at that ritual would sharply decline. And to most priests, including those who serve on education committees, indoctrination is more important than education and social harmony.

The Commission's warning that some Catholics would leave the teaching profession rather than teach in a non-Catholic school, also contains an element of truth. There are large numbers of such teachers drawn from religious orders. Some of them work devotedly for their pupils and endeavour to equip them for full, happy lives. But many of them have neither the temperament nor intellect for the job. Their main concern is turning out good, obedient Catholics. Some of them use their position to spot likely candidates for the priesthood and religious orders. A minority use their position of authority as an outlet for their suppressed and warped sexuality. Those who regard teaching as an opportunity to indoctrinate may leave the profession. Would they be such a great loss?

Ignore Threats

The Scottish Labour Party need not worry unduly should their sub-committee produce a report which is not pleasing to the Bishop of Motherwell and his colleagues. Catholic threats have, to some extent, lost their bite. If there are any fainthearts on the committee they should be reminded of a by-election in Liverpool earlier this year. A prominent Roman Catholic stood as the "Labour and Against Abortion" candidate in a largely Catholic constituency. He lost his deposit.

IN PURSUIT OF A FANTASY

This article is an extract from Brigid Brophy's contribution to "Animals, Men and Morals" which will be published next Thursday, (Gollancz, £2.20). It consists of twelve essays, and the contributors deal with the moral, sociological and psychological implications of our treatment of animals.

The moral thing to do about a moral dilemma is circumvent it.

The justification vivisection claims is that it is necessary to the saving of human lives. Publicly at least, British vivisectionists have nowadays abandoned the idea that human "fun" is sufficient vindication of vivisection. They are now huddled under the moral umbrella of the "necessity" of vivisection, a necessity which, if it can be measured at all, can be measured only against human necessity. By its own terms, the vivisectionists' terms, the umbrella does not morally cover an experiment unless the experiment simultaneously observes two conditions: the pain and terror given the animal must be as small as possible within the compass of the experiment; and the experiment itself must have a reasonable likelihood of producing information immediately crucial to human life—not merely to human convenience or human "fun".

Towards limiting vivisection to cases where those conditions are kept, the 1876 Act may perhaps achieve *something*—at least in a comparison with, say, the near-anarchy that exists about vivisection in the United States. But in comparison with what it must achieve if even the justification claimed by vivisectionists themselves is to apply, the British Act is plainly not merely not achieving; it is not trying. It is a two-edged Act. If it controls, it also licenses. If it purports to protect the other animals, it also protects the vivisectionist from being prosecuted for cruelty. If it forbids him to perform his experiments as a public spectacle, it also prevents the public from seeing what happens in his laboratory.

That vivisection is likely of its nature to cause pain and terror anyone can tell by consulting his commonsense or the reference¹ by Professor Aygün to the "cruelties and horrors inseparable from experimenting on living animals". That indifference to the cruelties and horrors is written-in to the historical tradition of vivisection he can see by reading John Vyvyan's excellent historical account, *In Pity and in Anger*.² That pain and terror are caused, regularly and nowadays, he can discover by asking an anti-vivisection society for its publications. And there is no let-off in the supposition that such societies are "biased"—an old mistake which C. S. Myers made in 1903-4 when he began an article³ that sought to justify vivisection by saying that the controversy had hitherto been conducted by people suspect of prejudice, namely vivisectionists and "those who claim to be protectors of animals". To claim to protect guinea pigs does not make one a guinea pig. Anti-vivisectionists are liable to verbal attack, but not to the attacks by scalpel and syringe made on guinea pigs. It cannot be argued that the direct self-interest of anti-vivisectionists is involved. That they have an emotional investment in their case is true, but that is likely to lead them as much to de-emphasise as to exaggerate the horrors concerned, because, if they can possibly be convinced that

the situation may not be so horrific as they fear, they will have lightened both the burden on their own imagination and their own responsibility to amend matters.

That the 1876 Act is not very sharply equipped to implement even its own equivocal terms can be guessed from the fact that, since 1876, there has never been a prosecution.⁴ That it does not in practice reduce vivisection to the cases which come under even the claimed umbrella can be thought likely from the continual rise in the figures. In 1964 the number of experiments on living animals in Britain was a little under 4½ million. In 1965 an article in the pro-vivisection journal *Conquest* stated the total number of animals "needed" as "about 4 million a year". In 1968 the number of experiments actually performed had increased to over 5 million. It is unlikely that 5 million experiments were performed at the lowest devisable cost in terror and pain, and incredible that all 5 million concerned issues vital to human life. Certainly, the Act under which they took place is in no position to make sure of either point. To license and inspect 5 million experiments in the Home Office employed ten inspectors. At this ratio, one inspector to half a million experiments, it is obvious that Parliament has no *intention* of making sure that vivisection takes place only with minimum pain and only in order to save human lives.

