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SECULARISM AND SOCIETY

by F.A. Ridley

Writing this article in the first issue of the Iconoclast, I wish to take this opportunity of assessing the present and future relationship between any viable secular movement and the second half of this twentieth century, the era, par excellence, of the scientific revolution.

It is now abundantly clear that, at least if the term "secular" is to be interpreted in its literal sense, this connotation necessarily implies not only the total negation of the supernatural, but equally, a positive attitude to the current social system; as also simultaneously to its social, cultural and ethical aspects. For, whatever may have been the case in the pre-scientific past, the old liberal-bourgeois fragmentation - by means of which individual man or woman was regarded as a mere disconnected bundle of dissociated opinion in various fields of human existence - is now over and done with for ever. For, as the monistic philosophy of Dialectical and Historical Materialism requires for its effective working, a single unified source of mind and matter; so the social order can only be constituted and regarded as itself a unified monistic whole.

Secularism and the Scientific Revolution

The primary and essential fact about this chronological

era, is that it is the precise era of the scientific revolution. For the evolution of a scientific outlook, that began with the Ancient Greeks, and was then frustrated by an "unholy alliance" of economic scarcity and of religious superstition, at last terminated its adolescence in the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But it is only during the last generation that it has finally "broken through" and remoulded the whole scope of our present day civilisation. It is the victory of this major intellectual revolution, along with its spectacular technical innovations, that alone guarantees the ultimate victory of secularism.

For the first time in history, secularism is on the side of history, and history is on the side of secularism! Should this modern scientific revolution ultimately fail, as its classical Graeco-Roman predecessor failed, who can doubt that the historical result would be, broadly speaking, generally similar to (or perhaps identical with) the historic backwash that followed upon the disintegration of the classical civilisation.

A new "Dark Age", and in all probability, the triumph of some old or new religious ideology, adapted as no humanistic philosophy and ethic could be adapted, to a darkening twilight age of advancing barbarism.

For when the origins of Christianity are viewed in a "dry light" against the background of their contemporary world history, it surely becomes clear that the eventual wave of Oriental superstition, as also the ultimate Christian victory of the "Age of Faith" to which it led, represented in final perspective the backwash of that frustrated industrial revolution? For, just as the classical age of civilisation ultimately perished in the "Dark Age" of Christianity, so with the collapse of our modern scientific culture, a new "Dark Age" would intervene. To be sure, the Hitler "Brown Age" of incipient barbarism indicated only too clearly what is the probable fate of any post-scientific culture which has advanced to the verge of an authentic scientific revolution; and then, like the classical scientific revolution, vanished within sight of the Promised Land!

What is the Scientific Revolution?

It must first of all clearly be indicated that the scientific revolution is primarily a social, equally with a technical, revolution. If science is the tool, the indispensable tool, with which this revolution works, its fundamental aim and purpose is to serve human society: one might even say to make human society human! To abolish the pre-historic jungle, in which Mankind in the Mass has so far merely existed; in brief, to transform Homo into at long last Homo Sapiens! Hence, the scientific revolution, like mankind itself, is monistic, monolithic. At bottom, and fundamentally, mankind assumes a single aim: the elevation of humanity, its essential subject matter, from the prehistoric epoch of a future civilised humanity.

(cont. pg.7.)

Editorial:WHY THE ICONOCLAST?

The classical answer of the materialist capitalist to the pressing social needs of the day is Christian evangelism. The revivalist can always count on solid financial backing. He serves a useful social purpose so far as his backers are concerned. It is high time that we thought not of ignoring the religious apologist, as most of our fellow-countrymen do, in the hope that "if we pretend he isn't there he will go away", but of exposing his social pretensions and the reasons for his being.

We need today a secular revivalism; a re-statement of the case for scientific humanism, for atheism and freethought. No critic of religious cant need apologise for his bad manners in continuing to press the attack upon religion now that it is in the doldrums. On the contrary, now is the time to administer the coup de grace. It is most certainly impossible to compromise with a corpse.

For this reason, the Iconoclast comes into being. It does not propose to be uncommitted nor impartial upon social issues lest it offend those who are prepared to be no longer actively opposed to secularism now that its case is proved up to the hilt. It does not wish to preserve a false image of its own or project a new image of freethought. It is an image-breaker.

