The
Salisbury Review
The quarterly magazine of conservative thought

Children of the Damned
Theodore Dalrymple

Sir Patrick Moore
Jane Kelly

First Amendment Blues
Matthew Walther

Sexual Stalinists
Stephen Baskerville

Deutschland über Brussels
Jonathan Story

Salmond Fishing
Vivian Linacre

Spring 2013
Vol 31 No 3

£4.99

Contents

3 Editorial

Articles

4 Sir Patrick Moore
Jane Kelly
6 Fishy Rights
Christie Davies
8 Deutschland über Brussels
Jonathan Story
10 Children of the Damned
Theodore Dalrymple
12 First Amendment Blues
Matthew Walther
13 Sexual Stalinists
Stephen Baskerville
15 Rowan Williams
Brian Ridley
16 Salmond Fishing
Vivian Linacre
18 Bad Samaritans
Jane Kelly
19 Goldwater, the would-be President
John Phelan
21 The Climate of Religion
David Wemyss
24 Murder by the Danube
Helen Szamuely
26 A Canadian at the Bank
David Twiston Davies
28 The Biochemistry of Belief
Will Emkes

Columns

30 Conservative Classic — 50
Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*
32 Reputations — 39
John Buchan
35 Roy Kerridge
36 Eternal Life
Peter Mullen

Arts & Books

37 Anthony Daniels
on Gabriele d'Annunzio
38 Nigel Jones
on Joachim Fest
39 Celia Haddon
on Otters
40 Lindsay Jenkins
on Obama's America
42 Christie Davies
on Mary Whitehouse
43 John Jolliffe
on T S Eliot's Circle
44 Alan Medenhall
on American Conservatives
45 Penelope Tremayne
on Syrian roots
46 Merrie Cave
on Elizabethan spies
48 Brian Eassty
on Persecuted Christians
49 Film: Merrie Cave
on Medical Films
50 Music: Gerald Place
on Arts Funding
51 Art: Charles Thomson
on Trash Art

54 In Short

Subscription payments by cheque should be sent by post to

The Salisbury Review,
5 Turnpike Court, Woburn Sands, Bucks,
MK17 8UA

Changes of address or other enquiries should be sent to the same address or by phone to
01908 281601

Credit card payments by phone remain the same
0207 226 7791
or
01908 281601

The Salisbury Review

Editor: Myles Harris
Managing Editor: Merrie Cave
Consulting Editors: Roger Scruton
Lord Charles Cecil, Jane Kelly,
Christie Davies, Ian Crowther

33 Canonbury Park South, London N1 2JW
Tel: 020 7226 7791 Fax: 020 7354 0383
E-mail: info@salisburyreview.co.uk

Web site: http://www.salisburyreview.co.uk

The National Health Service is bankrupt, kept going by money printing, long-dated IOUs and imported cheap labour. Real income is falling, while claims are out of control. In 1948 it was assumed that most people would not live beyond seventy, today they live into their eighties and longer. Officials believed that treatments would get cheaper. Most illnesses these days, usually the most expensive, occur in the last years of life, and the bills are mighty. However, unlike a commercial insurance company where you pay more as you get older, it is the other way round in the NHS.

Politicians now say that the only solution is to make pensioners pay more. Whether Labour or Conservative wins at the next election heavy taxes will be imposed on pensioners' properties, their free travel will be taken away, pensions delayed, and when they die many will have their property seized by the state.

This is sheer cowardice. The collapse of the NHS lies entirely at the door of NHS administrators and lying politicians. Three million immigrants have been smuggled onto the NHS's books since 1997. Because most of them are poor, they pay no premiums. Many have large families and it is common for any relatives still living abroad to be invited over for free treatment as well. There has been no attempt to stop the latter practice, quite the reverse. A few months ago GPs were asked not to ask for paperwork from patients to prove eligibility. Everybody from everywhere is to be given 'immediate and necessary' treatment free. In practice this means almost any condition except cosmetic surgery, and even then some get it free. And while hospitals abroad demand paperwork, many British hospitals merely ask patients if they have lived here more than a year. A simple yes (in any language from Mongolian to Tuareg), is sufficient to guarantee outpatient treatment; really serious inpatient illnesses are almost always 'immediate and necessary'. Treat first and cross your fingers for the money.

This is ridiculous. Residents registering with a GP or visiting a hospital should produce evidence they are known to the tax man, while visitors from countries who do not have reciprocal arrangements with us should produce insurance at passport control or be turned away. Matters could be further improved by small up-front payments. An administratively simple method would be to oblige everybody to pay £5 per visit to a GP or hospital, the money going to the Treasury. At a (life saving) stroke fifty per cent of the chairs in hospital casualties and GP waiting rooms would empty.

None of this is done because many key administrative posts in the NHS are held by officials who would give a good name to the Mafia. Their job is to conceal that we have been paying into a Ponzi scheme which makes Bernie Madoff look like a shining light of the Plymouth Brethren. They are utterly without scruple, appearing at the gates of hospitals, in which hundreds have died due to maladministration, to announce 'that lessons have been learnt'. They then return to their desks to persist in activities that have brought this state of affairs about; strangling the NHS in bureaucracy, closing wards and hospitals, firing clinical staff, using customer premiums to pay the most pressing debts, awarding themselves vast salaries, and writing off future debt against wishful thinking. Many of these creatures go on to lucrative jobs in companies lending long-dated money for new hospitals (known as PFI contracts) at rates comparable to loan sharking.

They should be dismissed; some should be in jail. But they are paid to lie by their masters in Whitehall. If we threaten to take away Milliband and Cameron's power at the next election, and pensioners can, (they have the casting vote) we may see people arriving to defraud the NHS being turned away at passport control while everybody else takes a P60 when they visit the doctor. Then we might hope for a day when old ladies are fed in *all* our hospitals, not forced to drink water from flower vases, and babies' mouths not taped shut to hide their cries from officials.

back to contents

Sir Patrick Moore, 1923–2012

Jane Kelly

The division of thinking between left and right hasn't been so clear since the 1640s, and is particularly obvious in the Cavalier *persona* of Patrick Moore, who aside from his obsession with the planets created an ironic *persona* based on one joke; the mad professor, and it was a huge hit with the British public.

He attracted a mass audience by his tremendous self-taught learnedness and his jokes. He once appeared dressed in a spacesuit and a fishbowl helmet, pretending to be a Martian. To make the point that we should not assume other planets to be lifeless just because their conditions were different from Earth's, he declared in an alien voice: 'I am surprised to see you all. I had thought your thick atmosphere and excessive water would have prevented life from evolving here.'

In the interest of explaining science to the masses he accidentally became the first man to swallow a fly on live TV. He was happy to use his comic powers to take swipes at other, more earnest public figures: 'Somewhere in the universe there could be a complete carbon copy of Anthony Wedgwood Benn – although I sincerely hope not.'

He prided himself on being a complete amateur, who, it seems unthinkable now, never went to school or had a proper job. 'Since the war I've never worked,' he told me happily when I interviewed him in 1997, at his home in a 17th century cottage in Selsey, where he lived for most of his life with his mother and cats, surrounded by a garden sprouting telescopes.

'Never having a job, I've always had the wonderful security of knowing that no one could ever sack me. Amateurs like me are still very important. We are doing all the things that the professionals haven't got time to do.'

He did everything he wanted to do in life because he was born before the great age of constraint in which we now live. He had no qualifications, no particular pedigree and was always just himself. He was that thing that many Englishmen once admired and secretly aspired to be, a true eccentric who got away with it and became extremely successful from pursuing his hobby.

The *Sky At Night*, which began on April 26th 1957, when he was 34, was the world's longest-running TV series with the same presenter. By pursuing his own interest with obsessional freedom, Moore did more than any other man to interest the public in astronomy and space travel. At the same time, he was an excellent cricketer, golfer, wrote music, appeared in Gilbert & Sullivan, and played a mean xylophone. He was even rewarded for his love of tobacco. In 1983 he was elected Pipeman of the Year. He was fat, loved food, didn't approve of slimmers, and never bothered with women. If only he'd owned a shed, he would possibly have been the happiest Englishman of the previous generation. But all this came at a price.

When he died, on December 9th, last year, *The New Statesman* published an obituary entitled: 'Sir Patrick Moore: A great and bad man.' Adding for good measure: 'The astronomer inspired many, but we cannot whitewash his sexist, xenophobic and homophobic comments as the outbursts of a quirky old eccentric.' Having installed a complete irony by-pass, they wasted no time in lacerating the recently deceased old man. Their writer Martin Robbins declared he was glad he'd never met Sir Patrick, (a man who'd known Yuri Gagarin, Neil Armstrong, Einstein and H G Wells), because he had once said that there were too many women on *Star Trek*.

You have to admire his sense of proportion. In

an interview with *Radio Times*, the astronomer had provocatively asserted: 'The trouble is that the BBC now is run by women and it shows: soap operas, cooking, quizzes, kitchen-sink plays. You wouldn't have had that in the golden days. I used to watch *Doctor Who* and *Star Trek*, but they went PC – making women commanders, that kind of thing. I stopped watching.' In his June 2002 programme he compounded his thought crime when he banished female news readers into the dreaded *Room 101* on the TV chat show.

One of the rules of modern life, which Sir Patrick flagrantly flouted, is being very careful what you say and to whom, and making a joke is far too big a risk for most people. He just went on zapping out his one liners: 'Welcome to the Mormon state,' said a humourless citizen, when he was visiting Utah with a TV Crew. 'We are quite different from the rest of America. You will find no swearing or drinking or wild women here.'

'It's hardly worth coming, is it?' replied Patrick.

In 1982 he wrote a humorous attack on modern life, rapped out on his grandfather's 1892 Remington typewriter, in his book, *Bureaucrats: How to Annoy Them*. It advised that imposing a thin layer of candle grease on those parts of a form marked 'for official use only' would prevent the recipient from writing anything and probably drive him mad. This was 'Useful when dealing with the Inland Revenue.'

In 2005, aged 84, he devoted an entire chapter of his autobiography to denouncing modern British society, which he encapsulated as full of 'motorist-hunting policemen'.

This type of individualist subversion cuts no ice with Robbins and his roundhead friends. 'Moore's bigotry went far beyond a few crass comments about *Star Trek*', fumed Robbins in his obit. 'He expressed sympathy for the BNP in his autobiography, which also set out some interesting thoughts about homosexuals and AIDS.'

Moore believed that homosexuals were mainly responsible for the spread of the disease. What the Left particularly hated was Sir Patrick's greatest heresy, on the matter of race. According to Robbins, he had famously referred to immigrants as 'parasites', declaring that he would 'send them all back to where they came from'. 'If you are an immigrant, or the descendant of immigrants, then you were not particularly welcome in Sir Patrick Moore's vision of British science.'

Down in Selsey, Sir Patrick had failed, through his own fault, his own deliberate fault, to embrace the new religion of multi-culturalism, and in his negligence had done terrible damage to the huge sensitivities of its disciples, and they are an unforgiving bunch.

