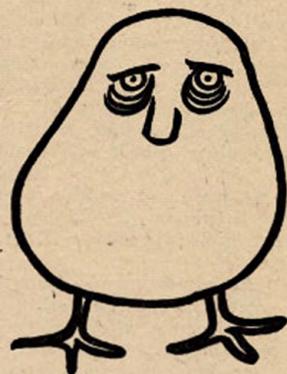


freethought criticism and satire

The Realist



October, 1959

35 Cents

No. 12

The Conversion of George Jean Nathan

by James J. Geller

More than four decades ago, the iconoclastic George Jean Nathan temporarily laid aside his critical poniard during a seasonal lull on Broadway. Measured by his discriminating standards, the opening nights that year were not distinguished by scintillating comedies or absorbing new dramas. Greenwich Village and the Washington Square Players were overlooked, and Eugene O'Neill had not as yet come to the fore.

Even during that silvery epoch, Nathan assaulted the theatrical entrepreneurs, both successful and unsuccessful, for their incapacity to interpret life in terms of the theatre. What they consistently offered to playgoers, he repeatedly asserted, was the direct antithesis, theatre in terms of life. His demands were singularly lofty and uncompromising. George Bernard Shaw once crowned him with the following laurel: "The only drama critic in the world worth reading."

When he wasn't tilting at questionable stage exhibits, his nimble mind explored the field of intellectual ideas which he unflinchingly set down in a lively, pungent and well-knit style, unmatched by few of his contemporaries. On the occasion when no Broadway premieres were scheduled, he gravely speculated about the ultimate course of a deep-dyed rationalist on his deathbed. What about his decision before the last moment of consciousness?

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Would he suddenly discard his painstaking belief of a lifetime for extreme unction?

Nathan reflected that this given situation called for a fearless and resourceful individual on the brink of death to resist any religious overture for eternal salvation. "Why," ran one of Nathan's acidulous interrogatories, "should any thoughtful and civilized person be denied entrance to the gates of heaven merely because he was prompted by the doctrines and arguments advanced by the recognized skeptics as opposed to the ecclesiastics who rested their holy conclusions exclusively on the scriptures?" He resolutely defended the critique of pure reason as against the folly of superstition.

(Continued on Back Cover)

EDITOREALISMS

This Month's Cover Story . . .

James J. Geller has been on the editorial staff of the New York *Herald-Tribune* Syndicate, and has served as story editor in Hollywood for Warner Brothers and Universal studios. He is the author of *Famous Songs and Their Stories*, which had been praised most extravagantly in the printed reviews of Franklin P. Adams, Carl Sandburg, Gilbert Seldes and others, and *Grandfather's Follies*, a light treatment of oldtime stage pieces which was beautifully illustrated with full-page woodcuts by the late John Held, Jr.

When we first read his manuscript of "The Conversion of George Jean Nathan," we felt that something was missing: the answer to the question, *Why?* Replied Mr. Geller:

"One answer may be found in the Gallic expression, *Cherchez la femme*. In Nathan's one-act play, it was the character of the wife who goaded the dying man. Perhaps the same thing happened to Nathan himself in the last few hours. It always seems to me that women are more prone than men to this type of proselytism.

"It is also possible that the victim's mind was not normal, as I have indicated. Or perhaps he remembered that his mother attended a Catholic school. Again, who knows the precise strategy, Machiavellian or otherwise, employed by the gentlemen of the cloth?

"When I casually mentioned Nathan's conversion to my friend, Aldous Huxley, he expressed considerable surprise. He, Huxley, told me that he had paid a visit, only a few days previously, to Nathan's bedside at the Royalton Hotel in New York City, and had detected no deterioration of his mental faculties.

"To try to explain this phenomenon any further would only belabor the point. I can but repeat the remarkable analogy to be found in the finale of Nathan's one-act play and his own departure from this vale of tears."

And Speaking of Conversions . . .

Rabbi Richard Rubenstein, during his two-year tenure as chaplain at Harvard University and Radcliffe College, has arranged for the conversion to Judaism of about fifteen gentile girls, almost all of whom were students or alumne of Radcliffe. In each case, the conversion was motivated by a desire to marry a Jewish boy.

The girls all came from varying upper-class Protestant backgrounds. About a third of them had Ph.D.'s. Without exception, the decision to convert resulted in intense disturbance on the part of their parents. In no situation, however, was the parents' disturbance so unreasonable as to prevent a future relationship with the couple.

Almost every girl had gone out with a number of Jewish boys prior to their engagements. In some instances, there was a record of engagements with a series of Jewish boys. What is behind this pattern of upper-class gentile girls marrying lower-middle-class Jewish boys?

Alienation was the uniform experience of the girls in this group. All were convinced that they no longer belong to their parents' world, which they saw as stuffy, hidebound, or simply unacceptable because it was their parents'.

The marginal character of Jewish life attracted them. What they liked about their prospective mates was, in part, the apparent success with which they had overcome their Jewish marginality and made it, to quote Rabbi Rubenstein, "a source of creative expression." Whatever that means.

In the words of one of the girls, "I don't belong and Jews don't belong, but at least they have each other. I have nobody."

Explains the Rabbi: "The capacity of the Jewish intellectual, apart from all considerations of theology, to give a meaningful context to his predicament of alienation was a strong source of attraction for these girls."

Thus, they decided to become Jewish and to raise their children as Jews, although they were as undecided about the literal truth of Jewish religious myths as they were of Christian myths.

Furthermore, they had no hankering for the Marjorie Morningstar type of suburban Jewish life. As one girl said, "For that I might as well stay home." Rather, they saw themselves as joining a mixed urban or university community, never one of the new all-Jewish or all-gentile suburban ghettos.

As freethinkers, we are well aware of the artificial barriers brought about by religio-cultural ties. But the other side of the prejudice-coin is just as disturbing: In the case of every single girl, the decision to marry a Jew was prior to the actual choice of the particular Jewish partner.

H-Bombs, Sex and Religion . . .

From *Marg* magazine—published in Bombay, India—come these words:

"The vast forces of a civilization, based on the atom bomb, are oriented towards barbarism in such a manner that anxiety neuroses about the dangers threatening us and the concern for personal survival lead to love-inadequacy, through which sex is considered as a much overrated pastime.

"This public morality is regarded as the very height of righteousness, and masochism becomes the normal attribute of life of the urban industrial orders which negate our genuine desires as much as they curb our freedom to be human."

In this country, such negation is epitomized by the Jack Paar show. Husbands continually complain to him that their wives bed down in the living room instead of living it up in the bedroom. One of these husbands decided to move the TV set into the bedroom. It did no good. He calls Paar "a human bundling board."

The point is, five nights a week, marital relations across the country are either called off or postponed, and for what?—an hour and forty-five minutes of cheap, sex-and-scatology, single-entendre scents of humor, interspersed between commercials featuring marble statues with underarm-perspiration problems, girdles that move all by themselves, and dental plates that stay put and influence people.

This reversion to adolescent sublimation is also evident in the abundance of girlie magazines, which offer paper-fantasy in the form of seduction-loaded short stories and bosom-and-buttocks photography. And so it seemed somewhat incongruous this month when *Playboy*—in its first straight editorial—called for an "immediate halt" of nuclear tests.

Now, we don't doubt for a moment the sincerity of *Playboy's* editors. But it should be mentioned that (1) for almost a year, there has been a cessation of tests; and (2) the Promotion Director of *Playboy* saw fit to send out a press release on the editorial, getting a couple of plugs in, in the process: "the entertainment magazine for men" and "a magazine . . . dedicated to life's good things, to the joy and fun to be found in the world."

The joy and fun in this particular issue of *Playboy* was not limited to the three-page foldout "Playmate of the Month"—the usual obscure nude suffering from a severe case of swollen mammary glands—for there was also a photo of Kim Novak which undoubtedly got at least as much attention from its horny audience as did the editorial: it revealed that not only does a real live actress have nipples; there was also an innocent triangle of pubescence showing thru her negligible negligee. And it isn't bleached lavender, either.

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It would be unfair, however, if we didn't point out that *Playboy* is perhaps the most literate of the men's magazines, that its scope does extend farther than secondary sexual stimulation, and that its subscribers are not necessarily all college sophomores and frustrated bachelors.

As a matter of fact, we sent *Playboy* a note of congratulations on their editorial. We also asked about the reaction to it. Replied Executive Editor Ray Russell:

"It is a little too early to tabulate reader response to [our editorial], but I know we have been getting a fair number of letters, both pro and con. It is probably unfair of me to say this at such an early stage, but from what I have seen, most of the 'con' letters come from hysterics or virulent right-wingers, while the writers of the 'pro' letters include such people as Dr. David Reisman, Lord Bertrand Russell, and so on. . . ."

Since *Playboy* boasts that they print "over a million copies every month," we hereby suggest that they give some space to the activities of *Omaha Action* (italics ours)—a most significant program of non-violent action against the nuclear missile policy. Except for such wee little voices as that of Dorothy Day's *Catholic Worker*, there has been a general press blackout of *Omaha Action's* acts of *personal responsibility*.

Oddly enough, except for Joe Hyams' Hollywood column and the film trade papers, there has also apparently been a press blackout so far on a most significant dinner party, hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Steve Allen and Robert Ryan last month. Allen and Ryan are co-chairmen of a non-partisan Hollywood committee dedicated to informing the public of the dangers of repeated atomic testing and nuclear war.

Despite lingering memories of the blacklist (see issue #9), the party was attended by more than 200 prominent guests, including David Niven, Keenan Wynn, Inger Stevens, Mercedes McCambridge, Rod Serling, Guy Madison, Ray Bradbury, and Rod Steiger. Guests of honor were a Japanese and an American atomic scientist, and—via recording—Lord Bertrand Russell.

Incidentally, it's a funny thing, but somehow we had never quite thought of good ol' Bert as a typical *Playboy* reader. Maybe he just got a press release.

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Since the two great international powers have adopted, in their voluntary cessation of nuclear tests, a position that is consistent with humanist morality, an inquiry into what extent organized religions helped to solve this moral issue, would seem pertinent.

They have been more of a hindrance than a help. A few of the 'off-beat' religions adopted firm positions. The Mennonites, for example, said, as did Bertrand Russell, that the risk of totalitarian domination is preferable to "assuming responsibility for a nuclear holocaust."

