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AMIN'S THIRD-RATE REICH

The Asians who were driven out of Uganda recently lost much: money, homes, livelihood, and often nearly all their personal possessions. However, in one respect, at least, they were fortunate: nearly all of them escaped from Idi Amin's clutches with their lives. Others of the Ugandan despot's enemies have not been so fortunate; whole truckloads of corpses are reported by *The Observer* to have been found dumped near Uganda's border with Zaïre, apparently with the intention of embarrassing Zaïre's President Mobutu. A recent visitor to Kampala was King Faisal of Saudi Arabia who, at a banquet given in his honour, called for an international "war against the Zionists, who are there to destroy all human organisations and to destroy civilisation." It appears, in fact, that the present of a heap of dead political prisoners is Sergeant Amin's way of advising President Mobutu to break off diplomatic relations between Zaïre and Israel. It is at least to be hoped that the President will now be ashamed of the shabby publicity stunt he arranged with Amin earlier this year.

Africanising the churches

Having succeeded in persecuting the Asians, Amin's appetite has evidently been whetted for other ventures. Last week he ordered a full-scale census of all religious organisations operating in Uganda, the ultimate object being to "Africanise" religious observance and instruction in his country. When Sergeant Amin said that he was a devout admirer of Hitler, the public soon realised that he was not joking. We have already had an "Africanised" version of the Night of the Long Knives; now, it appears, Amin is to set up a Ugandan version of the Nazis' German National Church.

It is now quite clear that Amin has designs on all financial assets in Uganda held by non-citizens. It is also evident that the man's sanity is open to doubt. The political situation in Uganda seems by all accounts to be highly unstable and dangerous, and it seems high time that the British and other governments took steps to evacuate their remaining nationals (mostly Europeans) before further tragedy supervenes.

BRIGID BROPHY'S REPLY TO THE LONGFORD REPORT

New N.S.S. pamphlet

"This committee of theocrats, paranoiacs, simpletons and puritans doesn't like a certain type of entertainment. In order to stop it, they propose to stop culture."

Brigid Brophy, the well-known writer and critic, was one of several celebrated speakers who took part in a public meeting last October which was called by the National Secular Society to protest at the recommendations of Lord Longford's self-appointed pornography commission. Miss Brophy's speech has now been published by the N.S.S. as a pamphlet, *The Longford Threat to Freedom*, together with a foreword by Barbara Smoker.

Could stifle originality

In her foreword, the President of the National Secular Society says that the Longford Report's proposed revision

of the statutory test of obscenity to that which would 'outrage contemporary standards of decency or humanity accepted by the public at large', together with its proposed abolition of the existing legal defence of being 'in the public good', could stifle all originality. "Progress is impossible, as Brigid Brophy says, *without* outraging public opinion. (How shocking it was of Galileo to suggest that the earth was not the centre of the universe!)"

Miss Smoker is also mindful of the trials faced by her famous predecessor:

Less than a century ago, Charles Bradlaugh (founder and first President of the National Secular Society) and Annie Besant (Vice-President) were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment for their part in publishing a factual pamphlet on the subject of family planning—sentences that were quashed only on technical grounds. These criminal convictions . . . were based on the present definition of 'obscenity', as that which is actually deemed to have a depraving or morally corrupting effect, not merely (as proposed by Longford) that which upsets the prevailing sense of propriety. Had that been the law in Victorian England, it might well have been a criminal offence to display uncovered piano legs.

Political repression

Barbara Smoker adds further: "Wherever laws have been introduced to repress freedom of expression on grounds of taste, such laws have been used sooner or later for political ends, through selective prosecutions. One of the most ardent campaigners against 'obscenity', in the sexual sense, was Adolf Hitler. He contrived to stamp out the open sale of pornography in the Third Reich—but he stamped it out with jackboots."

The N.S.S., which has been in the forefront of the battle against censorship and fetters on the press for more than a century, decided to public Brigid Brophy's speech because—to quote Barbara Smoker again—"the characteristic wit and clear thinking of her speech obviously deserved a wider audience and the comparative permanence of print." We agree, and hope that all *Freethinker* readers will purchase, read and promote this pamphlet.

The Longford Threat to Freedom, by Brigid Brophy, may be obtained, price 10p plus 3p postage, from the National Secular Society, 103 Borough High Street, London SE1 1NL.

THE FREETHINKER

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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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.

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.

EVENTS

Brighton and Hove Humanist Group, Imperial Centre Hotel, First Avenue, Hove. Sunday, 3 December, 5.30 p.m.: a speaker from the Anti-Apartheid Society.