'Perhaps most importantly', warns Robbins, 'The hailing of Sir Patrick Moore as simply a "great man" or a "hero" in the wake of his death is a kick in the teeth to those groups he sought to belittle and marginalise through his public statements.'

He never to my knowledge 'belittled' anyone personally. He was a kind man, as many young fans attest. Aged sixteen the astronomer Heather Couper, former president of the British Astronomical Association, told him that she worried that being a mere girl might prevent her becoming a professional astronomer. Sir Patrick assured her it was quite all right, and later wrote of the flyleaf of her book, 'Being a girl is not a problem at all.'

Personal kindness means nothing to the socialist personhood who cling to the creed of immigration like the Inquisition to transubstantiation. Patrick stood shamelessly on the other side, didn't like Johnny Foreigner and that was that. Somehow the influence of liberal thought didn't seem to have any effect on him. There was no stopping the blighter: On Britain being part of the EU: 'In the war, the Germans tried to beat us, the French did nothing and the Italians made good ice-cream. Out of Europe!'

On working class culture, as seen in the popular soap opera *Eastenders*: 'I suppose it's true to life. But so is diarrhoea – and I don't want to see that on television'. On hearing that a Damien Hirst installation was being attached to a spacecraft being sent to Mars: 'It won't interest the Martians.'

Patrick even annoyed the Left by hating our enemies. The former RAF rear gunner said:

> *We must take care. There may be another war. The Germans will try again given another chance. A Kraut is a Kraut is a Kraut. And the only good Kraut is a dead Kraut.*

Robbins seethed at this old warrior attitude. As well as eschewing a man who knew Einstein, he had obviously never risked speaking to anyone who actually went through the war. He was outraged at the old man's prejudices: 'He believed that the only good Kraut is a dead Kraut. He was out there whichever generation's standards you choose to judge him by.'

Patrick further upset the Guardianistase by complaining about the lenient sentencing policy in many courts. He had been a victim of crime. When I visited him, then aged 74, he'd just been burgled twice. His father's Military Cross was stolen, along with a watch given him by Neil Armstrong.

'I wish I could have caught them. I'd have laid them out', he told me, which was understandable. He despised the new way of thinking, where a man can be fired from his job for getting drunk at a Rugby club dinner, but does not go to prison, or get deported

to his homeland for rape or aggravated burglary. He believed that the law was increasingly being used to impose left-wing views; lenient sentencing policy in the courts, the Race Relations Act, Sex Discrimination Act and what he called the 'Thought Police/Politically Correct Brigade'.

In this modern age, politically there was nowhere for him to go. In the 1970s, he was chairman of the anti-immigration United Country Party, which became the New Britain Party in 1980. He gave up political campaigning with the arrival of Margaret Thatcher, deciding he was a Thatcherite. Like many he believed she would prevent, in her words, 'swamping' by immigrants. When she didn't, like many of his sensibility he floundered around on the fringes of politics, with no hope of representation, using his wit and popularity to fight a losing war against the tide of post-colonial guilt and pro-Europeanism. In 2001 he campaigned for UKIP in Chichester, and remained with UKIP until his death. His real home was probably with the Official Monster Raving Loony Party and he was briefly their financial advisor. He became a patron of the British Weights and Measures Association, which hoped to bring back our beloved inches, feet and miles. He was also opposed to the war in Iraq, blood sports, and capital punishment, always daring to have an independent mind.

'I may be accused of being a dinosaur', he said. 'But I would remind you that dinosaurs ruled the Earth for a very long time.' The meteorite of PC thought hit Britain with devastating effect, but it somehow missed him. His time was over but he must surely be applauded for refusing ever to believe it.

Jane Kelly worked for the Daily Mail *for 15 years as a celebrity interviewer.*

back to contents

Fishy Rights

Christie Davies

Animal rights protesters in Britain have for some time extended their campaign of sabotage to fishing. It is not just our intelligent relatives the dolphins and whales whose rights they seek to protect but also those of the cold-blooded, egg-laying pike, roach, bream and minnow. Members of the recently reinvigorated Campaign for the Abolition of Angling with its headquarters in Ross-on-Wye and its Scottish counterpart in Perth headed by a reformed and repentant ghillie, have begun to disrupt angling matches by stirring the water with bamboo canes and banging dustbin lids under water to drive the fish away. They even put on diving suits and swim underwater to make faces at the fish and frighten them away from the anglers. They are demanding that the government impose new legal restrictions on anglers including a compulsory written examination before a fishing licence is granted, a ban on the use of live bait and a complete ban on fishing by children under sixteen, unless supervised by an approved adult. In the long run they want to see fishing banned altogether, a view that will be strongly supported by the producers of lake and river pollution and acid rain.

They are not alone in their indignation, for many ultra-sensitive British animal-lovers, such as vegans and fruitarians who refuse to eat fish, have long been appalled at the callous anglers' disregard for the sufferings of fish, and the brutality with which fisherman regularly inflict all manner of cruelty and humiliation on our finny friends. It is worse, they say, than a hallal slaughterhouse. Can it be right to fill a sentient creature's skin with barbed irons, or his head with fish spears?

They are particularly revolted by the popularity of the so-called sport of competitive fishing. Every weekend in England the shores and banks of lakes, rivers and canals are lined with grim-faced men holding poles and wearing rubber boots hued according to social class: green for the gentry, black for the plebs and red and white stripes for our new multi-cultural Polish friends. The more audacious among them even don drizzle-proof hats and waders and, abandoning the terrestrial life for which man was designed, mount an unnatural invasion of the waters, created specifically for the use of the fish, for those sea creatures excused a trip in Noah's Ark. 'Can it really be right,' the anti-anglers ask, 'for men to enter the sacred river and the sinless sea in this way?'

The most militant among the proponents of fishy rights argue that, even if we ignore the indignities inflicted on impaled worms that cannot even turn and the deceit

involved in the use of a lure or a synthetic gleaming fly, fishing is clearly a morally repellent activity. There can be few ceremonial killings worse than that which succeeds the coarse shout of 'a bite', along the shores of a normally peaceful stretch of water. Not for the hapless fish the quick death by bullet or shot of the grouse or stalked stag, nor the chance to make one last run for it granted by huntsmen to the fox, but the long agony of fighting against the hook. 'How many anglers' demand the militant anti-fishers 'would like to be forced to sprint up and down the bank trying to free themselves from a person-hook baited with a cigarette or a piece of chewing gum by a cunning shark?' When finally the helpless fish is landed it is left to flop, gasp and drown in an air its fluttering gills cannot breath, or else trapped in a net more constraining than any cage. Later it may be cooked alive at the whim of a gourmet or cast aside to become a tit-bit for some complacent fishy-whiskered pussycat. If the fish is especially large its corpse may even be preserved in a glass case stuck above a grimy 'real-ale' bar with a note of its dimensions, not as a tribute to a gallant fish, but to support the boasts of the cruel and mendacious anglers. Should we not rejoice rather in the size, strength and skill of 'the one that got away', they ask?

"Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he'll have the maggot liberation army to deal with."

This, they argue, is the horrid reality behind the sentimental and heroic tales churned out by icthyophobes from Izaak Walton to Ernest Hemingway which have served to reproduce the bigoted ideology of atmosphere-breathers' supremacy. 'If fish could read', say the anti-anglers 'it would take their breath away'. It is time to remove their books from public libraries as has happened to racist, sexist and heterosexist ones and burn them in public. 'Hemingway is the new Salmon Rushdie'.

The public conscience of much of the rest of Europe and especially of those regions where there is nowhere to fish, has also been revolted by the gross inequality between the beings of land and water practised in Britain. A strong movement for the rights of fishes has long been gathering force in the EU and Britain may well be faced with having to defend itself in a variety of Euro-courts against law suits brought by determined fish-lovers. The radical Franciscan exponent of liberation theology, Amato Calamari, whose mocking of Jonah and criticism of Saints Peter, Andrew and Simon, caused so much controversy last year, has recently denounced the English as 'not angels, but anglers' and called for a boycott of Cornish pilchards.

More ominous still are the activities of the violent Poisson-libération front in France, the Parisian sons and daughters of the Marxists of 1968, who have been snipping angler's lines with scissors in Argenteuil and casting so much bread upon their waters that the sated fish ignore the beguiling baits held out by the rod-wielders. There have recently been several mysterious deaths by drowning in Argenteuil, though there are no reports of anglers dying in this way. 'Offensive' paintings of fishermen by Seurat and Maurice de Vlaminck have been daubed with synthetic cod-liver oil made from coal-tar, for much the same reason that the feminist Mary 'Slasher' Richardson attacked the nude-bottomed Rokeby Venus by Velásquez; art should not promote inequality, they claim**.** Fish-mongers' shops in Paris have been daubed with the slogan 'Poissonier = empoisonneur' and there are fears that this new militancy could lead to the criminal contamination of tins of snoek.

Most fishy activists deplore the use of violence and indeed see the brutality of the present world as a mere extension of unrestrained piscatorial aggression. Nonetheless there are many who feel that only in this way can the rights and liberties of fishes be attained and the dignity of aquatic creatures everywhere upheld. Right now I would not care to be in the shoes of the fishermen.

Christie Davies is the author of the The Mirth of Nations*, Transaction*

back to contents

Deutschland über Brussels

Jonathan Story

Once again the debate over the future of the UK's relation to the European Union has flared up. A day after Philip Gordon, the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, stated at the US Embassy in London that the US wants the UK in the EU, Mr Kirchbaum, leading a cross-party delegation from the Bundestag's EU Affairs committee, stated at the German embassy in London that 'renegotiating the Lisbon Treaty is legally impossible'. Doing so would 'open a Pandora's box'. For good measure, he added, a UK out of the EU would lose influence in the world.

The two views come in response to the assumption David Cameron and George Osbourne are alleged to entertain that Lisbon Treaty renegotiations are inevitable because of moves by the 17-member eurozone group of nations to become more closely integrated politically. But the fact is that Kirchbaum's reference to Pandora's box echoes Berlin's new mantra that no treaty change is needed.

One reason for the change in tone is the easing of pressure on banks in the Eurozone following the ECB decision in early 2012 to purchase bonds. But another is resistance in Germany to direct ECB regulation of Germany's local banks. These are the highly politicised banks that loan on eye-watering terms to German Mittelstand firms, the bedrock of German manufacturing, and had to be bailed out following their exposure to the US mortgage market and in southern European construction and infrastructure projects.

German politicians, bankers and industrialists rushed to the rescue as soon as bankruptcy threatened. The IKB – the Deutsche Industrie Bank, whose board was a who's who of German business – was bailed out. Berlin then came to the rescue of a series of Landesbanken; the Irish government announced it would guarantee the deposits of Irish savers for its six big banks, prompting Chancellor Merkel to state that she would not bail out Irish banks. What was good for German banks was clearly not good for others.

