

The

AMERICAN

# RATIONALIST

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● AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF NEWS AND VIEWS FOR ALL RATIONALISTS, HUMANISTS, FREETHINKERS



VOLTAIRE  
the  
incomparable  
infidel

## The Pagan Mystery-Cults

by MARTIN A. LARSON

## The Roman Catholic Index Of Forbidden Books

by EMMETT McLOUGHLIN

## Our Eighth Anniversary

an Editorial by Walter Hoops

## An Old Malady

by DOUGLAS ANDERSON

A rational approach featuring faith in Man, his power to solve his own problems, and his ability to build a better world for a glorious future.

50c

THE AMERICAN

# RATIONALIST

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## Voltaire . . .

whose curlicued likeness is on our cover, died 185 years ago on May 30. McCabe considers him the second most famous writer (after Shakespeare) in the world and incomparably the greatest RATIONALIST writer.

At the age of 23 Voltaire landed for the first time in the Bastille and a few years later found himself again in the same prison. He was exiled several times and in 1722 decided to exile himself from his beloved Paris for the rest of his life. In England Voltaire became acquainted with Locke and other thinkers and upon his return published the "Philosophical Letters on the English," in which he showed his countrymen the benefits of greater freedom of thought which made it possible for English philosophers to publish their books without interference by the crown. The French king did not like the comparison and Voltaire's book was burned by the hangman.

Victor Hugo, in this magnificent funeral oration at the 100th anniversary of Voltaire's death, said: "Voltaire declared war against the united front of court, nobility, judiciary and that vile melange of hypocrisy and fanaticism, the clergy. His weapon was the pen and with this weapon he fought and conquered." John C. Powys wrote a delightful essay on Voltaire and used these words: "The name of Voltaire is more than a trumpet call of liberty for the oppressed artists and thinkers of the world; it is a challenge to the individuals . . . of our harrassed generation to rise above their own weaknesses and introspections and come forth into the sunshine. Voltaire was a ribald and scoffer in the presence of much that the world holds sacred; but the most sacred thing of all THE SANITY OF HUMAN REASON — has never been more splendidly defended."

## **Our Eighth Anniversary**

Greetings and salutations to all subscribers and friends of "The American Rationalist" on our 8th anniversary! Our magazine has passed between Scylla and Charybdis and is sailing along as smoothly as any enterprise run by volunteers can be expected to run.

In my anniversary letter to all readers, I said about AR: "There is nothing like it in the whole world." This may have sounded a bit boastful but I was happy to see that our old and faithful friend, Otto Meine of Milwaukee, agrees with me when he wrote the other day: "You are quite right. There is nothing like it in the whole world and you should get all the support possible to make this venture a crowning success."

In his introduction to the first issue of AR in 1956, Eldon Scholl, who is responsible for the distinguished design and format of our journal, said: "We are determined to make AR the finest Freethought magazine in the field." These words express our goal and are the quintessence of all our efforts. In the years to come, we hope to achieve this distinction. It is impossible to please everybody but we can strike a balance between new and old material, between scholarly contributions and personal expressions by our readers, between serious articles and humorous and satirical items. Some people have to get their hatred and contempt for the black pest out of their system and send us their fulminations and imprecations. This may be good mental therapy for them but it is, in most cases, poor journalism. Every editor has to wade through a lot of unprintable "literature." I recently took a course in psycho-ceramics — and if you ask me what it means: it is the study of crackpots.

There will be no issues in June and August but the July and September numbers will try to make up. I will be in Europe part of July and all of August and attend the International Congress of Freethinkers in Duisburg, Germany on July 26 to 29 as the representative of the American Rationalist Federation. But in a larger sense, I intend to represent all American Freethinkers. If any of our readers should be in Europe during the time of the meeting. I wish they would get in touch with me. This is the first time in many, many years that an official representative of the American movement is participating in the deliberations of our

world-wide organization, the World Union of Freethinkers, based in London. Our readers will receive a full report of the proceedings and probably will be able to read some of the outstanding speeches at the Congress of which Bertrand Russell is honorary president.

\* \* \*

### **More On Chartered Air Trip To Germany**

In response to some inquiries about the contemplated chartered air trip from St. Louis to Frankfurt and back, sponsored by the Freie Gemeinde of St. Louis, I want to say that this trip did not materialize. — If you plan to go across, please make your arrangements early. 1963 promises to be another banner tourist year in Europe and facilities are already getting scarce.

— WALTER HOOPS.

## **Time . . .**

The Sands of TIME, tried and tested,  
Are devised hourly, to sift  
Through the Glass of ETERNITY,  
Erasing those moments passed.

Although we abhor the age it imposes  
Upon us, we sigh with relief  
For the unction which dispells  
A poor experience.

To destroy the container would be  
Foolhardy, for in its destruction,  
The measure, (Whether good or bad)  
Would adversely defeat the balance of  
Our very being.

Synchronized are we, as is the pendulum  
And metronome, ever dependent and  
Completely obeisant to the  
Clock-work of MORTALITY.

Andree Lee Collins.

• To live in the presence of great truths and eternal laws — that is what keeps a man patient when the world ignores him and calm and unspoiled when the world praises him. **BALZAC.**

• There are three marks of a superior man: being virtuous, he is free from anxiety; being wise, he is free from perplexity; being brave, he is free from fear. — **CONFUCIUS.**

# The Pagan Mystery-Cults

by MARTIN A. LARSON

For thousands of years preceding the advent of Christianity, the peoples of the ancient world clustered about the Mediterranean Sea had worshipped various savior-gods in the mystery-cults. Perhaps the most dynamic religious concept ever known was this particular kind of deity, known to the Greeks as the **soter**, a term which had a very specific and even a technical meaning; it signified a divine god-man who died as a sacrifice for mortals otherwise doomed to misery or destruction, whose body must be eaten and whose blood must be drunk as a holy sacrament by his communicants so that they too might become, like their god, divine and immortal; this **soter**, after his death, was to be invested with all power and become the judge and the eternal ruler of all who pass into the afterlife.

All this is certainly no mere academic question: for it is the doctrine around which most Western religion is centered to this day. It is the theme of thousands of sermons in Christian churches every Sunday; it is the force which has given power and vitality to orthodox Christianity for 1900 years.

## The Problem in Scholarship

To obtain adequate knowledge concerning the ancient, pre-Christian mystery-cults is a task involving considerable difficulty. It is only within the last generation or two that scholars have really come to grips with the problem. Only through a careful study of Egyptology and collating and organizing material drawn from hundreds of widely scattered ancient sources is it possible to understand this intricate and esoteric phase of religious development. For the mystery-cults really were what the name implies: secret organizations, all the members of which were sworn never to reveal their doctrines except as they had learned them themselves. Most classical writers knew little about them, because they were not initiates; and even non-members, like Plutarch and Diodorus Siculus, who knew something of the esoteric mystery-ceremonials, would not reveal what they knew, because to do so, even for them, was considered sacrilegious.

Nevertheless, there are, throughout the length and breadth of the classics, from Homer and Hesiod, down through Julian the Emperor, hundreds of passages which bear on the subject: and out of all this we can reconstruct

with some accuracy and completeness just what the mysteries were and what they taught.

## The Nature of the Savior-God

At the center of every mystery-cult stood the worship of the savior-deity. There was considerable variety among these divinities and their ritual; but in all cases, the god died a sacrificial death that mankind might be redeemed; the deity descended into the grave or the underworld, rose again, and reigns forever; by some mystical process, usually through partaking of the holy eucharist, the communicant believed that he himself became, like his god, divine and immortal, so that he too might eventually rise in a second birth into eternal life.

Most of the savior-gods were male deities; but there were also several great female **soters**, whose functions gradually coalesced with those of their male counterparts.

