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NUREMBURG-ON-THAMES?

—SLOGANS AND SALUTES AT JESUS RALLY

Readers of *The Freethinker* and members and friends of the National Secular Society, allegedly "inspired by the Devil," have been busy of late doling out doses of antidote to the 'London Festival for Jesus.' Copies of *Festival of Twilight* were distributed at a Clapham Common rally on 1 September and at a Festival of Light march-past in Romford last Saturday. But *Jesus Christ Supersham* and other torpedoes were earlier employed on 31 August, when "Dunkirk Miracle '72" cruised down the Thames to the applause of supporters at Kew and Westminster Bridges, and Tower Hill. At Westminster, little gaggles of Jesus-teenagers chanted "J-E-S-U-S: Jesus!" and then in unison thrust their arms heavenwards, with index fingers extended. The lack of uniforms, spades and jackboots gave such incidents the air of a rather bad imitation of a pre-war Nuremburg rally, for not even the genius of Miss Leni Riefenstahl and modern colour photography could have made a *Triumph of the Will* out of this Christian parody of a Spithead naval review. A more convincing miracle would have been Lord Longford, Mrs. Whitehouse and Malcolm Muggeridge walking on the waters of the Thames, and turning the President of the N.S.S. into a pillar of salt as they passed Tower Bridge.

"Jesus loves everybody!"

The young Jesus people we met were for the most part pleasant enough, though at times painfully naïve. One young man assured us that Christianity was unlike any other religion; but then he had never heard of the worship of Mithras, Krishna or Isis (which he wrote down as "Ices" a Freudian slip probably: it was a warm day!). A real Jesus-freak assured one of the godless leafleteers that "Jesus loves everybody! Jesus loves me! I love everybody," and then bearing his teeth, "I love you!"

It is sad, but evidently true, that these suggestible young Jesus-things really do not know the meaning (or if they do, they do not use it) of the poor old Anglo-Saxon, four-letter word, 'love.' This nebulous travesty of which they so glibly speak is as much a degradation of a decent, natural, life-enhancing emotion as is prostituting the word 'love' to cover horsewhips, voyeurism and promiscuous sexual athleticism.

Religious 'love' or secular tolerance ?

One hardly needs to labour the point in these columns that love is very much an inclusive/exclusive emotional bond between an *individual* and one or more of a small, select number of other individuals. 'Universal love' is a contradiction in terms. Universal tolerance and good neighbourliness are excellent attitudes, but these are not the same as love. And it is simple, old-fashioned tolerance that the world so badly needs. We should aim for the realistic goal of tolerating our fellow men, rather than kidding ourselves that we "love" them; but then religion and tolerance are bad mixers—*No Neutrality* is the title of one of the 'Festival for Jesus' hand-outs!

There is one happy aspect to the recent London carnival of well-financed cant and humbug: the young teenagers who have been supporting the Festival of Light, and the younger children who are just being "used," will nearly all grow out of the nonsense they have been expounding;

and they will do so more easily, and far less painfully, than generations before them who were tormented by the 'sin' of adolescent religious doubt. For the growth of science, rationalism and education have wrested from religion its power to overawe and to terrify; and that, surely, is something to be very thankful for.

BRITISH AND ASHAMED OF IT

We may justly be proud of many features of life in Britain; but there are occasions when we are utterly ashamed of this country's public image. One such instance is the case of baby Carol Sarrett: she has been refused British citizenship, despite the fact that her natural mother is a British national, because she happened to be born in Spain. This is not some mediaeval anachronism that someone forgot to repeal, either! With wisdom and compassion equal only to that of President Amin of Uganda, our Home Office decided at the beginning of this year that a baby born abroad should be entitled to British citizenship only if the father was British and married to the mother. Such heartless bureaucratic idiocy is travesty of human decency and natural law; the Home Office would do well to reconsider—sharpish!

PAKISTAN NATIONALISES CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

This paper has never held any brief for Christian missionary schools; but neither are we in the least impressed by the nationalisation of all Christian educational establishments in Pakistan. The Islamabad government has always been too conspicuous for its Moslem fanaticism and militaristic politics for anyone to believe that this take-over marks the beginning of anything like a secular state. Its sinister action has already been followed by riots resulting in two dead and sixty injured. On this occasion, for once, the Christians have our sympathy.

THE FREETHINKER

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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The *Freethinker* is obtainable at the following addresses.
London: Collets, 66 Charing Cross Road, WC2; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Road, King's Cross, N1; Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street (Angel Alley), E1; Rationalist Press Association, 88 Islington High Street, N1; Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1; Freethinker Bookshop, 103 Borough High Street, SE1. Glasgow: Clyde Books, 292 High Street. Manchester: Grass Roots Bookshop, 271 Upper Brook Street, 13. Brighton: Unicorn Bookshop, 50 Gloucester Road, (near Brighton Station).

National Secular Society. Details of membership and inquiries regarding bequests and secular funeral services may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1NL. Telephone: 01-407 2717. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the N.S.S.