Is Human Life at Stake ?

Vivisection has become a habit, the done thing—not only among vivisectionists but among legislators and among the public who, ultimately, permit vivisection. We have swallowed the argument that it would be justified if human life were at stake and have licensed the running of a whole system and whole industries about which no one asks if human life indeed *is* at stake.

Much of the vivisection that takes place is in fact not justified by the only justification that morally can be or nowadays is put forward for vivisection at all. It takes place because (in the immediate sense of "because") it can: it is part of the system; it is not illegal. But it is a moral atrocity according to the vivisectionists' own professed morality. This in itself throws the gravest suspicion on the vivisectionists' sincerity, and on their impartiality in assessing the facts, in those (probably few) experiments which do come under the claimed umbrella because they investigate issues immediately vital to matters of human life or death. It is this small section of the problem that forces us to examine exactly what moral obligations are placed on us by a moral dilemma.

There are certain dicta which probably began life as examples in the discourse of philosophers and made their way out to a larger audience through the usual route of communications between academics and the public, namely exam papers, where they appeared as propositions followed by the word "Discuss". They have now been accepted as maxims in the folklore of ethics. For instance, every car driver knows "If you have to choose between running over a human and running over a dog, you must run over the dog". Likewise every householder or caretaker knows "If the building catches fire and gives you time to rescue only one portable item, you must snatch grandmother from her wheelchair and abandon the masterpiece by Rubens to the blaze".

BRIGID BROPHY

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Even I, who am probably as extreme as reasonable beings come in defence of both aestheticism and the rights of the other animals, do not deny that both these maxims are right in the solution they lay down to the crisis they propound. But it *is* a crisis. The obligation which the examples place on us is to avoid such crises. The true moral to be drawn from the hypothesis (the moral tale in fantasy form) about the Rubens is "Better fire precautions"—just as the true moral of the human-or-dog dilemma for drivers is "Better traffic control and better care for dogs so that they aren't left to wander the highways".

Crisis Situations

The first time a careaker abandons a Rubens we correctly praise his concern for grandmothers. But if a series of such incidents happens, we should be correct to suspect of philistinism the society that doesn't make better provision for its Rubenses. Similarly, it might be an instructive, if painful, psychological exercise to ask yourself whether, in the crisis of an avalanche or a flood, you would rather save your lover or your child. But if you constantly dwell on the dilemma, you are entertaining a fantasy of killing one or both of them. And if you constantly put yourself in circumstances likely to be overtaken by avalanche or flood, you are doing your best to fulfil your fantasy without actually taking the responsibility of actively fulfilling it—or, indeed, of acknowledging it. To acknowledge it would be dangerous to your murderous wishes. You might feel obliged to give up putting yourself in crisis situations.

To face a moral dilemma, even in a hypothesis inside one's imagination, takes courage. Sometimes, I suspect, we are so impressed by that courage that we assume it would be cowardly to avoid the dilemma. But the point of hypothesising the dilemma in advance is to bring home the moral obligation to plan in advance to avoid the crisis. Ethical examples and artistic composition (another form of hypothesis) must aim at crisis, because that exposes the nature of dilemmas. They are acts of imagination. Civilisation consists of planning to circumvent in real life the dilemmas imagination has exposed.

Our legislators have, I suspect, accepted the folklore maxim that a driver must run over a dog in preference to a human and extrapolated from it to the belief that vivisectioning other animals is justified if it saves human lives. They have been impressed by the hypothetical driver's courage and are determined not to be less courageous themselves in facing the dilemma posed by vivisection. In this process what is lost to sight is the chief moral point, the obligation to widen the circumstances so that crisis does not occur and the dilemma can be circumvented.