## The Growth of the Mystery-Cult

There is only slight evidence of the mystery-cult in Greece, except that at Eleusis, during the Mycenaean period, which ended about 1100 or 1050 B.C. Even in the time of Aeschylus and Herodotus, about 450 B.C., the official religion was still predominant. By the first century, however, many of the mysteries had spread far and wide at all social levels; Plutarch bears witness that the temples of the Twelve Great Gods stood empty; and evidence easily gathered from many sources shows that the mysteries had captured the common mind, especially the poor, the slaves, the women, the illiterate, the outcasts, the hopeless. Seeing no prospects for success in this life, they turned their gaze upon eternity, and transferred their loyalty from the human state which ruled with an iron hand to a hoped-for Elysium, which would be not only glorious, but also delightful and eternal. There the wicked would cease from troubling, and the weary would be at rest.

About 120 A.D., there was a tireless traveler whose name was Pausanias and who wrote a book called **The Description of Greece**. We are much indebted to him, because he visited every Greek community of any importance, and wrote down detailed information concerning shrines, altars, temples, religious statues, etc., which existed in such profusion everywhere. We learn especially from him how

numerous and various were the then extant cults and religious facilities, in which deities were worshipped more or less similar in character, but with different names, traditions, and rituals. The most common and important of these savior-gods were Osiris, Isis, Dionysius, Demeter, Aphrodite, Persephone, Serapis, Attis, Adonis, Bromius, Sabazius, Mithra, Bacchus, Zagreus, and the Aeon.

### The Genesis of the Soter

The **soter** came first into existence because fearful and trembling humanity had little faith in themselves; since they dared not venture upon self-reliance, they sought salvation and redemption in vicarious atonement; they believed that by becoming one with a great supernatural power, they might live securely in this life and achieve blessed immortality for the next.

The fountainhead of all subsequent savior-cults was the great religion of Osiris, first established in Egypt about 6,000 years ago. Before this, the Valley of the Nile had been inhabited by a very primitive people who had neither cereals nor metals; who worshipped clan gods, shaped like birds and beasts; who were not only cannibals, but who killed and then ate the flesh of their relatives, particularly their own parents. How many millenniums this culture had existed, we do not know; it is probable that it stretched back at least to 10,000 B.C. True, it practised a form of agriculture and built tombs; but it compared to the Sumerians of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, the Nilotics of that period were a primitive race.

And so, about 4000 B.C. a great event occurred, fraught with the deepest significance for the development of mankind. An army of Aryans marched into Egypt, conquered the natives, and established themselves as the ruling class. They controlled the flood waters of the Nile, built irrigation dams and ditches, constructed better and more elaborate buildings, introduced metal utensils and weapons, established a system of written law, paved the streets and roads, and compelled all persons to respect certain basic human rights. But they did more; they outlawed relative-cannibalism, particularly the eating of parents; they decreed the sanctity and integrity of the human body, even in death; they declared that every person may attain a blessed after-life, but only on condition that he live justly in this world and that his body be committed to the grave intact; and they lengthened the

old 360-day year so that the solar period very nearly coincided with the calendar year.

The conquerors accomplished these vast reforms through supernatural and religious sanctions. They did not try to eradicate the religion of the natives: they simply engrafted new ideas upon the old, as the Mormons did with 19th-century American Christianity. The old theogony consisted of Tem, or Ra, the Father-Creator; and of the great deities Thoth, Maat, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, and Nut, all signifying certain abstract cosmic principles, whom Ra had produced out of himself. When the Sumerians had completed their conquest and were in the process of consolidating their power, they very wisely did so by adding their own new gods to the old, as if they were all of the same family. The Osirian religion had as its objective a real elevation of society, politically, ethically, economically. Its purpose was nothing less than the progress of humanity from savagery into civilization. Incidentally, its purpose was also to consolidate the political power of the invaders.

### The Legend-Myth of Osiris

There need be little doubt that one of the early great Sumerian kings had five children, three brothers and two sisters. About them was woven a legend-myth which was believed for thousands of years. The conquerors consolidated their power by claiming to have conferred benefits by supernatural power; the natives willingly sold themselves into inferiority and economic servitude in return for temporal blessings and hoped-for ultimate salvation.

Tem, or Ra (so the new theology declared), had married Nut, the sky-goddess; but when he discovered her in the embrace of Keb, the earth-god, he cursed every day of the year, so that her offspring might never be born. Nut thereupon went to Thoth, the great scribe and magician, for help; he played at draughts with the moon-goddess and won one seventy-second portion of each day from her, so that five intercalated days were added to the year, increasing the total to 365. On these newly-created days the curse of Ra was ineffectual; and so on the 361st, Osiris was born; and on successive days were born Horus the Elder, Set, Isis, and Nephthys. Osiris married Isis; Set married Nephthys. Horus became the great physician.

Osiris was identified with the bull and the sun; but especially with the grain that comes down from heaven, is placed in the earth, and dies that it may be resurrected into a second

life. His flesh was the grain itself and his blood was the ale made from the barley. Whosoever ate and drank of these consumed the god, and the eater-communicant was thereby made divine and achieved (it was believed) the same immortality which was the specific attribute of the god. In a very real sense, therefore, religion was, to the Egyptian, his science of life.

Isis was said to have taught the women of Egypt to bake bread from wheat. She was identified with the moon, the cow, and the morning star; and her tears were said to fill the Nile each spring, so that it overflowed and fertilized the fields. In addition, she symbolized the earth, into which the grain is placed; she was also the healer and the beneficent mother.

It is indeed curious to note that the concept of personal immortality, together with a belief in eternal rewards after death, arose in no ancient culture except the Egyptian previous to perhaps 800 B.C. Whatever it was, something in Nilotic life created a longing for an endless and blessed existence; and therefore also of a savior-god who could make it all possible. In the Egyptian Elysium, the wheat was to grow nine feet tall; a man of importance would have his family and servants with him there forever; and he would rule without end in a domain controlled by the great and the just Osiris.

According to the legend-myth, after Osiris had established his beneficent regime in Egypt, he wished to confer the same boon upon all peoples and nations. At the head of a great army, therefore, he set out to civilize mankind. The great majority were said to have accepted his benefits with joy. Those who opposed him, he slew summarily. After several years, he returned to Egypt, laden with honors. During his absence, Isis had established a system of social ethics, under which all could live in peace, justice, and dignity.

But every garden has its venomous serpent. The evil Set, envious because of his brother's greatness and honors, had attempted to seduce Isis, but had been repulsed. Doubly frustrated and furious, he conspired with seventy-two others (who were the remnants of the old priesthood) to murder Osiris and subvert the government. They constructed a coffin and, when they succeeded in enticing Osiris to lie down in it, clamped the lid shut, welded it with lead, and threw it into the Nile, whence it flowed into and across the Mediterranean to Byblus in Syria.

Pursued by Set, Isis fled into the Delta

swamps, where she gave birth to the Younger Horus. But Set discovered them, and killed the child; Isis, however, with the aid of the ever-beneficent Thoth, brought the infant back to life. She now went forth to find the body of her husband, and finally discovered it in Byblus. She brought it back to Egypt; but Set seized it, hacked it into fourteen pieces, and buried one in each of the fourteen provinces of Egypt. Isis now performed an act of love and devotion, celebrated in song and drama, unparalleled in religious mythology. She searched throughout Egypt for the broken pieces of her husband's body; one by one, with the help of Nephthys, she recovered them, and finally fitted them all together. With the aid of Thoth, she breathed new life into Osiris; through her, he was resurrected from the grave; he was born again. He was the first-fruits of the dead. He was the only mortal ever reputed to have risen from death into a second career on earth. Thus, the body of Osiris, having been placed in the earth throughout Egypt, like the grain, rose again into a new life for the salvation of all.

He now resumed his throne and ruled until Horus grew to manhood. But, since he had already died once, death had no further hold upon him. Approaching his end, he instructed Horus how to defeat Set in the great battle which would soon take place. Osiris thereupon entered his solar ship and sailed away to the Western Land, where he became the ruler of Khenti-Amenti, or Elysium, the judge of the dead, and the arbiter of eternity.