Freethought books and pamphlets (new). Send for list to G. W. Foote & Co. Ltd., 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1NL.

Humanist Holidays, 29 September—1 October, "Brighton for Freethinkers" (leader: William McLroy). Details and booking forms from Marjorie Mepham, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey. Telephone: 01-642 8796.

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Sunday, 24 September, 3 p.m.: Annual Reunion (guest of honour: Richard Clements). All members and friends welcome.

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.

Public Action Committee for Broadmoor. Saturday, 9 September, 1.30 p.m.: demonstration and public meeting at D.H.S.S. Offices, Elephant & Castle (near Underground station).

Having Humanist Society, Harold Wood Social Centre, Gubbins Lane. Tuesday, 12 September, 7.45 p.m.: Bill Brown, "What is Humanism?" (discussion).

South Place Ethical Society. Sunday, 17 September, 10 a.m.: outing to Guildford and Wisley (£1.50 a head). Details from the Socials Secretary, S.P.E.S., Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL (telephone: 01-242 8032).

NEWS



OBITUARY

Professor W. A. Sewell

News has just reached us of the death of Professor William Arthur Sewell on 19 April in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Professor Sewell was born in Yorkshire in 1903. He was recognised as an authority both on Milton, in his *Milton's Christian Doctrine* (1939), and on Shakespearian Studies (*Character and Society in Shakespeare*). He held university posts in English at Athens, Ankara, Beirut and in New Zealand (being foundation professor of English at the University of Waikato until his retirement in 1969).

Professor Sewell was a frequent lecturer at meetings of the New Zealand Rationalist Association and was at one time vice-president of the Association.

NEW EDITION OF "REBEL PITY"

Readers of *The Freethinker* will be delighted to hear that copies are now available of the new Penguin edition of *Rebel Pity: the Life of Eddie Roux* by Eddie and Win Roux. Eddie Roux (1903-1966) was a distinguished South African journalist, botanist and anti-racialist who became chairman of the Rationalist Association of South Africa in 1955 and editor of *Die Rasionalis (The Rationalist)* until he was "banned" by the government of the day, whereupon his wife took over the paper, and the Rationalist Association responded by electing him honorary president for life and chairman *in absentia*. Bertrand Russell described Eddie Roux as "a worthy addition to the long list of victims of bigotry from Socrates to the present day."

On Eddie Roux's death, his widow bravely carried on his work for rationalism in South Africa until her death a few months ago (see *Freethinker* obituary, 22 July); she also completed *Rebel Pity*, which was first published in 1970. The paperback version should have an honoured place on every freethinker's bookshelf.

Rebel Pity is obtainable (price 45p plus 7p postage) from G. W. Foote & Co. Ltd., 103 Borough High Street, London SE1 1NL.

S AND NOTES

SECTARIAN TANGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to the *Daily Telegraph* (19 August) six Catholic nuns have been dismissed as matrons in a hospital for 'non-Whites' at Tembisa, Transvaal. Dr. H. A. Grove, director of the Transvaal's hospital services, said this decision had "nothing to do" with last June's synod in Pretoria of the Dutch Reform Church which unanimously condemned the employment of the nuns at Tembisa, called for their replacement by Protestants, and appealed to the public to boycott Catholic institutions.

The *Telegraph's* correspondent in Pretoria has said that because of a nursing shortage the present decision could mean that sick Africans who would otherwise have received hospital treatment may not now obtain it.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"People who are concerned about sex find it one of the strongest temptations they have to face."

—John Capon, editor of the *Church of England Newspaper* and leading Festival of Lighter, interviewed in the *Church Times* (25 August).

BRIGHTON FOR HERETICS

"Brighton for Heretics" will be the theme of Humanist Holidays' residential weekend at the Caversham House Hotel, from the evening of Friday, 29 September, until Sunday, 1 October.

Leading the visits to the many places of interest in Brighton will be Mr. William McIlroy, General Secretary of the National Secular Society, who has made a study of the freethinkers who have lived in the district. There will also be a visit to the Theatre Royal to see *Suzanna Andler*, and a talk by George Melley (given under the auspices of the Brighton and Hove Humanists).

Full board will cost around £6 for the weekend, but non-resident participants will be welcome. Details of charges and booking forms are available from Mrs. M. Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey (Telephone: 01-642 8796).

VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA SOCIETY

The latest Newsletter of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society* speaks of a growing interest in the euthanasia debate among the public. In response to this the Southwark Council of Social Service are arranging a public meeting on this subject in the North Peckham Assembly Hall, Old Kent Road, London SE15, on Wednesday, 20 September next. Speakers representing the V.E.S. will include Dr. Saul Crown and the Rev. A. B. Downing.

*13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London W8 5PG.