Superstition and Hypocrisy

Continue to permit vivisection, and scientists will continue to mislead themselves and the public by claiming that there are no alternatives—a claim made plausible only by their contriving to remain ignorant of the work of fellow-scientists who have discovered alternatives. Forbid vivisection, and necessity will mother invention. Science and society will alike be freed from a superstition which is making nonsense of our professed morality, subverting our science and corrupting our very use of language by hypocrisy. By the monstrously sized and systematic machinery which technology makes possible, we vivisect one

animal a year for every ten humans in the population: a monstrous attempt to plumb the present, carried out on principles no more moral and barely more rational than those on which the ancients tried to divine the future from the entrails of animals who were at least mercifully killed first. We seek cures by sacrificing other beings almost as blindly as the ancients sought a propitious future by the same propitiatory method.

This is a situation we have either to change or to conceal from ourselves by hypocrisy. We have chosen, as the ancients did, hypocrisy. In the ancient world, even so shrewd and noticing a writer as Ovid⁵ could write of cows "offering" their necks to the sacrifice, in pursuit of the sad fantasy that it was an ill omen if the creature seemed unwilling to die. *We* publish pop encyclopedias of the animal kingdom, from which we exclude our own species and in which we caption a pretty photograph of a pair of baby rabbits with: "They are also used in research laboratories, helping mankind to fight disease". We are half-way to pretending they volunteer—a very effective method of hiding from ourselves that it is we who are the species with choice.

REFERENCES

- 1 (My italics.) Professor Dr S. T. Aygün's address to the International Association Against Painful Experiments on Animals, London, April 1969, published by that Association (51 Harley Street, London, W1).
- 2 Michael Joseph, 1969.
- 3 *International Journal of Ethics*, Volume XIV (1903-04) pp. 312-322.
- 4 John Vyvyan: *In Pity and in Anger*, p. 93.
- 5 *Fasti*, I, 83.

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PUBLIC LECTURES

Friday, 5 November, 8 p.m.

AVRO MANHATTAN

RELIGIOUS TREASON AND PLOT, PAST AND PRESENT

Friday, 19 November, 8 p.m.

RICHARD HANDYSIDE

THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLBOOK AND RELATED ISSUES

Friday, 3 December, 8 p.m.

MICHAEL LLOYD-JONES

SEXUAL MYTHOLOGY

Friday, 17 December, 8 p.m.

R. J. CONDON

THE NATIVITY MYTH

Organisers:

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

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THE FREETHINKER

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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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 5p stamp to Kit Mout, Mercers, Cuckfield, Sussex.

EVENTS

Ashurstwood Abbey Secular Humanism Centre (founded by Jean Straker), between East Grinstead and Forest Row, Sussex. Telephone Forest Row 2589. Meeting every Sunday, 3 p.m.

Belfast Humanist Group. War Memorial Building, Waring Street, Belfast, Wednesday, 27 October, 8 p.m. Discussion on what humanists can do in the present troubles.

Humanist Holidays. Details of future activities from Marjorie Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey, Telephone: 01-642 8796.

Leicester Secular Society, Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester, Sunday, 24 October, 6.30 p.m. M. Cybulynk: "Immortality Through Art".

North Staffordshire Humanist Group, Cartwright House, Broad Street, Hanley, Friday, 29 October, 7.45 p.m. Bryan Milner: "Education for Uncertainty".

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, 24 October, 11 a.m. Heinz Norden: "America in Trauma", Tuesday, 26 October, 7 p.m. Michael Lloyd-Jones: "Today's Pressure on Growing Up".

Worthing Humanist Group, Burling Hotel, Marine Parade, The Pier (West), Sunday, 31 October, 5.30 p.m. James Hemming: "What Alternative Society?"

CATHOLICS AND CREMATION

A Roman Catholic bishop's participation in the ceremony to open a new crematorium at Chichester was another example of how the Church has been forced to change its attitude on a social issue. It is now nearly a century since the cremation movement was started in this country, and its history is one of struggle against conservatism, prejudice and superstition. The erection of the first crematorium at Woking was delayed because of opposition by the Bishop of Rochester, within whose jurisdiction lay the ground on which it was to be built. Local opposition was organised by the vicar of Woking, who sent an appeal to the Home Secretary.

The Anglican and Non-Conformist churches continued their opposition to cremation for many years. But it was eventually overcome, and today, about 56 per cent of all disposals are by cremation. There are over 200 crematoria in Britain.