Leicester Secular Society, Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate. Sunday, 3 December, 6.30 p.m.: Professor P. C. Sylvester-Bradley, "Life and Religion on Other Planets."

National Secular Society, Distributive Trades College (fourth floor), 30 Leicester Square, London WC2. Wednesday, 6 December, 7.45 p.m.: public meeting—The Social and Financial Cost of Church Schools.

Nottingham and Notts Humanist Group, University Adult Centre, 14 Shakespeare Street. Friday, 8 December, 7.30 p.m.: Dr. S. Lilley, "Why is Humanism like Patriotism?"

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Sunday, 3 December, 11 a.m.: T. E. Evans, "Mr. Shaw's First Play." Tuesday, 5 December, 7 p.m.: Hugh Sharman, "The Energy Crisis and Oil."

NEWS



"The greatest despotism ruling the press is popular ignorance."

—Richard Carlile (1790-1843), republican publisher.

GOSPEL OF GOODWILL ?

We are informed by the *Daily Telegraph* that as part of its "winter campaign" the British and Foreign Bible Society plans to distribute 400,000 copies of St. Luke's Gospel from door to door in Northern Ireland. The object of the exercise is, believe it or not, to "bring healing and hope to those who read it."

St. Luke's Gospel has been chosen for Northern Ireland, already brimful of Christian 'charity', because "it shows how Christians should live together in decency and dignity."

Well, one can always hope! Frankly, the logic of this exercise seems rather like that of trying to put out an oil fire by dousing it with a can of cold petrol.

DELINQUENT ARCHBISHOP

According to *The Observer* (19 November) Mr. George Sakelaropoulos, an Athens lawyer, is arraigning the Primate of Greece, Archbishop Ieronymos, before the Orthodox hierarchy on a charge that he (the Archbishop) has failed to "move against" freemasonry in that country.

Anti-freemasonry campaigns have virtually disappeared since the fall of Nazi-occupied Europe. Evidently the new order in Greece is still running resolutely true to type.

FIGMENTS AND ANACHRONISMS

The leader of the Australian Labour Party, Mr. Gough Whitlam, has announced that his party will introduce a new national anthem in place of "God Save the Queen" if it wins this month's federal elections. He is reported by the *Daily Telegraph* as saying that "The choice of the Australian people, not the musical taste of George II, should determine Australia's national anthem."

Good on you, cobber; but when, oh when, is one of our beloved political parties going to do something about this

AND NOTES

twice dirge we are lumbered with back in the old country? At the moment most of our political leaders have been preoccupied euphorically grovelling over a royal wedding anniversary: the exercise may wear some of the gilt off in time for when the next proposed increase in the civil list comes along!

REAL SPOOKY!

According to the *Daily Telegraph* the United States Military Academy at West Point is being haunted by a nineteenth-century cavalryman, complete with boots, musket and handlebar moustache! He has instilled such terror into the officers and cadets of West Point that the "haunted" room has been closed.

A ghost of this calibre is really wasted on West Point; if he really wants to be of public service he should make his way to Washington (being careful, en route, to avoid marauding bands of phantom Mohawks) and to the White House, there to terrify the life out of one Richard Millhouse Nixon. Better still, he could, like his corporal American descendants, take a holiday in Europe and gladden the hearts of spiritualists and mediums by showing us benighted sceptics the error of our ways. A manifestation during a full committee meeting of the National Secular Society should be quite spectacular!

REINSTATED

Time Out, which we mentioned (News and Notes, 11 November) had been banished into outer darkness, has now been restored to a state of grace on the shelves of W. H. Smith & Company. Such is the power of the press!

CATHOLICISM AND ABORIGINAL ADVANCEMENT

The Catholic Church in Australia has decided to form an "Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Council" to "listen to the Aborigine people, to patronise them and to help their endeavours in every possible way." The Atheist Society of Australia is not altogether impressed by this news, and its *Atheist Journal* had this to say of the Council's terms of reference: "The key word here is surely 'patronise'; and in this the Catholic Church will be no different from any other church in Australia that has tried to dominate the lives of Aborigine people in missions and advancement societies over the years."

GOING, GOING...

The Association of Irish Priests reports that last year 14,000 Catholic priests applied to end their ministry.

(*Yorkshire Post*, 6 November.)

HUMANIST HOLIDAYS

With the dark winter evenings now upon us, many readers may be casting around for ideas for their holidays next year. This seems a suitable opportunity, therefore, to mention that Humanist Holidays are already taking bookings for next Easter (19-24 April 1973) at the County Hotel, Southampton. Trips will be available to archaeological sites, local museums and art galleries, and the New Forest and the Isle of Wight.