DATED, INDEED

The National Secular Society's press release accompanying *Jesus Christ Supersham* seems to have got under the skin of the Methodist Recorder's columnist John Drew. Quoting the press statement that the N.S.S. has, for over a century, "been providing an antidote to the poisonous influence of Christianity," Mr. Drew then observes (31 August):

I am always relieved to hear that the National Secular Society pursues its out-of-date mission with such indefatigable fervour. So long as we have enemies like this dated little group we are well off for friends.

Well, how is that for hypocrisy and sour grapes? Quite apart from the fact that Methodism was founded a clear half century before the N.S.S., its doctrines—like hell—which we are not aware that it has abandoned, are a couple of millenia behind the time to boot. At least Mr. Drew concedes that there was a time when the N.S.S.'s mission was *in date!*

THEN, ALAS, AS NOW

In consequence of the Belfast riots, about thirty persons have been sent for trial, and . . . the claims for compensation amount to over £7,000. The following is a specimen of the notices to quit which were served on both sides: "Please leave your house before morning, or, by holy Moses, you will get your — head shot off." A number of threatening letters embellished with sketches of coffins were also sent. If it were not for the civilising influence of the Christian religion, man would be a brute!

—From the *National Reformer*, 8 September 1872.

EAST ANGLIAN CHURCHES

The Norfolk Society's Committee for Country Churches has launched a campaign to prevent any of the county's 700 churches, most of which are mediaeval, being closed or declared redundant. Readers will not be surprised to hear that about a third are thus threatened. We heard a titled lady spokesman for the Society say in a radio interview that the churches must be kept open (as functioning churches) primarily because they were "evidence of Christian witness." This sounds curiously like the mediaeval military dodge of putting dummy soldiers on thinly manned ramparts!

History has a curious way of repeating itself, and just half a century ago this paper was also expounding on East Anglian churches. Since we cannot disagree with, or improve upon, our predecessor's comments, we reprint them below:

One of the religious papers is concerned over the destruction of old churches and pleads for the preservation of an old wooden church in the county of Essex. We read the article with a considerable degree of sympathy. We are rather fond of rambling over old churches, and think that as mere examples of architecture they should be preserved. And if preserved they could be put to uses other than of illustrating the history of architecture. Nothing would be more instructive than . . . a museum . . . of the history of religion with the exhibits arranged in true evolutionary order. And no better building could be utilised for this purpose than a church. A church which contained effigies of clergymen, beginning with the savage medicine man and running right up to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with representatives of the gods from the earliest times . . . would leave as little doubt of the blood relationship of the whole as is left in the mind of a student concerning the blood relationship of man to the rest of the animal world after he has studied the evolutionary sequence . . . Things are understood as they are only when we know what they have been.

—*The Freethinker*, 10 September 1922.

One of the ironies of modern living, however, is that after walking for miles to an historic old country church, your irate freethinker often finds it locked—as a precaution against vandals!

AMERICAN ATHEISTS PUSH AHEAD

JAMES HERVEY JOHNSON

James Hervey Johnson, the author of this article, is President of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, Inc., of San Diego, California.

The activity of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism never ceases. Over the years millions of pamphlets and books have been sent out which have had a constructive effect on American thinking.

The Atheists are denied the use of television (strictly controlled in the United States) and they are refused recognition in the large newspapers and national magazines. Our work has been done in spite of a nasty campaign of ridicule by the press and television. On the other hand the forces of religion broadcast 24 hours day on some stations, and all carry an immense amount of religious propaganda, as do the newspapers and such magazines as *Readers Digest*. Some radio and TV preachers have as many as 400 stations over which their message is broadcast. Public libraries do not handle atheist material, nor is atheism recognised, except on few occasions, in the universities.

The American government grants billions of dollars in subsidies to religious organisations, and, of course, they are exempt from taxes on their \$10 billion or more annual income and on most of their \$400,000,000,000 property. But, as in England, the congregations decline, churches branch off into social "reforms" to hold their customers and they have toned down their sillier preachings to some extent.

Changing attitudes

In spite of these handicaps, atheism makes progress. Only 35 years ago a teacher was arrested and prosecuted for teaching evolution. Now it is widely taught. Only 35 years ago the then editor of the *Truth Seeker* was arrested for blasphemy for putting a sign on his window: "There is No God." When hauled into court he was prohibited from testifying on his own behalf because he was an atheist.

Only ten years ago the teaching of birth control was prohibited. Advertising contraceptive pills or equipment made the advertisers liable to a \$5,000 fine and a year in prison. Now the government actively promotes birth control and dispenses birth control pills, although birth control still may not be taught in the schools, nor, as a result of religious pressure, may sexology be taught in the lower schools. Until three years ago almost all states prohibited abortion. Now some states permit it freely; this in spite of vigorous opposition from the Catholic Church.

Thirty-five years ago many states had "blue laws" prohibiting anyone from working on Sundays. The playing of baseball was prohibited and whole teams and spectators were hauled off to court; now such ancient intolerance is unheard of.