### An Immortality Cult

Around all this developed the great religion of Egypt, which became the faith of millions for thousands of years; as its central principle was accepted and reconstituted by others, it became the religious mystery of countless communicants in the ancient pagan world.

Over a period of 4000 years, the Osirian priests supplied inscriptions, believed to possess magical powers, written on tombs, or incised on papyrus and buried with the dead; these have been collected into a celebrated volume known as **The Book of the Dead**. As the cult evolved, Isis underwent a vast development and finally became the greatest goddess of antiquity, the Queen of Heaven and the creative force of the cosmos; to her untold millions addressed their prayers and it was fervently believed that she would intercede for sinners with her husband Osiris and with her son Horus the Mediator for the dead



very nature must be transmuted into the divine essence of the god by eating and drinking his eucharist; at death, he must be properly embalmed; before he could be buried, he had to be vindicated at a public trial; unless all this was done under the direction of properly constituted priests, nothing else would avail: immortality would elude him.

But once all this was done, the deceased was ferried across the great lake by the dog-headed Anubis and conducted into the Hall of Maat, the Goddess of Justice. In **The Book of the Dead**, Ch. CXXV, dating from the XVIIIth Dynasty about 1550 B.C., there is a great and colorful painting which depicts in detail what now occurs. We see the royal scribe Ani and his wife Thuthu conducted before the great scales in which the heart of the suppliant is weighed against the justice of Maat. If it is not found perfect, the fearful beast Apep or Amemet, a terrible monster with a crocodile-head, forebody lion-shaped, and the rear of a hippopotamus, stands ready to devour the heartsoul of the condemned, after which his **Khu** is thrown into the adjacent Lake of Fire and annihilated there. However, Ani and Thuthu pass the test and each emerges as an Osiris victorious; by the records of Thoth and the consent of the great gods, they are conducted into the awful presence of Osiris himself, who sits upon his white throne. At his side stands the beloved Isis, always interceding for inners, imploring mercy; behind him stands the kindly Nephthys, giving sage advice. Horus leads the pair before Osiris, and, acting as mediator, persuades his father to admit Ani and Thuthu to the blessed realm.

During the early Egyptian dynasties, from about 3,000 to perhaps 1,200, those who might hope for a happy immortality must have been limited to important and influential people. But as time went on, democracy increased in religion; and Herodotus, about 440 B.C., describes three methods of embalming, the cheapest of which was within the reach of all except the very poor. Cheops and Kafre, who built the great pyramids about 2800 B.C. at a cost which staggers the imagination, did so primarily that their position might be secure in the kingdom of Osiris; but 2500 years later, a small piece of papyrus placed within a coffin was believed to accomplish the same stupendous result for those of very modest means.

We must emphasize that all persons seeking admission to the Osirian Elysium called themselves Osiris, including the Pharaohs, who wore the tall white crown of the god as their emblem

of divine power and authority. And more: it signified that these rulers, by absorbing the eucharist of the god, had actually become divine and immortal while still on earth.

The mummies of the deceased would have inscriptions attached to them which read: "I am Osiris . . . Let not my limbs suffer corruption; let them not pass away; let them not decay; and let them be fashioned for me as if I were myself Osiris . . . The mighty Osiris taketh possession of me . . . Behold, I am the God who is the Lord of the Underworld . . . I am the Great One . . . I have made myself whole and complete; I have renewed my youth; I am Osiris, the Lord of Eternity."

### The Osirian Ritual

The rituals practised by the Osirian mystery-cult were extraordinary and impressive. The great annual festival was celebrated in two phases, of which the first was public. It began at Abydos on the 17th Athyr, which is our 13th of November. This date commemorated the death of Osiris; and its significance lay in the fact that this was also the very day on which the wheat was planted after the flood waters of the Nile had receded. The god and the seed grain died at the same moment, for the grain was the god and the god was the grain. The resurrection of the god was the rebirth of the wheat. Man could be redeemed from savagery only through the divine sacrifice of the cereal; and his **Khu** could be redeemed for eternity only through the eucharistic ritual of the god.

In this public phase of the Osirian passion play, the murder and dismemberment of the deity were depicted in moving scenes by highly skilled actors; to the audience it seemed that they were witnessing actual events, or a replica of them. This was followed by the search for, and the finding of, the body of Osiris by Isis, his resurrection from death, his triumphal return to power, his victory over the forces of evil symbolized by Set, and his journey into the hereafter in his solar ship. This was known as the Coming Forth by Day.

Such was the first portion of the Osirian festival. But within the temples there was an esoteric phase performed by the priests in which only the initiated communicants could participate. The ancient writers were exceedingly secretive about this, even when they had information concerning it, for it was considered sacrilegious to reveal the slightest portion of it. Nevertheless, we can piece together a number of fragments and thus reconstruct what these secret rituals were.

Two days after the death of the god on 17th Athyr, the priests brought forth a sacred chest, which contained an image of Osiris; when this was revealed to the worshippers, they saw in it their resurrected god. In the temple at Denderah were found a series of inscriptions which describe the secret Osirian rituals in which cakes of divine bread were made from the body of Osiris.

We see, therefore, that the publicly performed passion-drama depicted the earthly career of Osiris; but the secret ceremonials were initiatory eucharistic rituals by which the communicants believed they would become divine and immortal by eating the body and drinking the blood of the god.

(Continued next month)

## An Old Malady

by DOUGLAS ANDERSON

With the defeat of Hitler, it was readily and universally assumed that anti-Semitism would die. Why does it still flourish? Because he didn't invent it, but only used it as a weapon to incite hate and as a scapegoat for all the ills of Germany. He in turn became the scapegoat for anti-Semitism at the end of the war. The malady was in society throughout the world, and thrived. — At times it is dormant but quickly wakened by any unscrupulous person intent on personal gain and power.

At present the sudden upsurge in the U.S. can be laid on a few men and their organizations. Gerald K. Smith and his Silver Shirts and his Christian Nationalist Crusade; The Defender, The Cross and the Flag, Women's Voice, Common Sense, The Beacon Light Herald, Destiny and publications, books, verse subsidized by such organizations. — Rockwell and the American Nazi Party, The Ku Klux Klan, America for Americans, all told, the Anti-Defamation League lists 39 known professional anti-Semitic organizations, and 32 of those publish bulletins, magazines, and papers contributing the bulk of the hate-literature.

We ask: what begets the desire to persecute another? What do we hope to accomplish by it? The latter is far simpler to answer. Most, if not all, fall into one class. An illusion of infallibility and omnipotence which they cannot have so long as they can be contradicted in a democracy of controversy and free enquiry. Their ego is not fully developed, so they lack

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self-confidence which should sustain them when they are refuted or contested. Their illusion of omnipotence cannot be sustained if one enemy, or another faith, can thwart their will. They must be the uncontested, supreme authority. The reason why they have the desire to persecute are too varied and complex to cover in a mere article. Yet they all can be categorized in these three kinds: inculcated, bad experience, or solely for selfish gains.

Historically it is ancient. — Persecutors, tyrants and the use of whipping-boys is as old as history itself. Psychologically it is an illness and releases an antagonism as a response to an unwelcome situation and an inner and unacknowledged confession of inferiority. Morally it is a transference of guilt and spiritually it is as man must have been when he awakened from barbarianism before man evolved a conscience.

Historically it needs no further explication. The ways of inception, the ways that a man can use it against another does need discussion. It can be handed down for centuries in the home, taught in churches, and bred. Prejudice is never innate. A child who has never been exposed to it in his environment is immune. A child gains susceptibility in a ratio to that expressed in his environment. Thus a man who has been exposed in childhood but never catching it, if meeting just the right circumstance, can be a Jew-hater by experience. A convert to an unscrupulous man and his self-seeking ideology, from fear or from mere pressure to conform, from fear of retaliation — ungrounded but used to incite hate, is the easiest known method of creating mass hysteria. — Every revolutionary, both good and bad, has resorted to it. It makes no difference if it is utterly irrational, untrue, illogical and impossible to accomplish — as the alleged Jewish aim for World domination! It can still be used by any man intent only on power and financial gain. **KILL THEM BEFORE THEY KILL US!** Suppress them before they can suppress us!