The World Council of (Protestant) Churches, however—at its last meeting in Rhodes, Greece, in August—was slightly equivocal. It did not demand that the tests be stopped, but said:

"No nation is justified in deciding on its own responsibility to conduct nuclear weapons tests when the people of other countries who have not given their consent may have to bear the consequences. Therefore we

Ad Nauseam

The *Saturday Evening Post* last month advertised, with unwitting irony, the contents of a single issue of that magazine.

"You'll discover," said the ad, "how the radioactive particles that are released after each atomic blast have polluted the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat. . . . If you have ever asked yourself . . . 'What price must my children and their children pay for our atomic arming?' . . . you must read 'Fallout: The Silent Killer.'"

The next article mentioned in the ad tells how "It's never too late to serve God."

And the one after that starts out with the question, "Having a baby?" It continues: "Every mother-to-be — and mother — should read (this article). . . . You'll find some startling changes since you were a baby in 'Were You Boiled as a Baby?'"

Finally, under the headline, "Relax and live longer," you are invited to "Listen in while 402 people over 95 tell the secret of their happy, long life. . . ."

Yes, "It's a wonderful week in the *Post*."

call upon each nation contemplating such tests to give full recognition to this moral responsibility as well as the considerations of national defense and security."

The implication being that nuclear tests were morally permissible if they did not affect foreign countries, but only poisoned the local citizenry.

The Central Conference of American Rabbis—in another better-late-than-never appeal—asked the President to "make every effort" to hold to the present suspension of tests.

In July, a Catholic nuclear disarmament group was organized in London, but the Catholic press was careful to point out that it "did not have the approval of the hierarchy."

In June, Dr. Hugh Eskildson—Vice-President of the American Lutheran Church and an employee of the Atomic Energy Commission—said that "atomic power is part of that power over which God gave man domination. It can be used for good or evil." He asserted that criticism of nuclear testing can be "semi-hysterical if not actually deceptive."

John A. McCone, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and Thomas E. Murray, former member

of the Commission—both Roman Catholics—have consistently warned against any permanent cessation of tests without tight guarantees from the Russians. But such guarantees, according to them, are quite impossible because tests can be conducted underground without detection.

When Eisenhower and Khrushchev were about to agree on a method of inspection, Murray said it would be a "disaster." The Brooklyn (Catholic) *Tablet* called it "foolhardy," saying that "when dealing with the Communists on such an important matter, we need a foolproof arrangement."

Murray called for a "return to first moral principles" in international affairs, but the religious leaders have displayed a marvelous reluctance to do so.

Daniel A. Poling, editor of the *Christian Herald*, criticizes all who call for an end to nuclear weapons testing. He says that "the most insidious and far-reaching menace of atheistic communism is its world wide peace drive."

The Realist is published monthly, except for January and July, by the Realist Association, a non-profit corporation founded by William and Helen McCarthy, to whom this magazine is dedicated.

PAUL KRASSNER, Editor

Publication office is at 225 Lafayette St., N.Y. 12, N.Y.

Subscription rates:

\$3 for 10 issues; \$5 for 20 issues

Five copies of one issue: \$1

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Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, declared that, for all he knows, it is "within the providence of God that the human race should destroy itself" with nuclear weapons.

John Courtney Murray, S.J., leading Catholic intellectual, has urged the U.S. to adopt a more aggressive policy toward the U.S.S.R., to "seize and retain the initiative in world affairs." He claims that "it would be prudent even to create situations of risk for the Soviet Union—situations in which the risk would be too great for it to take."

Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, principal architect of the modern Catholic inquisition in Spain, stated at Lourdes that the atom bomb cannot do as much harm as that "being produced by the doctrine now prevailing in a society without God."

When the National Assembly of United Christian Women met in Denver last year, Mme. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, former Indian Minister of Health, told them that Christian churches must examine themselves to determine why they have failed to bring peace to the world. "We say war is no solution to any problem, yet we arm for war," she said. "Is this not a challenge to the Christian churches? Have the churches always raised their voices against wrongdoing by their own governments?"

The answer is a large, mushroom-clouded No.

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A few years ago, a new club was formed at Columbia University. They called themselves "Students for Apathy." It didn't last long, though. The group disbanded. Reason: but naturally—lack of interest.

A book entitled *The Beat Generation and the Angry Young Men*—in which the beats and the angries show how much they care about their apathy—states in its

introduction the main basis for their estrangement from society:

"Man, having found the means to release the natural force imprisoned in matter and thereby to obliterate himself, his heirs and the sum total of his racial inheritance, has created the most pervasive fact in his history: one must learn to breathe, eat, make love in its presence; it is a part of every living consciousness."

Except, that is, for some American movie-makers. The film version of the play, *Look Back in Anger*, is peppered with sexual content, but this highly significant comment by the antagonistic protagonist has been omitted and placed under protective custody:

"There aren't any good, brave causes left. If the big bang does come, and we all get killed off, it won't be in aid of the old-fashioned grand design. It'll just be for the Brave New nothing-very-much-thank-you."

And in the last few seconds of their existence, the bishops and the beatniks alike will at long last have finally found God, as He speaketh, in heavenly Looney Toon cartoon tones: "Th-th-th-th-that's all, folks!"

Rational Therapy & The Nun's Story . . .

Some day, when psychological dogmatism has become less prevalent, the contributions of Dr. Albert Ellis to mental health and happiness will be recognized at their true value. Meanwhile, he is a man far ahead of his time.

Last month, we attended a lecture given by Dr. Ellis on "Internalized Sentences and Rational Therapy." The crux of his theory, and technique—which have evolved from his clinical practice over the last decade—is this:

"Rational therapy . . . seeks to reveal and assail the basic ideas or philosophies or values which may underlie irrational behavior or neurosis. It is an application of the theory that much of what we call emotion is nothing more than a certain kind—a biased, prejudiced kind—of thought, and that human beings can be taught to control their [self-defeating] feelings by controlling their thoughts—or by changing the internalized sentences, or self-talk, with which they largely created these feelings in the first place."

This, of course, is such an oversimplification that it makes Dr. Ellis sound like nothing but an egghead version of Norman Vincent Peale. The difference is that Peale's "positive thinking" accepts irrational concepts instead of rejecting them, and employs irrational means (such as prayer) in order to adjust to the original irrational concept.

Conversely, "Rational psychotherapy makes a concerted attack on the disturbed individual's irrational positions in two main ways:

"(a) The therapist serves as a frank counter-propagandist who directly contradicts and denies the self-defeating propaganda and superstitions which the client has originally learned and which he is now self-propagandistically perpetuating.

"(b) The therapist encourages, persuades, cajoles, and at times commands the client to partake of some kind of activity which itself will act as a forceful counter-propagandist agency against the nonsense he believes.

"Both these main therapeutic activities are consciously performed with one main goal in mind; namely, that of finally getting the client to internalize a

rational philosophy of living just as he originally learned and internalized the illogical propaganda and superstitions of his parents and his culture."

That same night (of the lecture), we went to see a movie: *The Nun's Story*. Coincidentally, it is in a way the direct antithesis of rational therapy.

A specific example of what Dr. Ellis considers a basic irrational idea is this: "One should severely blame oneself for one's mistakes and wrongdoings. Punishing oneself for one's errors will help prevent future mistakes." Which is practically a definition of convent life.

And, for that matter, of Catholicism per se. *Vita Pastorale*, an influential Roman Catholic review published in Rome, urged this month that when Catholics confess their sins, stiffer penalties be imposed upon them; that the murmuring of a number of Hail Marys should not be sufficient amendment for sins of adultery, pride, greed, jealousy and avarice.

The review, which is circulated to priests, says that Catholic sinners should suffer adequate punishment, and suggests that they be required to give up smoking,

Quoted Without Comment

The following letter was published in *Senior Scholastic*, a quasi-official magazine used in high schools.

Dear Editor:

We attend a private Catholic school for girls. We have the privilege of wearing school uniforms. They prevent petty disagreements and jealousies among the students. Uniforms enable us to dress modestly, neatly, and orderly. They also help us to think in a systematic way, resulting in a better education. We are non-conformists to the popular teen-age trend towards immodesty. We will be rewarded if just a few teen-agers follow our example. Long live uniforms!

*Students in Problems of Democracy
Our Lady of the Angels Academy
Enfield, Connecticut*

drinking, or the use of salt and pepper, to refrain from the use of the word "I" for a number of days, to forego movies, parties, etc., to get up earlier than usual, and so on.

That, as opposed to what Dr. Ellis deems a more rational replacement (of the basic irrational idea): "One should acknowledge and accept one's mistakes and wrongdoings and use them as guides for self-improvement. Punishing oneself for one's errors will usually detract from and sabotage action necessary to eliminate them."

Of course, the mistakes and wrongdoings in *The Nun's Story* are negative value-judgments to begin with. The film itself is a beautiful one, and we recommend it highly, in case you care. Its very objectivity is an indictment of sorts, and there are fascinating little bits of subtlety to roll around in your mind. For instance, Sister Luke (played by Audrey Hepburn—the nun we would most like to get out of the habit) confesses at one point that when she finally succeeds in getting rid of pride, she then feels pride in her success.

How has the Catholic press reacted to this potential Academy Award winner?

A priest, quoted in the *Register*, said that "such a film will serve only to put the brakes on the vocation of any Catholic girl who has been considering entering a convent, and in many cases it will bring such a tender vocation to a full stop forever. Reluctant parents will have a good and convincing devil's advocate to keep their daughters out of the convent."

To which he added this paradoxical statement: "The only thing praiseworthy about the film is that there is no sex or love interest in it; but the rest goes against human feelings."

However, the *Standard's* reviewer called the picture "a refreshing change from the syrupy Hollywood approach that depicts nuns as merely a gang of sunny, jeep-driving girls whose main occupation is teaching small boys how to play baseball."

Said the *Advocate's* man: "... if *The Nun's Story* accurately presents convent life I'd prefer San Quentin." He described the film as "a thorough bore and ... a fairly lousy movie. ... In its own dull way it has added to the confusion created by cute cartoonists, bigots and bitter ex-nuns."

And the *Tablet's* critic insisted that the film "may neither encourage nor discourage young women [in regard to entering the vocation] because the inner resolves of those who feel called to the religious life are subject to stimuli far above and beyond fleeting illusions on the motion picture screen."

Namely, their neurotic predisposition to—in the words of the movie's Mother Superior—"a career against nature."

Get thee to a psychotherapist!

Satire and Reality . . .

"The proportion of satire in the *Realist* seems to be diminishing," writes Dr. H. Lansdell of Bethesda, Md.—"you're taking things a little too seriously, it seems to me."