Religious opposition interfered with America's marriage and divorce laws to a great extent only five years ago. Now the laws have been greatly liberalised and most states permit easy divorce. In California, divorce is practically automatic when the complaining party simply states in court that there are irreconcilable differences in the marriage which make it necessary to dissolve it. There is no need to prove guilt, and no need for a trial.

Religion and American schools

During the last ten or fifteen years we have opposed the use of the schools for religious teaching or indoctrination. Prayers and Bible reading in the public schools have been outlawed. However, the teaching of all religions as an objective course is permitted. Less than ten years ago no person could serve on a jury or grand jury in Maryland unless they took an oath that they believed in God. The United States Supreme Court has now banned this religious interference with the free selection of juries. Some time before this the Court outlawed the requirement that Notaries Public had to take a theistic oath before they could hold office.

Recent Court decisions have prohibited the governments of the states from granting direct aid to Catholic and religious schools. Indeed, the people have lost so much confidence in religious indoctrination that every day one or more Catholic schools are closed because of lack of attendance, or lack of funds, or lack of nuns who will work for nothing to staff them. The end of the 1970s in the United States will see the end of Catholic schools, if the present trend continues.

Opposition to the use of the schools for religious propaganda at Christmas has grown and has been sustained by some courts, and many schools have dropped the use of this religious advertising scheme. Thus atheism is gaining; religion is declining—even though the wealth of the churches, as a result of tax exemption, is growing; and with this money, their political power is still very great.

A majority of Congress recently voted to restore prayer to the public schools, but as it takes two-thirds to carry the vote this measure failed.

A.A.A.'s aims

The goals of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism are:

1. Taxation of Churches.
2. Abolition of the special privileges of the clergy, such as half fares on trains, buses and planes.
3. Abolition of the exemption of the clergy from the draft and from war service.
4. Elimination of such statements as "In God We Trust" from our currency.
5. Elimination of paid chaplains in the military service, and in the prisons; and removal of prayers from all sessions of legislative bodies and boards.
6. Obtaining the means for atheists to use television and radio for broadcasting on a par with the churches.
7. Elimination of compulsory religious holidays set by law such as Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving Day.

In short, the A.A.A. maintains that government should have no part in religions nor interfere in the beliefs of the people, and that neither directly nor indirectly should they put into effect as law any religious dogma or doctrine, nor grant directly or indirectly any funds from the public treasury to organised religions.

There is still much to be done. The public are entitled to know that God is a myth and that religion is a gigantic fraud, and this programme of education must be pushed until man is relieved of the shackles of the supernatural, and permitted to progress in intellect as he has in technology.

THE WORLD MALAISE IN HISTORY

R. READER

It is 1972 and it is now quite obvious that economic man and economic expansion are at the end of their tether. The sequence of future events stands out like a beacon on a dark night.

First, ever-increasing populations will still further intensify the pressure on the vital square of 200 yards side on which all human life ultimately depends,* aggravating still further the evils of over-population. The tempo and fury of the commercial bear-garden will therefore yet further increase, and then die away in a wail as money becomes increasingly unable to fulfil its primary function of representing real values. And with this belated, but progressive realisation that money, in itself, can do nothing to relieve the world malaise in which too many are struggling for too little, will come the progressive dislocation and collapse of all monetary systems, of West and East alike. There will ensue a corresponding collapse of all social nucleation—housing, communications, sanitary and medical services—until mankind either reverts to medieval conditions of life (the heyday of the Inquisition), or instead, loses patience, and casts off all restraints, indulging in an orgy of self-destruction in order to obtain relief.

Numerous warnings

It is indeed two minutes to midnight, but we must not complain that this situation has sprung upon us unawares. In fact, it has been building up steadily for the past half century, at least. The warnings have been numerous—and the present situation described with amazing prescience by the late H. G. Wells as long ago as 1945 in his last book, *Mind at the End of its Tether*:

The writer sees the world as a jaded world devoid of recuperative power. In the past he has liked to think that man could pull out of his entanglements and start a new phase of human living. In the face of our universal inadequacy, that optimism has given place to a stoical cynicism. Man must go steeply up or down and the odds seems all in favour of his going down and out . . .

Wells also mentioned the conflict between Age and Youth and the inability of Man to seek a remedy. "So great is the adaptability demanded of us that ordinary men are at the end of their tether . . . The majority won't care about our end, solacing themselves with such opiates as they have a mind for."

But even Wells did not think that, twenty-five years later, the young would be solacing themselves, not with metaphorical "opiates" but literally with drugs of all kinds, and that the drug problem would have become worldwide, being only one aspect of the much greater whole, namely, the desperate struggle of the doomed young to achieve significance.

Mind at the End of its Tether aroused little interest. It was written under the stress of illness; it was still wartime; Wells was an ageing prophet; and if some of his prophecies had been amazingly borne out by subsequent events, others had landed disastrously wide of the mark. There was, therefore, no need for alarm, and, when the war finished, mankind got back rapidly to its erstwhile economic preoccupations.