In producing the Iconoclast as a secular review, we have in mind the traditional struggle of the people as a whole, science as an abstract, and the radical-minded as a minority, against the bulwarks of religion. We hope to express in modern form a struggle that is older than our civilisation.

We shall not propose putting a respectable front upon the atheist so that in a dim light of public indifference he may pass off as a lay preacher. Nor shall we let up in our attacks upon the churches in the hope of gaining the alliance of the clergyman who sees "the writing on the wall" and wishes to borrow our weapons to defend his bastion of privilege. Our conception of a secular movement is that it should be able to unite the freethinker and rationalist in defence of a morality and ethics based upon freedom and reason, as unlike the morality and ethics invented by religion as science is from superstition.

The Iconoclast comes into being at the same time as the Secular League, which is a compact for mutual help in this struggle and whose title is self-explanatory. We are the enemies of all who want to decrease the sum total of human happiness and the friends of those who would increase it.

In actual fact, this leaves us with few opponents outside the churches and embraces the bulk of the working class. It follows logically that if most people sincerely agree

with our ends, then our real problem is to demonstrate the practicality of our means. Few even among tyrants are prepared to defend tyranny. Men will perpetrate excesses against their fellows, but few are poor enough even to admit to themselves the true nature and motivation of their actions.

It follows, then, that our problem is one of education. The nub of our ideas is this: that we should never shirk from stating the truth as we see it. In this we can offend no sincere and honest humanitarian, but only those who do not want the truth, or do not want to learn.

In resuscitating an organisation of which George Jacob Holyoake was the first president, the Secular League may bridge the gap in our ranks caused by the determined and prolonged attacks of the Christian apologists, whilst bringing together the ever-growing number of individuals who find themselves alone in the struggle. The Secular League, as a militant organisation of atheists, will justify its claims or admit its errors. In the Iconoclast we shall pursue this course. There is no other journal devoted to militant atheism. Yet these are the views of a not inconsiderable number of our fellow-citizens. We rightly claim to have time on the air that is denied us by the BBC and the ITV which publicise absurdly small religious minorities. Yet in print we have no voice of our own. This now is rectified, and in the Iconoclast - of which this is the first issue - we hope to state succinctly the case for those whom the Secular League seeks to represent.

Comment:BREAKER OF IMAGES

It must have been the evoked spirit of Omar Khayyam who settled the torry question of a title for us: we had no sooner sat round the "tavern" table than one said: "Why not the Iconoclast?" And so it was agreed. The breaker of images, the name that Charles Bradlaugh, as a young persecuted champion of emergent causes, had adopted as his own, was to be ours. And with it his philosophy: never to accept anything as "sacred" except the right of everyman to knowledge and culture, and the economic conditions necessary for these to take root and flower. Only by the greatest freedom of print and speech can mankind gain his rights - that became the mainspring and life-fight of "Iconoclast".

In an obsequious age of royal pandering, he exposed the "House of Brunswick". In an age of religious sycophancy, he exposed the humbug of priestcraft. In an age when knowledge was the perquisite of the wealthy he addressed himself to the poor, he

(cont. pg.7.col.2.)

Digging Up The Past:LIVE ISSUES AND THE DEAD SEA

by Albert Meltzer

Great indeed was Israel when even the scattered bits of paper it left littering the desert can, two thousand years later, rock the foundations of then undreamed- of civilisations! The Dead Sea Scrolls (currently on view at the British Museum) have directed attention to the "In-between Testament" and its times. It is no longer possible to think of a Jewish Bible, written from start to finish and intended as one work - guide, history and moral textbook; nor of another book, the Christian New Testament.

Jewish History The Jews wrote extensively on their history, and on derivations from other civilisations. To them all literature was sacred and the secular did not exist. At one particular point, a rabbinical council decided on what was and what was not "canonical"; they purged the sacred literature and their decisions have been inherited by the Western world. But they did not stop the flow of literature, nor was there a gap between the Old and New Testaments. There was an "in between", whose fragments are being found.