For the summer, Humanist Holidays are arranging accommodation at Ilfracombe, in glorious north Devon, from 18 August to 1 September. The cost for adults will be about £20 a week.

Humanist Holidays' Annual General Meeting and Reunion will take place on Thursday, 4 January 1973 (6.30 to 9 p.m.), at Conway Hall, Holborn.

Application forms and further information about Humanist Holidays may be obtained from Mrs. Marjorie Mephum, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey (telephone: 01-642 8796).

FIFTY YEARS AGO

According to Sir Percival Phillips, the British Government terrorizes defaulting taxpayers in Mesopotamia by bombing parts of the district from the air. We referred recently to the flogging of natives at Rabaul, near New Guinea. Yet our publicists and journalists spilt gallons of ink in realistic descriptions of German cruelties to native races. This was one of the "arguments" against restoring the German colonies.

—From *The Freethinker*, 3 December 1922.

NINETY YEARS AGO

The Rev. W. Yates, vicar of Worleston, Cheshire, has the true priestly spirit. Mr. Humphreys, the station master of Worleston, having sent a respectful letter to the schoolmaster of the parish school asking that his son should on no account be sent to Church, this reverend tyrant stepped into the school and publicly expelled the boy. He, moreover, got the manager at Chester to remove Mr. Humphreys from his employment, which so seriously affected his wife that she is still in bed suffering from the shock. Happily, some gentlemen have taken the matter up and Mr. Humphreys has been re-instated.

—From *The Freethinker*, 3 December 1882.

"England is a post-Christian nation; a land of former believers."

—Cardinal Heenan, March 1971.

"The plain fact is that unless more money is found we shall have to stop building schools . . . with unpredictable effects on Christianity in this country."

—Cardinal Heenan, September 1972.

PUBLIC MEETING:

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EDWARD BLISHEN PATRICIA KNIGHT
LORD RAGLAN

Chair: BARBARA SMOKER

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by BRIGID BROPHY

FOREWORD: Barbara Smoker

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THE SAINT WHO NEVER GREW UP

R. J. CONDON

In the church calendar 6 December is the day of St. Nicholas, one of several popular saints demoted by Pope Paul on account of their never having existed. Reputedly a fourth-century Bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, the supposed remains of St. Nicholas were deposited in the church of St. Stephen, Bari, in 1087. On the first day, we are told, thirty persons were cured of various distempers, and from that time the saint's tomb has been a favourite place of pilgrimage. It is to be hoped that his official fall from grace has moderated the devotional excesses which were once common at Bari. R. Chambers's *Book of Days* (1864) tells of pilgrims making a circuit of the church on their knees. Some even went round with their foreheads pressed to the marble pavement, holding a string or handkerchief in their mouths by which they were led, generally by a child. Water exuding from the saints' natural rock tomb was bottled by the clergy and sold to pilgrims as a miraculous specific.

The charitable St. Nicholas

Despite his fictitious character St. Nicholas, as Santa Claus, remains in popular imagination the particular saint of children. Butler, in his *Lives of the Saints*, says that St. Nicholas is esteemed a patron of children because he was from his infancy a model of innocence and devotion. As an instance of the saint's precocious piety, we learn that he refused his mother's milk on church fast days! Two of his many legends specially mark him as the children's protector. He is said to have miraculously restored three boys to life after they had been murdered by an innkeeper who hid their dismembered bodies in a pickling tub. On another occasion he saved the virtue of three young virgins who were in danger of losing that status through parental poverty, by providing them with dowries in the shape of the purses of gold, secretly thrown through the window of their father's house. From this he has often been represented with three purses or three golden balls. This emblem was used by the Lombard merchants who settled in England and were the first to open pawnbroking establishments, and by the Medici family of Florence whose wealth came partly from moneylending. The same origin, the device of the charitable St. Nicholas, is traceable in each case.

On St. Nicholas's Day a Boy Bishop used to be elected in most cathedrals and in many parishes and grammar schools. For three weeks he exercised a burlesque episcopal jurisdiction and parodied various ecclesiastical functions

and ceremonies, attended by other children in the parts of lesser clergy. If he died in office he was buried with full episcopal honours; in Salisbury Cathedral a monument to one of these child prelates bears an effigy of a boy in bishop's vestments. The custom, which dates from the ninth century when "Lives" of St. Nicholas began to appear, was abolished in the time of Elizabeth, though sporadic revivals took place until 1937.

A pagan god in Christian clothing ?