And yet, with even greater prescience, Wells had already described our present situation in a much earlier work, *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933):

As the gravity of economic and political problems increased and the structural unsoundness of the world became more manifest, sexual preoccupations seem to have afforded a sort of refuge from the mental stress demanded by the struggle. People distracted themselves from the immense demands of the situation by making a great noise about the intensifications and aberrations of the personal life. There was a real propaganda of drugs and homosexuality among the clever young. Literature, always too responsive to its audience, stood on its head and displayed its private parts. It produced a vast amount of solemn pornography, facetious pornography, sadistic excitement, re-sexualised religiosity, and verbal gibbering, in which the rich effectiveness of obscene words was abundantly exploited.

And here again, little did Wells imagine that, in 1972, religious neurosis would be deliberately exploiting these tendencies of humanity in order to offset any danger of birth control becoming universal and effective, and even succeeding to the extent that the young, its wretched victims, would be reduced to reciting, with what is possibly the most pitiful irony in the world, Napoleon's remedy for battle losses: "Make love not war!"

The Shape of Things to Come also gives us a clue as to the reason why, after half a century of warnings, not only by Wells but by many other writers, nothing whatever was done to avert the present situation. In that book Wells describes an imaginary planner of the future world preparing a revolutionary blueprint for better conditions.

Then in the margin . . . were little sums in multiplication and addition . . . His thoughts were not wholly fixed on planning our new world. They wandered. He was gambling in industrial equities and a large and active portion of his brain was considering whether the time had arrived to sell.

A more illuminating instance of what social psychologists have called "the divided mind" of the intellectuals . . . could scarcely be imagined.

So Wells wrote, little thinking that he himself, in common with all others of his generation, and would-be reformers today, also possessed a "divided mind." For if we go back to his novel *Kipps*, we find that divided mind beautifully illustrated.

In *Kipps* (1905), Wells used some 100,000 words to attack the absurd social snobberies, futile aims and ambitions of the society of the time. And then, right at the end of his book, he put the following words into the mouth of his hero, Kipps, when indulging in baby-talk with his son: "Yes o'man, I got a cheque. And it's got to go into a bank for you when you got to go to school. See? So's you'll grow up knowing your way about a bit." In other words, Kipps was going to bring his son up to emulate the very people and systems he himself loathed and despised.

Immortality through offspring

This is where Kipps went wrong—this is where the world of 1972 is still going wrong—this is why time for all humanity, and perhaps for all life, is fast running out. Insensate personal conceit and pride in offspring was a

(Continued overleaf)

THE WORLD MALAISE IN HISTORY

(Continued from Previous page)

formidable weapon and force for survival in a small Jewish community battling for survival 2,000 years ago (and even more in the days of the mammoths) but it has no place in the modern world, where it is both dangerous and completely ineffective. For example, prolific and wealthy families living in Germany in, say, the late 1920s, must have felt as secure and permanent as human beings can ever do in this world. Yet a decade later they had utterly vanished—even their names forgotten—in the camps and the holocausts of World War II. So much for the value of the pursuit of immortality through offspring.

Yet still, today, the greater part of mankind lives in a similar fools' paradise, indulging in a fury of internecine rivalry and competition for intensely personal ends, and yet too monstrously imbecile to see that, collectively, it is digging its own grave.

The whole thing is an affair of the mind, and it is just possible that even now, at the last moment, collective realisation will awaken to the truth that the human life span is too precious to waste in such vain phantasies of immortality.

* READER, R. 1972 (March 25). "The World Malaise in Space." *Freethinker* 92: p. 98.

REVIEWS

BOOKS

APARTHEID: a Collection of Writings on South African Racism by South Africans edited by Alex La Guma. Lawrence and Wishart, £1.

Public opinion in Britain is confused about South Africa. From the continual reports in the newspapers, everyone knows how cruel or squalid or absurd apartheid can be. But we are seldom reminded that apartheid rests not only on the two million Afrikaners (formerly the "Boers", who are no longer mainly farmers) but also on the one million English-speaking community. This group (with the exception of a very tiny minority) has always supported the Afrikaner Nationalists in times of crisis.

There is another complication. British investment in South Africa is a very heavy and it is increasing every year. Even Labour cabinet ministers, such as Anthony Crosland, defended the existing economic relationships and repudiated any proposal that, because we detest apartheid, Britain should disengage itself from deeper involvement with South Africa and begin to withdraw its financial stake there. Clearly, there are serious moral, political, and economic questions to be faced if we are to go beyond facile verbal condemnation and move towards action with a view to producing change in the situation.

Unfortunately, this book does little to clarify the problems involved. The editor, a brave and talented Cape coloured exile, enlisted sixteen contributors (all but four of them black or brown men) most of whom were close to, if not in, the South African Communist Party, now outlawed. After the Sharpeville crisis in 1960, they fled or emigrated, mainly to Britain. In London there are today thousands of exiles dreaming of the day when a revolution will occur and enable them to return to South Africa. Accordingly, most of these pieces are cries from overflowing hearts, expressions of emotion understandable enough in those who have suffered severely for their convictions.