What manner of men are those who even support and follow such monsters as Hitler, and our present Rockwell, Marilyn Allen, Mrs. Van Hyning, Smith, Winrod, Rand, etc? Taken in the above order, a man is ripe for an acceptance of it when he meets failure, or, if he has developed the habit of blaming others for all his errors, faults, and other shortcomings. Few can take full responsibility for his acts. People have alibied their "sins" on Satan for centuries. It too is not innate but begins in childhood in the home. When

he too is looking for absolute surety and utopias and cannot face an ever-changing reality, or knows that our society cannot be remedied by emotional debauches. Unhappy, frustrated, discontented people readily respond to demagoguery and can find a target for their wrath in their fellow citizens. If Khrushchev has absolved the ills of the society, why did his fellow citizens wreak their inner frustrations on Pasternak if not because he showed them the errors of the rules of writing laid down for writers by that regime? If their motivations had been higher, if they could have admitted their failures were their own, they could have used vision and made life meaningful and their conscience wholesome by morally purposeful activities.

A person too can become anti-Semitic by a bad experience. All of the people of any race, culture or nation are not moral, nor more than all Americans are. He may see they are, on a whole, more resourceful . . . more studious. Few of them admit they are defeated with one or two failures. They have as a people overcome so many "defeats" on this earth, they have learned to profit by their mistakes. But we seldom admit ours and we must before we too can profit by them.

He may become a convert because he really believes the lies of one intent on becoming a dictator; or from fear of reprisals he may meet now or in the future in his society. — Economic interests are usually violated with less impunity but unless they completely eradicate the oppressed organism (which they cannot do) they reap but disastrous revolts as a result. The South has tried that for over a century on the Negro and has yet to see its results in their economy. Nor could they foresee the revolts now, although George Cable warned them a century ago. A nation's economic standard cannot be raised by limiting the economy of one race either from keeping them ignorant and untrained or from an unjust suppression as suggested by the Women's Voice, Common Sense, etc., for the Jewish people.

A democracy demands mature responses to an unwelcome situation or a contradiction, refutation of mere frustrations. "Every normal human infant passes through what is called an 'omnipotent stage'," A. Powell Davies wrote in his **Urge to Persecute**. "He expects all his wishes to be gratified, his moods humored, and his behavior approved. Whatever frustrates him provokes his wrath. Regarding himself as the center of the universe, or at least all the universe of which he is aware,

he seeks compliance. Everyone and everything must always say 'Yes.' The word 'No' he cannot abide. If he is fortunate, he will leave this stage in due time and learn to accommodate himself to realities. He will accept the fact that dominance is denied him, that a great deal of the world is not concerned about him, that he can have only a little of what he wants, and that even this little is precarious. Instead of approbation and concurrence, he will expect opposition and divergence. And so, besides the word 'yes,' which he likes to hear, he will adjust himself to the word 'no,' and not be too put out about it. In other words, he will have forsaken the childish stage, with its illusion of omnipotence, for the more adult stage, leading to emotional maturity . . . If his development is arrested, which it may be if he is over-indulged — or, as we say 'spoiled' — and which it also may be if he is too much thwarted so that he develops the habit of antagonism — he remains emotionally a child."

A nation will only be as strong, as mature, as well educated, as cultured, as tolerant, as just and as honest as its constituents. We cannot raise our overall standard of living and not raise it for all Americans.

## THE PASSING PARADE . . .

by EDD DOERR



The news from the church-state front is not very encouraging this month. The American Institute of Public Opinion (The Gallup Poll) reported on February 10 that the percentage of Americans who oppose federal aid to parochial schools has dropped considerably during the past two years, even though Pres. Kennedy has publicly stated that such aid would be unconstitutional.

The population sample ballot was not asked for its opinions on the desirability of federal aid to education per se, but only to respond to the following question: "If the federal government . . . decides to give money to aid education, should the money go only to public schools, or should the money go to help Catholic and other private schools as well?" While in March of 1961 only 36 percent polled favored including parochial schools in federal aid plans, 49 percent were reported to favor such action in February of 1963. — Opposition to federal aid to parochial schools in the same period declined from 57 percent to 44 percent. The change is reported to be almost solely a Protestant one. Of course, this opinion poll, because of the controversial nature of the subject, probably rates opposition to parochial school aid too low; it also ignores the tremendous complexity of the problem and of political realities.

Nonetheless, one cannot avoid the unpleasant conclusion that opposition to clericalism is diminishing as a result of the Catholic Church's massive and unending propaganda offensive. The Vatican oligarchy is updating its methods with some success, which means that "containing" clericalism will be increasingly difficult.

\* \* \*

"Well, if we are no longer a Protestant country, and we are not to be a Catholic country, what are we?" asks Villanova Law School dean Harold Reuschlein in the January **Catholic World**. "We are," he answers, "a country dominated by secular humanism. The real danger to Catholicism is not Protestantism; it is not Judaism; it is anthropocentric humanism on the march. The fact in itself makes it more essential than ever that all men, be they Catholic, Protestant or Jew, who believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, must unite." Reuschlein goes on to say that the Supreme Courts' decisions relat-

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ing to church-state matters constitute "not a trend toward the uncommitted state, but to the state committed to secularism;" he harps on this theme and abuses the Court for six pages, at length concluding that Catholics will have to press ever harder to win the country over to their clericalist interpretation of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Reuschlein rightly recognizes that secular Humanists, and this includes Rationalists and Freethinkers, provide the most articulate opposition to clericalism and clericalist aims, but his exaggeration of our strength and influence is only a propaganda device to throw a scare into the millions of Americans who may be denominationally uncommitted but who have residual tendencies toward supernaturalism and a conditioned response to the effect that non-theism and anticlericalism are probably subversive.

The Catholics would polarize society into supernaturalists and humanists, but the best interests of Humanists, Protestants, Jews and individual Catholics would be best served by putting true democrats and lovers of freedom on one side and clericalists and other authoritarians on the other side.

\* \* \*

The American bishops who attended the first session of the Second Vatican Council are reported to be hoping that the Council will produce a "clear-cut definition of the Church's policy on religious toleration" and/or "a declaration of freedom of religion in a pluralistic society." Such statements might well be produced by the Council, and, if issued, will probably cause a great many non-Catholics to fall all over themselves in praising the Vatican as a new champion of religious freedom. However, while the leopard might change his spots in the interest of camouflage, he is not likely to pull his teeth or dull his appetite. Non-Catholics should recognize that what appear to be Vatican policy changes are in reality but propaganda tricks or shifts in tactics; the Church's basic orientations and goals remain the same.

\* \* \*

Catholics are always weeping and moaning about the lack of funds to do the work of the Lord, but Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana, seems to have no difficulty in raising \$18,000,000 in gifts and pledges for its building campaign and in obtaining a \$16,000,000 Ford Foundation grant. Notre Dame is currently finishing an eight million dollar, two million volume library, believed to be the largest collegiate library building

in the world. — ND also announced that donations to the building fund from more than 16,000 alumni averaged \$365. (How many of us donate \$365 per year to the cause of reason and freedom?)

\* \* \*

As a result of continued Catholic pressures, students at two Missouri state colleges, the Missouri Schools of Mines and Southwest Missouri State College, may now take religion courses for credit. Although these programs are reported to involve no public funds, the whole business strikes me as being rather questionable. How long will it be before state universities are giving credit for sectarian instruction in Baptist, Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, Jewish and Greek Orthodox theology?

\* \* \*

The National Education Association, the 816,000 member group which represents a majority of the country's teachers, continues to oppose federal aid for non-public schools. NEA president Robert Wyatt recently presented the teachers' views before hearings of the House Education Committee.