As many saints are known to be pagan gods in Christian clothing, it is probable that St. Nicholas originated in the same way. Santa Claus driving through the night sky from the frozen north and bearing gifts recalls the Scandinavian Wotan, who was supposed to reward in this fashion those who specially honoured him at Yuletide. The saint's close connexion with childhood must be sought elsewhere. In 1881 Gerald Massey, who derived just about everything from Egypt, offered the following explanation:

The mystery of the Child-Horus, who always remained a child, is also the mystery of St. Nicholas and of the boy-bishop. Nicholas is the chosen patron of children, and is himself the child. In the English Festival it is said 'he was christened Nicholas, a man's name, but he keepeth the name of the child. Thus he lived all his life in virtues with his child's name, and therefore children do him worship before all other saints.' His child's name! the name of the child! and yet a man's name! In Egypt Neka is the typical male, virile power, the bull. Ras (las) is suspended. The suspended virility marks the child, the unvirile, infertile sun, the Child-Horus of Egypt. Nicholas was a survival of the Child-Horus, who was the Neka-las in person. In cathedral churches in Spain, when the boy-bishop was elected, there descended from the vaulted roof a cloud that stopped midway and opened, whereupon two angels issued from it with a mitre and placed it on the boy's head. This is a replica of the crowning of the Child-Horus by the two divine sisters Isis and Nephthys. The Child-Horus is Har-Skhem, lord of the shut-place, the secret shrine. The mouse was one of his emblems. And this character of secrecy and of working in secret is extant in the child's Saint Nicholas.

The writer is forced to confess that every great day of festival and fast and every popular ceremony and rite pressed into the service of the Christian theology were pre-identified in these islands. No true account of many of these has ever been given: of others we have nothing but downright lying, as needs must be in a thorough course of systematised fraudulence and imposture such as was practised by the Romish Church. (*A Book of the Beginnings*, vol. 1: p. 274).

Santa Claus the Peter Pan of saints? He could be. An illustration of the pickling tub incident, reproduced in *The Book of Days* from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, shows St. Nicholas in full episcopal costume—as a child.

ATHEISM AND ALNMOUTH

I. S. LOW

Alnmouth is a small village on the Northumbrian coast. If you have travelled by train from London to Edinburgh you may have noticed it. The River Aln glides at an angle into the North Sea, forming a small peninsula on its north bank. On this peninsula is a hill covered with trees. At the end lies the compact, red-roofed village.

John Adams and his "atheistic principles"

John Adams died here on 8 March 1832, and I am writing this article to save him from being forgotten.

In Sykes's *Local Records* (a sort of diary of all important events in the history of Northumberland and Durham since Roman times) it is said that Adams "entertained atheistical principles of which he did not hesitate the avowal." He was trained at first for law but owing to circumstances took up philosophy. For a time he taught in a school in a village called Longhoughton. At last he grew cynical, withdrew from society and became a recluse, his only companion being his dog. He never married.

Sykes says he was "often the object of unprovoked insult

from juvenile wantonness and unenlightened manhood." Adams's intellect was acute, his conversation on general subjects engaging and instructive; his remarks on "everything connected with his peculiar opinions were pointedly keen and satirical"; his features were good, his aspect serene and contemplative. He disdained parish allowance and his diet "must have been the most sparing imaginable." In spite of his cynical outlook Sykes tells us he "possessed naturally great benevolence." An atheist who could win tributes like this in nineteenth-century England must have been quite a man.

Fairly near Alnmouth is a village called Shilbottle. In 1819 the parish minister complained to Parliament that the people of Shilbottle were not observing the Sabbath. He said this was because of "the dissemination of atheistical and seditious pamphlets."

John Wesley visited Alnmouth in 1748 and on later occasions but was unable to form a society there. No wonder he said it was "famous for all kinds of wickedness."

Clerical "characters"

The guide books never fail to mention certain clergymen who lived in the neighbourhood of Alnmouth and who were "characters." For instance Patrick Mackilwyan who became vicar of the nearby village of Lesbury in 1609. Frank Graham, in his *Warkworth; a short history and guide*, says of Mackilwyan: "He was a quarrelsome man and continually in dispute with his parishioners over tithes, one of them calling him 'a theffe, carle and Gallowaie knave'." Mackilwyan was supposed to have had a rejuvenation at the age of 110, though Graham says he died when he was 91. Alex Wills in his book *The English Gate* mentions another clergyman (unnamed) who "used to beat his wife and claimed the right from the Scriptures."

Alnmouth is now a small village, but in the eighteenth century it was an important port. Grain and wool were exported and timber imported from Norway. The granaries of Alnmouth were supposed to be, about 1769, among the largest in the country. On 23 September 1779 Alnmouth was attacked by John Paul Jones, the American privateer.