The Roman Catholic Church maintained its traditional opposition to cremation until July 1963, when Pope Paul announced the mitigation of the law on this question. Less than a decade ago Catholics in Britain—and still in other parts of the world—were making ignorant and scurrilous attacks on cremation and its advocates. But, as on many other questions, the world (including a growing section of the faithful) was coming to ignore the commands of the Catholic Church, and, at the request of Cardinal Heenan on behalf of the hierarchy of England and Wales, the Pope gave a further mitigation of the law for these countries. Many thousands of Catholics are now cremated every year.

Cremation was widely practised in early times, and by the time of the Greek and Roman civilisations it was the accepted method of disposal of the dead. With the rise and spread of Christianity, and its belief in the resurrection of the dead, cremation was regarded with disfavour. By the fifth century the practice had become almost obsolete. Burial of the dead had become so much a part of the Christian heritage that, when nations and peoples were "converted" to Christianity, they were required to give up the practice of cremation in favour of the Christian method of burial.

Later, unsuccessful attempts were made during the Middle Ages to introduce cremation into the Christian community. At the end of the nineteenth century advocates of cremation in Europe were vigorously opposed by Rome, and this opposition has continued to our own times.

The standard excuse now given for the change of policy is that the Church never regarded cremation as intrinsically evil, or even incompatible with the Christian religion. But, for some odd and unspecified reason, many of the supporters of the cremation movement were motivated by hatred of the Roman Catholic Church, and regarded cremation as a gesture of defiance. No evidence is presented to substantiate this claim, and no attempt is made to explain why so many of Rome's enemies—religious and secularist—were buried rather than cremated. But, as an infallible institution like the Roman Church cannot make a mistake or adopt wrong policies, it is necessary to resort to lies and chicanery to justify mischievous, obscurantist teachings which have eventually to be discarded.

S AND NOTES

FAMILY PLANNERS EXPAND WORK

At its recent biennial meeting in London the Governing Body of the International Planned Parenthood Federation appealed to its member associations to do everything possible to mitigate the ill-effects of illegal abortion. A resolution was passed reaffirming the Federation's traditional stand that contraception is the first line of defence against unwanted pregnancy. The resolution said that women should be offered contraceptive advice immediately after an abortion, and that "in those countries in which abortion is illegal, legislation which punishes a woman who has had an abortion may deter her from seeking medical advice if she is ill after such an operation and may inhibit her from obtaining immediate contraceptive advice". The resolution called on IPPF member associations to press for adequate and socially humane services to treat incomplete abortions and the provision of contraceptive advice for all such cases.

Julia Henderson, secretary-general of the IPPF, told the meeting: "In view of the diversity of religious, cultural and political factors involved in the discussion of this question, our Federation has long pursued a policy of recognising that every member association must be free to make its own policy without any overall mandate from our decision-making bodies promoting or opposing particular abortion legislation. Within this permissive and strictly constitutional position, a growing number of our associations have worked for abortion reform in their own countries and a number have sought help from central or regional offices in informing themselves of new techniques, training their personnel, and obtaining equipment. More and more testimony is available to us about the number of women who die every year as a result of illegal abortions—the figures are appalling. Surely as a matter of pure humanitarian action, all responsible bodies of the IPPF must do everything in their power to *prevent* abortion through the provision of educational and contraceptive services for the women who are victims of the present situation".

It was decided to establish "as a matter of urgency" an expert panel on male and female sterilisation. Such a panel would work to create greater understanding of human sterilisation, study its psychological aspects and consider improved techniques.

There are now 79 national associations represented in the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

ROY BEARDMORE

Roy Beardmore's many friends in the humanist movement were shocked and saddened by his sudden death at the early age of 52. Mr Beardmore was a member of the National Secular Society and North Staffordshire Humanist Group. He played a leading role in the Group's affairs and had been honorary secretary for the last two years.

There was a secular cremation ceremony at which Tom Stringer, chairman of North Staffordshire Humanist Group, spoke of the great loss of a good friend, active humanist and a man who was concerned for the wellbeing of humanity. He had an enquiring mind and worked to promote the application of informed reason towards improving the human condition.

Our sympathy is extended to Mr Beardmore's widow, son and daughter.

CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DAVID TRIBE

Mrs Kathleen Tacchi-Morris, founder and world president of Women for Disarmament within the United Nations Associations, recently led a British delegation to the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) to discuss environmental pollution and suggested remedies. With her were Dr Donald Jones, chairman of the Western Region of the British UNA, who read the principal paper from the United Kingdom, Mrs Hilary Edwards, regional organiser of that region, Steve Mama, Michael Andrews and David Tribe. Other guests from abroad were B. Reiner, official representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (which, as distinct from the parent UN, recognises the GDR), and Dr Kappeyne v.d. Copello of the Netherlands, who is honorary president of the World Federation of UNAs, and his wife. A strong German delegation included the president and secretary-general of the GDR UNA, Prof. Dr Steiniger and Dr Felicitas Richter, who organised the programme, the chairman of the Weimar Branch, Dr Taubert, and numerous experts from the universities, government and planning authorities of the republic.

New Problems

Most striking, though hardly surprising, of the themes that recurred throughout the conference was the universality of dangers of pollution and environmental disfigurement throughout the technological world. The GDR still has a low car population for a country with its high *per capita* GNP, but is faced with all the other problems of urbanisation, industrialisation and chemicalisation of the landscape. Greatest of her social difficulties is the housing shortage in the towns, where—as distinct from Britain—there is also a labour shortage, and the planning hazards of too rapid building. With a low density of motor vehicles there is less air pollution from this source, but pollution from industrial processes remains. Some smaller factories, like smaller villas, are still privately owned, but socialist as well as capitalist factories are given economic targets and incentives, and environmental protection is, in the short term, more expensive than doing nothing. Probably the GDR has an additional problem with the belching chimney, since the higher grades of coal are in the Federal German Republic (West Germany) and, apart from an

(Continued on back page)

YOUR 1972 POCKET DIARY

This year, for the first time, freethinkers, humanists, rationalists, secularists, or whatever, can have their own pocket diary, containing 16 pages of specialised information (mainly useful names and addresses, plus a few forward dates of 1972 events in the humanist movement), as well as the usual week-to-an-opening diary pages and all the usual features, including London theatre and Underground maps. All this, incredibly, in a small pocket size (4.1" x 2.8") diary that won a design award last year. Just the thing for your own use, and that of like-minded friends to whom you may (dare we suggest it?) send Xmas gifts.

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BOOKS

THE GOOD SOCIETY: A BOOK OF READINGS

Edited by Anthony Arblaster and Steven Lukes.
Methuen, £1.50.

One man's utopia is another man's nightmare. This fundamental truth of political theorising too often falls on deaf ears, whether they belong to Left or Right, and regrettably casts cold water on the hope that we may yet, despite all experience to date, run society along humane and rational lines. For this hope presupposes first, a commonly accepted view of what a humane and rational society would be like a view which is alarmingly contradicted by the enormous divergence of political positions revealed in this book. And second, the rational reorganisation of society, which was of course the ardent dream of the early Fabians such as H. G. Wells and the Webbs, logically demands a consensus on rationality as a method of change. But the various contributions to the "Good Society" are all too frequently inspired, not by reason, but by ideology. To those who subscribe to the humanist vision of man, the irrationalism of the political dogmatists ought to be anathema: particularly as the repeated experience of totalitarian regimes, of whatever political complexion, does nothing to dissuade the ideologist from advocating doctrines whose application destroys freedom.

The editors' admirably trenchant introduction makes the point that so-called "value-free" analysis in political science is a myth. You can't take the politics out of politics. What, however, should be hoped for is that the actual policies of governments will be influenced as much by the sceptical rationalist as by the idealist. For idealists—essential as they are—too often overlook that politics are about people, not general principles. Only idealists get things done, but only sceptics stop to ask whether the possible side-effects on people's lives may outweigh the general benefits. Living, as we do, in a country where both Labour and Tory governments more or less clumsily muddle through, we may think such a remark not only banal, but also impertinent—for no one in his senses would accuse Mr Wilson or Mr Heath of being passionate ideologues. But consider the whole history of Lenin's attempt to put his Marxist principles into practice in post-1917 Russia: a classic case of the blindness of political dogma. Following the ousting of the bourgeoisie from power, the entire country had somehow to be reorganised along socialist lines. To judge from his contribution in this book, Bukharin, at least, was in no doubt as to how this should be done:

... And inasmuch as, from childhood onwards, all will have been accustomed to social labour, and since all will understand that this work is necessary and that life is easier when everything is done according to a pre-arranged plan, and when the social order is like a well-oiled machine, all will work in accordance with the indications of these statistical bureaux . . .

I suppose only a planner of Bukharin's peculiar zeal could cheerfully envisage people working to the dictates of "statistical bureaux", and not shudder.