It ain't that so much, Doc, it's just that things are getting too ridiculous to satirize. Steve Allen once remarked—when asked where satirists get their material—that "Life is a straight-line." More and more, though, life is becoming a punch-line.

Item: A couple of years ago, we sold a comedy script to a TV show. It was about the teleprompter industry. A small portion of it pertained to the "instruction section of a teleprompter roll . . . used on the quiz show, *Twenty-One*." The instructions were, "Look puzzled; Bite lips; Scratch head; Chew fingernails; Swallow hard; Perspire profusely."

Well, if you've been reading the papers, you know that Herbert Stempel testified this month that, on *Twenty-One*, the reason for his perspiring forehead while he was competing with Charles Van Doren was that his isolation booth was hot from the lights and the producers refused to turn on the air-conditioning in the booth.

He had been told when to hesitate in giving his answers, and so forth. He was even told how to have his hair cut: if we ever printed that as satire in the *Realist*, we'd be criticized for reaching too far to make a joke.

Item: In issue #10, we published "A Fable for Our Time"—a satirical critique of fallout shelters. The pivotal point of the piece was when advertising-man

Slick Fraser arranged to have his client's fallout shelter "installed underground at the site of the next H-bomb test—and he [for the sake of publicity] would stay in it for two weeks!"

A week later, didn't we read in *Life* magazine of a pair of newlyweds doing the shelter bit?—sans H-bomb test, though. "The stunt," said *Life*, "might have been called 'fallout can be fun.'" It was done at the behest of a Miami shelter-builder. The couple's reward: two more honeymoon weeks—this time above ground, in Mexico, all expenses paid.

And, too, a married couple with three kids played the game—they, at the behest of Civil Defense, which saw to it first, via psychological tests, that they were all togetherness, rather than, say, the family who advertised in the Bergen (N.J.) *Evening Record*: "Mal-adjusted couple, 3 ill-bred children, colicky baby, need 3 bdrm. house or apt. . ."

Item: Suppose you heard that there was going to be a movie about the life of Christ? Wouldn't *Son of God* be a kind of funny title? But that's what it is going to be called. We won't be at all surprised if the sequel is titled *Jesus Meets Wolf-Man*.

Item: Or suppose you wanted to write a satire of the type of TV program which features a private detective with a jazz background. Why, you might make your hero a jazz musician who does private detecting in the background. Make his name the same as something out of musical terminology—like, say, staccato. That's it, call him Johnny Staccato. Have him hunt out a murderer between performances, and have the criminal finally confess to Johnny while he plays the piano. (We have just described an actual adventure in the serious *Staccato* series.)

Item: The following are honest-to-goodness songs wending their way up Tin Pan Alley: *There's a Hole in the Middle of the Moon* (recorded by the Ravens, not the Luniks); *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (the lyrics consisting only of the title); *Does She or Doesn't She?* (secretly sponsored by the Miss Clairol people—really); *Under Moscow Skies* (indicating a thaw in the cold war, obviously); *The Ballad of Earl K. Long* (a number of Louisiana radio stations have banned the record, for fear that other gubernatorial candidates might squawk, demand equal time, or threaten to pull paid political ads off the air).

Item: Graphoanalysis may very well have some scientific basis—its thesis being that handwriting delineates personality, and that one's handwriting changes along with one's personality. But, in any event, its use has been accepted by educational institutions, law enforcement agencies and big business, and it is just a little frightening to think that you may not get hired for a job because someone in the personnel office has been trained in graphoanalysis.

The subject is a natural target for satirical treatment—the premise being, "Change Your Handwriting and You Change Your Personality." Only, that happens to be the title of a *straight* article in the September issue of *Fate* magazine—the contention being:

"Personality can be changed by suggested changes . . . in some of the characteristics of the handwriting,

in the way the letter t is crossed, in the way the loops on such letters as f, g, b, and y, are formed, changes in the angles of such letters as n, m, and w, and in the curves added in forming such letters as n, m, w, u."

It looks pretty hopeless for us: we only use a typewriter. Unless. . . ?

Item: It would seem that some things are too tragic to satirize. How could you possibly poke fun at a civilization wherein billions of humans starve while surplus foods rot? That the following could be, but is not, satire—only compounds the tragedy.

It seems a Hollywood manufacturer, E. Joseph Cossman, has marketed a toy gun which shoots bits of potato. "Just push the barrel into a fresh potato and a quick twist," he explains, "then it's armed." His sales pitch is that if the kiddies go for the gun in a big enough way, it will help solve a three-year surplus of potatoes.

Although potato-growers from California's Imperial Valley are not subsidizing the new toy, they do feel that it provides enough of an incentive for them to offer free potatoes to Cossman's advertising campaign; he told them that if the nation's younger set cooperates by shooting lots of potatoes next year, the surplus could be reduced by as much as six million pounds.

The potato-gun will make an ideal Christmas gift, one which symbolically combines the twin goals of peace on earth and good will toward men.

Here Comes the Commercial . . .

"Enclosed is \$3 for a 10-issue subscription to the *Realist* for a friend of mine," writes Bob Davis, editor of the Poplar (Mont.) *Standard*. "The *Realist* is about the best gift I can think of for a college graduating senior. A recent convert myself to the *Realist's* reading public, I cannot imagine why the magazine is not more widely known. . ."

Funny you should bring that up, Bob. The *Realist* is about to launch an all-out advertising campaign—including the taking of ads in every college newspaper in the country (although we may have some trouble with Notre Dame, Southern Methodist, Yeshiva, et al).

This will take money. And, although we are sincerely grateful for every 'small' contribution, we are now especially soliciting lifetime subscriptions at \$25 per. Which is, if you can afford it, quite reasonable; a radio station in Berkeley charges \$1,000 for a lifetime subscription to its program schedules.

So far, the *Realist* has nine lifetime subscribers: Steve Allen; Frèd Elder; Harvey Furgatch; Robert J. Howard; William Larsen; Harry P. Larson; Mary T. Newell; William Rinke; J. J. Wilson. Incidentally, Mr. Wilson "threatens" that "if the *Realist* folds before I die, I'll sue!" Mr. Howard, likewise, calls his lifetime subscription "an act of faith." And Mr. Rinke is 90 years old—chronologically, that is. Mr. Larsen writes:

"You must continue your admirably frank love of truth. I am the leader of a discussion group which meets in one of the First Unitarian Church buildings in Los Angeles, although we as a group have no religious affiliation; our only common bond is in being of 'college age,' sharing in the quest for truth, and having an interest in all vital issues relating to education, civil liberties and the propagation of tolerance.

"I am also active in the L. A. chapter of the Inter-

The Realist

Reginald Dunsany:

The Tolerant Pagan...

Can Can-Can Be Canned?

It was again clearly demonstrated last month that the minds of great despots often run in the same channels. Premier Nikita Khrushchev condemned the film *Can-Can* as immoral. The Catholic press supported him, sorry only that it had to be a Communist who said it first.

As reported in last month's *Realist*, Protestants on the West Coast started to imitate the Catholic Legion of Decency by suggesting a boycott of films. But George A. Heimrich, director of the West Coast office of the National Council of Churches-Broadcasting and Film Commission, was promptly repudiated by the vice-chairman of the Commission, Dr. Robert W. Spike, who stated:

"Boycott and censorship are most reprehensible to traditional Protestant thinking. . . . This charge seems to be ill timed and inappropriate. As every moviegoer will tell you, the fact is that the film industry has recently begun to show increased maturity and artistic sensitivity in what it is producing. This is not true of all productions, of course, but the Church should be grateful for this new fact and not simply castigate the industry."

Rather than criticizing the production code for being too lax, Dr. Spike, in a letter to Eric Johnston, President of the Motion Picture Association of America, said that application of the industry's self-censorship guide was too rigid.

As an example of this rigidity, Spike said that "When certain words are picked out as taboo and a whole situational meaning often ignored, one wonders what advantage to the religious point of view accrues from such wooden handling."

He observed that it is possible to be repelled by the sex and violence of the movie, *The Ten Commandments*. But he said that no one dared question this film because it has a "religious" theme. Yet, at the same time, "the sensitive handling of sexual transgression, even though it might be done with the greatest amount of compassion and sense of tragedy, often comes in for reproach."

The Khrushchev blast followed by

just a few days this statement of the New York Protestant leader. It gave courage to a small minority group of ministers in Hollywood to resume the counterattack.

They lined up with would-be boycotter Heimrich, saying that "he speaks for a large number of Protestants. Since the motion picture is a part of American culture, we feel that it should maintain the highest moral standards."

The statement was issued by the Hollywood Ministerial Association, which is made up of only 29 ministers, who claim to represent only 20,000 Protestants. It is to be noted, however,

How To Get a Priest Out of Wedlock

Senator Herman E. Talmadge, Democrat of Georgia, last month joined the growing chorus of welfare critics who suggest that federal-local relief payments encourage illegitimacy. This is only one of the many barbs that have been shot at the growing number of mothers of illegitimate children.

It has been proposed that such mothers and their children be cut off relief; that no additional aid be given for additional illegitimate children; that the children be taken from their homes; and that the mothers be sterilized.

There are ugly racial overtones in all this discussion. The number of Negro illegitimates is much larger percentage-wise than whites. But *Editorial Research Reports* warns that the white illegitimates may actually be more than the 'statistics' show.

Public officials find themselves in a quandary. They are attacked on one side for giving public aid to children bearing the unfair stigma of illegitimacy. On the other hand, a housing authority in a Washington suburb has been attacked recently for too harsh an attitude toward such babies and their mothers.

The Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority was attacked in the

that they did not repeat Heimrich's suggestion for a boycott of films.

POAU (Protestants and other Americans United for Separation of Church and State) recently condemned a Pennsylvania movie censorship bill, stating that it was "drafted by Catholic Action" and that "the Legislature is now being pressured with the crude, bludgeoning tactics of this group to pass it. All decent people want to eliminate filth from the films but they do not want to succumb to Roman Catholic clerical control in the process."

POAU Executive Secretary Glenn Archer's statement claimed that "control of two men on a three man board would give one religious group control over every film that Pennsylvanians may see. My prediction is that if this bill passes, the Legion of Decency listing will automatically determine what films may be exhibited in the state."

There is no question that *Can-Can* can survive. The view of the box office experts is that the condemnation by Khrushchev, like condemnations by other bluenoses, will serve only to increase its drawing power.

press as "Simon Legrees" because it tried to exclude one such mother, a white girl of 13, from one of its projects, along with her own parents, brothers, and sisters.