Alnmouth is near the most beautiful part of the Northumbrian coast. There are long sandy beaches, dramatic cliffs at a place called Cullernose Point and of course the Farne islands. Near Alnmouth are three great castles: Alnwick, Warkworth and Dunstanburgh. The history of Alnwick Castle is full of incident and its architecture full of interest. Warkworth Castle stands on top of wooded cliffs above the River Coquet. It is famous for having examples of almost every type of castle architecture in its make-up.

Haunted castle?

I think readers of *The Freethinker* will be most interested in Dunstanburgh Castle; it is supposed to be haunted. "Not one but several ghosts disport themselves here," writes Alex Wills in his booklet *Northumberland's Hundred Castles*. In particular a knight called Sir Guy is supposed to be wandering round it, trying to find his way in to a hall full of sleeping people. (I am not quite sure whether King Arthur and his knights sleep under it; they do, I think, at another castle called Bamburgh!) In *The English Gate*, Wills describes a night spent at Dunstanburgh. A mysterious voice sounded, Wills was hit on the head and he received a slap on the face. The voice was the echo of

his own, a bird dislodged a piece of stone which fell on Wills's head and his own towel, hung up to dry, slapped his face!

I once asked the Ministry of Works custodian about the hauntings. He said misty nights, raging seas and lively imaginations were probably the cause. Mention should be made of the Rumbling Churn. This is a sort of chimney in the cliffs to the north of the castle. When a wave hits it, it shoots up a column of spray fifty feet above the cliffs and falls back with (to quote Wills again) "a noise like the death rattle in a thousand throats."

Ghostly encounter

May I briefly mention my own encounter with a ghost (not at Dunstanburgh). Years ago, at a youth hostel in the Lake District, I was told that the room I was sleeping in was haunted. "A cold wind passes over your face" my informant said, quite seriously, in blood-freezing tones. In the middle of the night I awoke. A cold wind was passing over my face. Someone had left the window open!

Anyway I hope this gives an idea of Alnmouth and the region round it; a place where one of England's least known atheists lived and where the people were not always too respectful to their clergy.

THE FUNERAL

There's no more time:
No more time for me,
The golden sand has spilled its final grain
And there's no hand to tilt the glass again:
There's no more time.

There's no more youth:
No more youth for me,
Here lie the memories of my halcyon days
Of manor houses, pennyworths and plays.
There's no more youth.

There's no more love:
No more love for me,
Silent the heart that beat for me alone;
That constant, loyal, loving metronome:
There's no more love.

There's no more tears:
No more tears for me,
For all you knew of sorrow I have cried
Here at your grave where it was I who died:
There's no more tears.

CHRIS HARRISON

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BOOKS

REVOLUTION IN PERSPECTIVE: People Seeking Change—1775 to the Present Day by Mary Charlesworth. Peter Lowe, £2.50.

A large portion of this book is taken up with reproductions of photographs or works of art, so that it would have taxed even Marx himself to have covered the theme adequately in the space at the author's disposal. Also, I was not prejudiced in Mary Charlesworth's favour by reading that she "worked for a time in the research department of the Foreign Office (Soviet Affairs)." However, after reading her book I must admit that little or no mark of the Foreign Office is to be detected in it. Clearly she does her best to set out the material as honestly as she can and is genuinely interested in "people seeking change."

However, it is only by extreme vulgarisation that one could say of Marx that he "held that profit-seeking capitalists pay labour subsistence wages and take the 'surplus value' for themselves, although the workers have added to the product through their labour." If the theory of surplus value was as simple as that, it would hardly have needed all the volumes of (uncompleted) *Das Kapital* to expound it; a penny pamphlet would have sufficed. But I would not like myself to be forced to define the theory in a single sentence; highly complex ideas and movements cannot be enclosed in small nutshells without simplifications that prune off their rich interconnexions and expansions.

There are thus many statements that I would challenge, for instance: "Another method, much in fashion since the Chinese and Cuban examples, is the creation of conditions ripe for revolution by a guerilla force." Does such a phrase really cover what happened in China, or even in Cuba, where Castro and his friends considered the conditions *already* ripe for revolution? Certainly since then other impatient groups have misjudged conditions and attempted abortive revolts; but that is hardly the same thing.

Miss Charlesworth remarks, "An important element in most modern revolutions has been, and continues to be, the ideal of building a socialist society," eliminating feudalism, capitalism and imperialism.

Part of these ideas are derived from religious sources; part from the demands of the awakening but oppressed working and peasant populations who were outside the existing power systems; and part from the formulations of philosophers and reformers [such as Marx], who were opposed to power being concentrated in the hands of the privileged few.