Censorship It is no coincidence that these fragments are being found today. Fragments of such literature were always to be found, long before the modern interest in archaology, nor was it always fragments; and in the earlier days it was in greater profusion. But the early Christians consigned to the flames all those writings of antiquity that did not agree with the episcopal council that decided what the New Testament was "canonical". To find scrolls in a copper vase in a cave that contradicted theological assumptions could have been put down to the work of the Tempter, ever active in misleading mankind! Nor did matters fare much better in the "Age of Reason" when theology was still a recognised science. When scrolls were found that might have predated Jesus it was assumed logically that the scrolls must have been forged, just as we today would assume a book printed in the reign of James I could not contain references to the United States. Jesus was still a historical character even if not God Almighty!

Myths It did not occur to scholars to doubt this. It was left to the radical opponents of religion. The discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls means that the scholars can no longer accept the historicity of Jesus except by devious excuse. "So vivid a character could not have been forged", protests the old guard of Christian mythology. Jesus is no more vivid than Robin Hood or Father Christmas, yet these are not usually assumed to be historical characters. It may well be argued that there is a historical basis for myths. They may be personifications or idealised figures, folk legends or composite portraits. Naturally, there can be no "proof that Jesus did not exist". It is impossible to find, say, a document of the period of Queen Anne saying categorically that the Count of Saffron Walden did not exist; and if one invents

the Count as oje's ancestor one is safe enough on that score. To prove that he existed is quite another matter.

Several Claimants What the scrolls do prove is that there are several claimants to the throne of Jesus. We already knew that his teaching was not original nor the product of an exclusively Jewish mind. Now we find that among the Essenes more than one could have been personified as Jesus while the most thorough-going excavations, for instance those at Massada relating to incidents that happened during his alleged life and where records are preserved by people who lived when God Incarnate is said to have lived, fail to reveal one shred of evidence for the traditional Jesus.

More, we find that the links between the Jewish and Christian faiths are close, not merely in the sense that the founder of the Christian religion is said to have been a Jew, but in the sense that the Christian myths were already current in Judaism before the "Christian era", and Christ may be said to have lived in (among other periods) one hundred years before Christ!

Mods and Rockers Christianity has been identical with Western civilisation, in one form or another, for hundreds of years. It is nothing if not historic: either the Son of God, God Himself, the Creator Incarnate, came down on earth or he did not. Either God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son or this is utter gibberish. But Modernists in all sects are doing their best. Between the "Mods" - the Bishop of Woolwich and others who take the modernistic stand - and the "Rockers" - whose faith is founded upon the rock of St. Peter! - the Christian Church is trying to close the ranks. On the one hand, the "Mods" do their best to appear humanists; on the other hand, the "Rockers", in the form of the Vatican, find that it is now going to be difficult to maintain that Jesus ever lived and therefore finally and graciously forgive the Jews for Crucifying him. But where was the corpus delicti in the first place? And what has happened to it now?

The traditionalist Christian trembles at the news of every new discovery which it is impossible to debunk in an age of science.

(cont. pg. 8.)

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

"Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolised and traded in by tickets and statutes and standards. We must not think to make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the land, to mark and license it like our broadcloth and our woolpacks. What is it but a servitude like that imposed by the Philistines, not to be allowed the sharpening of our own axes and colters, but we must repair from all quarters to twenty licensing forges." - thus wrote John Milton in his *Areopagitica*.*

Milton was one of our earliest iconoclasts and was probably the first to use this "image smashing" expression. It is therefore not inappropriate to begin these two pages of comment on the news with the above quotation, for the basic demand of secularism for "freedom of the press" still remains a serious objective for which to fight.

Freedom from War Despite the peregrinations of the world's politicians, the war in Vietnam continues into 1966 and, as always, the Papacy is involved up to the hilt in these complex negotiations, open and secret, in order to preserve (and where possible extend) its material and spiritual interests, which have nothing to do with the lives and liberties of the Vietnamese peasants and workers - or with ourselves either.