The only really sophisticated article is the anonymous analysis of the prospects of revolution, a report which was adopted in 1969 by the African National Congress in exile at the Morogoro conference in Tanzania. This is a document written by a realist. It explains why, until 1961, the oppressed people did not consider taking up arms against

the police state. Ever since the 1880s they had made every possible protest against the injustices and indignities inflicted on them. In concert with the very limited group of white liberals, now diminishing steadily, African leaders have time and again put forward proposals for reform which a spokesman once described as framed "with extreme moderation"! All those efforts have in the course of ninety years produced very little change, especially when seen in relation to the growing wealth of the whole white community.

No one can tell whether armed guerilla struggle conducted from neighbouring territories such as Zambia or Tanzania will have greater effect in the coming years. The outlook certainly remains bleak as long as Britain, France and the United States continue in effect to support the existing régime while using diplomatic double-talk to deplore its racial policy. The spineless attitude taken by successive British governments towards rebellious Rhodesia (a much smaller nut to crack) is sufficient indication of what the realities of the situation are.

If your friends are in ignorance or in doubt about apartheid, this book tells much more of the naked truth than any other book of its kind; and 245 pages for £1 is good value in a well-produced paperback in these days.

JOHN GILD

PSYCHOLOGY IS ABOUT PEOPLE by H. J. Eysenck. Allen Lane, £3.50.

There are already many books of varying quality about psychology and to add to their number requires a strong justification. The title of Professor Eysenck's new book suggests, with much truth, that some psychologists overlook the fact that psychology is, after all, about human beings, and a book is needed to rectify this oversight. Moreover—a very important consideration—many textbooks treat psychology in a piecemeal fashion. There are chapters usually on perception, cognition, memory and intelligence which are presented as self-contained units having little connexion with one another and, as Professor Eysenck rightly says, could be presented in any order. There is clearly a need for a unifying theme which would integrate these various aspects of psychology. Professor Eysenck finds his unifying concept, or, as he puts it, the fundamental unit, in personality. Personality he defines as the "habitual behaviour pattern of the individual," to be measured along the two dimensions of extraversion-introversion and neuroticism-stability.

How far does he succeed in presenting an integrated psychology theory? I think, not at all. The framework of two-dimensional personality theory, with conditioning thrown in to account for the accretion of habitual behaviour patterns, provides too flimsy a foundation for the vastly complex fabric of human activity. Having criticised the tendency to present such aspects as perception, cognition and memory as separate units, one might have expected Professor Eysenck to show how they could be integrated in a general psychological theory. But he does not even attempt this. His chapters on Sex and Personality, The Rise of the Mediocracy and The Uses and Abuses of Pornography (among others) could have been presented in any order. Eysenck has nothing to say about such important psychological processes as projection, rationalisation, and identification by which our perceptions of other people and the world around us are strongly influenced. This, I think, stems from his hostility to Freudian theory which he criticises because of the uncertain results of its therapeutic procedures. He seems unaware that Freud shared his doubts about the practical value of psycho-analytic therapy; that he was well aware that it could not compete, for example, with the successes of Lourdes. More people believe in the latter than in psychoanalysis, was how Freud put it. But for the explanation of the efficacy of that belief one needs the kind of general framework of theory provided by Freud.

Eysenck, I think, misunderstands the rôle of a general theory in psychology, including his own personality theory. Such theories are not subject to falsification by experiment. For instance you cannot show how Eysenck's personality theory or the Freudian theory of the unconscious could be falsified. The value of these theories lies in their integrative rôle, the way they bring together otherwise disconnected facts. They are not subject to falsification, but to replacement, when a more comprehensive, more economical theory, does the job better.

Eysenck has more in common with Freud than he cares to acknowledge; and this comes out very strongly in this book. Both courageously follow the facts, as they see them, wherever they lead, even if this means courting unpopularity. Eysenck repeats in this book his views about the genetic basis of intelligence. He argues that if we are going to have selection in education then it is preferable to do so by means of intelligence tests. For these strive to be objective and on the whole favour working class children who on any other basis of selection would be overlooked. The alternative to selection is some form of comprehensive education about which Eysenck expresses doubts. He is not, in principle, opposed to comprehensive schools but he thinks that we need to be more precise in our ideas about their purposes; we need more experimental research on the subject. Perhaps the recently published findings of the National Foundation for Educational Research will go some way to allay his fears.

His discussion on the genetic-environment controversy follows the pattern of his recent book on intelligence tests. Two things worry me about this discussion. Eysenck tends to treat environment in gross terms, ignoring such important factors as dietary differences, tobacco-smoking practices, medical attention for mothers, which may differ among social classes, producing effects which may be wrongly interpreted as genetic. Further, I do not think one can assume, as Eysenck does, that what is quantitatively larger is necessarily qualitatively more important. It is probably true that his statistical analyses show a larger area of genetic factors than environmental. But does it follow that

it is more important, that the genetic factors are as limiting as Eysenck seems to suggest? Perhaps it would be better to regard them as providing a foundation rather than a ceiling, remembering the profligacy of nature. It always provides more than is strictly necessary; we probably have more brain cells than we can profitably use.