In the postwar years, German leaders became past masters at talking the European talk, while walking the national walk, as the American expression goes. What is new is that Germany is being blunt about its national interest. The Latins are told to shape up; France is told that Germany will not pay for its follies (electing President Hollande); the UK is told to take the EU as it is, or shut up. There will be no treaty change.

This change in German style has implications for the UK, but even more so for France. We can start answering this by asking: Why is Merkel popular, while the SDP and Greens are struggling, and the FDP, her partner in government, even more so? For two reasons: first, the German public no longer feels it has to make amends about the two world wars, and is proud that Germany is Europe's top dog by a long way. Second, the public, and Merkel, realise that if Euroland goes to a true, federal superstate, the rich will be transferring wealth to the poor, led by France (which is not so poor) from here to eternity.

What is at stake here? The EU states that its objective is to end wars. But a subtext has always been for France to milk Germany of monies, disguised as EU funds in lieu of reparations. This is no longer something Germany wants. So no treaty revision. I doubt that the SPD/Greens who say they want a federal EU future mean what they say they mean: persuading German taxpayers to pay much higher taxes is not a direct road to power.

In other words, my contention is that Germany wants the *status quo* for fear of a federal future. And the fear is not just about the distant prospect of German taxpayers having to transfer monies indefinitely to France, Club Med countries, and central eastern European EU member states. The German Constitutional Court has declared that any further hand over of powers to the EU would require a new Basic Law. Only German Eurotopians would risk running the diplomacy of an EU Treaty change alongside a German constitutional convention.

Germany has become the champion of the *status quo*, Europe of the states with some federal powers ambiguously allocated jointly to EU institutions, because it is doing very well, thank you. It runs a huge surplus with western Europe, and its exports have boomed with the emerging markets, especially with China, which is predicted by 2015 to absorb 15 per cent of total German exports, compared to 9.5 per cent to France now.

France wants an end to the *status quo* to ensure the funds keep running. But its Euro strategy has gone fatally astray. The original idea was to collectivise the Bundesbank, into a European Central Bank, where France, with its Club Med partners, could influence policy in favour of growth. But the reverse has happened. In order to keep Germany and The Netherlands happy, France has had to import Germany's stability orientation, but has failed, as has Germany, to drive down unit labour costs, contain wages, multiply exports and restrict fiscal expenditures. Berlin now calls the tunes, and France has nowhere to hide.

The reason why the Euro crisis has lasted so long is that the Franco-German tandem no longer works. Since the outbreak of the crisis in 2009, Germany has developed the position that it backs the Euro, but on its terms only. France has tried every trick in the book to inveigle Germany into accepting a Keynesian policy for Euroland, but has met with a very firm and consistent *Nein*.

The result is that Greece, France and the Club Med countries are caught in a Euroland without fiscal transfers, and with the only option for adjustment being to cut wages and slash expenditures. The fact that Italian and Greek prime ministers have been politically defenestrated for having dared to oppose what is in effect Berlin's policy, or that under the hammer of retrenchment, Catalonia has threatened separation from Madrid, is irrelevant. Germany's position is that Latin skivers have to learn from Nordic strivers.

Which side should the UK back, supposing the objective, as Prime Minister Cameron states, is to stay in the EU? The answer must be Germany. Cameron has already indicated in the House Commons that he considers that national parliaments should be responsible for policies and government composition, ie a Europe of the states. That is what Germany, through the mouthpiece of the Constitutional Court, is indicating it wants.

But Germany also wants to keep the EU federal option going, because it is by the accretive legislation of the EU that its influence over others can be magnified. Germany is therefore saying to the UK, we are your ally, but on our terms, just as it says to France and the Club Med, we are for the Euro, but a Euro on our terms. For France and the Club Med that means years of very high unemployment, and major internal upheavals.

Being outside the Euro but in the EU, the UK does not have to crucify its working population, but whether in or out of the EU it definitely has to get its economic house in order. Labour clearly backs a losing horse in President Hollande, but is winning opinion at home as the party of 'fairness', ie consumption, debt and deficits.

Within a few years, that position will be easily identifiable as favouring mass unemployment, as the UK's cost structure goes way out of line with those of emerging markets. In China, for instance, labour productivity in manufacturing, continues to rise at 10 per cent per annum, while in the UK it is stagnant. This is manifestly unsustainable.

Germany and the EU Nordic countries, on the other hand, have been serious in dealing with competitiveness in a global economy. To be fair, so has Spain, which records the most rapid growth in labour productivity in manufacturing in the EU. Chancellor Merkel has encapsulated the challenge facing all European welfare states thus. Europe, she points out, has 6 per cent of the world population, which create 25 per cent of world product, and receive 50 per cent of 'benefits' distributed in the world.

Germany, as a champion of competitiveness on a global scale and as a champion of a Europe of the states, is the UK's natural ally. But in order to make that alliance work, German political and other leaders have to realise that it is not just Germany that has a constitution, but the UK has one too. The basic principle of that constitution is that the Crown in parliament is sovereign, as is the German parliament, and the Constitutional Court in Germany. And one of the central pieces of the UK's constitution is the reversibility of legislation, that no parliament binds the next.

If the UK is to get out, and a plague on all houses, then of course we can expect some very vindictive policies by Germany for daring to say: no more; and celebrations from France, because it thinks it might be in a stronger position relative to Berlin.

The overriding point that has changed since 2008 is that the European balance of power has re-emerged from all the integrationist patter, and the centre of the EU is not Brussels, but Berlin. We need a frank discussion in the UK about how best to confront this situation. Cameron is right to include other Europeans in the debate.

Jonathan Story is a Professor Emeritus of the European Business School (Insead)

back to contents

Children of the Damned

Theodore Dalrymple

If Macaulay were alive today, he would remark not on the absurdity of the British public's periodic fits of morality, but on the sinister propensity of the police to make mass arrests after a public outcry about something or other. It is not so much that the people arrested are innocent, but that the police appear to act in response to mob sentiment rather than to transgression of the law. Having ignored evidence of wrongdoing by people in high places for years or even decades, they suddenly act as a Holy Office, perhaps to deflect criticism from themselves. But both the initial laxity and the subsequent zeal undermine the impartiality of the law, with serious social consequences: for if the law is not impartial the moral imperative to obey is fatally weakened and people feel morally free to do what they can get away with. Nothing is a matter of principle, everything a matter of expedience.

In the wake of the posthumous but unsurprising revelations about the militant and evangelical vulgarian, James Savile, there were revelations of the sexual abuse of underage girls by various prominent, though not necessarily meritorious, figures in the circus department of Britain's regime of bread and circuses. Whether they were guilty as alleged is not my concern, nor am I interested in the important question as to how much public money will now be siphoned into private pockets in the quest for that panacea for all ills, financial compensation. It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

The curious thing about the public moral outrage as expressed in our newspapers, media of mass communication and occasional well-publicised actions like the removal of the gravestone from James Savile's place of interment, is that you would think that it occurred in a land of sexual delicacy verging on prudery, a country in which children were carefully protected from knowledge of the facts of life and everything that surrounds those facts until a comparatively advanced and mature age.

This is not the country that I recognise. On the contrary, when I see children coming out of school, it seems that the ambition of most of the girls is to look like Friday and Saturday night British sluts by the age of twelve at the latest: and they succeed with a determination that would be admirable if only the end were itself more admirable. As for the publications that lead the braying pack, they are generally not very chaste in their approach to sexual titillation, upon which they rely so heavily for their circulation. The public culture of Britain is sexually crude and explicit by comparison with that of all other countries in Europe known to me, including those that once had a reputation among us for libertinism. The British seem to become morally exercised whenever the question of the sexual abuse or exploitation of children arises. They become sentimental about the abused and vengeful towards the abuser, sentimentality and brutality often subsisting in the same breast. Some of them are so blinded by their outrage that they are no longer capable of distinguishing between a paedophile and a paediatrician. The official response to this hysteria is to treat every Briton who has charge of a group of children as a paedophile until proven otherwise.

There is no reason to suppose that the bureaucracy of paedophilia has ever protected any child from anything. But there is no problem that is not an opportunity for our entrepreneurial public administration. Of course, real sexual exploitation of children exists and is horrifying. I have myself seen evidence of the sexual exploitation of children of such a degree that I would scarcely have credited its possibility had I not seen the evidence of it for myself, which was as incontrovertible as it was terrible. But there is a tendency to obscure general and widespread social problems by concentration on extreme cases. We use those cases not to learn about the problem of which they are extreme examples, but to comfort ourselves that the evil perpetrators in these cases are of a totally different human type from the rest of us, a type that could be weeded out with sufficient bureaucratic procedures and vigilance. We use them not to learn, but as scapegoats. We use them to slope shoulders and place responsibility elsewhere.

One of the reasons for the outraged reaction to stories like that of James Savile's persistent exploitation of young girls is our own guilt *vis-à-vis* the way we bring up children in this country. On almost every measure, Britain is a worse place for children than any other country in Europe; by adolescence they display more social pathology than the offspring of any other European nation. They are fatter, more likely to drink to excess, take drugs, get pregnant, be criminal, take overdoses, than any of their European counterparts. From my observation, they are more likely to be resentful, uncouth and ill mannered as well. There is

nowhere in Europe known to me where there are so many vicious-looking young men on the streets whom you would wish to avoid, and so many slatternly young women with blank or ruminant gazes. Like the rest of us, they are the product of their upbringing.

Of course such behaviour is not universal. But it is not so small a percentage of the population that it can be brushed aside as an insignificant minority. A major cause is the deliberate destruction of the family, which has always in the past acted as a barrier between the state and the individual.

The pattern of child-rearing in Britain often seems a toxic combination of overindulgence and neglect, indeed neglect by overindulgence, the purpose of the latter being to shut the child up as easily and quickly as possible so that the business of parental neglect can continue in peace. Rarely in Britain do you see the unselfconscious tenderness towards children that is commonplace elsewhere. The British do not include children in their social lives and they rarely take their children to restaurants, for example, with the unsurprising result that British behaviour in restaurants is often unpleasant and inconsiderate: for they have never been inducted gradually into adult social life but rather thrown into it by the mere process of aging. The dialectic of overindulgence and neglect is not confined to one social class, though no doubt it has slightly different results according to the material circumstances in which it takes place. Among the prosperous overindulgence leads to an arrogant sense of entitlement to everything that is available; among the less prosperous to a resentful sense of entitlement. Neither is very attractive; I have never heard school or university teachers with teaching experience in more than one country remark on the charm of British offspring.

I am, of course, speaking in very general terms. Let me take one important activity: eating. It is said that a fifth of British children do not eat a meal with any other member of their family or household (often a more accurate term than family) more than once a week. In many cases, they never eat a meal with anyone else, and certainly I have been into many households, in the days when I did house-calls as a doctor, in which there was nowhere for communal eating to take place; children in such households are left to forage in the refrigerator, and it is hardly surprising if they do not expand their repertoire of culinary tastes, remain forever childishly fixated on the kind of foods that most small children like, and grow fat as a consequence. The children are neglected and overindulged at the same time.