\* \* \*

The Catholic press is gloating that the 2nd Vatican Council was responsible for toning down the anticlericalism at a recent POAU convention in Denver. Baptist Dr. Stanley Stuber, executive director of the Missouri Council of Churches who attended some sessions of the Vatican Council as an observer, was lulled into stating that "there was a real desire on the part of the Roman Catholic bishops to make us feel at ease. There was no strategy, no insincerity in their friendship." — But, fortunately, POAU was not lulled to sleep. Theodore Smylie, president of POAU's St. Louis chapter, led an attack on Citizens for Educational Freedom, a Jesuit front organization repeatedly exposed in the **Rationalist**.

\* \* \*

Catholic Auxiliary Bishop Clarence Elwell of Cleveland told an interfaith meeting in that city that "U. S. Educators must make a thorough study of religious education throughout the world in order to deal with the problem of getting back into American public schools." But two non-Catholics, Congregationalist Geo. E. Drew and American Jewish Committee area director Irving Levine, supported the principle of church-state separation and urged that parents and churches provide religious instruction on their own time.

\* \* \*

In Kansas City, William Ball, a lay flunky

and spokesman for the hierarchy, told a joint Catholic-Jewish symposium that Catholics need Jewish help in getting government aid for parochial schools. "We would hope," said Ball, "that — in the matter of Catholic education — no encouragement and no cooperation would be lent by Jewish quarters to the forces of extremism in the field of church-state relations." Ball, who was the principle author of a 1961 study on church-related schools and federal aid sponsored by the Legal Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (the hierarchy's official mouthpiece), referred to the church-state separation principle as a "slogonized rigidity," said that education cannot be theologically neutral, and insisted that government subsidize the "secular" portions of parochial education.

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# THE WIDE WIDE MOVEMENT



by ELDON SCHOLL

The magnificent support given to Madalyn Murray and her court case has shown that the Rationalist movement can support worthy causes. This kind of activity has never been effectively organized, even in the Murray case, which was an exception to the past fifteen years or more.

The movement has had poor leadership and poor support. Many leaders have not benefited the movement and a few thought they could be supported in style. We can't do much about the past mistakes except to learn from them and do something about our future. We have supported the wrong people in the past, much to the regret of many. After a while we are reluctant to support anything. We would caution our readers to be careful about your support. There are only a few points to watch.

Any organization to be honest has elected officers with announced meetings. The officers are not "owners" of the organization. And watch for audited financial statements and for leaders who work for the movement, not for themselves. It is always easy to donate and let the other fellow do the work for you but if you do this then make sure your money is going for the benefit of the movement. If you believe in democracy then join only those organizations in which you have the right to vote. Do not accept promises as fact. Support Rationalism, not individuals posing as a movement.

There are several organizations that meet the above requirements, one of which is the American Rationalist Federation, composed of all the older, experienced, and organized local groups of Rationalists. Member organizations belonging to the federation must meet minimum standards and this screens out undesirable organizations. National activity for the movement should be carried out by a national organization. In the case of the ARF we have the local groups working together in the national area. We can't see any other way to deal with all situations. The ARF can handle all situations if supported. It was founded by the older organizations that understood the entire picture and concluded that all the one-man "national" organizations in the past never were successful. The half-dozen today are not successful and are no credit to the movement.

The ARF is the only Rationalist activity organized "from the ground up." And there should be only one such national organization. The officers are elected through delegates from local groups and can be voted out at any time. Their terms are yearly.

Dictatorship belongs to the Catholic Church. If you disagree with it you cannot voice an opinion or vote, only walk out. Our movement should do

better than this. — The ARF was founded on democratic lines and there are many who carefully watch for any slight infraction of the rule.

Before any one can organize the movement nationally, he or she should gain experience and knowledge of the movement by first working in committee, or organizing his own locality and progress up to a national officer. If that person can be a success and be able to work with others on a local basis, then he or she might be ready to work in national or international areas. The movement has not recovered from the last sudden organizer who some years ago caused more harm than good and almost destroyed it.

If only one idea emerges from this and can be remembered, it is: **RETAIN YOUR VOTE!** This reporter would welcome readers' opinions and experiences on this subject.

\* \* \*

Dr. R. C. Traill, president of the RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA was appointed as vice-principal of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. For some years he has been head of the Chemistry Department.

\* \* \*

Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery recently received front page news for saying that Christians with their promised reward of life ever after are most reluctant to leave this wicked world. He added he found hymns a bit dismal.

Speaking at a banquet in Stockholm City Hall, after receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature, John Steinbeck, author of "The Grapes of Wrath," said that man has assumed "God-like power" and was "our greatest hazard and our only hope." He added that "we must seek in ourselves for the responsibility and the wisdom we once prayed some deity might have."

\* \* \*

Doctor Francis Crick, Nobel Prize winner for medicine, resigned his fellowship of Churchill College, Cambridge, because they planned to build a chapel. "Why should I support the propagation of error?" he asked. Later, when interviewed on BBC television, Dr. Crick was asked if he believed in God. He replied: "No, of course not."

\* \* \*

Dr. Peter Remmant, Professor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia, caused a sensation recently when he spoke to a crowded auditorium of students at a lunch-hour lecture on why he didn't believe in God. According to the press, gasps repeatedly rippled through the audience, and one student whispered: "I can't believe it." He found none of the arguments for God convincing. He said, "They represent nothing but (the) familiar human tendency to personify our own ignorance." Theologians, he pointed out, filled in the gaps of scientific explanation by God. "A system of explanation which loses itself in a mystery isn't a very good system of explanation," said Dr. Remmant.

\* \* \*

Thomas Hyslop, Provost of Denny, caused a local and (Scottish) national sensation last year when he refused to attend the Kirkin' of the Council because he was an Atheist. — The Sunday Post devoted a page to Mr. Hyslop and his atheistic views under the heading "The Honest Truth". Asked if he ever had doubts about atheism he

answered "Never. But I don't blame Christians for doubting the existence of a benevolent God. With millions starving on the earth, with pain, illness, threat of war, there's plenty to doubt." When asked if he had read the Bible he replied: "I certainly have. But how many professing Christians know the Christian faith?" On life after death Mr. Hyslop said: "It is vanity and fear that cause people to want a life after death."

\* \* \*

"A cradle-to-grave service from a priesthood unimpeded by family ties" was the description of Roman Catholicism in the BBC television program "That Was The Week That Was." The program went on "The Pope claims to be infallible but he can't tell you which television set to buy, only which television programs not to watch." The program was equally irreverent at the expense of other religions assessing them as you would assess merchandise from the standpoint of the consumer. "How much do you have to put in? What do you get out of it?" The Church of England was considered the best buy, being pretty well adaptable to all needs. There was strong criticism of the program. The night before this program a "Tonight" program criticized a "weeping Madonna" film taken in Sicily as shoddy commercialism and sanctimonious vulgarity blossoming from the alleged miracle. Among the writers for the "That Was the Week" show, two described themselves as "the usual agnostics" and one, Christopher Booker, called himself an atheist.

Among evidence of a change in the BBC is the fact the booklet "BBC Variety Programmes Policy Guide for Writers and Producers" has been withdrawn, which means lifting the ban on references to religion, royalty, politicians and sex in light entertainment programs.

\* \* \*

Mr. Cyril Cannon of West Wickham, Kent, England, set himself the task of copying the New Testament in copperplate handwriting. It took 580 hours and 848 pages. Interviewed on television he said "I am not a deeply religious man." He told a TV interviewer though his understanding of the Pauline epistles had increased it had not improved his estimation of Paul.