Eysenck tells us that his father was a famous comedian—"a kind of Bob Hope with brains." This book is a good argument for the genetic transmission of a gift of humour. Eysenck always writes well; sometimes his polemics may cause him to be rather selective in his presentation of facts; but he has a tremendous sense of fun and his book sparkles with wit.

REUBEN OSBORN

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LETTERS

Communist Brutality

It is a relief to know that J. H. Morten (letters, 5 August) does not admire the Russian police. From his previous letter I thought for one awful moment he was one of those gullible dupes for whom communist tyranny represents paradise and democracy is decadent.

Democratic freedom is a very precious possession to be jealously guarded by any country fortunate enough to possess it; for there are plenty of ruthless nations ready to snatch it away from us. Both Hitler and Stalin were ruthless tyrants from whose clutches we have been lucky to have escaped.

Our democracy has evolved by a long and slow process over hundreds of years in which the will of the majority has prevailed. How does Mr. Morten imagine the Russians will regain their liberty? It is almost impossible to struggle against a dictatorship maintained in power by a police state. There is no opportunity to make a start by voicing opposition or forming opposition parties. The very life-blood of democracy is freedom to dissent.

Perhaps all police forces have to play it rough on occasions. Criminals have a habit of resorting to violence to resist arrest. But where they do use unnecessary toughness it is not done with the approval of the government they serve in a democratic state. In totalitarian states, on the other hand, police brutality is a deliberate part of government policy—irrespective of whether the people at large approve of it or not.

CLAUD WATSON.

Marxism and the Ethics of Mass Murder

Marxism, and the uses to which it has been put by latter-day Stalinists, is far too serious a matter to be reduced to the level of a film comedy, and some recent correspondence calls for comment.

The Great Man theory of history was developed to a pathological degree in Soviet Russia where, in the 23 years of Stalin's rule, some 20 million human beings perished by execution, in labour camps, and during collectivisation. Did the Soviet system produce this mass murderer and "the cult of personality" or, if a single individual can thus shape society, is it the theory of historical materialism which is false? Certainly, it was Lenin who asserted that "There is absolutely no contradiction in principle between Soviet (that is, socialist) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individuals."

As for Marxist ethics, Lenin laid it down that "Our morality is wholly subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat." He wrote that Communists must be prepared "to make every sacrifice and, if necessary, even resort to all sorts of schemes and stratagems, employ illegitimate methods, conceal the truth, in order to get into the trade unions, stay there, and conduct the revolutionary work within." Trotsky echoed him by saying that "lying and worse are an inseparable part of the class struggle."

According to Professor Ebenstein unemployment exists in the Soviet Union, and Poland and Yugoslavia have suffered from chronic unemployment for years. Increased prices of necessities triggered the 1970 Polish uprising.

Of the so-called "dialectics of nature," suffice it to say that the internationally renowned Russian physicist P. Kapitza has protested that Soviet dialectical materialism has rejected cybernetics, the quantum theory, the resonance theory of the chemical bond, and the theory of relativity, as well as having committed blunders in biology.

Christian theology is indeed "the grandmother of Bolshevism" which, as Solzhenitsyn's Nobel lecture (published on 24 August) testifies, is the mortal enemy of freethought and humanism.

JUDEX.

Last Words on Marxism

Andrew Blewitt (letters, 26 August) says he prefers Groucho Marx to Karl, so this is my last contribution to the debate before I am accused of Harpo-ing on the subject!

Professor Levy (26 August) says he knows nothing about what I called the whole basis of the Marxist ethic, namely that whatever furthers the revolution is morally good. How long since he read Lenin? Let me quote briefly from his "Address to the Third Congress of the Russian Young Communist League" (1920), where Lenin propounds the classic Marxist ethic:

"Morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the toilers around the proletariat, which is creating a new Communist society . . ."

Now either Lenin meant what he said, in which case it is Professor Levy's leg that is being pulled and not mine; or Lenin did not mean what he said, in which case we cannot begin to take Marxist ideas seriously. Actually, of course, Marxists hold that there is no valid ethic save that of the proletariat, the class dialectically destined to inherit the future. The criterion of morality then becomes success, a Hegelian position largely responsible for the river of blood which has disfigured the Soviet régime ever since the brutal murder of the last Tsar, Nicholas II, and his family by the Bolsheviks in 1918.