In the pre-revolutionary situation in Russia, Lenin at no time foresaw the incredible difficulties of socialising the country virtually overnight, as he naively hoped. Nor did he anticipate the problems he would encounter in preserving the basic fabric of government. The reasons for this are highly instructive. It was, of course, Marxist doctrine that the State, as the embodiment of class rule, would wither away once there were no classes. And as class

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society had been instantly abolished by the Bolshevik triumph, so had the State. The practical problem of governing Russia, however, remained. Luckily, it was for precisely this sort of emergency that the Hegelian dialectic had been invented, and was now to prove its worth. The disastrous period of "war communism" in Russia following 1917 compelled Lenin to revert to a modified version of private enterprise, and indirectly led to the rigid autocracy of Stalin, than which nothing could be less socialist. But if the State had not "withered away" following the revolution, as Marx and Engels had predicted, this could not of course be the fault of the original doctrine. It was to be seen as merely the temporary strengthening of state power the better to consolidate the revolution. By such tortuous logical shifts does communism proceed.

The adoption of a consciously theoretical and dogmatic view of politics is not, however, the exclusive preserve of the Left. Conservatives, whilst they tend to be suspicious of dogma and carefully articulated plans for reform, can in practice be as inflexible in their outlook as the extreme Left. It is one thing to be sharply critical of idealists' attempts to devise a perfect society, and of their subsequent practice. It is quite another to take a genuinely open-minded and empirical view of the workings of society. Hobbes, for instance, was so obsessed with the need for strong central government, which also could guarantee social stability, that for him "security" came first and individual liberty a long way behind. However understandable such a conception of the good society may have been in the light of the political conditions of Hobbes' time, we would now see it as a somewhat primitive model, attempting to regulate all behaviour in accordance with one supreme end without reference to the complex nature of social needs. Similarly, few conservatives were more inflexible than Edmund Burke in his single-minded belief that tradition was the only possible basis of a stable society. Rigid belief-structures are not at all confined to "doctrinaire" socialists.

Paradoxes clearly abound in this field. Vehemently accused by conservatives of a dogmatic commitment to the continuous extension of State power, Marxists are in fact committed by their ideology to the eventual abolition of all central coercive authority. Emphasis on the planning and regimentation of society is more characteristic, indeed, of the social democrats, who share with conservatives an opposition to the "utopian" views of the extreme Left. It is history, not the internal consistency of ideas, that furnishes a basis for the typically Right-wing criticism that socialist zeal for the future welfare of mankind leads to the sacrifice of present welfare, in a morass of central regulation and direction, as human intractability makes itself felt. And, by and large, this criticism seems to be correct.

The interesting question, however, which is not discussed by the editors in their introduction, is whether the attempt to put utopian ideals into practice must necessarily pave the way for repression and tyranny. It is this fundamental uncertainty that makes the experiment of Castro's Cuba so relevant to an investigation of the relationship between ideology and political action. Pending the outcome of such experiments, it is as well to stick to evolutionary change, not revolutionary; for at least the evolutionary method, however unexciting, allows one to see where one is going. And, as the editors remind us, the decision to turn society

REVIEWS

PAMPHLET

HOW WILLIAM HONE, THE PERSECUTED PUBLISHER OF FLEET STREET, BEAT THE BIGOTS ON HIS THREE TRIALS FOR BLASPHEMY

Edited by Victor E. Neuberg. Frank Graham (Publisher) 55p.

This booklet consists of reprints of three pamphlets published (originally in 1817) by William Hone, "One of the candidates for the Office of Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty" (as Hone liked to style himself), together with an introduction to Hone and his background by Victor Neuberg. The three Hone pamphlets are entitled, "The late John Wilkes's catechism"; The Political Litany"; and "The sinecurist's creed, or belief . . ." All three are brilliant satires of the Government of the day, using parodies of the wording of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The "Catechism" begins in characteristic waspish style:

Question: What is your name?

Answer: Lick Spittle

Q. Rehearse the Articles of thy belief.

A. I believe in GEORGE, the Regent Almighty, Maker of New Streets and Knights of the Bath . . .

Its treatment of the Ten Commandments justifies the purchase of this reprint alone. The "Political Litany" follows in a similar vein, and concludes: "The Grace of our Lord GEORGE the Prince Regent, and the Love of Louis XVIII, and the Fellowship of the Pope, be with us all evermore. Amen." This was a verbal swipe at the reinstatement of the old monarchies in Europe after 1815.