The consequences of this pattern of eating, which is associated with educational failure, are obvious and disastrous. The child never learns that satisfaction of appetite is other than a solipsistic activity, and that often he must control his inclinations for the sake of others and of sociability. He learns no self-control; on the contrary, his whim is his compass, controlled only by *force majeure*. In no other country in Europe is so savage, so feral, a way of eating as widespread; and it is hardly to be expected that people who learn to exercise no self-control in what should be an elementary aspect of social behaviour will be self-controlled in other things.

The factor that links much social pathology, indeed, is an absence of self-control. It is not merely that in Britain more than anywhere else parents fail to inculcate it; our popular culture, so-called, celebrates absence of self-control as almost the highest good, treats it either as ridiculous or as an enemy to be combatted, as a form of treason to the self. If you open almost any popular magazine you will see pictures of insolence, crudity and patent lack of self-control celebrated as if they were admirable, sophisticated and worthy of emulation. The late James Savile was an early proselytiser for this 'culture': not so much a dumbing-down (though it was certainly that as well), as a coarsening-down.

When the British public or those who claim to speak for it express horror at what Savile and others did, they are expressing horror at what a large part of the British people have become, encouraged by the country's political, intellectual and media elite. It was the BBC, after all, that employed this horrible and deeply destructive man, and a Conservative government that knighted him.

Theodore Dalrymple's latest book is most recent book is The Pleasure of Thinking *(Gibson) Square).*

back to contents

"I think it's a good idea to let people from abroad run our police forces - look how many foreign criminals are allowed to operate here."

First Amendment Blues

Matthew Walther

In 2010, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the production, distribution, and exhibition of 'crush videos', films in which women, often morbidly obese, flatten the bodies of invertebrate (and sometimes vertebrate) animals while wearing fetishistic footwear, is a type of 'speech' protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. Only Justice Samuel J Alito dissented, (rightly) calling the films 'a form of depraved entertainment that has no social value'. More recently, the high court has ruled that members of the Westboro Baptist Church have a constitutional right to harass the families of American soldiers at military funerals, where they shout inane, mildly treacherous slogans ('THANK GOD FOR DEAD SOLDIERS!') and carry signs emblazoned with lurid, somewhat theologically unsound messages ('GOD HATES FAGS!'). To this decision Alito was again the sole dissenter.

For my part, I cannot see these recent high court decisions as anything but fits of wilful judicial ignorance. Surely Justice Alito's colleagues are aware that James Madison, the author of America's Bill of Rights, did not envision the words of the First Amendment to the Constitution being used to as a legal refuge by pornographers and seditious blusterers. Such rulings give evidence of something that one thinks should be obvious by now, namely, that like St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the First Amendment these days means a great many things to a great many people: anything, it seems, save what its text plainly signifies. (Making it illegal to record vicious acts of animal cruelty is not 'abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press' any more than an ecumenical Christmas display – a plain wooden cross, say, or a simple nativity scene – is a 'law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof'.) Unfortunately, the rulings come at a time when free speech, as traditionally and rationally understood, is in danger of becoming circumscribed. The grim spectre of 'hate speech', for example, which has haunted the United Kingdom for so long, is now an unfriendly ghost at many American public universities, as George Will has recently pointed out in the pages of the *Washington Post*.

How does one define 'hate speech'? If I say, for example, that I hate Piers Morgan (and I am not sure that I do not), is this hate speech? Is publicly announcing my not very favourable opinion of his employer, CNN, a criminal act or merely an expression of consumer preference? I have always hated motorcycles, and my impressions of their owners tend not, on the whole, to be much more sympathetic. Should I be prosecuted for saying so? In my experience, purported instances of hate speech tend not to involve any direct expression of hatred *per se*, whether of groups or individuals. (I was once accused of hate speech by an assistant professor of art history after venturing the opinion that a sculpture produced by an anonymous Mossi tribesman was aesthetically somewhat inferior to Michelangelo's *Pieta*.) According to the National Hispanic Media Coalition, anyone who makes use of 'false facts' or 'divisive language' or who engages in 'flawed argumentation' is guilty of hate speech. (That the reasoning which undergirds this definition is itself laughably flawed seems not to have occurred to members of the Coalition.)

While it does not appear likely that any statute explicitly prohibiting hate speech will be passed in the United States anytime soon, certainly not at the federal level, many anti-discrimination laws, both recent and longstanding, pose similar threats to freedom of expression. Some American lawyers now believe that the anti-discrimination provisions of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act may extend to the obese. If a court rules that this is the case, virtually any action, a comment, a gesture, a decision not to hire, which offends an obese person could become criminal. In advance of this, something called 'weightism', that is to say, public acknowledgement of the fact someone or other is overweight, is now considered by some an offence on a par with racism. A waiter in California was recently fired for referring to a group of female customers as 'fat' on a restaurant ticket, in response to which a *crème brûlée* of cloying sentimentality, of the kind to which everyone in the Anglosphere (Singapore and India excepted) is now accustomed, was served up by the American media. The women, in interminable ensuing interviews, spoke of their thwarted attempt to leave without paying their cheque and of how humiliated they felt when the restaurant's manager offered them discount – fifty per cent – instead. (One, apparently weeping, complained that she has since experienced flashbacks of the event, as if she were a battle-scarred veteran of the Afghan War rather than

the dismayed reader of a cash register receipt.)

Like most Americans I have seen the affronted women on television; they *are* fat, and monstrously so. No journalist of whom I am aware has pointed this out; and not, I think, simply because it is obvious but rather because doing so would make the women's super-sized outrage appear somewhat less justified. The waiter behaved callously, but his offence was one against tact, not against the women's legal rights. There exists no right, natural or enumerated, not to have one's feelings hurt. Having one's shortcomings (of appearance, intelligence, athletic ability, taste, etc,) pointed out is unpleasant; it is also universally a part of human experience. Sometimes it is even beneficial. When I was in primary school a teacher of mine (an unrepentant leftist, as I have since learned, but also a grammatical stickler) baffled a classmate of mine by replying, after he had asked her whether he *could* use the lavatory (he of course said 'bathroom'), that she had no idea. He stood uncertainly before her for perhaps thirty seconds before she wryly added that he *might* use the lavatory, meaning of course that he *could*. At the time my classmate felt, as he later told me, embarrassed and upset; but from that point on one doubts that he ever found himself unsure as to the distinction between 'can' and 'may'.

How some Americans can believe that hardcore pornography is constitutionally protected free speech but that an accurate (if somewhat insensitive) physical description of an individual may be criminal I have no idea. Like the words of the Declaration of Independence proclaiming all men equal but written by a slave owner, it is an aggravating paradox, of the kind that has always characterised my country, and which may yet be its undoing.

Matthew Walther is an intern at the American Spectator

back to contents

Sexual Stalinists

Stephen Baskerville

With astonishing speed, the public agenda of the Western world has come to be dominated by the politics of sex. Elite opinion has been slow to comprehend the threat posed by this new form of radicalism. US President Barack Obama's healthcare programme has accelerated an emerging realisation that growing sexual militancy – what Helen Alvare of George Mason University calls 'sexualityism' – has now positioned itself on the vanguard of the left. 'There has been a massive expansion of "sexual liberty" on a nationwide scale', she writes. 'The federal government is seeking to expand sexualityism': Gerard Bradley of Notre Dame University describes it as the doctrine 'that women will and should have lots more sexual intercourse than they have interest in conceiving children'.

But there is much more to it than unlimited sexual licence. The inescapable corollary is the loss of true freedom. What feminist and homosexualist scholars now call 'the ideology of the erotic' has replaced the old socialistic demand for social justice with new demands for 'erotic justice'. This appears to mean using the penal apparatus to punish opponents to their agenda, a trend that is well under way.

The healthcare mandates have focused attention on religious freedom, but they are only the latest example. In the industrial democracies, most major threats to religious freedom now come from the expanding sexual agenda: street preachers arrested, registrars fired for refusing to officiate same-sex marriages, B&B owners put out of business for 'discrimination', Catholic adoption agencies shut down, Christian firemen ordered to march in 'gay pride' parades and police to display symbols of 'gay liberation', homeschoolers losing their children to school authorities pushing an increasingly sexualised curriculum, European Union directives allowing private citizens to be looted financially for expressing their religious and political convictions.

But the assault on freedom extends well beyond religion – though here as elsewhere we can see how religious freedom preserves other freedoms. Sexual Jacobins have created a panoply of dishonest new gender crimes and expanded definitions of existing sexual crimes: 'rape', 'sexual assault', 'sexual harassment', 'domestic violence', 'stalking,' 'bullying', 'child abuse', and more. These have politicised law enforcement, rendered the law vague and subjective, eroded due process protections, and criminalised vast numbers of men and some women who had no inkling that they were committing a crime. The reality bears little relation to the inflammatory language: 'rape' that is clearly consensual, domestic 'violence' that

is not violent, 'child abuse' that is routine parental discipline or homeschooling or concocted altogether to win custody in divorce courts, 'bullying' that is any dissent from the homosexual agenda, 'stalking' that is involuntarily divorced fathers trying to see their children.

Seldom are these quasi-crimes adjudicated by trials or juries. Instead guilt (but seldom innocence) is summarily pronounced by judges, lawyers, social workers, school administrators, and other petty bureaucrats with a vested interest in accumulating offenders to administer. Accusers are 'victims', and the accused are 'perpetrators', 'abusers', 'bullies', 'batterers', 'deadbeats', and more, even before they are tried (if they are tried). High conviction rates are goals for their own sake, and proceedings are rigged in specialised quasi-courts with 'victim advocates' to ensure conviction and maximum punishment. Government campaigns to 'raise awareness' about unnamed nonviolent malefactors committing newfangled crimes rationalise the budgets of feminised law-enforcement agencies by manufacturing safe criminals for female and homosexual policepersons to arrest.

But by far the most draconian punishments meted out by the new sexual gendarmes – and the most repressive government machinery ever created in the Anglophone democracies – is the unilateral and involuntary divorce *apparat*, government's purpose-built mechanism for dismembering families and seizing control over the private lives of innocent people and their children. This brainchild of the feminist bar associations was slipped in with no public debate at the height of the Sexual Revolution. It allows legally unimpeachable citizens, sitting in their own homes minding their own business, to be summarily evicted from their homes, stripped of their children, expropriated of everything they possess, and incarcerated without trial. The measures involve no formal charges, no indictments, no juries, no trials, no acquittals, and no records whatever of the incarcerations.

This criminalisation of the population in turn reflects a still larger increase in government scope and power, also in the name of sexual liberation. The Obamacare health program is only the latest venture in the ever-expanding welfare state – rationalised by the very problem it creates: the proliferation of single-mother homes. These fatherless communities are breeding grounds for crime, substance abuse, truancy, and almost all social ills – precisely the problems that account for most domestic spending, including budgets for law-enforcement and incarceration, education, health, and other 'social services'. This is government's self-expanding engine for creating problems for itself to solve. It is money spent to turn children into criminals, drug addicts, drop-outs, and rioters, who then rationalise more spending. This is why the *Wall Street Journal* has located the debt crisis entirely in the welfare state. History's most affluent societies are voluntarily bankrupting themselves by underwriting sexual decadence.