Religious sentiments are confused and conflicting. On the one hand, there arises the concern of all religionists for the welfare of 'all God's children.' Against this stands the prejudice against non-marital sexual intercourse and its frequent results. Few religious leaders have been able to react coherently to the recent tremendous increase in illegitimate births.

The Roman Catholic *Advocate* did react. It blamed the situation on the "pitiable craze of boys and girls of 'going steady' at an early age, the growing tendency of girls to become more aggressive in sex matters, and the dangerous setting created by outdoor movies, where young people huddle out of sight in darkened cars."

national Society for General Semantics; the Youth Committee for Civil Liberties; an Existentialist discussion group in Beverley Hills; the Great Books Leadership Program; and there are other more intimate ties which I needn't go into.

"I meant to send in for a lifetime subscription when I read your first issue (#7 at a college book store), but was pressed with financial responsibilities. Hell, I'm pressed now—but because the very essence of my life seems to live in the newsprint of the *Realist*, it seems

imperative that I convert the reasonable sum of \$25 into priceless ideas and objectivity. Best wishes for a very long life. . . ."

So much for 'testimonials.' If you have just recently subscribed to the *Realist*, or if you have already renewed your subscription, you may, if you wish, deduct that amount from the \$25. In any case, if you've decided to send in a lifetime subscription, do it, as the ads always say, today. You'll notice the improvement in your handwriting immediately.

When Family Life Starts . . .

Sociology teaches us that man is a social animal. It is not instinct or heredity that determines his conduct; it is environment. This fact is vividly borne out when you consider the case of Julio Sigafoos.

Julio, abandoned as an infant in a dark wood near Cleveland, was adopted by a pack of wild dogs and reared as one of their own. When Julio was found by a hunter at the age of twelve, the poor child was more canine than human. He ran on all fours, barked and growled, ate raw meat, lapped water with his tongue, and could neither speak nor understand one single word. In short, he was a complete product of his environment.

Julio, incidentally, was more fortunate than most wild children. They never become truly humanized, but Julio was exceptional. Bit by bit, he began to talk and walk and eat and drink as people do. His long-dormant mental processes, when awakened at last, turned out to be fantastically acute.

He was so bright that he learned to read and write in a month, got through grammar school in three years, and high school in two. And last June as thousands of spectators, knowing the odds Julio had overcome, stood and raised cheer after cheer, he was graduated valedictorian from Cal Tech with a degree in astrophysics!

Who can say to what towering heights this incredible boy would have risen had he not been killed the day after commencement while chasing a car?

—Max Shulman

The *Advocate* advocates more family prayer, better parental supervision, and more parochial schools. Such solutions do little for the hungry "fatherless" children.

One Roman Catholic prelate—in England — proposed a humanitarian measure to aid those who are deserted or abandoned by both their parents: William Cardinal Godfrey urged more Catholic families to adopt unwanted illegitimate children.

He explained that the number of such children is exceptionally high in the Westminster archdiocese over which he "rules" because unmarried mothers come to London "from everywhere" to have their babies secretly and then leave them behind when they return home. (This situation was described in the first issue of the *Realist* in my article entitled "Little Irish Baskets: Bundles for Britain.")

"We believe," Cardinal Godfrey said, "that the attitude of Catholics toward adoption is changing. The prejudice against the illegitimate child is lessening. And this, as you can understand,

Mad Dogs and Clergymen

New outbreaks of gang violence in New York evoked characteristic pronouncements from the clergy last month.

Monsignor Joseph A. McCaffrey, who was on New York City's payroll as police chaplain for 30 years, told mourners at a mass for one of the victims that "what we should do is have a law by which all known members of gangs are arrested and sent to jail. The professional sob-sisters, over-sympathetic youth board consultants, and professional do-gooders seem obsessed with the senseless theory that there is no such thing as a bad boy. This is like having a theory that there are no mad dogs."

A letter to *Time* magazine responded: "Msgr. Joseph A. McCaffrey's denunciation of 'coddlers' and 'do-gooders' as the chief contributing factors to New York's juvenile crimes seems to ignore completely the basic source of trouble. The Roman Catholic Church must accept its fair share of the responsibility. As long as the church insists on its adherents bringing children into the world regardless of their ability or prospects of providing them with decent homes, so long shall we require 'more jails' to meet 'force with force.'"

Meanwhile in Washington, the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare reported out favorably a bill

Non Sequitur of the Month

Richard K. Morton, chaplain of Jacksonville University in Florida:

"I am launching . . . a campaign which I call 'College Students for Christ.' I see this as a non-denominational activity . . ."

is due to the recognition of the fact that a child, whether born in or out of lawful wedlock, is made to the image and likeness of God and is beloved of the Heavenly Father.

"The boy or girl so born into the world is innocent of any stigma attached to its parents and it quite invites our loving compassionate care. Once adopted, such a child has a status of its own, and its origin carries with it no blemish or stain. We lay particular stress on this fact and urge you to think about it prayerfully so that God may move your hearts with truly Christian charity."

But his Grace did not report whether the prejudice against the illegitimate child incorporated in the Canon Law is going to be relaxed. Under it, the child of unmarried parents is not "innocent of any stigma."

Reverend Robert F. Kekeisen, theological expert of the Catholic *Register* of Denver, was asked early this year: "Can an illegitimate boy ever become a priest?"

His answer was that Canon 984 of

which would provide extensive federal subsidies for "juvenile delinquency control projects," including those operated by priests like McCaffrey with their mad-dog theory of social service. Some saw in this move a return to the philosophy of an earlier day when bad boys were consigned to the tender mercies of "reform schools" run by priests and nuns but paid for by the public.

Osservatore Romano also commented on "teenage toughs" but did not dignify them by comparison with dogs. Instead, it said, "Their recent conduct constitutes a global invasion of human termites that corrodes the structure of society and may cause its collapse."

The suggestion implied here seemed also to be one of extermination.

A priest of the nearby Episcopal church presiding at the funeral of another victim said that "we are the guilty ones, the police, social workers, clergymen, citizens . . . all of us caught up, as was Theresa [the dead girl] in the tragic and demonic forces of our age." His solution was to lead through the streets a "Prayer Procession for Peace," by which he apparently hoped to exorcise the demons on whom he blamed the situation.

Leveller heads were seeking sounder remedies, such as Carl V. May, Executive Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee, creator of the Youth Service Project in San Francisco. He has organized a number of gangs there, called by such names as "War Lords," "Sheiks," "Aces," and "Los Bandidos."

In the last two years, more than 300

the official code bars illegitimate boys from Holy Orders "unless they have been made legitimate or have pronounced solemn religious vows"—in an approved Order. And only the Pope at Rome may dispense from this "irregularity" for major Orders.

Father Kekeisen seems to imply that an illegitimate cannot become a regular parish priest at all; that even with a dispensation he can only join an "Order" where his secret can be kept from the outside world. He explains that "the law in this matter safeguards the honor and dignity of Holy Orders."

It doesn't do quite as much for the honor and dignity of the individual illegitimate child.

When Family

Sociology teaches us that man's heredity that determines his conduct borne out when you consider the case

Julio, abandoned as an infant adopted by a pack of wild dogs and was found by a hunter at the age of 10 than human. He ran on all fours, bit water with his tongue, and could not walk. In short, he was a complete idiot.

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members of such gangs have participated in 103 service projects—ranging from repairing the dilapidated homes of poverty stricken families, to building a bridge on an Indian reservation.

May is opposed to the idea that teenage gangs should be smashed. He argues that they have as much right to exist as the Boy Scouts. Lawyers would certainly agree.

But Mr. May is not apt to get much sympathy from the "less peculiar" faiths. There is considerable question in their minds whether Quakers are even Christians. Their founder, George Fox, carried religious individualism to such an extreme that the only spiritual law the Quakers recognize is that of "internal, divine, illumination." They do not recognize ecclesiastical authority and reject the sacraments. Many consider their beliefs tantamount to atheism.

This month, in fact, Dr. Henry Hitt

The Bloodless Buddhists?

When an American ambassador to Ceylon was appointed recently, sharp questioning at the confirmation hearing disclosed that he could not spell or pronounce the Prime Minister's name: S. W. D. R. Bandaranaike.

That problem was solved last month by the bloody hand of religious fanaticism: Bandaranaike was assassinated by a monk of the Buddhist faith.

The Prime Minister had been under vehement attack by Buddhists in his country for failure to reorganize it as a Buddhist nation. Part of the abuse levelled at him was based on his continuation of the colonial policy of subsidizing Christian schools and hospitals.

The opposition did not subside when

he announced that, as a general principle, he favored state education. The Ceylon Buddhist Congress went on record as favoring government control of all Christian schools receiving state funds. They also demanded the replacement of foreign Roman Catholic nuns teaching in such schools and hospitals.

The monk who shot Bandaranaike was a practitioner of so-called "eastern style" medicine. His resentment arose from a report on the future of this style of medicine made by a Colombo Plan expert.

It is interesting to note that in the last issue of the *Realist*, Buddhist minister Frank Newton referred to Buddhism as a faith which "holds the enviable record of never having been the cause of the shedding of a drop of blood, of either man or beast, in its over 2500 years of existence." The record has been broken.

Moreover, an article in a recent issue of the *New York Times Magazine* seems to indicate that the shining record described by Reverend Newton never in fact existed: It points out that Genghis Khan was a Buddhist. So were the *samurai* of Japan, who waged perpetual war during the ages of feudalism. So, very often, were the Japanese *kamikaze* pilots whose devotion to the Emperor was harnessed to a Buddhist indifference to death.

"In more recent times," says the article, "we have seen the Burmese fight seven civil wars simultaneously, an accomplishment which suggests a certain lack of benevolence. Burma, which claims to be the country where the purest form of Buddhism is practiced,

has the highest murder rate in the world."

And no doubt there was many a drop of blood drawn from the backs of the serfs who served the monks in Tibet who now are seeking Christian aid against the Communists.

However, it is extremely doubtful whether Buddhism has been responsible for the shedding of even a small fraction of the oceans of blood that have resulted from Christianity's inveterate addiction to militarism — starting with the Crusades.

Tefila.

• In Cologne, Germany, Roman Catholic Chancellor Konrad Adenauer addressed a congregation at a new synagogue. He respected the Jewish tradition by wearing a high silk hat throughout his address.