The third pamphlet, "The Sinecurist's Creed", will not be so comprehensible to the modern reader because of its use of (then) contemporary nicknames and puns. Nevertheless, it requires a great deal of literary ingenuity to transpose the theological gymnastics of the persons of the Trinity for the purpose of political satire. If nothing else, it demonstrates the adroit sense of humour of the semi-underground pamphleteers of the early nineteenth century, as compared with what the so-called underground Press of today passes off as humour and social comment.

The production of reprints of this type will necessarily mean that they will only appeal to a small minority of the reading public. This is a pity, for in reproducing some of these old, scurrilous tracts, most of the originals of which are now lost, Mr Neuberg is performing a most useful service for antiquarians and political and social historians. I hope that further reprints of this nature will be well received by both the private collector and by historical departments of libraries.

The pamphlet is obtainable from Frank Graham, 6 Queen's Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (55p plus 3p postage).

NIGEL SINNOTT

THE COST OF CHURCH SCHOOLS
 By DAVID TRIBE
 Foreword: MARGARET KNIGHT
 20p (plus 3p postage)
 G. W. FOOTE & Co.
 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1

upside-down to bring about a blissful future involves the rather large assumption that that is what people want. It is, moreover, unscientific; for though Messrs Arblaster and Lukes do not mention this point explicitly, a really thorough-going radical egalitarianism ignores the psychological diversity of human beings, and so cannot engineer a society which caters for people, rather than abstract notions of "equality" or "freedom".

PHILIP HINCHLIFF

YOUTH UP IN ARMS by George Palocz-Horvath

Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £3.50.

Young people have traditionally lacked the proper respect for their elders and betters. In the last ten years or so, however, this lack of respect has taken on a new note of defiance. The generation gap has never been so wide; positions either side of the gulf have never been so entrenched.

There are several reasons for this new prominence of youth. One of them is simply a question of number; since the end of 1964 over half the world's population is under the age of 20. The effect of this can be seen in many ways—not the least politically. The number of young Americans who have become eligible to vote since the 1968 Presidential election is nearly 25 millions. The total vote in the last election was only just over 73 millions and Nixon won by only 500,000 votes. He must hope that short memory is amongst the weaknesses of the "campus bums".

One of the more depressing features of the "youth scene" in recent years has been the number of books published purporting to explain or analyse the movement. These books have usually revealed more about the prejudices of the old than about the motivation of the young. For this reason I approached George Palocz-Horvath's book with misgivings.

I am pleased to say that my fears were not justified. *Youth Up in Arms* takes a refreshingly objective look at events like the Teddy-boy movement, the Clacton Mods and Rockers disturbance, the Berkeley protest, the West Berlin demonstrations of 1967 and Czechoslovak resistance to the Soviet occupation.

Palocz-Horvath declares that he has an "obsession with the truth" and it is obvious from this carefully-researched book that he has made a real effort to get at the facts and the feelings behind them. This makes a pleasant change from those writers who are content to rely on Press sources. The recent Penguin, *Demonstrations and Communications*, has shown how the Press reports of events involving youth are tailored to make the "news" fit the popular preconceptions and prejudices.

Given all that, the book seems over-long. There is a lot of historical and other detail which seems a distraction in a book claiming to be a survey of events between 1955 and 1970. The book includes chapters on the Russian Revolution, the development of universities in the Middle Ages, and the changing concept of youth over the last few thousand years. But if those chapters seem irrelevant they can be skimmed or missed entirely, and one is still left with a lively and very interesting book.

MICHAEL LLOYD-JONES

LETTERS

Read and Judge

I am sorry that Mr Tribe was so distressed by my review of his book on Charles Bradlaugh. On reading his rebuttal, though, that the major difference in our attitudes is one of personal opinion, turning upon our several views of the merits of the main characters in the historical characters concerned, and also of the importance, to readers of the present day, of the various incidents in the narrative—which obviously conditions the amount of space given to them. Clearly some of these differences are fundamental, and not to be solved by writing letters.

I should like to say, however, that my comparison of the terms used by the secularists in their disputes with one another with the terms used by the Puritans before them (and the Communists after them) was a generalisation based on a good deal of reading over a period of years and not on any particular text—I am sorry that I cannot remember just what phrase of Mr Tribe's it was that seemed to me to have the same effect. And I must maintain that to write a book partly in text and partly in voluminous notes at the end is not to be commended, and that Annie Besant *should* have been shown in a contemporary photograph, whether or not it had been printed before. With regard to "Stalin's Russia" insofar as that is relevant, I should hope that "Fabian eulogies" would not be reprinted in any detail; on the other hand, the problems which Guild Socialism was trying to solve have by no means been solved today.