We should not be taken in, as some secularists are, by the politicians and the Pope's "peace pause" over Christmas. It is but one more manifestation of the world's rulers pulling wool over the people's eyes. They are not for peace. Only the ordinary people, the workers and peasants, have a genuine interest in peace. But we must find a way of directly talking to each other outside the control of governments, and finally solving the problem of this age-long curse of mankind. Nineteen hundred years of Christianity is the history of the mad gallop of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse - Christianity and other religions have found no solution to the problems of poverty and war, any more than governments have. For a perceptive and factual background to the current war, "Vietnam" a pamphlet by Bob Potter, is worth reading.**

Freedom of Speech The history of secularism is also the history of the struggle for freedom of speech. Charles Bradlaugh in his time not only defied all kinds of censorship on the written word, but sturdily defended the right of free speech. But the "right" of free speech is never "given" to us; it has to be "taken". It is a permanent struggle with hierarchy and bureaucracy in every country of the world, without exception.

* Recently re-published under the title of "Liberty of Printing", Coptic Press, 7, Coptic Street, London, W.C.1. (2/-).

** Published by "Solidarity", 197, King's Cross Road, London, W.C.1. (1/-).

(Order direct from the publishers.)

A recent attempt by the police authorities to curb a march and meeting in Manchester on the 27th November, 1965, organised by the British Council for Peace in Vietnam to protest against the war in Vietnam, should be met with strong protests from the secular and freethought movement.

The organisers of the march had provisionally accepted an obscure car park at Watson Street as a central meeting place at the end of the march. But many of the marchers felt that this site was far from adequate and certainly not central. Albert Square, a traditional meeting place, was far from central. However, this site had been refused by the Lord Mayor, the Town Clerk and the Chief Constable.

The more militant of the marchers decided to challenge this decision and, breaking away from the main march, eventually occupied Albert Square without any interference. When the rest of the marchers passed via Brasenose Street, on the way to Watson Street, they were invited to join this meeting. Some did, but the rest marched past to hold a meeting behind Central Station.

A meeting was held but the speaker was arrested. Then followed a series of incidents between the demonstrators and the police. Following these incidents, some marchers were determined to protest against the police action formally at Bootle Street police station; ten people were arrested as soon as they entered the station to complain and charges were preferred against them.

Subsequent to these events, a leaflet has been published (according to the monthly "Direct Action") and widely distributed in Manchester because it is realised that "an official protest will be ineffectual (as with the Challenor case)."

Freedom from Rabbis? Ever since Sir Isaac Wolfson said unguardedly, at a meeting of the Jewish community, "Don't worry, I will find you a good Chief Rabbi", the office has been vacant. Why the difficulty?

The office of Chief Rabbi is not, it is true, essential to Jewish worship. But if they could get a "good Chief Rabbi" they would do so.

(cont. pg.5.col.1.)

News Comment, cont. from pg 4:

The United Synagogue has had one ever since Dr. Adler came across from Hanover, recognised by a grateful Elector when taking a job as King of England, for his services in having prayed successfully for the safe delivery of the mother of his children, whilst the Christian Bishops pointed to the undeniable fact that the Electress was in good health.

The United Synagogue was rent by the controversy over Dr. Louis Jacobs, denounced by the Chief Rabbi for his "Woolwich" type views on Biblical criticism. Whilst the Liberal Jews might have tolerated such a tendency to pander to the scientific age, the Orthodox could scarcely allow it - though it is true that Dr Jacobs' principal critics (such as Wolfson, whose fortune, and thereby his ecclesiastical standing, rests on busy but sinful Sabbath trading) may be regarded as a trifle hypocritical in their lip-service to strict orthodoxy.

The problem is quite simple: it is no longer possible for the Jewish community to find educated men to come forward to the ministry, unless they are narrow and ignorant bigots. The Federation of Synagogues, which does not provide a chief rabbi, has a monopoly of bigots, but they are mostly uneducated. ~~How to get the education and preserve the~~ bigotry? - that is the question. The conservative Judaism of the United Synagogue can neither get a good "compromiser" like Dr. Jacobs, who would be welcome by the liberal-minded, nor one of the fanatical, superstitious "wonder rabbis" with miraculous powers, on the lunatic fringe of orthodoxy, who would sadly detract from the "image" of the community. In a dearth of ministers, it has no suitable, educated and cultured person on whom to call as Chief Rabbi. Better, it is suggested, let the office be suspended.

So, tomorrow, will they be saying at Canterbury!