• In Birmingham, Alabama, Father Bryan Egan spoke at the Independent Presbyterian Church.

Under Canon Law, bishops are charged with the power and duty to discipline their "subjects." But there is no indication as yet that they are going to mete out any punishment to Wagner, Adenauer, or Father Egan.

Another such problem is posed by the appointment of a Catholic as Governor General of Canada, as reported in the *Realist* last month.

There have been some previous Catholic Prime Ministers of Canada. They had no difficulty because, in that capacity, they represented the people. But the Governor General represents the Queen, who is not only the ruling civil monarch but also the popess of all the Anglicans (Episcopalians) and of all the Presbyterians in Canada.

As such, she and her official representative, Governor General George Vanier, have important official religious functions to perform. But the Governor General is a devout Roman Catholic and the father of a Catholic priest.

His son would certainly have advised him such ceremonies are "heretical."

It looks as if 'something's gotta give.' Perhaps some device can be worked out such as the one used by a prosperous local priest who was asked by his poorer Baptist colleague across the street to contribute to the Baptist building fund.

The priest considered the matter very carefully. "The Canon Law," he said, "strictly forbids me to contribute money for the construction of an heretical church."

The Baptist parson's face fell. "But," continued the priest, "there is nothing in Canon Law to prevent me from contributing to the destruction of such a building. I will give you a good-sized check if you promise that the money will be used not for the reconstruction but for the wrecking job."

It Starts . . .

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When A Canon Law Misfires . . .

Last December, a lay member of the Catholic Church wrote to one of its theologians as follows:

"A non-Catholic family I know attends a newly completed church. At the opening ceremonies, each member was supposed to bring as many outsiders as possible, and the one who brought the most was to get an award. The family asked me to attend, as a Catholic, and I refused. The family took it as a personal affront. How can

I explain why I could not attend?"

The answer was that Catholics "have it as a basic doctrine of their faith that Christ, the God-man, Saviour of the World, founded but one true church. . . . With this premise, it would be . . . an external denial of faith, productive of scandal, for a Catholic to take active part in any non-Catholic service. It does no violence to a Protestant's conscience should he attend mass; whereas it is strictly forbidden to a Catholic to participate in rites he knows are heretical."

Last month, however, the following events occurred:

• In New York City, the Catholic mayor, Robert F. Wagner, participated in ceremonies dedicating the new Jewish Temple of Congregation Shaaray

October 1959

Negative Thinking:

Sex Education for a Modern Liberal Adult

by Robert Anton Wilson

*The head Sublime, the heart Pathos, the
genitals Beauty, the hands and feet
Proportion . . .
If the doors of perception were cleansed
every thing would appear to man as it is,
infinite.*

—William Blake

While I was attending college, I worked part-time as an orderly in a hospital. One of my jobs was cleaning up the "stroke" cases, paralyzed old men, who could no longer control their bowels. This proved to be useful experience later on, when I became a father—a baby and a paralyzed old man are much the same to one who must care for them, except that a baby's bowel movement is lighter in color and there is less of it.

I also used to go along on the ambulance to emergency calls. I'll never forget the first birth I witnessed. I had just read Philip Wylie's *Essay on Morals*, and I remembered his statement that a man who hasn't seen a baby born is a spiritual fop, a traveler on the surface of life. I was, I remember, astonished at the enlargement of the vulva (it was so much bigger than verbal descriptions would lead one to expect). Later, I wrapped the placenta in newspaper, to throw it out.

In spite of having received "a good Christian upbringing," I can't remember a time when I really believed that sex was "dirty." When I saw the *Family of Man* exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art, I was swept by a wave of tenderness, almost to the point of tears, at the photographs of lovers.

The first time I heard anybody refer to those beautiful pictures as "vulgar" (I have heard this opinion twice, once from a 16-year-old Irish Catholic virgin, and once from conservative Russell Kirk) I was flabbergasted. If someone had said that Van Gogh's "Sorrow" was pornographic, I couldn't have been more astonished.

It seemed to me then, and it still seems to me, that our civilization must be basically insane to produce people with such orientations.

During the Korean War, I made a point of donating blood the maximum number of times. I was thunderstruck when somebody told me that donating blood requires "courage." "What the hell do you mean?" I burst out, "It doesn't hurt!" (I was, at that time, nervous whenever I went to the dentist.) "But," said my friend, "to see your own blood draining out. . ."

I didn't understand then, and I still don't. But I heard the same tone of voice from a co-ed in my college class when I mentioned my work as an orderly. "You mean you clean up dirty old men?" she said. And I heard the same tone, again, when I was explaining to another girl why my wife and

I believe in Natural Childbirth. "Your wife must be very brave," she said. (Natural Childbirth, according to the Read Method, is often an ecstatic as the conception itself.)

And I hear exactly the same tone of voice in people who object to Marilyn Monroe's joyful femaleness, or some of Red Skelton's jokes, or Dr. Albert Ellis' frankness. I can only conclude that our civilization is full of people who are squeamish and uncomfortable about the basic biological nature of life.

I think that these people are, whether they are "adjusted" to society or not, profoundly, *existentially* insane.

I was astonished and dismayed to discover—in letters of protest which the *Realist* received after printing Paul Krassner's satirical "Sex Education for the Modern Catholic Child" [see inset]—that this literally insane hatred for the physical world still festers in the minds of many who consider themselves enlightened free-thinkers and humanists.

Let us face the facts for once. Man is one cell in a universe of process. His life is part of the carbon cycle. He lives off the fruits of the earth directly, or off the animals whose food-value derives from the fact that they live off the fruits of the earth; and his excrement and (ultimately) his corpse both go back to the earth as fertilizer.

This is the basic existential cycle, the frame in which our values must be found. There is no way of breaking out of it. The other natural processes of the solar system and the great galaxy itself are equally crucial to humanity: if the sun went nova tomorrow, human life would end. The cycle of birth, reproduction and death also dominates us.

Millions of lesser cycles, epicycles, rhythms and processes make up the structure of our reality: the moon; menstruation; blood pH; metabolism; spring, summer, fall and winter; di-

gestion; respiration.

There is nothing "vulgar" about these processes, nothing "not nice," nothing "obscene." There are just *there*; they exist; and that's all. Whether we accept these processes, rejoice at their beauty or feel hopeless and disgusted about being involved in them—this tells something about our own mental health, but not about the natural processes.

The most important of the *cyclic* processes in the life of a healthy adult

A Letter to The Humanist

Dear Sirs:

Partly because I saw an ad for the *Realist* covering the entire back page of the *Humanist*, I sent along money for the same. I took it the appearance of the ad in your magazine was a tacit recommendation. Eight issues came.

Holding my nose, I glanced through a few pages, then consigned all eight to the incinerator. No further issues shall come into my house. I can take criticism, satire and freethought in plenty but I want it on a high, clean level.

I have enjoyed the *Humanist* and always thought that the members of its staff and frequent contributors were persons of good taste, intelligence and learning. Some I have had the pleasure of hearing. But as of right now I am so incensed at the *Humanist*, I have quite decided not to renew my subscription once it has expired.

The *Realist* appears to me to be nothing but a dirty sheet, edited by gutter-bound minds of extremely low intelligence and I want no more of it.

A copy of this goes to the *Realist* . . .

Nellie M. Housden
Waterloo, Iowa

is, of course, that of pre-orgasmic tension, orgasm, and post-orgasmic relaxation.

Psychiatry, history, anthropology, etc. all seem to bear out the conclusion that it was the Church's interference with this particular cycle that began the degeneration of mankind, which led ultimately to the present mess in which a great proportion of the population are embarrassed, uncomfortable or just plain frightened at any crucial biological process.

It is for this reason that I am a militant freethinker and not just a nice, respectable academic "humanist." The American Humanist Association goes on and on about "stating positive values," etc., not "being merely negative," etc. Well, I call myself the Negative Thinker with good reason.

I just don't believe any new positive values can enter the lifeblood of our civilization until we have first purged it of the poison of the Schizogenic Fallacy: the fallacy that man is a "nice"

The Realist

spirit imprisoned in a "not nice" physical body.

My wife, my beautiful red-head, used to believe, as many "liberal intellectuals" still believe, that organized religion is a quaint relic of the Dark Ages, a charming sort of living fossil precisely as cute and as harmless as the duck-billed platypus. She couldn't understand how I could get so angry about it.

Now, however, with children arriving at school age, she is beginning to develop some of my own militant anger. It is a horrible thing to see innocent children begin to pick up the millennium-old theological rubbish from their playmates; it is more horrible to reflect on how much more they will pick up from children's TV shows and from our supposedly secular, public schools.

For, make no mistake about it, old Wilhelm Reich may have been wrong about a million things (I think he was), but he was not wrong when he wrote, in *The Function of the Orgasm*

A Case in Point

"The Visible Man" is being pushed as an educational toy with which children can learn about the "complete" anatomical structure of man by fitting the various parts together properly on a skeletal figure. It truly does educate the child for this culture: "The Visible Man" has no reproductive organs.

and *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, that chronic rage and hatred stem directly from "orgiastic impotence" (the inability to achieve total organismic orgasm), and that "orgiastic impotence" stems from man's rejection of his own physical being.

The child who is taught to despise his own body and its functions and to identify himself with an imaginary "soul" is eventually going to become full of hatred for everybody and everything in existence. Why? Because one part of him (the sensory, non-verbal, existential level, you might call it) is permanently at war with this ridiculous "soul" dogma which his cortex tries to believe. His nervous system becomes schizoid.

He has what Reich calls "muscular armor," chronic physical tension holding back the natural, but (to him) forbidden felicity of the organism. He can't be comfortable in his body; and, of course, he can't really get out of it.

The result, according to the usual Freudian mechanisms, is that all this neural frustration and biological rage is projected outward upon the rest of existence. The physical world becomes, as it was to Saint Cyprian, "the creation of the devil." The rest of mankind becomes "the enemy" to be exterminated, or, more hypocritically, "the

damned" to be saved. Every social evil, from the malicious gossip of Mrs. Gilhooley's bridge-table to the horrors of Belsen, derives from this state of mind.

Now, finally, what of the people who consider themselves "liberal" and "enlightened" but object to "Sex Education for the Modern Catholic Child?" Mr. Krassner's language is uncensored, very true. So is the blood, smear and urine analysis of a competent obstetrician.