We see here her loose formulations; for no population, however backward, is outside "the existing power systems" (apparently she means 'the more advanced power-systems') and Marx was not simply reacting against power and privilege. He indeed had a deep sense of human brotherhood, which class-divisions (and even more, divisions of labour) crucified; but his moral revolt was at every point linked with concepts of historical development and the actual potentialities of each stage, and with an (Hegelian) philosophy of alienation and its effects. In short, his revolutionary creed was many-faceted and cannot be reduced to a mere moral dislike of class-society.

Miss Charlesworth's summary statement thus omits the crux of the post-1755 situation. Far back in ancient Egypt and in Mesopotamian societies we can make out revolts of the peasants or oppressed classes, and such revolts carry on through history. But even when inspired in part by dreams of universal brotherhood, they never managed

FREETHINKER

(except occasionally for brief moments) to realise that dream; they played a part in changing society to some extent, but without radical effects—for instance the long series of peasant revolts in Chinese history (before the twentieth century). The modern revolutions have been different in that they have brought about great changes in society and since 1848 have been increasingly directed, with more massive effect, towards the creation of a classless society—even if the problem of creating such a society has turned out to be vastly more complicated than was expected.

In fact the revolutions in this book fall into two quite different categories: those directed against a feudal or semi-feudal system of controls, in the American and French Revolutions; and those in which an industrialised working-class begin to play an increasingly important rôle.

We cannot properly understand the first group unless we recall that behind them lay the Dutch national and religious wars against the Spaniards, which produced profound social effects and begot the first effective bourgeois society in Europe (and in world history), and the following English Revolution, which in its early stages owed more to mercantile admiration and envy of the Dutch developments than is usually noted. The American and French Revolutions are later examples of this series, establishing bourgeois power even if they aroused deeper hopes of equality and freedom among the lower classes. The turning point came in 1848 when, at least in France, a wide set of struggles against feudal survivals turned into a strong popular movement based in the newly-arrived working class. In Germany, Italy, and elsewhere the anti-feudal aspects dominated; in England there was a fiasco—the radical and working-class forces, after the long struggles of the 1830s and 40s, collapsed before the entrenched bourgeoisie.

It seems to me that only by this sort of differentiation can we make sense of the post-1775 revolts. Miss Charlesworth tends to see uprisings and revolutions simply as responses to oppression and bad conditions in general; but in fact there have been ages of oppression and misery with very little resistance, and conditions have indeed often been better when the revolts occur. We need to analyse each movement in terms of its full historical context: political, social and economic. The author does not neglect this point, but she lacks any coherent social philosophy to sort the movements out.

This criticism of the book is not as serious as it sounds. The work is essentially descriptive, not analytic; and the text is generally a helpful accompaniment to the fine and interesting series of illustrations, which alone make the book good value. Further, nobody, Marxist or non-Marxist, has yet been able to provide a philosophic analysis which explains satisfactorily why, however crucial the development of capitalist production and exploitation in the highly advanced areas, it is the strongly peasant countries in which the contradictions of the world-system are most fully at work, providing the post-1917 revolutionary dynamic. Even Russia in 1917 was a predominantly peasant country, and Mao produced a proletarian revolution with practically no proletariat. Today, we still lack an analysis which will bring all the factors together in a coherent and convincing way.

JACK LINDSAY

REVIEWS

APPLICATIONS OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

by R. M. Hare. Macmillan, £1.95.

ESSAYS ON THE MORAL CONCEPTS

by R. M. Hare. Macmillan, £1.95.

These two small collections of papers, most of which have been published somewhere before, are both contributions to a promising series of "New Studies in Practical Philosophy." The series editor, Dr. W. H. Hudson of Exeter, claims that the first "gives the lie to those who accuse moral philosophers of being no longer interested in real moral issues" (p. vii). It does indeed. For *Applications of Moral Philosophy* begins with a masterly talk, broadcast first in Germany and later on the B.B.C. Third Programme, on "Can I be Blamed for Obeying Orders?" Professor Hare considers next the logical character of 'Reasons of State,' and later what is and should be involved in recognising a régime as 'The Legitimate Government.' He gives an extended and sympathetic treatment for a young man persuaded by his reading of Albert Camus's novel *The Stranger* that 'nothing matters.' In "Adolescents into Adults" Hare develops his understanding—which I have elsewhere given reasons for amending—of the essential difference between education and indoctrination. Of the remaining four papers two—"What is Life?" and "Peace"—are, perhaps, slighter and less surefooted than the rest; while two others—fruits of Hare's lifelong interest in architecture and urban design—are, as *Applications of Moral Philosophy*—rather peripheral.