Freedom from Archbishops While on the subject of "Woolwich" type compromisers, it may interest readers to know that a book is soon to be published under the title: "The Crisis of Christianity." It has been written by my old friend Frank Ridley, and a synopsis of its contents indicates the wide scope of the book. It is in three parts: the evolution of Christianity, the anti-Christian Revolution, and "From Woolwich to the Vatican". Some 30,000 words in length, a condensation of many years research, the book will be appearing in early Spring.

Freedom from Astrologers We must necessarily be cautious in making attacks upon astrologers, numerologists, and other forecasters of the future, since who know, after the knighting of Bill Connor, now popularly known as "Sir Cassandra" we may yet hear of a similar honour being bestowed upon the Daily mirror's astrologer.

But if we turn a blind eye to one of the best means of turning papers into mass circulation dailies in this country, we can, at least, expose similar astrological interests in other more backward countries!

I read that in Ceylon, after consultation with astrologers, Mr Senanayake's National Government has legislated to make the weekly "poya" days, days of religious significance to Buddhists, which fluctuate according to the phases of the moon, the weekly full holiday, and these (together with the preceding half-days) will become Ceylon's variable week-ends next year. They will vary every year with lunar phases.

Freedom from Vandals Since the introduction of the S.T.D. system, telephone kiosks have been broken into throughout London and elsewhere. Large-scale crippling of telephone services almost presages the breakdown of the service itself. Inevitably the voice of the flogger is heard. Beat them, flog them, hang them....the tugs of today will "not respond to soft measures" and so on.

But what is the cause of the outbreak? The unguarded kiosk has long been a feature of English life, like the unguarded newspaper stall with a saucer for the coins. The answer is apparently that since S.T.D. the G.P.O. has slipped up by the introduction of cheap aluminium boxes which are as easy to open as a sardine-tin. Yet the box can now be crammed with money. Indeed, in Birmingham the G.P.O. has had to put back equipment dating from the 'twenties, in the utmost haste.

Is it surprising if today unguarded kiosks with accumulations of money in tin boxes are broken into? The G.P.O. slipped up - "penny wise and pound foolish". Is it just possible that the outcry against vandalism is to cover up somebody's mistake?

Increased prison sentences or extra punishments are never a remedy, but a symbol of failure.

Freedom from Fiction A Christian psychologist and educationist, Dr. Ronald Goldman, points out that the Bible was never intended for the use to which it is put in schools. It is fiction and should be treated as such!

Readers Letter Page: for obvious reasons, we have no readers' letters in this first issue of Iconoclast. We look forward to receiving correspondence from readers and friends (and others) and making this a live feature of future issues. But please keep it short! We also welcome press cuttings (paper and date important) for comment by "Freethinker."

THE ROCK ON WHICH THE POPES BUILD POWER

by John A. Millar

Whether or not Jesus ever fed five thousand with only five barley loaves in the historical past, it is certainly an indisputable fact that in 1966 it takes the labour of more than five thousand of his disciples to feed only five of his bishops - a much less spectacular performance than the alleged original, although from a practical point of view far easier to carry out.

Ostentatious If there is one mark of the Roman Catholic prelate it is ostentatiousness. From the triple tiara to the gold embroidered hemlines of the sacerdotal robes, from the sickly sycophancy of supposedly benign smiles to the sandalled feet that are supposed to concede to the humble a hatred of pomp, the priests of Rome ooze from every pore ostentatiousness.

If there is anything worse than the Catholic prelate who, living in a palace, urges starving masses not to "store up treasures in this world" it could only have been in the first years of the Church's formation when one priest preached "blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" while another raped, forged and pillaged in order to acquire that wealth which was to form "the rock on which I build my church". It was not petra the stone but carbon the diamond!

Economic Basis of Power As is common knowledge, the prelates at Rome least of all believed that "the Lord would provide" and anticipating a vital weakness in the power and ability of their omnipotent and infinite god, forged what is now popularly known as "The Great Testament of Constantine", at present in the British Museum. This document purported to be the dying wishes of the Emperor Constantine and by it the Christian community at Rome claimed the right to most of the fairest portions of Italy. They were successful in their perpetration of this shamless outrage and its result was to set the Christian Church economically on its feet as a real power. That was in the first quarter of the fourth century. Today, the Vatican still owns the lands acquired by the forged testament of Constantine. And more.