Mr. J. H. Morten (26 August) should read my article again, and more carefully. I did not maintain that the class struggle has been "disproved." Nobody denies that class struggles occur. What I did maintain was that the class struggle is not the key to the scientific analysis of society. If Marxism really is a science, as its devotees have always held, then it is appropriate to apply the standard tests of scientific method to the set of Marxist hypotheses. When I tried to do this, Professor Levy promptly wriggled out by urging that social history could not be subjected to scientific analysis. So there we have it: an excellent illustration of the unfalsifiability of Marxist theory, and thus of its vacuity!

Why does the class struggle fail so badly as a scientific tool of analysis? Firstly, because Marxists simply have not observed the historical data properly. History is very far from being the record of class struggle in any fundamental sense. Secondly, the specific predictions of the theory of the class struggle have been disproved, time and again.

To point to the weaknesses of the capitalist system, in the form of unemployment and so forth, is *not* to provide respectable evidence that Karl Marx was right, as Mr. Morten believes (Marx in fact praised capitalism to the skies). Logically, one can perfectly well criticise capitalism *without* being a revolutionary Marxist. But pure logic never has prevented Marxists from advocating the most radical, revolutionary and violent changes in the whole of society, since they say *nothing else* will work. Ideology, pure and simple, not to mention a truly gigantic "leap of faith" that leaves Christianity gasping.

PHILIP HINCHLIFF.

Spurious Alternative

I agreed with just about everything that Philip Hinchliff had to say in his article, "Marxism and Christianity" (*Freethinker*, 20 & 27 May) but I was not very impressed by Hyman Levy's defence of the language of Marxism (29 July). More is involved than metaphor; what is involved is the fundamental basis of logic.

More recently (19 August) Trevor Morgan suggested that we should accept dialectical materialism because it is realistic and we should reject idealistic theories because they lead to mysticism. But dialectical materialism is only one form of materialism, and in any case the choice between materialism and idealism is a spurious alternative (as Karl Popper pointed out in his *Conjectures and Refutations*). What we need is a theory of knowledge which takes into account (1) the physical world which exists independent of us; (2) consciousness and mental states; and (3) the objective contents of thought. This is a theory which Popper has attempted to provide in his forthcoming book *Objective Knowledge*.

RALPH CHAMPION.

What About Housemaid's Knee?

My work in connexion with reporting trends in Consumer Research includes the compulsory (though not compulsive!) reading of strange, obscure and sometimes fascinatingly unusual publications.

During the course of these investigations I often come across some amazing tit-bits of incidental information. Among these is the following from the September number of *Prediction*:

The following report appeared in the *American National Health Federation Bulletin*:

'Dr. George Comstock of John Hopkins University recently conducted exhaustive tests on 567 men. The results proved (!) that men who attended church regularly stood twice the chance of avoiding fatal heart attacks, cancer, tuberculosis, chronic bronchitis, suicidal tendency and cirrhosis of the liver. N.H.F. does not involve itself in religion, but this test, which was investigated by us, is so conclusive that we are reporting it. Apparently, the psychic or emotional response to a religiously orientated life in church relieves stresses that otherwise have a deleterious effect on our bodies. An original survey on which the study was based included 91,000 persons.'

After that, words fail me!

J. M. ALEXANDER.

So much for the old saying that "the Devil looks after his own." (Ed.)

Misplaced Sympathy

In her letter of 26 August Doris Wardle's sympathy seems misplaced; Jesus was not an innocent victim of society (as compared with many in Northern Ireland or Vietnam). He was always harping on his death which he courted by going to Jerusalem.

Unless he is taken at his own valuation, Jesus was undoubtedly guilty of blasphemy, which was then punishable by death. He was not a victim of mob rule but was judicially executed—albeit by a cruel method. His death was tragic (in the true sense of that word) but without it no-one would have heard of him today.

There is, of course, the possibility that his movement was much more political than is now made out. He may have been executed primarily as a seditious leader who was considered dangerous to Rome.

ENID ROB.

Mental Health and Individual Liberty

Mr. N. Morris of the Public Action Committee for Broadmoor has mentioned (*Freethinker* letters, 26 August) the power of psychiatrists. The death of Mrs. Thetis Spalek in Shaftesbury on 1 July has given further publicity to the fact that under a Section 25 Compulsory Order, the Responsible Medical Officer (who can be a junior) can give radical and irreversible treatment in *any* mental hospital. This treatment can be given without either consulting or informing the patient's next-of-kin.

Mrs. Spalek wrote eight letters on the evening she died explaining that death was the only protest open to her: she had that day found out that her mentally ill son had again been given E.C.T., to which she strongly objected, without her consent.

I was, among others, an observer for the National Council for Civil Liberties at the resumed inquest upon Mrs. Spalek on 1 August. The West of England Schizophrenia Group and the Bristol Group of N.C.C.L. have since been trying to help the second son, Edward Spalek, make his mother's protest as effective as possible. Quite a number of issues are involved, and Sir Keith Joseph has been asked to institute an inquiry.

It would be very helpful if readers would furnish me with evidence in cases where E.C.T. and similar forms of treatment have been used without the prior knowledge of the patient's next-of-kin.

JIM LITTLE.

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