Are you upset by Mr. Krassner's reference to sanitary napkins (a puritanical euphemism itself, by the way)? You would be more upset by the case of a girl my wife once knew who inserted her first Tampax without removing the cardboard roll. I don't suppose anybody could deny that the painful experience of that girl resulted from the stupid taboos of our society

which made it impossible for her to learn how a Tampax should be inserted by asking clear and specific questions in plain words.

Can a freethought journal effectively combat the vast organized stupidities of Orthodoxy if it tacitly accepts the pressure of Orthodoxy by restricting itself to prissy and priggish little euphemisms?

Are we still living in the Victorian Age? Do you object to a reference to "nocturnal emissions?" The Army, in its psychological test for draftees, refers to them as "wet dreams." If you are afraid of plain language about the natural functions of the healthy human body—your human body—what are you doing reading a freethought journal anyway?

Nobody can deny the point made by Mr. Krassner's Swiftian little bit of

Realist First Reader:

Sex Education for a Modern Catholic Child

(Editor's note: This 'primer' first appeared in the second issue of the Realist. We are reprinting it here inasmuch as Mr. Wilson's article above makes specific reference to it.)

This is a diaphragm. Women use it when they don't want to have a baby. That is very immoral. Why, you ask? Because it is artificial, that's why. But never fear. There are other methods to prevent conception. They are very moral. Why, you ask? Because they are natural, that's why.

This is big brother's pajama bottoms. He had a nocturnal emission last night. What a shame. It woke him up. But see the semen stain. It has millions of dead sperms. They were killed the natural way.

This is big sister's sanitary napkin. It doesn't look very sanitary any more, does it? There is an ovum somewhere in that bloody mess. But it will never be fertilized. It will be flushed down the toilet bowl. That's the natural way, too.

This is a baby. It was born dead. Every year in the U.S.A., 136,000 infants are still-born or die within a month. Now suppose their Mommies and Daddies had interfered artificially with the process of procreation. God's purpose would never have been achieved. Just think what a tragedy that would've been. But at least some of the dead babies were baptized. That's the natural way.

This is a special calendar. It marks off menstrual periods. That's for the rhythm system of not having babies. A husband and his wife are in bed. They start to make love. Then they get out of bed. Because they have to look at the calendar. That's the natural way.

This is a husband and wife who want to have a baby. But the calendar says that the time is sterile. Lucky for them they have a calendar. It saves

them from having unnecessary intercourse. So they stop making love. Because one thing would lead to another. Ask Dorothy Dix. She should know. She tried it once with Dr. Crane. Just to prove her theory. Later she had to write to his Worry Clinic. She was worried because she missed her period. She missed it very much.

This is a husband and wife who don't want to have a baby yet. But the calendar says that the time is fertile. So they stop making love. Unless they'd like to gamble on having unwanted babies. That's the natural way.

This is a confessional booth. There is a screen in the middle. The person on one side is a priest. The person on the other side is a confessor. He is confessing that he has had evil thoughts. The priest tells him that to have an evil thought is evil. It is just as evil as committing the evil act that the evil thought is about. Priests never have evil thoughts themselves. They don't have to. They have an ample supply of other people's evil thoughts to draw upon.

This is the husband and his wife again. The ones who don't want to have a baby yet. Now the calendar says that the time is sterile. How convenient. Now they can make love without stopping. And without worrying. But they're good, consistent Catholics. And so they are worrying. Because they know that evil thoughts are evil. Their evil thought is to have intercourse but to avoid having a baby. They can't be sure they won't have a baby—that's why the rhythm system is moral—but the intention is there. Tomorrow they will go to confession.

satire — that the precious “natural order” which the Catholic hierarchy is so anxious to save from interference by the rubber industry, this wonderful capitalized Nature that is not the same as the nature known to science (since things can happen which violate it), this sacred “Nature” sees to it that millions of ova are wasted for every one that is fertilized, that trillions of spermatozoa perish without ever reaching an ovum, that hundreds of thousands of babies are born dead every year.

Mr. Krassner makes this point by using specific, extensional language, which is what any semanticist would advise. Who or what would profit if the point were weakened by evasions, subtleties, euphemisms and nice-nellyism in general? Only those reactionary institutions which are committed to keeping mankind imprisoned in sexual ignorance, superstitious fear and queasy shame at the biological bases of life.

A psychiatrist once told me that he makes a point when discussing sex with his patients of using the familiar Anglo-Saxon monosyllables rather than medical terms. “They can never really tell me about their problems if they’re busy searching for ‘nice’ words,” he said. It may seem unrelated, but I am reminded of Ramakrishna’s remark that, before he could teach yoga to Occidentals, he first had to teach them to weep.

I am a very enthusiastic student of certain varieties of Oriental mysticism, some of which seem quite rational to my mind. The purpose of yoga, of zazen, of what the East calls “ways of liberation,” is not to sink into a mindless trance like a masturbating tree-sloth, but to become more acutely aware on all levels of the senses, nervous system and “mind.” (A Zen master once summed up Buddhism in the one word, “Attention.”)

The first step toward this awareness is to transcend the “muscular armor”

which keeps the organism insensitive to those parts and functions it has been told are not “lady-like” or not “gentlemanly.” (Modern psychiatry insists on “abreaction”—as Mencken put it, the patient has to make a jack-ass of himself before he can be cured.)

Michelangelo wrote that “to create, you must first be able to love.” Einstein, more verbosely, said that the drive toward greater knowledge always begins from “an intellectual love of the objects of experience.” The greatest artist and the greatest scientist of the Western world are at one in recognizing that their creativity arises from “love”; and Einstein seems to have had in the back of his mind Spinoza’s “Intellectual love of a thing means understanding its perfections.” Twenty-five hundred years ago in China, Confucius wrote in the *Shu King* that “the dynasty, Y Yin, came in because the folk had achieved a great sensibility.”

All of these expressions (the Zen master’s “Attention,” Michelangelo’s “love,” Einstein and Spinoza’s “Intellectual love of things,” Confucius’ “great sensibility”; and I could throw in also Blake’s remark about “cleansing the doors of perception”) seem to me attempts to verbalize an experience which, by its nature, cannot be verbalized. One has to experience it.

You have to relax your body, so that the hard kinks of prejudice and fear cannot censor your perceptions. You have to look at things without using

words inside your mind, look at things as they are originally perceived without shame or “value” or use-consciousness or purpose of any sort. Every thing you look at will then appear to you, as Blake says, infinite.

This is the “oceanic experience” Freud noted at the root of religion. It is also at the roots of science and art. We are all stumbling into this experience constantly, whenever we are completely relaxed and unafraid—Sunday afternoon in the hammock, for instance.

This experience has created a hundred stupid theologies, true; but, as I mentioned above, it has also created sciences and arts. In the Occident especially, from the troubadours of the 12th Century up to D. H. Lawrence and Ezra Pound, this experience has become the exclusive property of wild and erotic independent mystics, while the official churchly mystics have sunk deeper and deeper into a miasmal mist.

It is out of this “oceanic experience” that a rational humanism can create “positive values” as an alternative to the delusional schizophrenias of Judeo-Christian theology. But these values can only be understood by those who are aware on all levels of their being, sensory as well as rational; and the majority of people will never become aware in this way until those institutions are destroyed which teach man to despise his own body and to fear even to speak of it in plain, honest words.

“The Churches Ought To Be Able . . .”

If death and taxes are the only things a man can be certain of, it would seem that immortality and non-payment of taxes are the only things a clergyman can be certain of. Last month, however, the chief administrator of the Presbyterian Church asserted that continuation of church tax exemption could jeopardize the future.

Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, writing in *Christianity Today*, a conservative Protestant semi-monthly magazine, stated:

“When one remembers that churches pay no inheritance tax . . . that churches may own and operate business and be exempt from the 52 per cent corporate income tax, and that real property used for church purposes . . . is tax-exempt, it is not unreasonable to prophesy that, with reasonably prudent management, the churches ought to be able to control the whole economy of the nation within the predictable future.

“That the growing wealth and property of the churches was partially responsible for revolutionary expropriation in England in the sixteenth century, in France in the eighteenth century, in Italy in the nineteenth century, and in Mexico, Russia, Czechoslovakia and Hungary . . . in the

twentieth century, seems self-evident.

“A government with mounting tax problems cannot be expected to keep its hands off the wealth of a rich church forever. That such a revolution is always accompanied by anticlericalism and atheism should not be surprising.”

Dr. Blake explained that “the present pattern of religious tax exemption by federal, state, and municipal authorities, if continued, may present the state with problems of such magnitude that their only solution will be revolutionary expropriation of church property.”

He recommended that the churches approach local tax authorities and start paying voluntarily one per cent of the sums that would be assessed as taxes were it not for the legal exemptions, and increasing the amount an-

(Continued on Page 15)

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Religious Socio-Politics Around the World

"IMMORAL PROGRAM." The Draper Committee report recommending U.S. aid to the planned parenthood programs of needy foreign nations, as reported here last month, has been followed by the publication of another report on that same subject. This one was issued by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, having been prepared for the Committee by the Stanford Research Institute of Menlo Park, California.

The report predicts the possibility that world population might increase 100% by the year 2000. It says that this population growth will require inexpensive and effective means of birth control. It recommends that the U.S. study the possibility of backing large scale foreign tests of birth control devices.

Ironically, it was this same Senate committee which had pleased the Catholic hierarchy a few weeks before by issuing a statement by unnamed "distinguished former foreign service officers" advocating an American ambassador to the Vatican. The new report was not expected to please the bishops.

The Diocesan Union of Holy Name Societies, meeting in Brooklyn, added its voice to those of various clerics who had previously opposed the program. It urged government authorities to "guard against any attempt that may be made to implement legislatively or administratively such an immoral program."

LABEL-CONSCIOUS. The West German Socialist party has published a new statement of principles which largely disowns its Marxist ancestry and affirms the right of private property and free competition. But Catholic sources do not accept its reformation, insisting that until it drops its opposition to state-supported religious education it will continue to bear the brand of Marx.

MR. CLEAN GOES ABROAD. When President Eisenhower went to England in September in preparation for the visit of Nikita Khrushchev to this country he made a serious diplomatic error. He invited the Spanish foreign minister, Fernando Castiella, to meet him in London. Castiella is a former Nazi officer who, when appointed ambassador to Great Britain, was rejected by the Queen. Eisenhower invited the Spaniard to England without even notifying Prime Minister McMillan.

But there may have been some method in the President's madness. For one thing, when Castiella arrived, he brought a statement by General Franco, approving the Khrushchev visit. This obviously was intended to help

alleviate some of the pressure and criticism from the Catholic hierarchy regarding Mr. K's welcome.