It would be well for those supreme optimists who consider that the Vatican is "dead" but has merely overlooked the formality of lying down, to reflect that there have been many occasions when the Vatican has been deprived of these lands - and yet they have been recovered. One could not briefly enumerate the number of times the Church of Rome has been bankrupt (financially), yet she has always recovered her fortunes. Our present era does not appear to represent the greatest challenge the Church has yet had to contend with, even if everything is not quite as she would like. There are no Napoleons or Garibaldis to be seen, and the rival churches seem to think that lambs can safely lie down with lions, while many atheists are naive enough to think that a great power political force like the Vatican has survived for

fifteen centuries by being a mere anachronism in our modern age.

Semper Idem "Semper Idem" is for the faithful - the backroom boys of the Curia never wait for any trend to reach its peak - they believe with Trotsky that "history is on the side of those who are on the side of history". Those who follow Catholic share movements know that Vatican financiers seldom wait till shares have reached their peak before selling. Neither did von Stauffenberg wait til Hitler was dead before denouncing him.

Pact With Fascists If the Vatican did not wait for the defeat of Germany before turning against their Nazi colleagues whom they had helped into power (and so ably assisted when they had got it), they nevertheless overlooked the 1929 Pact under which the Fascist Government exempted the Vatican from all Italian taxes. This they claim is still valid. To its undying shame the present Italian government recognises this as valid except in the case of stock market profits. You would think that is very good going for what is, after all, a church - but no, the Vatican is still not satisfied.

Exemption From Taxation They want complete exemption from all taxes, in all countries, including England and America. According to the Italian weekly "Espresso", the Vatican's unpaid bill amounts to some 40,000 million lire (£23 million) for the last four years alone. It is true that the Vatican denies this. They say they are only evading about £500,000 tax each year. Even if it is a mere half a million per annum, the Curia does not intend to let it go. Thus we read in the "Observer": "Strong pressure is being put on the Italian Government by the Vatican to pass a law exempting the Vatican from profits tax on its share holdings". But there is more to this. What sort of stock market holding does one need in order to have to pay a tax of a million lire on its profits?

cont. pg. 8.)

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Secularism and Society, cont. from pg 1.

For whilst man, Homo, has to fight his fellow man for his daily existence, a human social order does not differ from the jungle in any essential particular: the prehistoric dinosaur and the modern Rothschild both bear sway in their contemporary jungle!

To effect this epoch-making transformation the scientific revolution "revolutes" in several parallel fields of human activity. Put briefly, in the world of ideas, it eliminates every form of irrationality and of traditional superstition. It gives to all the gods and to all creeds that fail to pass its rigorous scientific tests, an anaesthetic so potent that they sink into everlasting sleep; while simultaneously and as an equally necessary function of its liberating activity, scientific revolution also does away with all "restrictive practices" however subsisting and by whomsoever imposed, that inhibit the freest and most unfettered development of humanity, that is, of the whole of humanity, and not merely (as hitherto) of a favoured minority which alone could find appropriate shelter between the partial umbrella of a scarcity economy.

One could, indeed, affirm that the scientific revolution, whenever and wherever found, makes war impartially and implacably upon its two primary enemies, upon scarcity in this world and upon superstition in the realm of ideas. For whilst mankind is perpetually on his knees, whether to supplicate heaven for either immortality in the next world or to acquire his daily bread on earth, he can neither be happy, rational nor even useful to his fellow-man, for if religion sought to make men into angels, the scientific revolution has the more modest, but more attainable aim of transforming the animal jungle into a human paradise; and prehistoric animals into civilised human beings.

What is Secularism? Surely, as and when viewed in the light of the above, it can only be briefly and accurately defined as the essential philosophy of the scientific revolution. For what other aim and purpose has secularism except the basic aim, and one identical with the scientific revolution, of transforming animals in human form ("sheep and beasts of the field", as a cynical Jesuit once described his contemporaries) into bona-fide human beings?