\* \* \*

The death of Bayard Simmons brings to a close the long, useful life of a well known freethinker. He died at Croydon, England, where he was born and where he received 22 wounds during the bombings in the Second World War. He was a pioneer in the struggle for women's rights and was the first man to go to prison for the Suffragettes. He was proud of this honor. He was a Fabian, a member of the Independent Labour Party in his early years and for some time was private secretary to H. G. Wells. His father was a lay preacher but once uttered blasphemy in the chapel and had to be drowned out by the organist playing a Bach Fugue. At dinner that night Thomas Frederick Simmons told his family there was no God. Bayard was seven years old at the time. Many of Bayard Simmons' verses were published in the Freethinker and later collected into two volumes. He was elected to the board of G. W. Foote and Co., and served on the editorial committee. He did a great deal of translation, especially from the Russian. He lived a long and full 80 years.

The quip of an Anglican bishop: "The Church of Rome claims she is infallible; the Church of England says only that she is right."

\* \* \*

The Dean of Canterbury was shocked to read that Somerset Maugham didn't believe in God.

\* \* \*

The NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY is building a tape-recording library for use by its branches or members throughout England and it proved valuable when a speaker was unable to appear for a meeting at Glasgow.

\* \* \*

Joseph Lewis writes that he expects to go to London soon to make arrangements for the Thomas Paine statue. "When I went to London last October to make the offer, the betting was 1000 to 1 that I would not succeed." If any of our readers see any news item about the Thomas Paine statue in London, please mail it to us.

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# The Roman Catholic Index Of Forbidden Books

by EMMETT McLOUGHLIN

Author of: PEOPLE'S PADRE, AMERICAN CULTURE AND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS; CRIME AND IMMORALITY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Very much confusion prevails in the minds of both Protestants and Catholics regarding the INDEX OF FORBIDDEN BOOKS. Some Catholics deny its existence because they have not studied the Catholic religion for themselves, and nuns when teaching catechism say nothing about it because they know practically nothing about it. Priests as a rule do not teach their people about it because, in a Democracy that is supposed to guarantee freedom of thought, they cannot explain the inconsistencies of American freedom of thought and the restrictive legislation of the Church that will not let its people think. — Catholic bookstores routinely will say there is no such thing because they never had a copy of it for sale.

The Index is based on ancient laws of the Church which forbid the reading of anything at all that might disturb the Catholic, be he priest or layman, in the smug confidence of the divine origin of his religion. This rather vague prohibition of earlier centuries has been codified in the Code of Canon Law, which is now used to govern the Roman Catholic church. The moral theology textbooks point out the guilt, as far as sin is concerned, in violating these laws; and the Code of Canon Law itself prescribes the ecclesiastical penalties for this violation.

The Index may be divided into two parts. They are, first the part that condemns books by title and author; second by, and, by far the most important, the section that condemns books by type or category. The listing of books condemned specifically by title and author comprises the lesser group of forbidden books. It is obvious that even an efficient Vatican "Congregation" or department could not possibly keep up with the volume of books being published around the world. If the slowness of the Roman Catholic 'congregations' is also taken into consideration, it can be realized that this specific listing of books would be antiquated by the time it were published.

Some books are being routinely condemned by title and author, and their listing appears in current issues of Acta Spostolicae Sedis, the official periodical of the Vatican. They are also listed in the "Commentary on Canon Law" published by Bouscaren. These books are usually of Italian, and French and German authors, because the members of the "congregation" in Rome do not seem to be too familiar with the books published in the English language; or, if so, they are published in such profusion that the Hierarchy cannot keep up with them. If a recompilation of books condemned by title and author is routinely published, it is not widely circulated, at least in the English speaking world. It is certain that the average Catholic priest does not have such a list available, nor does the average Catholic family.

Most books that are condemned are forbidden by category. The following summary is taken from the Roman Catholic textbook MORAL THEOLOGY, by Reverend Heribert Jone, published by the Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1952, p. 269 seq. All Roman Catholic textbooks, whether written in English, or, as is more common, in Latin, teach exactly the same to the finest detail, because the censorship of books is contained in the Code of Canon Law which is obligatory on all Roman Catholics in the world.

### **Ecclesiastical Legislation on Books**

The Church's laws concerning books are divided into those that treat of censorship, and those that deal with the prohibition of books.

What is said of "books" in the two following chapters applies also to newspapers, magazines and other publications, unless it is evident that "books" are to be understood in the strict sense (C. 1384) Pamphlets and leaflets, too, come under these regulations; but duplicated and mimeographed material is not

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— Thomas Paine.

included (unless it is published in this form), e.g., the duplicated lectures of a professor for the convenience of his students.

### Chapter I

## THE CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS

1. **Books to be submitted** to the Church's censorship, whether written by the clergy or the laity, are the following: I. The books of Sacred Scripture as well as annotations and commentaries thereon; II. books that treat of Holy writ, Theology, Church History, Canon Law, natural theology, ethics and other cognate sciences; prayer books and books of devotion; books that contain religious, moral, ascetical, mystical or similar teaching, and other such books that are of special interest to religion and morality, even though their purpose is to foster piety; III. sacred pictures, no matter by what process they are to be printed, and whether to be published with prayers or not (C. 1385).

Permission for publication must be given in writing. The "nihil obstat" (nothing prevents it) of the censor should precede the "Imprimatur" (let it be printed) of the Bishop. Generally the name of the censor is also to be added (C. 1393). In the printed book itself the name of the censor need not be published; but the "Imprimatur" and the name of him who granted it must be indicated, as well as the time and place of the granting. This may be placed at the beginning or at the end of the book. (C. 1394.)

Translations and new editions (not mere reprints), require a new approbation. This is not required for the separate publication of articles that have appeared in periodicals (C. 1392).

2. **Permission without censorship** is required for the publication of a work by:

1. **The laity** when writing for newspapers or magazines that are hostile to the Catholic religion or good morals (C. 1386).

This permission is granted by the local Ordinary.

2. **The diocesan clergy** even when they write books on secular subjects or when they contribute to, or edit, periodical literature or daily papers. (C. 1386).

3. **Religious** who must first obtain the permission of their major superiors and then that of the local Ordinary when they publish a book, or write for daily papers or periodical magazines or edit the same (C. 1385, 1386).

The "Local Ordinary" is either the bishop of the diocese wherein the convent is situated or the bishop of the printer or the publisher.

**Greetings  
from  
Ludmila  
and  
Victor**

III. **The violation** of these laws is usually a grave (mortal) sin.

In less important matters there is only a venial sin, more so in case permission alone is required than when the work must also be submitted to ecclesiastical censorship.

#### Chapter II

### THE PROHIBITION OF BOOKS

I. **The extent of the Prohibition.** A forbidden book is one which, without due permission, may not be published, read, retained, sold, translated, or in any manner whatsoever communicated to others (C. 1398).

II. **Books forbidden** by the common law of the Church are:

1. Editions of the original text of the Sacred Scriptures published by non-Catholics; likewise, translations of the same made or published by them.

2. Books that in any way defend heresy or schism or that tend to undermine the foundations of religion.

3. Books which, of set purpose, attack religion or morals.

4. Books of non-Catholics which professedly treat of religion unless it is clear that they contain nothing contrary to Catholic faith.

5. Books published without due ecclesiastical approval which treat of Sacred Scripture, or contain annotations and commentaries thereon or translations thereof into the vernacular; books containing new apparitions, revelations, visions, prophecies or miracles or which seek to introduce new devotions.

6. Books which attack or ridicule any Catholic dogma or defend errors proscribed by the Holy See; books which disparage divine worship, or seek to undermine ecclesiastical discipline, or avowedly defame the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the clerical or religious state.

Therefore, a book is forbidden which contains a collection of defamatory accounts concerning various popes or of the priestly or religious states, not, however, if the person of one individual pope or a certain religious order is disparaged.

7. Books which teach or approve of superstition, fortune telling, divination, magic . . . spiritism and other such practices.

8. Books which declare duels, suicide and divorce to be lawful; furthermore, books that treat of freemasonry and similar secret societies, maintaining that they are useful or that they are harmless to the Church and civil society.

9. Books which, with avowed intention, treat of, describe or teach, lewd or obscene matters, such as the methods of birth control.

10. Liturgical books containing unauthorized changes so that they no longer agree with the authentic editions approved by the Holy See.