To finance this, we all become the mob that must squeeze ever more revenue out of ever-shrinking productive sectors – modern-day kulaks that we can vilify and then loot. Officials duly increase taxation, criminalise tax 'evaders' who do not (or cannot) pay their 'fair share' of our benefits, and desperately devise innovative revenue schemes – traffic fines, student loans, child support awards, civil forfeiture – that are largely free of legislative control and inflict criminal penalties without criminal safeguards on those who cannot protect themselves from bureaucratic plunder. The US Supreme Court's collusion with the Obama administration to erase the distinction between taxes and fines will further facilitate government's use of the penal system to feed its insatiable appetite for revenue.

Europe is now financially and politically crippled because it cannot stand up to the adolescent and feminist mobs demanding more welfare – and to unions which no longer represent working men demanding their share of company profits but now serve mostly as auxiliary goons to the increasingly female civil service bureaucracies who cater to welfare clients and whose 'bargaining' has degenerated into collusion with their employers to increase budgets and salaries at public expense.

Meanwhile, sexualisation is undermining our freedom on another front: military strength. Europe is now militarily useless. Previously the exception, Britain is disbanding prestigious regiments and dismantling essential weapons systems while its welfare state continues to expand and wreak havoc like the 2011 riots. The US military is not only being eviscerated by the demands of feminists and homosexuals to infiltrate an institution most of them loathe; it is itself being transformed into a gargantuan welfare state, as benefits intended for real families encourage single motherhood, divorce courts see soldiers as sitting ducks for plunder, and budgets are consumed by childcare, abortion, and sexually transmitted diseases.

~~~

But Christian faith is the current target, because it is itself the most potent opponent to sexual radicalism. 'Religion is central to sexual regulation in almost all societies', writes homosexualist scholar Dennis Altman. 'Indeed, it may well be that the primary social function of religion is to control sexuality.' This is highly simplistic, but it does point to one very concrete
~~~

avenue by which erosion of our faith is leading directly to social chaos and political tyranny. Our most salient political fault line now emerges as a confrontation between sexual freedom and religious freedom – along with every other one.

It also indicates where Christians and other believers are now facing the consequences of our own failures. By standing by in silence while the sexual revolutionaries plunder and incarcerate innocent people, we are now left alone and vulnerable as the militants turn on us – validating Martin Niemoeller's famous lines about the Nazis.

So the killjoys turned out to be correct about the debilitating effects of licence. Sexual indulgence has feminised us all, enervating our willingness to defend freedom and leaving us passively acquiescing in an authoritarian ideology with an unquenchable thirst for punishment. The licentiousness of every radical regime from the Bolsheviks to the Nazis shows where this leads. But we are the first to elevate sexual decadence to the top of the political agenda.

Stephen Baskerville is Professor of Government at Patrick Henry College and senior fellow at the Inter-American Institute, Virginia.

back to contents

Rowan Williams – Social Worker in Chief

Brian Ridley

If the Church of England is not dead, it is, nevertheless, in a parlous state. The valedictory address of Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, said it all: religion was all about volunteering. That was it, in a nutshell. No gesture to God or anything remotely transcendental; no indication that the Church was anything other than an institution for social work.

It seems to me that if religion is to be meaningful it has to be about all those things that are called transcendental, meaning all those things that lie beyond science, and yet are central to humanity. Who does not ask what is the meaning of life – of my life? Science has no answer. Why are we self-conscious animals who can ask such a question? Science has no idea; just funny evolution, it might suppose. Is there good and evil beyond anything broadly to do with the survival of the species? Science thinks not, but worries a bit about altruistic behaviour in animals. The disconcerting fact is that science, which is the most reliable source of knowledge about the world, is incapable of helping. So useful and informative in a thousand ways, science is useless regarding the most visceral concerns of humanity.

In a word, science is limited. It is wonderful at analysing causes as long as there are many instances. There have to be repeatable events before it can say anything whatsoever. Not that that limitation stops the fundamentalist. The physical universe is unique, right? How many universes do you know? There is only one. So, in a deep way, it lies outside of science. Too bad! A trivial view, says the fundamentalist. Let us invent a population of universes, each with its own properties, including a statistical probability of actually existing. Science can now proceed. Even though there is no experimental evidence? Come on! But the urge to explain everything, to produce a theory of everything, in the elegant language of mathematics, is a deep and powerful force in the soul of every red-blooded scientist. And at this point, science itself becomes a religion; belief in multiple universes being more interesting than belief in God.

The idea that there are things in the world, in this world, that transcend the scientific view is not cool these days. Yet how ironic that science would be lost without mathematics when mathematics is among those utterly transcendental things that exist. You can't kick an equation to get it moving. You can't find what causes the number two. The recipe for pi can't be found in the kitchen. Much lies beyond the empirical world of the senses, like mathematics, that is vital to our understanding of our world and of ourselves. Another example is God. A secular society, over-impressed by science, is not only inconsistent in its rejection of the transcendent; it is in ignorant and nonsensical denial. The Church should see that and get back to its origins in the human soul, instead of opting for a kind of secular socialism.

B K Ridley is a Fellow of the Royal Society

back to contents

Salmond Fishing

Vivian Linacre

What an extreme contrast between the promises of referenda by Westminster and Edinburgh. The first is on a very clear issue, whether Britain should stay in the EU or not. This promise cannot be kept until after the next General Election and only if the PM has been returned to office and only after he has offered the electorate a fresh deal. Meanwhile he hopes to negotiate a deal with the Commission which will persuade us to stay in. The second promise is a binding commitment by the government in Edinburgh to a referendum by the Scottish electorate on a highly complex issue.

Withdrawal from the EU could be accomplished unilaterally by Westminster within a matter of months, simply by abrogating its 1972 accession to the Treaty of Rome, rescinding all subsequent Treaties and so reverting to Britain's former status as a sovereign state. Yet we have to wait another four years for this. On the other hand Scotland's separation from the UK would require exploration of uncharted UK constitutional, civil and criminal as well as industrial, commercial, property, trust and family law which would keep the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Privy Council busy for a year or two. Meanwhile, Holyrood would be preoccupied, as it is already, with the prospects confronting it at Brussels and the capitals of every member state of the EU. Without any apparent appreciation of the sheer scale and scope of it, Holyrood has blithely given that undertaking.

The respective strengths of the undertakings by both countries are in inverse relation to the time allowed for popular consent. Cameron has postponed a referendum (which could be acted on immediately) until late 2017, whereas Salmond is holding a referendum next year for which he is not ready. A direct 'Yes or No' question of immense international importance to the entire UK, a question that everybody understands and for which the whole country has been agitating since this government took office, is therefore being put off as long as possible, while a domestic question which isn't urgent and open to interpretation is being brought forward in Scotland amid chaotic debate and woeful official and public ignorance.

If both referenda are held in 2018-20 we could find the remains of the UK evacuating the EU while Scotland applies for admission. What a ludicrous spectacle! Will mass-migrations take place in both directions? Is it worth speculating on the comparative numbers and classes of refugees likely to flow North and South, and whether a transit camp should be built in the Cheviot Hills?

This farcical scenario could arise. Even with a head start of three years Holyrood's preparations might be no further forward than Westminster's. Salmond's argument for retaining 'seamless' continuity of EU membership is precisely that. After a 'Yes' vote in 2014 the Scottish government would have to negotiate a Separation Settlement with London or (if not seeking to create a new state rooting it in the status quo ante 1707, ie a Dissolution Treaty) as still part of the UK negotiating its recognition as an impending member of the EU. Obviously Cameron will not enter into discussions with Salmond except in so far as legally obliged to by the result of the referendum. Why assist a cause he has sworn to defeat?

His disinclination will be total, since from 2014 to 2015 he will be immersed in a General Election on which his political future, including the EU referendum, depends. Beyond that, assuming he wins, and for two years thereafter, he will be preoccupied with the EU negotiations and campaigning at home on leaving or staying in Europe. While hosting a Continental party in the drawing-room, he won't be able to spare much attention for the Northern neighbour hanging about the back door. So that's Salmond's three years head start gone!

What the two referenda have in common is equivocation over their wording. If Cameron's is not an outright question with a clear answer but merely asking us for our approval of some vague 'new deal' with the EU, withdrawal could be pursued only after the referendum's rejection of that 'deal'. Even then any threat of withdrawal

would provoke an indefinite process of protest, compromise, re-renegotiation and botch until one side gives up with bad grace or the whole issue fizzles out with nothing whatever achieved except a good deal of bad blood and, after years in limbo, immense damage to the British economy.

Likewise, Salmond's question must seek approval of the contents of a White Paper which has to be published by November this year, a year ahead of the vote. It must set out a detailed prospectus for an 'independent' Scotland, resolving all arguments currently raging under every heading on the foregoing agenda. The intricate machinery of government for this new country can perhaps be explained later, but people need to see at the outset what the vehicle they are going to travel in looks like. What will happen to the Scottish identity in all its manifestations: currency, Treasury subsidies, embassies and consulates, passports, relations with the EU, status of the military, naval dockyards and RAF bases, North Sea oil and gas fields, British institutions and national corporations, etc? Nothing has yet been disclosed. Obviously, to draft, revise and refine such a vast, historic compendium requires a commission comprising panels of civil servants, lawyers, economists, consultants and specialist advisers, of whom we have heard nothing. Therefore little progress can have been made to date, in which case there can be no meaningful White Paper this year and hence no referendum next. Or are Scots (indeed, every qualified voter in Scotland and around the world – they haven't been defined yet!) supposed to vote without learning the answers to these vital questions: to buy a pig in a poke, to sign a blank cheque and scrap their passports.....next year?

Holyrood's objectivity is easily gauged by the planning of its referendum to coincide with the popular 700th anniversary of the battle of Bannonckburn on the 24th June 2014. Well worthy of commemoration though that mediaeval victory was, it is not as significant as the Battle of Flodden on the 9th September 1513, ending centuries of war across the Border and whose 500th anniversary falls this year. Yet is never mentioned! If they can play fast and loose with Scottish history, what will they do with our future?

Perhaps no referenda will take place. While Salmond has no competition as Scottish leader, fewer than half SNP voters support separation from the UK, a proportion that will continue to fall. Meanwhile, like a latter-day Stanley Baldwin, Cameron is in for the long haul, offering a 'comfort zone' rather than 'extreme' views, and relying for steadily recovering support on the increasing political fatigue of the electorate. The country is becalmed and fearful; people want to huddle together and batten down the hatches rather than jump overboard to swim for some mythical shore. They also know that a Scottish government will never offer a referendum on EU membership: they have already had one referendum and 'Buy One Get One Free' does not apply. (Sadly, UKIP's support will likewise decline. Cameron, with his offer of an in/out referendum, has done enough to regain many waverers' support. However UKIP will do well in the European elections, greatly aiding the common cause.)