The title of the second collection, *Essays on the Moral Precepts*, may by contrast suggest something remotely technical; certainly this volume is the more technical. Yet it too contains much which is relevant to first-order practical questions of what is to be done. For instance: it is indeed very often said that "as prediction and causal explanation of human actions become easier and more widespread, moral language becomes in more and more cases unnecessary and pointless." On the contrary, Hare argues, what in fact becomes pointless, in certain cases, is a certain kind of attempt, by persuasion and scolding, to alter human behaviour. But the distinctive function of the word 'ought', in moral and non-moral contexts, is to instruct in or instantiate general rules for answering questions of the form "What shall I do?" So long, therefore, as questions of this form continue to need answering—and that will surely be so long as the human race survives—"we shall have a use for general rules for answering them" (p. 12).

Another, and perhaps easier, illustration is provided by Hare's insistence that

To establish that there is a distinction between descriptive and evaluative meaning, it is not necessary to deny the existence of cases in which it is difficult to say whether a term is being used evaluatively or not. There is a clear distinction between a heap of corn and no corn at all, even though it is hard to say just when the corn that I am piling up has become a heap (p. 56).

Characteristically, and very properly, Hare provides references to Classical employments of this example in Cicero and in Sextus Empiricus.

Hare begins his Preface to *Applications of Moral Philo-*

sophy with the confession: "I became a moral philosopher because I was troubled about practical moral questions . . ." (p. ix). The dust-jacket gives a hint of how real and urgent these questions must have been: "During the Second World War he served in the Indian Mountain Artillery, was taken prisoner by the Japanese, and spent the rest of the war in prison camps in Singapore and on the Burma railway . . ." So the innocent lay reader, who has read in *New Society* or elsewhere of the onslaughts of the Radical Philosophy Group on the supposed frivolity and irrelevance of Oxford philosophising, might expect that Hare at least would have been exempted.

So happy an innocent would be mistaken. In part this is, I think, because these attackers—like the religious assailants of a previous generation—really require not just relevance to practical questions; but positive support for their own preferred answers. In a corresponding way the word 'Radical' (with a capital 'R') has here to be construed: not (like 'radical' with a small 'r') as a label for a type of approach or for a caste of mind; but instead as the favoured eulogistic term for a more or less specific political and social commitment. But in part, I suggest, the refusal to exempt even Hare expresses an inclination to reject philosophy as such in favour of the right (which is in this case extreme left!) political activism. This is, surely, an important though rarely recognised element in the meaning of Marx's often quoted slogan: "Philosophers have interpreted the world; the task is to change it."

Hare's answer to both these demands is consciously and appropriately Socratic. (For if what Socrates did was not philosophy, what can be meant by the term 'philosophy?') When people accuse philosophers of not caring about politics, he says, "I always lose my temper . . . for I happen to care rather a lot. When people make this accusation, what they really mean is that philosophers ought to be using their philosophy to *prove* political conclusions." But that is not what philosophy is. "It aims only at *understanding*; and its initial move is often to show that we do not understand what we think we understand. That is why it is so unpopular" (italics original).

ANTONY FLEW

IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE: International Comparisons in Social Policy edited by Nicholas Deakin.

(Fabian Research Series, no. 306) Fabian Society, 40p.

The question of immigration has become steadily more important in Western Europe of recent years; and it is a measure of the speed with which the problem extends that this excellent pamphlet has no stop-press section to mention Ugandan Indians and Rotterdam Turks.

The Rotterdam troubles indeed make an unfortunate footnote to the praise rightly enough given to Holland for making a much more serious and sustained attempt to face up to the question of absorption than the other countries. But anyone who wants a considerable amount of information about the situation in West Germany, Holland and France, with some side-glances at Britain and the United States, should certainly acquire this packed and cheap publication, which concludes with some intelligent suggestions for grappling with the problem. That problem is going to get more acute every year in the foreseeable

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(Continued from previous page)

future; but whether the governments will listen to intelligent and comprehensive suggestions is another matter.

The evidence adduced in the pamphlet brings out clearly the heavy exploitation of migratory workers; once they were treated in the same way as the native populations the profits would disappear. The Continental situation will tend to repeat itself here as we move into the Common Market: so let us be forewarned.

JACK LINDSAY

LETTERS

Good Intentions

According to my limited reading every group has always wanted to be right and make people happy and look what that has led to: the Inquisition, Stalinism and the troubles in Belfast.

Mr. Parker (letters, 18 November) said that "right" and "mankind" are spooks; and when I see what some people do when they talk about right and mankind I think he is correct.

RICHARD MITCHELL.