11. Those books which contain apocryphal indulgences, or such as have been condemned or revoked by the Holy See.

12. Also forbidden are all images, however reproduced, of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, the Angels, Saints, or other Servants of God that are not in keeping with the sentiment and decrees of the Church.

N.B.: Besides those named there are other books proscribed by the special decrees of competent authorities (Cf. C 1395).

IV. **The violation of the laws** on the prohibition of books is in itself a grave (mortal sin); but in matters of lesser moment there is only a venial sin.

To retain forbidden books is a mortal sin if one keeps them for more than a month. — It is not sinful to keep a book for a short time either because one intends to surrender it to the authorities or because he is awaiting permission to read it.

### CENSURES "LATAE SENTENTIAE"

#### Article I

#### Individual Excommunications

An excommunication "Speciali modo" (in a special way) reserved to the Holy See is incurred by:

Those who **publish, defend, or who knowingly read or retain** without the requisite permission books of apostates, heretics or schismatics, or books **nominally proscribed** by Apostolic Letters, provided such books have actually been published (C. 2318).

Excommunication deprives a Catholic of the Sacraments of his Church. He cannot go to confession, receive communion, be married, or receive the Last Rites. He cannot even be

GREETINGS

To You On Your

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**Thomas Paine Society  
of Illinois**

buried in a Catholic cemetery even if he owns a plot and his wife is already buried there. (C. 2260, 2261).

Average Catholics and most Protestants do not realize the extreme implications of the above regulations. A grave or mortal sin means hell fire for Catholics for all eternity if they die without repentance which usually involves going to confession to a priest.

This means eternal hell fire for a Catholic layman who writes an article for the *Christian Science Monitor*, or *Church and State Review*, or the *Christian Century* without permission. (C. 1386).

This means eternal hell fire for a priest who writes regularly for the *New York Times*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, or for the *National Geographic Magazine* without permission. — (C. 1386).

This means that your Catholic neighbor is excommunicated and condemned to hell forever if he reads your copy of the *King James* or the *Revised Standard Bible*. (C. 1399).

This means excommunication and hell forever if he merely reads the *Book of Mormon* of the *Latter Day Saints*, *Science and Health* of the *Christian Scientists*, the *Great Controversy* of the *Seventh Day Adventists*, or any writings of *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Zwingli* or any other Protestant theologian or historian. — (C. 1399).

A Catholic hangs over the pit of hell with a mortal sin on his soul if he reads a book defending American freedom of thought, American freedom of worship, American separation of Church and State because all of these "errors" have been "proscribed by the Holy See." (C. 1399-6).

In the light of the above it is difficult to understand how Roman Catholics and their priests can reconcile their acceptance of the *Index* and its ramifications with the principles and freedoms of American Democracy.

An intelligent, sincere American cannot be an intelligent sincere Roman Catholic, for a sincere Catholic must accept and live up to **everything** his church teaches, not merely the doctrines or laws that he agrees with.

#### THE DEVIL . . .

I confess to a sneaking respect for Satan, for he is preeminently successful in his chosen profession.

He sat into the game with a cash capital of one snake; now he's got half the globe grabbed and an option on the other half . . . I have been called a defender of the devil; but I hope that won't prejudice the ladies against me, as it was a woman who discovered him.

— From William Cowper's "Iconoclast" published in the 1890's in Waco, Texas.

## Readers' Forum •

### LETTER SENT BY LEE MERIWETHER TO MRS. MADALYN MURRAY:

I've heard how Maryland is treating you and your boy, Bill, because you are atheists — spitting in your face as you walk a street, throwing rotten eggs at you, dumping garbage on your lawn, beating Bill with a baseball bat, etc. This does not surprise me. I'll be surprised if Maryland treats you decently.

Once Maryland, with steel forceps, tore the tongue out of an atheist's mouth, then tied him to a stake and burned him alive. — Thanks to philosophers like *Voltaire*, historians like *Gibbon* and orators like *Robert Ingersoll*, Maryland does not torture and kill atheists now; but it regards them as more vicious and less truthful than convicted felons. Maryland lets burglars and bank robbers testify in court if they say they believe the Bible is God's word; Maryland forbids atheists to testify even if theirs is the only testimony that can save an innocent man from conviction of murder.

The Rationalist Society of St. Louis appointed me chairman of a committee to go to Annapolis and urge appeal of the state's anti-atheist law. I accepted the appointment but not one of the 150 legislators is willing to sponsor a bill to repeal the anti-atheist law.

After 100 years Maryland stopped killing the atheists; after another 100 years it may stop treating them as brutally as it does now. This will help posterity; it won't help you and Bill. The thing for you to do is to move to another state that does not have Maryland's barbaric law.

\* \* \*

### CLERICALISM IN RHODE ISLAND . . . AND IN MEXICO

Congratulations to *Fred M. Dusenbury, Jr.*, for his brilliant rationalist letter-writing as reported in the March issue of *AR*. And may he train his literary talents on the even greater need for rationalist (and Constitutional) procedures in the

#### GREETINGS

to the

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entire school system of Rhode Island. In Rhode Island, the Christian Science Monitor reported March 2, a legal showdown is shaping up over a law signed on February 27 by Gov. Chafee that provides for state aid in the purchase of textbooks by private schools. Most of these schools are Catholic as this state is now largely Catholic in population. The priests there are thus unusually honest in their arrogance in demanding state aid. And, the politicians, in proportion, weak, meek, and submissive. This textbook bill was passed in the R.I. House by 67 to 8.

Only one Democrat was American enough to vote against it. She (sic) was Arline R. Kiven, and might well be a good person to contact for support in counter-attack on this measure.

The subservience of the politicians to the Church, especially in R. I., but more or less everywhere, may be judged from the need of the U.S. Supreme Court, Feb. 18, to declare unconstitutional the activities of a Rhode Island "Commission to Encourage Morality in Youth." The activities of this commission, established by the R. I. legislature, said the Supreme Court, amounted to unconstitutional censorship. What the commission did was to warn book and magazine wholesalers and retailers not to handle certain "immoral" publications.

It is worthy to note, by God, that the U. S. Supreme Court decision, against what was effective Catholic censorship in Rhode Island, was delivered by Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., a Catholic. Some Catholic publications have charged that he is in-

fluenced by "Communism." Feel better or worse, Mr. Dusenbury, with such company? Hope you can enlist his support, too, in the further fight needed in Rhode Island!

Down in Mexico, it's the same — only different, and worse. The MONITOR reports, March 2 also, that the government there DOES provide textbooks for compulsory distribution to primary age children in both public and private schools. This, the Catholic Church there, does NOT like.

Of course, in Mexico too, the Church wants textbooks at government expense. But it apparently wants to write what the books teach, too.

The director of the Mexican government's program, Martin Luiz Guzman, told the Monitor that the Church's schools controlled the private textbooks business through an alliance with business. "Until our program started," he said, "even the books that public school children used were anti-government and pro-Church. Not a single history text published by a private company mentioned the fact that the leader of our independence movement was a priest: Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla." (The Church defrocked and excommunicated him.) — (Father Hidalgo was finally executed, along with all his close followers . . . apparently with the aid of the Church.) "No history text mentioned these facts. Our textbooks do. That is why the Church does not want them," Guzman concluded.

In many persons' opinion, this would be equivalent to leaving out George Washington from American history.

P. HENSEL.

\* \* \*

Dear Sir:

Most people who believe in the personified monolithic deity say that God, among other things, is all-perfect because He is pure spirit and therefore knows of every move that man makes. Yet, how can this be? Exactly how does God know of every move that man makes? Does He see us? Hear us? Touch us? Smell us? Or sense us in some other manner?

He obviously cannot perceive us by sensory means since He is pure spirit and can therefore have no organs upon which are registered sense impulses. And if he cannot somehow sense us, He cannot know of every move we make and hence He is imperfect.