So with the falling confidence of the electorate, not necessarily in Salmond or with his administration but in separatism, and with a growing realisation that Labour, while fading in the South, will always have a hold in Scotland and is opposed to any 'Independence' referendum; with LibDems sinking and some signs of Tory resurrection, what are the odds against the following outcomes: (a) deferment of Scotland's 2014 referendum on plausible grounds until after the 2015 General Elections (b) Cameron's return to office with a working majority; (c) deferment of Scotland's referendum again on makeshift grounds until after Cameron's promised 2017 EU referendum; (d) indefinite deferment of that EU referendum on account of generous concessions by the Commission in deregulation and devolution of powers, promoted by Angela Merkel – anxious to forge a new economic partnership with the UK to resolve the eurozone crisis – and (e) indefinite deferment of Scotland's 'indefinite' referendum on account of new 'devo.plus' deal quietly agreed between Cameron and Salmond devolving extensive tax-raising powers as well as several other sources of revenue to Holyrood?

Let us hope that, with the Middle East, China and Africa to worry about, we are not plagued with any more of this parochialism!

Vivian Linacre's forthcoming book, Ground Breaking, *chronicles the creation, evolution and maturing of the UK market in commercial real estate, from 1950 to 1975, coinciding with the first twenty-five years of his working life.*

back to contents

Bad Samaritans

Jane Kelly

It's terrible to hear people crying and screaming in desperation. A few days ago I called on my neighbour because I knew her Dad, aged 78, was unwell and seeing her car outside her house during working hours I was concerned. When she answered the door she didn't say anything, just started crying desperately. Shortly after I heard her wailing down the phone to someone at Social Services, 'But I don't know what to do, I just don't know what to do!'

Her father was not well; he'd fallen down in the night for two nights running and couldn't get out of bed at all. She had entered the hell that is social need.

Her GP who had called the previous day stated that the old man was suffering from a virus, which would soon pass. The sick old man fell again that night and by the morning was bedridden and incontinent. My friend who couldn't go to work was tearing her hair out. The doctor's receptionist told her to call Social Services. They began asking her a lot of questions, and she was in the middle of that when I called.

She asked them when they could come round and they said it would be at least ten days. That is when she began screaming. After she put the phone down and sat down weeping I rang the doctor's surgery.

it is a shock ... that when someone collapses or they themselves need assistance ... they discover, at least in the major cities, that help in the community just isn't there.

'It is a shock when people first find out,' said the cool voice on the end of the line. 'They often break down'.

I realised that this woman probably deals with these desperate phone calls every day and her message was deeply chilling – it is a shock and people cry because many still believe that when someone collapses or they themselves need assistance, perhaps after a major surgical operation, there will be help in the community for them. Then they discover, at least in the major cities, that help in the community just isn't there.

Age UK formerly *Help the Aged*, have recently been making a fuss about this and are petitioning the Chancellor to do something about it in his forthcoming mini-budget. Nigel Morris, writing in the *Independent* in September, calculated that Britain's fragile economy is losing more than £5bn a year as a result of a growing crisis in social care funding aggravated by the Government's austerity measures. People are giving up an estimated £4bn in pay and cash that would have been channelled back into the economy because they are being forced to leave work to care for elderly or disabled relatives. The Treasury is also missing out on £1bn of taxes they would otherwise have paid, while carers are claiming some £300m in benefits to help cover their living costs.

I asked the receptionist if we should just send the old man into hospital, without waiting for a doctor's referral.

'Yeah, why not, go ahead', said the bored voice.

So that's what we did, and three days later he was still in a hospital bed, being treated for the complications of diabetes, the convenient diagnosis of a virus having been dismissed. If things are really dire, social services will appear, but not for a long time and after a tortuous inquisition.

Although I am not yet old enough to be a bed blocker I fell into the dismal trap of dependency, briefly, two years ago when I came home from hospital after a major operation. I was booted out after three days feeling ghastly and suffering from morphine nightmares. I was discharged with a bountiful box of dressings and a crate of syringes and told to get on with it. I saw a district nurse only once, at least I think it was a nurse: she had no uniform and took hours to apply a small dressing. Later when I was having chemotherapy a nurse was supposed to come and give me an injection. She didn't turn up. I kept phoning and the doctor's hard-pressed receptionist kept faxing until two nurses arrived at 9.30pm. They then refused to give me the injection because I didn't have a letter of authorisation. I gave it to myself while they watched.

That is the way of it now – self-diagnose and self-medicate. Buy yourself one of those children's science kits, available from Argos, a human anatomy DVD from Amazon and perhaps a nurse's uniform from Anne Summers, and get on with it.

Jane Kelly worked for the Daily Mail *for 15 years as a celebrity interviewer.*

back to contents

Goldwater – the man who would be President

John Phelan

On November 4th 1964 the owner of the largest department store in Phoenix, Arizona, the first in that city to ban racial discrimination, woke up to disaster. As Republican candidate in the previous day's presidential election he had won just 36 per cent of the vote, the lowest share a major party candidate had won since the four-way election of 1824. His only success was in winning the states of Mississippi and Alabama, which hadn't voted Republican since the 1870s, and Georgia, which had never voted Republican at all. That Goldwater managed to win even these was because some of his supporters, like many of his opponents, misunderstood him completely.

Forty-eight years later Governor Romney went down to the same defeat in the Presidential election as that of his Republican predecessor. On both occasions the left immediately began prophesying that the Republicans were finished. Unless they 'blacked up', that is, admitted a majority of Hispanics and African Americans, and were prepared to accept that the state would in the future dictate every detail of peoples' lives, they were finished. On this side of the Atlantic, the BBC, never slow to exercise its anti-white racism and sexism, thrilled to the notion that the white man's rule in America was over. It hoped for the same thing in the mother country.

But in 1964 neither the white man nor Republicanism were dead. Two decades after Goldwater's defeat, Ronald Reagan – spotlighted by the Goldwater campaign – led the US to victory against the Soviet Union. Once again commentators began to talk about 'the end of politics'.

Like the old grandfather clock politics never cease and by 2012 the pendulum had swung the other way. Too many Americans – as Mitt Romney clumsily put it at a private gathering into which the left had smuggled cameras and then broadcast his remarks on TV – were about to become recipients of state largesse. But this is unsustainable. America has doubled its debt in just four years and it is projected that entitlement spending, which already accounts for a third of the Federal budget, will double by 2050. Small government and economic liberalism will come about by mathematical necessity. The future rests with social and economic liberalism which, in America, is conservatism. The Republicans can position themselves to take advantage of this by following Barry Goldwater.

In June Senator Goldwater had cast the vote that defined him for supporters and opponents alike, voting nay to the Civil Rights Act. For this he was branded a racist which was utterly unfair. As an individual he was a founder member of both the Tucson and Phoenix chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. As a businessman he opened the doors of his store in Phoenix to all races when few other shops did. As a city councillor he voted to desegregate the restaurants at Sky Harbor Airport. As Senator he voted for the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960.

Goldwater's opposition to the Bill was not based on the simple, stupid racism of Southern Democrats like Strom Thurmond and George Wallace. Rather, he believed that the Act was ineffective and unconstitutional. He believed that racism dwelt in the heart, so while legislation might push these feelings out of sight it would do nothing to eradicate racism itself. As he put it 'No law can make one person like another if he doesn't want to'.

Further, to Goldwater the titles of the Act which made it illegal for private businesses and landlords to discriminate on grounds of race threatened 'the loss of our God-given liberties'. In Goldwater's eyes 'the freedom to associate means the same thing as freedom not to associate. It is wrong to erect legal barriers against either side of this freedom'. 'I am unalterably opposed to discrimination of any sort' he said in the Senate debate, 'I believe that, though the problem is fundamentally one of the heart, some law can help; but not law that embodies features like these, provisions which fly in the face of the Constitution'.

His ideology had been elegantly laid out in *The Conscience of a Conservative* in 1960. There, in a slim volume of barely 120 pages ghost-written by Brent Bozell, the case was made for smaller government at home and stronger opposition to communism abroad. Coming out at a time when New Deal liberalism was the dominant ideology in US politics and communism held a third of the world under its heel the book was

an iconoclastic bombshell. It became a publishing sensation selling 85,000 copies in its first month, mainly to the young.

Pennsylvania Senator Joseph Clark, a liberal himself, described liberalism as 'meeting the material needs of the masses through the full power of centralised government'. Goldwater disagreed, *Conscience* arguing that 'The Conservative knows that to regard man as part of an undifferentiated mass is to consign him to ultimate slavery'.

Instead, adopting a sort of 'methodological individualism', government should conceive of its citizens as individuals. As Bozell put it in *Conscience*, 'man's development, in both its spiritual and material aspects, is not something that can be directed by outside forces. Every man, for his individual good and for the good of his society, is responsible for his own development. The choices that govern his life are choices that he must make; they cannot be made by any other human being, or by a collectivity of human beings'. It was precisely to allow the maximum scope for these individual choices that Goldwater supported the limited government of the Constitution.

Of course, liberals claimed to support freedom themselves but Goldwater argued that these claims were bogus. He held that personal freedom was intertwined with economic freedom; the freedom to choose where to work or what to do with your wages were, ultimately, personal decisions, and government intrusion into economic life was as corrosive of liberty as its intrusion into any other sphere. As *Conscience* put it 'the economic and spiritual aspects of man's nature are inextricably intertwined. He cannot be economically free, or even economically efficient, if he is enslaved politically; conversely, man's political freedom is illusory if he is dependent for his economic needs on the state'.

Goldwater was proved right over the following years. The costs of expanding war and welfare broke the US economy and the world financial system with it. With the west mired in Stagflation the Soviet Union moved to the front foot in the Cold War. In 1980, with Americans anxious to escape the malaise, Ronald Reagan was elected president, largely on Goldwater's platform. Paul Gigot commented that Goldwater won – in a way 'the votes in the 1964 election really weren't finally counted until the 1980 election'.

But Goldwater, back in a Senate seat for Arizona, was not a happy man. Reacting to the social liberalism of the 1960s and early 1970s, exemplified by the 1973 Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision legalising abortion, Christians in the US began to get politically organised, setting up groups like the Moral Majority under Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition. With memberships in the millions these groups sought to push the Republican Party down a socially conservative route.

'Mr Conservative' Barry Goldwater had no time for this. In 1981 Sandra Day O'Connor became Regan's first Supreme Court nominee. Regarding her stance on abortion Falwell said 'Every good Christian should be concerned'. Goldwater replied 'I think every good Christian ought to kick Falwell right in the ass'.