For the rest, I can only suggest to secularists that they read Mr Tribe's book for themselves, and judge between us.

MARGARET COLE.

Fish and Fertility

R. J. Condon must be congratulated on his interesting article "Fish on Friday" for which he must have done a lot of homework. The association of fish with fertility is a very old one and is almost world wide. To this day most eastern nations (particularly the Japanese who are great fish eaters) still believe this. Many also believe that eggs are aphrodisiac owing to their testis-like shape.

It may be of interest to note that the ancient Greeks considered Pisces to represent Aphrodite and Venus who were turned into fish by the monster god Typhon who caught them making love by the Euphrates. This was in "the Garden of Eden" of course—note the interesting parallel with the story of Adam and Eve.

What drivel astrology is to be sure, yet it seems to be becoming a cult as orthodox beliefs die out. It is astonishing to see *TV Times* devoting so much space to it for example. Do actors and actresses really take this childish nonsense seriously? Or is it just a bit of tiresome legpulling?

CLAUD WATSON.

No Obligation

I refer to R. J. Condon's article "Fish on Friday" (*Freethinker*, 9 October). For the sake of historical accuracy it may perhaps be pointed out that never at any time were Catholics under any religious obligation to eat fish on Friday. There was certainly a prohibition which made it a mortal sin for Catholics to eat meat on Fridays or on any other "days of abstinence" ordered by ecclesiastical authority. The doctors of divinity decided that the law of abstinence was not broken by the eating of fish. Hence the eating of fish on Fridays became a common practice but was never actually commanded. The termination of the theological distinction between meat and fish may be accepted as a small movement towards rationality inside the Roman Church.

PETER CROMMELIN.

Miss Louisa Donald, late of Highgate, who died on 18 August last, left £300 to the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Kentish Town, and a further £25 to that church for Masses; £200 each to the Crusade of Rescue and the Association of the Propagation of the Faith; £100 each to the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, and to Oxfam for any activity except family planning.

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oil pipeline from the Soviet Union, the GDR is dependent for fuel on lignite (brown coal), though hydro-electric schemes are being actively implemented.

Lignite is mined by opencast methods, and the most determined efforts are being made to rehabilitate the land after mining has ceased. Artificial lakes for leisure or power-generating purposes are being created and big afforestation schemes are under way. This is being done in other areas as well. The conference was taken on an excursion to see the Ilm Valley, which serves the recreational needs of the cities of Erfurt and Weimar. For many decades this area has been noted for its spas and tuberculosis sanatoria, but cement works and other unsuitable undertakings have found their way in down the years. Now they are being resited and, with the virtual conquest of tuberculosis, the sanatoria are being converted into rehabilitation centres for the disabled and those suffering from "modern" mental and physical conditions.

Conservation in the West

The British delegation was able to explain how the conservation movement has evolved dramatically in this and most other Western countries in recent years, so that Housing and Construction, Local Government and Development and Transport Industries are now embraced in one superministry, the Department of the Environment. Perhaps it is too soon to expect dramatic progress, but the setting aside of the Roskill Commission recommendation of Stanstead as the site of the third London airport may be a pointer to future dynamism. In the GDR environmental studies have a high priority as well, with nature conservation actually written into the Constitution.

Apart from the conference and related studies, there was a full programme of social and cultural events lavishly organised by the German hosts: receptions with the municipality and urban district council of Weimar, visits to a horticultural centre, the Potsdam Conference building at Cecilienhof and a stately home built by a woman and luxury-loving minister of Frederick II, and sightseeing round Berlin and Weimar. Most impressive and moving of the places was a memorial park near the site of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp, where young soldiers and high-school students are taken to make a declaration of allegiance to the State and a promise to see that Nazism is never re-established on East German soil.

DAVID TRIBE'S PRESIDENT CHARLES BRADLAUGH, MP

David Tribe has written what deserves to be the definitive biography of this Roundhead born out of his time. He has access to records not hitherto available, his judgments have the ring of fairness, and his detailed reasoning is scholarly and thorough.—Times Literary Supplement

£4.00 + 20p postage

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