So much for the Catholics. But Ike may also have taken care of the Protestants. Castiella has now returned to Spain advocating a "Charter of Protestant Rights."

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK. The Roman Catholic Diocesan Superintendent of Education in Chicago says that it is impossible for Catholic schools there to comply with city requirements with respect to fire alarm systems. Meanwhile, William Eddington, Jr., 14 years old, has just died in a hospital, the 95th victim of the disaster at our Lady of Angels Roman Catholic parochial school which burned last November because no alarm could be given.

WORKER-PRIESTS. When Giuseppe Cardinal Roncalli was Papal Nuncio to France, he supported the worker-priest movement against attempts from the Vatican to suppress it. But now, as Pope John, he has issued orders to the bishops of France that it must be dissolved.

Its purpose was to "re-Christianize" the traditionally anti-clerical and largely Communist-influenced working class in Paris and other industrial centers. The priests donned working clothes and even lived in working class neighborhoods. A previous order limiting their activities was defied by some of them.

Last month's order for dissolution was not addressed to the worker-priests themselves but to their bishops. An attempt was made to keep it secret and thus prevent the blame from attaching to the new Pope. But it was "leaked" to the press, perhaps by a disgruntled bishop. After the revelation, the official Vatican newspaper issued a blast against those responsible for the breach of confidence.

GUATEMALAN STRIFE. When Francis Cardinal Spellman returned from the recent Eucharistic Congress in Guatemala, he said that it was "a magnificent demonstration of Catholic faith and devotion to the Vicar of Christ." (Meaning the Pope.) The government of that country has been granting new privileges to the Church, including the right to hold property, which had been taken from it during the anti-clerical revolution of 1870, along with the 'right' to teach religion in the public schools.

But during July, the administration of President Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes was repudiated in an important local election in Guatemala City. At that time, also, a bomb was exploded at the

entrance to the palace of the Archbishop. Last month when a new Papal Nuncio arrived in Guatemala, another bomb was thrown at his official residence. But again the aim was poor, or the determination weak, and no one was injured.

FOOTPRINT PRECAUTION. Last January, a 2½-hour-old child was kidnapped from St. Peter's hospital in Brooklyn by a demented woman. The child was recovered, but only thru the efforts of a 24,000-man police force, a record army of 500 FBI agents and a special detail of 150 policemen; and only after the questioning of 200,000 people. While the cause of the difficulty was then not widely known, one of the obstacles to recovery of the infant was the hospital's negligence in failing to take the baby's footprints at birth, for purposes of identification. As a result, the New York Hospital code has been revised, as of this month, requiring that such footprints be taken in all hospitals. They are already taken in public hospitals.

NEWS-SLANTING. During last month's proceedings in the United Nations with respect to admission of Red China, the Irish delegation voted in favor of placing the issue on the agenda for discussion. At the same time, the Celts roundly condemned the action of the Chinese in Tibet. The metropolitan press headlined the story, "Irish lead UN Fight on Peiping." But Roman Catholic press headlines read, "China Sold Down the River" and "Ireland Votes with the Red Bloc."

The quarrel seems to be between two parties in Ireland, the Fianna Fail, which is in the majority, and a minority called the Fine Gael. Said Irish Foreign Minister Frank Aiken: "If Deputy McGilligan had to climb onto the bodies of his grandmothers and grandfathers for several generations to get a crack at Fianna Fail, he would do it. He is a low type who would climb on the body of a dead pope to have a crack at Fianna Fail."

Foreign Minister Aiken seems to be well treated by the secular press, but McGilligan and his ilk seem to have better standing with the editors of church papers.

IRISH PROTECTION. *Time* magazine recently carried a feature story about the "blushless press" of Ireland. It said that "Roman Catholic Ireland's law and custom have long forced Irish newspapers to adopt one of the most rigorous self-censorships of any free press in the world." But the Archbishop of Washington, D. C. said that "enjoyment of freedom presupposes a

sense of responsibility. That is why adherence to principle, not sensationalism, is the mark of a truly free press."

English newspapers regularly have to be completely revised for circulation in Ireland where any mention of sex crimes, venereal disease, even artificial insemination of barnyard fowl, is carefully excised. The *Irish Independent* insists that it can be read by the oldest mother superior in the smallest convent in Ireland without bringing a blush to her cheeks.

TESTING, 1-2-3 . . . Evangelist Oral Roberts, who spends more than \$1,000,000 annually for nationwide TV time in the interest of his multi-million dollar faith-healing enterprise, has now decided to go into the broadcasting business himself. He has applied to the FCC for a permit to build and operate a 1,000-watt AM radio station in Tulsa, Okla. The "non-commercial" station would emphasize music and news to a greater extent than religious programming. Roberts also hopes to buy a Boston short-wave radio station which now broadcasts his sermons throughout Europe.

One of his competitors, Billy Graham, is planning to build a radio station atop a North Carolina mountain.

HOLY POPCORN. The Loew's State Theatre in Boston, which cost \$2,000,000 to build, has been purchased by the Roman Catholic Church. It is believed to be one of the half dozen largest theaters in the United States. Supposedly, it will be taken off the tax rolls. The Church has another theater in the city of Buffalo, and, in a number of other countries, it operates whole chains of theaters.

Variety reported some time ago that the Italian film industry is in "terrible shape." Richard Basehart, who starred in *La Strada*, said that the Catholic Church is a "tremendous factor." The Church owns and operates between five and six thousand houses, sometimes the only theater in small places.

The acquisition of theaters in the United States may be a move to counteract the weakening of the Legion of Decency, now the Church's main reliance for controlling the movies. Already, the Church is taking a new tack, plugging certain pictures for producers who cooperate with it. This happened with (of all people) Ingrid Bergman's *Inn of the Sixth Happiness*. The control of theaters may be a second strategic move along the same line.

EDUCATIONAL PROVINCES. In India, the Communist government of Kerala was removed after riots inspired by the Hindu leadership and the Catholic hierarchy. As often occurs, their opposition was based not so much on the Communist Party's dictatorial ten-

dencies as on its refusal to cooperate with the religionists. In Kerala most of the schools are religiously controlled but are paid for out of the public treasury. The Communist administration had insisted that if the government were going to pay the bill, it should also have a word in the selection of teachers.

This was treated by the Catholics and Hindus as an interference with freedom of religion, and the central government finally removed the Communists and will call another election. But the Church is now dismayed to find that even the non-Communist official governing the territory has made no move to change the objectionable law establishing governmental control over government-paid teachers.

Meanwhile, in Madhya Pradesh, a non-Communist state, a similar problem has arisen. The bishops have called in their legal advisers about the state's "denial of recognition" to Catholic schools. What they mean is almost certainly not denial of recognition but denial of a government financial handout.

TEACHERS FRET. In Indonesia, the expenses of all education are paid by the government; but many of the schools are controlled not by the government but by the Catholic Church. Recently the government enacted a regulation requiring that teachers be citizens of the country. At the school opening date this fall, the Catholic schools indignantly refused to reopen in the face of this citizenship requirement. But, unable to force a change, the schools were re-opened, two weeks late.

SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY. As the school year opened, it was obvious that private schools, including parochial schools, would have a tremendous increase in enrollment. This was true in spite of the fact that a recent conference at Columbia University condemned the whole private school system as wasteful and undemocratic.

A writer for the *New York Times*, Sam Pope Brewer, says that "the biggest factor in the situation is the recent influx of Negro and Puerto Rican pupils in the public schools. Without any prejudice based on race or color, many middle class white families object to having their children plunged into an atmosphere of slum children who, through no fault of their own, start out from a completely different and much lower level of manners and conduct."

The parochial schools solve this problem in part by refusing to admit the worst of the "problem" children and throwing the burden of their education onto the public schools.

POST NO FRILLS. Many public school men have long been convinced that a number of the so-called "tax-

payer revolts" against "frills in education" are really led by the Roman Catholic hierarchy to keep down the quality of education in the public schools. Perhaps the true facts in this respect will be revealed in a study now being undertaken by the Education Department of the State of New York. It will try to determine whether communities with large parochial school enrollments are more likely to vote down their public school budgets. A study will be made of about 30 districts in which budgets have been voted down at least once this year.

The State Superintendent of Education, James E. Allen, Jr., has been the object of many violent attacks in the Roman Catholic press. If the facts revealed by his investigation point the finger to the hierarchy, such attacks are very likely to continue.

ST. LOUIS BLUES. A suit has been filed by an organization called Public Funds for Public Uses, Inc., to prevent the government from buying land in St. Louis at high prices and selling it at low prices to the Jesuit-operated St. Louis University. The situation is comparable to the multi-million dollar subsidy which Fordham recently extracted from federal taxpayers in the guise of a public housing project. Nevertheless, the Secretary of the Protestant Council of St. Louis opposed the 'attack' on the Jesuits, which had been encouraged by POAU.

MORE ITALIAN INTRIGUE. Don Luigi Sturzo died late in August. He was eulogized by the Catholic Church, of which he was a priest, for his opposition to Mussolini. But this was not the tune sung when Mussolini was coming to power. Don Luigi's Popular Party then lost the support of Il Duce's good friend Pope Pius XII, and had to be dissolved by royal decree to make way for the blackshirts.

At that time Don Luigi was permitted to leave the country. He continued agitation for participation by the Church in the democratic process. After the war, his party was rehabilitated and restored to power because the Western allies thought it would protect them from Italian Communism.

But now Pope John is again withdrawing his support from the Catholic Party of Italy. He has told Catholic Action that its members should work "in good faith" in other parties as well. To Catholic party politicians, this is not an unmixed blessing. Many of them, including former Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani, want the priests deprived of their control of party affairs. It may well be that the Catholic party of Italy will end up Catholic in name only, like the population in general.

NEEDLE & THREATEN. In Haiti, two French-born Catholic priests were

charged with complicity in a riot that led to the death of several people. Both were expelled from the country as undesirable, but on arrival in New York City, they were honored at a luncheon by Cardinal Spellman.

The Archbishop of Port au Prince, Francois Poirier, was summoned before a district attorney for agitation against the government. He refused to appear and a warrant was issued for his arrest. The Pope threatened Prime Minister Francois Duvalier with excommunication; and the warrant was promptly withdrawn.