In the Senate, shortly afterwards, Goldwater said

> *I'm frankly sick and tired of the political preachers across this country telling me as a citizen that if I want to be a moral person, I must believe in 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'. Just who do they think they are? And from where do they presume to claim the right to dictate their moral beliefs to me? And I am even more angry as a legislator who must endure the threats of every religious group who thinks it has some God-granted right to control my vote on every roll call in the Senate. I am warning them today: I will fight them every step of the way if they try to dictate their moral convictions to all Americans in the name of 'conservatism'.*

He made good on his promise even after retiring from the Senate in 1987. When Bill Clinton moved to allow gays to serve openly in the military, Goldwater, who had spent 37 years as a military reservist, said 'You don't have to be straight to be in the military; you just have to be able to shoot straight'. 'The big thing is to make this country, along with every other country in the world with a few exceptions, quit discriminating against people just because they're gay', Goldwater told the *Washington Post* in 1994. 'You don't have to agree with it' Goldwater said, echoing his stance against the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 'but they have a constitutional right to be gay. And that's what brings me into it'.

His savage denunciations of Falwell, Robertson, and their followers, surprised and puzzled many. The *Washington Post* described it as 'Barry Goldwater's Left Turn'. It was nothing of the kind. Goldwater was simply defending the social freedom of the individual as he had the economic freedom of the individual since *The Conscience of a Conservative*.

Both liberals and conservatives in America claim to love freedom. Often they love a little bit of it only. Liberals have to square the circle of giving the individual freedom over what to do with his or her body while placing ever greater government claims over the individual's payslip. Conservatives, on the other hand, want freedom for the individual to do what he or she wants economically but seek government limits on the social freedoms of others. Liberals want a woman's right to choose and big government. Conservatives

want a Constitutional ban on gay marriage and small government.

Neither side seems to realise the inherent contradictions of their position. This was not a situation Barry Goldwater found himself in. He didn't want government to interfere in how you disposed of your payslip or your bodily fluids. His politics were consistent. He managed, at the same time, to be a consistent advocate of both liberalism and small government. He could be both liberal and conservative at the same time because the Constitution he sought to conserve was a truly liberal document.

Goldwater warned that 'if and when these preachers get control of the [Republican] party…it's going to be a terrible damn problem'. The GOP is now finding that out. With the American economy a mess after four years of disastrous Obamanomics the Democrats were desperate to shift the focus of the 2012 election away from the economy and on to social issues where America is increasingly liberal. And there seemed no shortage of Republicans willing to help by holding forth about subjects like rape or gay marriage. If Republicans are to avoid marginalisation they will need to distance themselves from social conservatism. If they value the Constitution as much as they claim, they should.

Goldwater died in 1998 and with it ended his second political life as grizzled champion of liberal social causes. By then the liberals had come to regard the man who said 'I do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom' as their favourite conservative. Conservatives, meanwhile, had adopted the man who said 'I believe a woman has a right to an abortion' as the godfather of their movement. To the very end both supporters and opponents misunderstood him.

Could the next Republican Presidential candidate get elected in an America that has turned to statism? Very soon, perhaps as soon as the next presidential election, Margaret Thatcher's remark, 'The trouble with socialism is that in the end you run out of other people's money' will have come to pass. Middle class America will then find itself peering through the letterbox at the state tax gouger. The rich having being sucked dry or having exited – recently the French Actor Gerard Depardieu, fleeing a 75 per cent tax in France accepted a passport from a Russia that charges only 14 per cent – equality, or the right of the idle to stay in bed all day on other peoples' taxes, will still have to be paid for. Goldwater's dictum 'I do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom' will have an irresistible appeal.

John Phelan is a Fellow of The Cobden Centre and Contributing Editor of The Commentator

back to contents

The Climate of Religion

David Wemyss

In the UK, people like me – arty, bookish, classical music buff, interested in philosophy – are supposed to be on the left. We form the basis of our cultural elites. We work in government or education or health. Maybe even the BBC. We read *The Independent* or *The Guardian*. We're pro-European multiculturalists, tolerant and egalitarian. We hate the idea of going back to academic selection in our schools. The NHS must be a public sector monolith at all costs. Working in the public sector is like being the Good Samaritan. And of course we're environmentalists.

In November 2009, over more than a thousand private e-mails and other documents were hacked into at the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia. The correspondence involved some of the world's leading climate scientists. They were expressing frustration that what they 'knew to be true' wasn't being borne out by their research, and complaining about peer-reviewed journals allowing a platform for dissenting academics. They were even fantasizing about beating up opponents. The shameful episode proved not that climate change wasn't true but that climate change scientists are human beings and – like the rest of us – can sometimes be deceitful and petty-minded.

Although an inquiry in 2010 found no out-and-out corruption, one witness (Dr Richard Horton, the editor of *The Lancet*) said that the proceedings had identified failures, evasions, misleading actions, unjustifiable delays, and pervasive unhelpfulness, all of which had amounted to 'severely sub-optimal academic practice' – a clumsy phrase, but obviously not a complete acquittal. Dr Horton concluded that 'climate science would never be the same again'.

A few months later, Sir Paul Nurse, Nobel-winning geneticist and president of the Royal Society, appeared on the BBC television programme *Horizon* to try to address the feeling that, to some extent at least, the

public was losing confidence in science. He did well. And he came over as an amiable sort of chap, albeit gently sure of himself.

But the programme is remembered for a scene that brought much pleasure to the green fraternity. Half way through it, a famously disputatious British climate change sceptic – James Delingpole of *The Spectator* and *The Daily Telegraph* – suffered a harrowing moment for a public intellectual. He was publicly humiliated.

It was bizarre. He seemed to freeze on screen, apparently completely crushed by Sir Paul's use of this simple question: if someone dear to you were to be diagnosed with cancer, you would accept the consensually-led recommendations of senior doctors, so why won't you accept the consensually-led view of the scientific community that climate change is real and catastrophic?

The analogy was a poor one, but Delingpole was unable to compose himself and say why. And he had my immediate sympathy, because I've always been fascinated (and much troubled) by the way in which conversational miasma can have this effect. Even if there's no outright hostility, an unsympathetic questioner can still affect what your speech feels like – and what can be brought forth in it.

most of the people who go to classical concerts do so as a kind of lifestyle accessory. Music is lovely, but they would never save an orchestra ahead of a hospital ward. After all, you might end up in the hospital ward.

Many people notice this but don't dwell on it. They prefer to relish the solecisms and failures of their opponents, making them out to be as momentous as possible – 'she wiped the floor with him in the Commons yet again' – while taking the view that their own mishaps are negligible. For other people, though, defeats in conversational jousting ache and tug for surprisingly long periods – and not only defeats. The whole gamut of conversational ungainliness may disturb them. Needless to say, the former category is always going to be a good deal larger than the latter.

And so, when *The Guardian* did an item on Delingpole's embarrassment, it was no surprise that the online commentary generally assumed the humiliation of a wicked man by a good one, or the destruction of a pretender by a genuine intellectual. But two or three responses – I only read the first seventy – fastened on to the fact that Delingpole had actually missed an open goal. He just couldn't get the ball out from under his feet.

Sitting alone over a quiet beer I formulated a variation on the analogy that had left Delingpole stumped. The next morning, I put it to my son. What would he do, at the age of 21, if a doctor were to say to him that new research suggested strongly that he would develop a particular form of cancer in forty years time, when he was 61, and that he should enter hospital as soon as possible for a major operation to avert his fate? Unsurprisingly, my son thought it highly unlikely that he would go along with such a proposal.

A side issue would be to ask how many people would ever be autonomous enough to say no to cancer treatment, and insist that they just wanted to give up. After all, medical staff (and society at large) would disapprove strongly, and the consequent pressure would be very awkward for a patient to cope with. There's something to ponder there too.

But the main point is quite simple. It looks as if some people don't care all that much about environmental alarms. Just as they know they have to die, and don't intend to get themselves cryogenically frozen in the hope of being resurrected centuries later, they also know the planet has to die, and don't intend to flail about resisting either.

A lot of environmentalists will find that horrifying and defeatist, even nihilistic, but I think they're missing something. We bemoan political ideologies and religious fanaticisms but usually have a sneaking preference for one side or the other: left or right, secular or religious, Catholic or Protestant, Israeli or Palestinian. The seeds of ideology and fanaticism are in most of us – but maybe not in nihilists and quietists!

Of course nihilists deny value, so you might think that they throw the baby out with the bathwater. The quietist position is more congenial. It's more inclined towards the view that value is in the world, but that it doesn't show its workings in explanations the world is impelled to attribute to it. In other words, value isn't instrumental.

For example, most of the people who go to classical concerts do so as a kind of lifestyle accessory. Music is lovely, but they would never save an orchestra ahead of a hospital ward. After all, you might end up in the hospital ward. But I can never think like that, even though, as I approach old age, I fear the wretchedness of illness (not the eventual outcome) more and more.

I can never think like that because Schubert's last three sonatas are not just pieces of music I like. They're miracles of inwardness that changed what it felt like to be me, a change still running after thirty years.

And they remind me that, although the modern world is full of extraordinary and liberating things, none of which we honestly want to relinquish, comfort is not where the soul takes its bearings. It takes it from such

moments as that in Bach's *St John Passion*, when Pilate warns Christ he has the power to release him or crucify him. Christ replies (Peter Pears sings) 'Thou would not have the power were it not given thee from above'. Three notes on a harpsichord carry this terrifying answer into the immensity of space.

And so, in a similar way, I can never warm to the mindset that's simply horrified that some people don't seem to care much about saving the planet. It's a possibility.

But some of my readers may wish me to move on to the question of whether climate science is true – a question which I find a good deal less interesting. Well, there's a compellingly large consensus that it is true, and, on the whole, I accept that it is. Also, as I read around the subject – I'd never really taken much notice of it before – I was fascinated to discover how many different forms of scepticism there were.

The out-and-out climate change deniers were unconvincing, as were the people who said it was happening but that it was natural. I was more drawn to those scientists who were sceptical only about contemporary articles of faith and wanted an end to piety. They had no time for the anti-car mentality, aversion to air travel, long-life light bulbs, carbon footprints, and so on. Better to start planning seriously for inevitable global catastrophe in 150 years' time! Since I had no other way of judging it, this position seemed elegant at least.

although the modern world is full of extraordinary and liberating things, none of which we honestly want to relinquish, comfort is not where the soul takes its bearings.

And finally there were those who were arguing that wind farms in particular were a waste of time, scarring landscapes and seascapes for reasons of ideology and financial chicanery – and because of the desire of governments to create jobs. I tell people these sleek white turbines are quite attractive, and I sometimes almost believe it, but many people probably are very disappointed to find that a wind farm is going to be built on the hill outside their country home. And I don't buy into the idea that their opinion counts for less just because they're incomers, not indigenous oldies with antecedents in the local churchyard. As for the planning systems, they're loaded with prior value judgements.

But then again they would be, wouldn't they? How could they not be? Laws reflect political culture, and political culture is increasingly doctrinal. Most people vote for a political party so that it can bring about this very state of affairs – including the cultivation of a sympathetic public sector.