For this purpose, it is not merely necessary to abolish the gods; for after all, the gods are ultimately themselves, the prehistoric creations of pre-civilised man. In the creation of a civilised society, the abolition of religion represents merely the first step, though proverbially the first step is often the hardest! The real aim of the secular philosophy is much more ambitious than the mere negative abolition of all prevailing superstition. For it represents a positive aim, the effective realisation for the first time in all human society of a

civilised society in every sphere of human existence, social and cultural no less than philosophic and economic. A secular social order, when once fully realised, is simply a society in which the scientific revolution has been fully realised, in which all forms of tyranny have been effectively eliminated in both heaven and upon earth.

The Secularist Goal It is towards the eventual attainment of such a completely secular order, in which both superstition and scarcity have been abolished in all their divergent forms, that the scientific revolution of our era is today advancing with seven-league boots. It is with the sole purpose of finally achieving such a social order that secularism, in this second half of the twentieth century, must now consciously direct its efforts towards simultaneously banishing superstition from the sky and scarcity from the earth, along with its attendant barbaric immaturity. By so doing, for the first time in human history, a fully secular society will emerge in a fully scientific world.

(F.A. Ridley will be writing regularly for the Iconoclast.)

Breaker of Images, cont from pg 2:

shouldered their burdens and fought their battles. In England's age of triumphant imperialism, he championed the causes of dependent peoples - he was "member for India" and advocate for Irish freedom. He supported the anti-clerical movements of Italy and France; a friend of Gambetta, Mazzini and Garibaldi. He was never embittered by his own struggle for existence, and shouldered - like the lion he was - the mounting debts that his service to mankind brought him.

We hope that this paper will serve the workers as well; we shall erect no false images, bow down and worship none. We may say as Bradlaugh said: "My desire is rather to provoke discussion among the masses than to obtain willing auditors among the few, and I affirm it therefore as a proposition I am willing to support: that the political condition of the people can never be permanently reformed until the cause of poverty has been discovered and the evil itself prevented and removed.

"Give up blind adhesion to priests and creeds, strive to think and follow out in action the result of your thoughts. Each mental struggle is an enlargement of your mind, an addition to your brain power, an increase of your 'soul', the only soul you have."

Eva Ebury.

Live Issues and Dead Sea Scrolls, cont, pg 3:

He turns to safeguard his vested interests in religion with a new approach. One of the many approaches is a so-called dialogue with atheism. Let us not trouble to deny that the prospect of hobnobbing with the priestly fraternity is too delicious for the high priests of humanism to resist; indeed, a dialogue between the secularist seeking episcopal status and the bishop seeking rationalist bases offers richer pickings than anything since Henry VIII sacked the monasteries! But this time what they propose to plunder are basically secular institutions.

Only by co-existing with the scientific spirit of the age can the churches retain their power over education and the shaping of ethical and moral values.

The Iconoclast comes into being to speak for those rationalists and secularists who feel there is, so far as orthodox religion is concerned, no room for a dialogue, but solely a monologue, the refrain of which can only be YOU LIED. YOU LIED. YOU LIED.

The Reason on which the Popes Build Power, cont. from pg. 6:

This sum is merely the tax on profits! The tax is a low one, and profits are usually in the order of 4-5 per cent per annum in line with world market returns, so at what figure can we arrive for the value of the actual shareholdings? That is, what share of Italian industry, commerce and finance is Vatican controlled?

The "Espresso" figures produce the startling result that 70 per cent of Italian industry is Vatican owned!

SECULAR LEAGUE NOTICES:

Outdoor meetings sponsored by North London, Kingston and Camden Branches: Hyde Park, every Sunday. Speakers J.W. Barker, L. Ebury, J.A. Millar and others. Tower Hill every Thursday, 12.0 to 2.0 pm. L. Ebury.

Indoor meetings: Surbiton and Kingston Branch invite everyone to their meetings at the White Hart, Kingston Bridge, Hampton Wick, every Friday at 8.0 pm. February 25th: J.A. Millar: "Are All Christians Criminals?"

Secularists living or working in the Borough of Camden (which includes St. Pancras, Hampstead and Holborn) are urged to send for particulars of meetings of the Camden Branch of the Secular League.

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Full details of the aims and objects of the recently founded SECULAR LEAGUE, including application form for membership can be obtained from: J.A. Millar, Secular League, 139, Elm Road, New Malden, Surrey.

The Secular League welcomes all inquiries from interested persons who wish to advance the "good cause" of rationalism, secularism, freethought and social progress, in any area of the country.