PHILIPPINE FILLIP. It seems possible that an outstanding anti-clerical politician will, in the reasonably near future, become President of the Philippines, Senator Claro M. Recto was the candidate of the National Citizens' Party in the last election. He ran fourth among four candidates. But, since that time, his party has formed an alliance with the Nationalist Party which won the last election. One of the conditions he is said to have exacted was that he should be candidate for Vice-President with the present President, Carlos P. Garcia, seeking reelection on the coalition ticket.

Meanwhile, the coalition which was formerly in effect between the Progressive and Liberal Parties has fallen apart. The Progressive Party has been reorganized as the Grand Alliance. It has strong Catholic backing and is headed by a former president of Catholic Action. Felixberto Serrano, foreign minister, has complained to the Vatican that foreign priests have been using church-owned broadcasting facilities to campaign for Grand Union local candidates.

Last year, Senator Recto urged that the Philippine constitution be amended to bar Roman Catholic bishops, priests and nuns from election activities. He ascribed his defeat in the last election to their activities.

Philippine Santor Rosseller Lim says that the Church is one of the largest corporations in the island, citing the "estates, schools and universities and other properties" owned by it. He urges the nationalization of all educational facilities.

The most significant angle of the situation is that the Philippine constitution forbids the holding of the Presidential office for more than eight years. If Garcia runs again in 1961 with anti-clerical Recto as his running mate, it means that Recto will become president in March of 1965 when Garcia's eight years expire. Recto could then run for the Presidency himself, nine and a half months later, with control of an efficient political machine.

AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION. Rev. David J. Heffernan, founder of the Sacred Heart Auto League, re-

ports that 4,000,000 Sacred Heart statues for car dashboards have been distributed in the U.S. (Traffic officials in the nation's Capital have held that such objects, carried on dashboards, distract the driver's attention and cause accidents.) Father Heffernan also says that members of his society have promised 1,000,000 hours of "reparation" daily while driving. Presumably this means that instead of paying attention to the road, they will be engaged in prayer to "make amends to God for sin committed."

SUFFERIN' SUFFRAGE. Writing for the Associated Press, George W. Cornell said that "women today occupy a back seat in the running of American religious denominations. They do much of the work but generally have little voice in policy. They are often called the 'shadow church.'" Mrs. W. Murdoch MacLeod, Executive Director of United Church Women, a 12,000,000-member organization, agrees that "by and large women still are second class citizens in the Church."

In February, Richard L. Bluege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Whitehall, Wisconsin, was found guilty of heresy and dismissed from his post. One of the principal issues was his advocacy of women's right to vote in church affairs. Last month, the members of his parish withdrew from the Wisconsin Evangelical Synod and set up an independent constitution giving women the right to vote.

BEATITUDE CONTESTS. In connection with beauty contests, one of the writers on the Brooklyn *Tablet* who specializes in the technical phases of Canon Law was asked, "How far does the authority of the bishop of a diocese go in matters of obedience?"

The expert quoted section 2214 of the code of Canon law which says that "the Church has the innate and proper right, independent of all human authority, to punish her guilty subjects with both spiritual and temporal penalties." The answer continued, stating that the various bishops involved in the bathing suit disputes "acted within their jurisdiction" in threatening the girls with various types of punishment.

Since several girls were threatened by their bishops for participating in the Miss Universe bathing suit parade, it has now been suggested that the rules of that particular contest be changed. Protested one of the officials: "Without bathing suits, what would these girls be?"

However, from Long Beach, California, the Catholic press reports that the sponsors of the Miss Universe contest are going to withdraw from it and start a new pageant in which contestants will appear "in attire other than bathing suits." They said they

acted as a result of "objections . . . from various religious groups."

Reprints

"The Case Against Supernaturalism" by Dr. Oscar Riddle, and "Psychological Aspects of Discouraging Contraception" by Dr. Albert Ellis, are now available in reprint form from the *Realist* at 10¢ each or 20 for \$1.

A six-part debate between free-thinker F. P. Wortman and preacher Wendle Scott — on the proposition, "Belief in God and the Bible is reasonable and beneficial to mankind" — is available in reprint form for 25¢ from *The Debater*, published by Scott, at 6 South 15th, McAllen, Texas.

Contributions

We would like to thank the following persons for their contributions this month to The Realist Association — a non-profit corporation which publishes the *Realist* — and donations to which are tax-deductible.

Anon. \$1; Anon. \$2; Ruth Arlene Bolté \$1; John A. Carlson \$2; L. A. Harmon \$1; J. T. Harris \$1; Dr. H. Lansdell \$3; William R. Sage \$5; Ted Sly \$2; Albert L. Smith \$3; H. J. Smith \$1; A. P. Thomas \$2; Amos Ungherini \$2; William M. Wilson \$1.

CHURCH TAXATION

(Continued from Page 12)

nually until a rate of ten per cent of the normal levy on taxable property is reached.

He also proposed that churches and church-owned organizations be liable to the corporate income tax on business-type profits.

Dr. Blake — who is former president of the National Council of Churches of Christ in America (which embraces practically all Protestant groups), and who is supported in his stand by the Council's present director — warned that "American churchmen need seriously to grapple with the charge made by the antireligious that church tax exemption (in) the United States is but a slightly concealed form of tax support of the churches."

He admitted that such tax exemptions weaken the basic theory of separation of church and state; nevertheless, he made it obvious that the self-interest of the churches is highly involved.

Meanwhile, preachers with an even more personal self-interest were supporting a bill which has been introduced in Congress to make clergymen exempt from federal taxes on transportation, telephone calls and telegrams. They already get cut rates on the railroads. And they have been trying to pressure the airlines into a similar concession.

Singing, "Nearer, my God, to thee..."

GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

(Continued from Cover)

To register his viewpoint in effective terms of dramaturgy, Nathan staked his professional reputation as a stage critic by risking a whirl at play-writing. When his intimates counseled him against this move, he was reported to have exclaimed metaphorically that any man who hurls bricks at others must expect to become a target himself; whereupon he transcribed his provocative strictures against absolutism into a one-act play.

Here is a capsule synopsis of his theme as near as I recall:

It is the afternoon of a summer's day. The curtain rises on a bedroom setting in which the yellow window blinds have been lowered. The walls are heavily lined with book shelves. We witness one of the characters ostensibly on his death bed and another (his wife) tearfully in the performance of beseeching him to accept the true faith before the shadows deepen permanently. In fact, arrangements are in order for the last religious rites.

Although he is aware that the end is a matter of seconds, his mind still functions with an astonishing clarity. Nothing of his advocacy of skepticism has receded from his active brain. He is stoutly determined to follow his lifelong convictions to the finish, despite the disquieting entreaties of his wife. To yield, he realizes, would be a perfidious betrayal of his conscience.

It has been plainly established that the impenitent had unquestionably been influenced by the powerful writings of those dissenters who fashioned history, science and logic for their deductions. And, although he is in the remorseless grip of death, he brusquely dismisses any overtures for conversion. Nevertheless, his wife is undismayed and continues pleading with him relentlessly.

Outside the premises are some juveniles engaged in kite-flying, as I remember this very convenient bit of stage business. In the midst of this melancholy tug-of-war between the couple, the stricken man catches a quick flash of a kite on the drawn window shade which he instinctively as-

cribes as the true vision of the cross miraculously dispatched from on high.

With his last gasp, he softly murmurs, "I accept."

Now, it was plausible that George Jean Nathan penned this playlet of the disintegration of a free will, as an exercise of sheer cynicism. He was not concerned so much with the abstract struggle between the Lord of Hosts and Satan over man. On the contrary, one gathered the impression that Nathan was painfully contemptuous of any mortal who elects to sacrifice a prolonged belief in favor of a sudden mythical payoff at the last moment.

This inference was adroitly woven into the dialogue between the two protagonists in which the obvious agnosticism of the husband sprang from his stubborn rejection of any faith not based on genuine foundations. Any reader of this one-act play must concede that the tempting offer of a trip to Paradise is purely esoteric or apocryphal; that thus far its proponents have never offered any substantial or convincing evidence that it has ever been accomplished; and that no rational being should bow to the unsupported declarations of the theologians. Furthermore, Nathan averred, no fellow creature is endowed with the moral privilege to press for a death-bed conversion.

It is accurate to acknowledge that a drowning man will clutch at a straw. But we have yet to learn that any drowning man has ever been rescued by a straw. It is also reasonable to assume that anyone forced to take leave of this world is certainly at a disadvantage at the hands of those who grandiloquently guarantee him admission to the celestial region in exchange for an unqualified acceptance of organized faith.

The exigencies of the situation generally depend on whatever emissary of either the Old or New Testament races to his bedside first, bearing ethereal gifts. In extenuation, it is only just and fair to record that all such divines eye heavenly supports above the earthly ones. Small wonder that they pursue their prospects with the same zeal that Casey Stengel's merry sadists once battered their rivals or with which Marshall Matt Dillon scurries still, af-

ter the lawbreakers of the old West.

The prospective convert, whose life is fading, usually lacks the stamina and mental faculty to withstand the siege for his soul. Perhaps, in present day society, it's even considered unethical to block a minister from vending his favorite brand of salvation to the dying.

During his entire conscious career, George Jean Nathan scorned all religious practices which offered the doubtful usufructs of the legendary kingdom of heaven to those who unceremoniously surrendered to the faith. But his sharpest barbs were spared for the confirmed non-believers who capitulated behind a facade of fear. These, then, were some of the penetrating attitudes of Nathan's credo.

For more than a half a century, he never let up shocking, infuriating and dazzling his readers. Whether one agreed with his dicta or not, his prose was brilliant, epigrammatic and witty. Another time, with H. L. Mencken as his collaborator, he followed up his attack with a three-act buffoonery of early Rome in which Christianity was lampooned to extremes of exaggeration and despair.

The theatrical records fail to reveal whether any of his play efforts were ever performed professionally on the boards. At any rate, he and Mencken never masked their disrespect for organized religion.

In the late spring of 1958, the agnostic-hedonist George Jean Nathan—after contributing the preface to a collection of erotica, and whose own personal desires he elegantly expressed as "life's music and color, its charm and ease, its humor and loveliness along with good cigars, good food and wine, pretty women to talk to and work to do"—suffered a fatal stroke in his hotel suite.

There, in his room, with shades drawn, among his books and manuscripts piled ceiling-high on shelves, this controversial and debonair critic—who mocked and scoffed at every variety of religious dogma as being deficient in history, science and logic—became a death-bed convert to Catholicism, in the presence of his wife, during the last hours of his earthly existence.

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