Mr. S. E. Parker is right, but I *did* mention in my 4 November article Epicurus, whose doctrine was, if I understand it aright, that an action is good if it brings more happiness and wellbeing than unhappiness; an action is evil if it brings more sorrow and harm than happiness. Obviously the sadist and the puritan mentioned by Mr. Parker, could not be included in the category of those who are "right," as they bring more harm and sorrow to all who have not warped minds. Hitler, Stalin and the like are by these criteria automatically excluded from those who are right.

"The good of all mankind" means exactly what it says. Personally, I find it easier to wish for this, as an atheist, not believing in the immaterial, is the better able to concentrate on the tangible. This is the "advantage of abandoning the spook of God" as opposed to "spooks [?] like 'right' and 'mankind'."

Mr. Parker is also right in classing me as a "goodwiller."—
Are not most freethinkers?
CYRIL MARCUS.

In his letter of 18 November Mr. S. E. Parker says several things that have a certain amount of truth in them. However, if he thinks we should not use concepts like "right," and "mankind," I think it is only fair he should give us some idea what concepts we ought to be concerned about.
I. S. Low.

Lowdown on Mozart

I. S. Low (18 November) may "not agree with the belief that [Mozart] was the greatest opera composer that ever lived," but would he not agree that Mozart was the greatest opera composer that ever died before 36 years of age? When one considers all that Mozart created in a mere 35 years, one can perhaps excuse him for finishing some of his operas in a hurry!

By the way, although Mr. Low's article wisely avoids any horribly musical 'opinions,' would Mr. Low not agree that Mozart's operas contain a genius (for being beautifully gay and sad at the same time!) of a very great musical order?

CHARLES BYASS.

To my mind E. J. Dent was a lousy Mozartian, but he did not invent Raaff's opposition to the *Idomeneo* quartet. Mozart told his father about it in his letter of 27 December 1780. Rather than publish nonsensical guesses about Mozart's "character" not being "forceful" (*Freethinker*, 18 November), I. S. Low should read the letters of Mozart and his family (Bärenreiter, 4 vols; English translation Macmillan, 2 vols). Rather than dismiss English nineteenth-century appreciation of Mozart, he should read Vincent and Mary Novello's diaries (Faber) of their pilgrimage, in 1829, from London to Salzburg and Vienna, to visit Mozart's widow and to give Mozart's sister 60 guineas subscribed by musicians in London.
BRIGID BROPHY.

Solitary Quality

According to Reuben Osborn's review (18 November) of *Sex and Love* by James Hemming and Zena Maxwell, the authors assert the proposition: "The criterion of sexual life should be its quality as a shared experience."

What puzzles me is that, according to my view of the Just Society, man is a social animal who yet has an *unlimited* right to be left alone *within his private* life. In our society, for better or for worse, sexual life takes place in part of this private life. Accordingly, by what process of false legitimation do 'humanist' authors formulate moral dogmas proscribing *solitary* practices? Does all masturbation now have to take place with the company of a friend? Or has masturbation amazingly ceased to be sexual?
PHILLIP HODSON.

Moslems' Rights

I cannot write Hebrew, Gerald Samuel apparently does not understand plain English, so I feel that there is little point in prolonging our correspondence in *The Freethinker*. However, Mr. Samuel's latest offering for readers' delectation (letters, 25 November) requires refutation as any connexion between his accusations and what I wrote in *The Freethinker* of 30 September seems entirely coincidental.

Firstly, I did not contend that a situation like that prevailing in Northern Ireland might develop in Britain if we gave Muslim children "equal rights" to religious education in schools. I questioned Mr. Samuel's naive assumption that Muslims were incapable of such barbarities as are being committed by both sides in Belfast and Londonderry. I quoted Bangladesh as an example of what religious war can lead to; obviously such a disaster is out of the question in Britain where the Muslims are, as Mr. Samuel says, "a small and inoffensive community."

Secondly, Gerald Samuel's standards of accuracy are most effectively displayed by his reference to "the representative of scarcely 200 people (the chairman or secretary of the N.S.S.) . . ." Neither I nor Mr. Samuel know the exact membership of the National Secular Society and its affiliated groups, but his figure is, to say the least, as accurate as his reference to the chairman: there is no chairman of the N.S.S.

Thirdly, let me unreservedly state that I agree Muslim children should enjoy equal rights in religious education. Like children of other faiths they should receive it in their homes and places of worship, not in schools financed by the whole community.

I do not believe that Muslim children should be caned by religious leaders for attending a school function instead of going to the mosque; a point which Mr. Samuel, despite his touching concern for the children's religious welfare, has not commented on. But I do believe that future generations will suffer if we do not speak out against those who, for religious and other reasons, are prepared to create social and educational ghettos.

WILLIAM MCILROY,
General Secretary, National Secular Society.

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