But yet, if He does sense us, this means that He is susceptible to both pleasure and pain in one degree or another and since He is infinitely superior to man, it stands to reason that His senses are much more highly developed and He is therefore subject to both intense pain and intense pleasure. But if God is subject to intense pain, how can He be perfect? Would it not be impossible to "hurt" a perfect being? On the other hand, if God cannot perceive either pleasure or pain, this means that He is indifferent to both pleasure and pain and is therefore a Stoic. But most sophisticated and respectable religions condemn Stoicism as a false doctrine and therefore by necessity must condemn God as a false being, unless they wish to admit that, due to the ability to experience pain, He is not perfect. Now since non-believers also condemn this perfect God as a falsehood, it follows that both believers and non-believers are in perfect accord that a perfect God is a perfect myth. — So what are we all fighting about anyway?

RICHARD SUMAKTIS,

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# BOOKS



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### AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN ORIGINS by Georges Ory

This fascinating booklet, translated from a 1961 French publication, reasons that Christianity began as a mystery religion and was later coupled with Judaism. This interpretation of the evidence, plausible but complicated by many other considerations, is only the basis of the complete picture. Ory suggests also, therefore, that a sect following a Chrestos became confused with that of Paul, who followed Christos. Serapis was called Chrestus, as were several other mystery gods, and the title meant "good," but several references to the word in ancient texts have been supposed to mean Christ.

Such bald statements as the above are unfair to the pamphlet, as it reasons and gives sources. It seems that early manuscripts of various types are still full of unappreciated clues. How could Clement of Alexandria, in listing the symbols of Christianity, have neglected to mention the cross? How could Melito, about 170 C.E., write about Nero's cruelties without mentioning his supposed persecution of Christians in 64? What of the strange case of the ignorant and ineffective disciples said to have been chosen by Jesus to be apostles?

In the Clementine Homilies, of the third century, it is clearly implied that Paul came with a false doctrine and was supplanted by Peter with the truth, after the fall of Jerusalem in 70. Also, Christ was distinguished from the Son of Man. Marcion, in 140, was content to have Jesus, the son of God, arrive as a full-grown man, although only in the form of man.

A great deal is condensed into 60 pages, and the footnotes give references and further items of interest. The sources of the god Jesus are discussed. A distinction is made between the Cross of the Sun or Light, and that of a crucifixion. The Secular Society of London and the Rationalist Union of Paris have here given us a bargain.

— Harry E. Mongold

Order through Book Service - AR, 5437 Enright Ave., St. Louis 12, Mo. 50c ea. — 3 for \$1.00.

### STUDENT

by David Horowitz

The author is a teaching assistant in English at the University of California at Berkeley. In this

book, he reports on the political activities of the Berkeley students and attempts to answer the charges hurled by the right wing organizations against these students. Much space is devoted to the events leading up to "Operation Abolition."

According to Horowitz, the beat student has now been replaced by a Student who is politically mature and serious, who is learning to be politically effective. Today's student, he adds, is constantly thwarted in his attempts to gain a thorough understanding of present world cultures. He is much maligned for his belief in the necessity for freedom of inquiry.

Justice Black is quoted many times, concerning his interpretation of the First Amendment of the Constitution. Excerpts from magazine articles and newspaper items add interest. To conclude a thorough coverage of the role played by today's student, Horowitz discusses the stand taken by the University of California to the recent occurrences.

— Nan Mongold

Order through Book Service - AR, 5437 Enright Ave., St. Louis 12, Mo., 65c.

\* \* \*

### CHURCH, STATE AND ROME

by W. E. R. O'Gorman

This is a privately published paperback, written

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(An article on Mormonism by ARTHUR B. HEWSON will appear in a forthcoming issue of the American Rationalist).

by a man who was reared as a Protestant, who became and remained a Roman Catholic for more than thirty years, who was ordained and continued as a R. C. priest for seventeen years, who resigned from that church in 1953 to rejoin the Protestant communion, and who has since conducted a crusade to warn the American people of the great and imminent danger which the Vatican complex poses for our future. Mr. O'Gorman is another Emmett McLoughlin and, as Rationalists, we must wish him well in his principal endeavor, which is to expose the social, economic, and political machinations of the Vatican and its agents, lay and clerical, throughout the world, and especially in the United States.

To the well-informed Rationalist or freethinker, there is not much that is entirely new in the book. But it is this sort of material which we should place in the hands of our slumbering Protestant and secularist friends. CHURCH, STATE AND ROME is a popularly written and factual handbook of the principal practices and doctrines of the unchanging and monolithic Church of Rome. It is a sad commentary indeed upon the human race that it does tolerate such a monstrous thing as this to exist on the face of this earth. We believe with Mr. O'Gorman that the Vatican and its organization constitute by far the greatest threat to culture now existing on this planet. We need a thousand more like him to alert this generation to the peril now facing us.

One of the most impressive elements in O'Gorman's book consists in the incisive manner in which he shows the Roman Catholic Church, far from being a bulwark against Communist totalitarianism, is its prolific breeding-ground, and indeed, often its friend and ally. In spite of all its propaganda to the contrary, there is no serious quarrel between the Vatican and Khrushchev. They are brethren under the skin. Communism does not grow in Protestant or in secularist-democratic countries: it flourishes in those dominated by the Vatican and constitutes the only available weapon by which the oppressed can revolt against the horrible conditions resulting from the rule of the Hierarchy. As an example, O'Gorman cites the case of Bishop Wyszinski of Poland, who campaigned for an all-communist government in his own country and who was thereafter lauded in Rome and rewarded with a cardinal's hat. O'Gorman also points out that all such corrupt American political machines as those of Tammany Hall, Hague of New Jersey, Prendergast of Kansas City, and many others of the same kind, have all been dominated entirely by Roman Catholics. He might have added the Mafia to the list.

I deem it a privilege to recommend **Church, State and Rome** to all readers of the **American Rationalist** and to add that we should do our best to get this book into as many hands as possible.

— Martin A. Larson.

Order through Book Service - AR, 5437 Enright Ave., St. Louis 12, Mo. — \$1.90.

• The intellectual attainments of a man who thinks for himself resemble a fine painting, where the light and shade are correct, the tone sustained, the color perfectly harmonized; it is true to life.

— SCHOPENHAUER.

## GREETINGS

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### Czech-American National Alliance

Marie Kacer, president  
Bela Kotrsal, secretary

**Time and Its End**  
by Howard Slaatte

Vantage, \$4.95. Serious study of the existentialist Berdyaev, especially as to time. The doctrine incorporates Christian concepts and seems a typical struggle with ambiguous words.

\* \* \*

**Logic and Existence**  
by Martin Foss

Philosophical Library, \$4.75. Maneuvers abstractions, regards relations between substances as part of the substances themselves, reasons about reality, love, sin, value, faith, and beauty.

\* \* \*

**The Quest for Ethics**  
by James Simmons

Philosophical Library, 54 pp., \$2.75. Briefly defines the human being and urges education and shared study of ideas, especially by a World University, as a means of increasingly humanizing him.

\* \* \*

**BOOKS RECEIVED**

**MAN: HIS FIRST MILLION YEARS**  
(Revised), Montagu, 1962. Signet. 75c.

**PIETY**

Too many people presume that they are full of the grace of God when they are only bilious . . . They put up long prayers on Sunday; that's piety. They bamboozle a green gosling out of his birth-right on Monday; that's business. They even acquire two voices — a brisk business accent and on Sunday a whine that would make a cub wolf climb a tree.

— From William Cowper's "Iconoclast" published in the 1890's in Waco, Texas.

The whole tone of the Church in regard to woman is, to the last degree, contemptuous and degrading.  
— Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

**CORRECTION:**

Amos Ungherini writes that his Epigram, printed last month in the AR, should have read:  
Theology invents words that obscure,  
Science invents works that endure.

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**Correction:**  
 The Box Office number of the new magazine  
 TILL EULENSPIEGEL was given wrong in our  
 ads in the January and February issues. —  
 If your letter was returned, please try again.  
 The correct address is:  
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