Sometimes you have to accept that the world has just passed you by. Storming its barricades is no longer an option, even though that doesn't make you wrong. What's unfair isn't that objectors to a wind farm don't usually manage to prevent its approval but feel a sense of bewilderment their opponents don't really grasp.

But you have to let these things go. There are too many well-meaning people who just don't get it, and that reinforces my conviction that I can't say they should. Of course, inwardly, I'm sure they should – but my attempts to say so, however mild, seem oddly uncongenial. And so I've stopped because I've begun to dislike the sound of myself speaking. There's something impenetrably deep about the way inhospitable company can affect what your speech feels like, and what can be brought forth in it. If almost all the people you talk to have begun to seem inhospitable, you've got to be big enough to say it's you, not them.

Back in 1959 C P Snow was complaining that intellectual life in western society was damagingly split between scientists and literary types, and that the latter were more culpable. Some scientists couldn't cope with literature but others definitely could. Humanities scholars, on the other hand, were unlikely to have even the remotest idea about the second law of thermodynamics, and didn't care. At the time, I would have agreed with Snow, unreservedly.

However, in 2013, humanities scholars are very knowledgeable about popular science but miss the nuances of their own subjects. History becomes little more than a search for the precursors of the present. Dickens' sympathy for those in the poorhouse turns him into a present-day Labourite. Hundreds of years of literature and philosophy and music are treated as if they had been no more than an inchoate struggle towards post-modern sociology. People weigh up their sentences as if in relation to a super-dictionary. All nonsense, of course, but it plays straight into the hands of scientists who think 'arty' subjects are a soft option. More importantly, it means that even the humanities people think that science depicts the real world while the arts depict an imaginary one. Therefore we should only believe in science. That is not the message of Schubert. There is a deeper language, that of the universe, and Schubert sings it far more clearly than the second law of thermodynamics. Even when the world is consumed, whether by its own climate or the great sunburst scientists anticipate five billion years hence, that music will still be playing.

David Wemyss is a retired lawyer.

back to contents

Murder by the Danube

Helen Szamuely

One morning at the end of November, 1952 a five-year old Czech boy, Ivan, who was staying with cousins of his parents in Bratislava while his mother, who had seemed exhausted and unwell, remained in Prague, wandered into the kitchen, a little surprised and disappointed that the usual appetizing smells of baking were not noticeable. He found his grandmother's cousin and her daughter sitting tensely at the table, listening to some boring official announcements on the radio. Ivan thought it was silly of them. Then, in response to something said by the boring official announcer, they exclaimed and clutched each other's hands. One of them burst into tears. Ivan was puzzled. 'I thought someone died', he said and the women looked at him in shock, then sent him away to play with cousins of his own age. About ten years later Ivan realised that what he must have heard was the announcement that his father, Rudolf Margolius, former Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade and one of the defendants in the last Stalinist show trial, the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia, had been sentenced to death. Out of fourteen defendants, eleven received the death sentence, carried out on December 3.

Three months later Stalin was dead and a period known as the thaw began. The second, largely anti-Semitic purge was stopped, the so-called Doctors' Plot declared null and void and those medics who were still alive released from prison. Prisoners from Siberia began to make their way home; in some camps there were uprisings that were put down ferociously and across most of Eastern Europe there began a process known as de-Stalinization. As it happens, Czechoslovakia, whose 'little Stalin', Klement Gottwald, died very soon after Stalin and was succeeded by Antonin Novotny, remained largely immune. The show trials continued though with considerably less verve and there were no investigations into the years of what was later called the 'cult of personality'.

Romania decided to go her own way and ignore the fact that Stalin was dead but in the other countries show trials were either stopped as in Hungary where the 'little Stalin' Mátyás Rákosi, himself a Jew, had been planning a major anti-Semitic trial for 1953 and had begun the preliminary arrests and interrogations; or abandoned as in Poland where the main 'conceptual trials' as they were called, never actually took place and the man who was to be Poland's Rajk or Slansky, Włodyszlaw Gomulka, was released. Indeed, many people were released though some with their health permanently damaged by the tortures they had endured.

One of those released was the American Communist, Noel Field. He had been a brooding presence behind the trials and purges as the man who had allegedly created a vast anti-Soviet conspiracy into which he had recruited thousands of seemingly good Communists, most of whom had spent the war years either in their own country or in the West, often in internment, Nazi prison or concentration camp, and not in the Soviet Union. Kept in a Hungarian prison, he had not been tortured or put on trial. On release he asked to stay in that country with his wife, also released from prison, and was eventually granted Hungarian citizenship. In 1954, during massive political convulsions in Hungary, there was a reasonably thorough investigation into the methods whereby the Rajk and successive trials were set up and how the concepts were exported to neighbouring countries. Noel Field gave an exhaustive account of his role, which was only partially that of a victim and mostly that of a willing accomplice, ready to further the cause through the death and torture of people he had known well and many others. This extraordinary document was uncovered by the Hungarian historian Mária Schmidt in the 1990s.

There is a phantasmagorical quality to the events of post-war Eastern Europe and the process that culminated in the show trials. The Soviet Union, having liberated the countries in question from Nazi occupiers or their own Nazi and pro-Nazi governments, had no intention of allowing the development of a free democratic system in any of them. This may sound like a truism now but was not at all clear at the time. Instead, the states were either wholly or partially incorporated into the USSR or had high Stalinism imposed on them. The process that took a couple of decades in the home country was pushed through in something like half a decade, with a considerably less willing population who had already had experience of developed social and political activity before the war and tried to revive this in the immediate aftermath.

Across a large part of the territory the war did not end in May 1945; civil war and disorganised violence continued for several years. The newly colonised countries were not only largely unsympathetic to Communist ideas, but saw them, rightly, as a foreign

imposition administered by foreign puppets. This could have been avoided if the Soviet officers and NKVD administrators had listened to some of their local Communist advisers who thought that there ought to be a national component to the new system. Instead, a completely Soviet system was imposed not just politically but ideologically with the Soviet Union seen as the true *patria*. National resentment became the focus of all other resentments.

Nor did the Soviet colonisers ever really understand the different geography. Used to the vast distances of their own country where people could disappear with ease, they found it hard to understand that in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe arrests, disappearances, destructions of businesses and organizations became known by all and sundry almost immediately.

By the late forties the process of subduing the economy and society seemed complete but the dissatisfaction was as rife as it had been in the USSR in the post-collectivization years. There were serious shortages; life was hard for most people while the party bosses seemed to have a much pleasanter life. The churches had been either suppressed or co-opted; parties disbanded and their members arrested, tortured, tried and executed or imprisoned; other organizations were accused of anti-Soviet activity and treated similarly. The anger and resentment was palpable. The time had come for the conceptual trials – a mixture of bread and circuses, apportioning of blame and intended final terrorization of population. No one, these trials were going to say, is safe. Not even good or seemingly good Communists. But, in the meantime, we shall present a good show that will explain who exactly is behind all those problems.

From 1948 on, while the United States was grappling with the realisation that its own government agencies had been infiltrated by Communist agents like Alger Hiss, NKVD officers and their local stooges built up the cases against Communists who were not, as it happens, dissident but who had a less controlled biography. They had fought in Spain or with the French resistance; they had been active in occupied countries; they had been involved with Soviet espionage in the West. Many of them were Jews and could be linked to Stalin's anti-cosmopolitan purges and the new enemy, Israel, as well as the rebellious Tito. (Slansky, unlike Rajk in Hungary, was himself as much of a Moscovite Communist as Gottwald, though his co-accused fell mostly into the usual categories. Margolius was the odd one out for different reasons: he had not joined the party till after the war, but his presence was necessary to provide another economic scapegoat as he had negotiated treaties with Western countries.)

Thousands were arrested and endlessly interrogated until they signed the requisite confessions. As so many survived and wrote about their experiences later, we have a good idea of the sort of physical and intellectual pressures they were under. The torture was horrific and many died under it in prison. Threats to their families and promises of mercy were used as well as the peculiarly Communist weapon of appeals to loyalty to the party and a permanent feeling of guilt.

The outcome was three major trials, Kosto Trajev's in Bulgaria, the main conceptual trial of László Rajk and his 'associates' in Hungary and the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia. There were secondary trials, which inflicted ferocious punishments on other Communists. The population watched and listened with apathy, applauding as required. What did they care who killed whom among the group that had been doing the same to them for years?

I started with Ivan Margolius's reminiscences; let me end with my own from several years later, when the system was falling apart. As small children who started school in the autumn of 1956 we knew that things were uneasy but failed to understand exactly what was happening. It was morning school on October 6 (mornings and afternoons alternated week in, week out as there was insufficient school space) and we were walking home at lunchtime. I knew my parents would be out and somebody was coming to look after my brother and me. It was a grey day with intermittent rain, which had stopped, producing a sort of crystalline clarity with the droplets in the atmosphere making everything look sharper and brighter. There were black flags everywhere. We were talking quietly. Some of us had been told that this was the first time for some years that the Day of Mourning, the anniversary of the execution of 13 generals in 1849, was marked. Others had heard another name connected with the day: Rajk. My parents had gone to the reburial of Rajk and those who had been executed with him. (Slansky could never have been reburied as his and his co-defendants' ashes had been thrown out of the car onto an icy road.) They had gone and had stood through the macabre rain-sodden ritual because they knew that it presaged something bigger. Just over a fortnight later, on October 23, they went to another major demonstration. By the time they returned from that, the city was in the throes of an uprising.

Helen Szamuely is a writer and researcher, specialising in the European Union.

back to contents

A Canadian at the Till

David Twiston Davies

To put the point plainly: when David Cameron chose the Canadian Mark Carney to be the next Governor of the Bank of England last November he revealed a forgotten truth about the Anglo-Canadian relationship. It is not wilting away, as popularly assumed. Rather it thrives largely unnoticed, so close, so familiar and so natural as to be invisible most of the time.

A figure of 80,000 has been suggested for the number of Canadians in this country, though nobody really knows. It is undoubtedly true that no visitor from Canada ever arrives at Heathrow without some knowledge of Britain. He is likely to disappear into the Tube to renew business, political, entertainment or private links and may never meet another Canadian until he is back at the airport to go home.

Unlike the Americans who were 'overpaid, oversexed and over here' during the Second World War, the Canadians were never 'foreign' then, and they are not 'foreign' now – the newspaper headlines about Mr Carney's appointment notwithstanding. The failure to appreciate this difference helps to explain why we have allowed ourselves to be sucked into the morass of the European Union. For too long there has been an assumption that any British approach to doing anything must be inferior to an American or European alternative. Nobody asks where a society born in revolution can totally lose the anger inherited from a violent birth.

Carney was chosen because he was different. The first Canadian to become Governor of the Bank of England he promises a breath of fresh air – which was missing from the home grown candidates nurtured in the aura of failure as Bank of England insiders, close outside regulators or heads of commercial banks. Carney is credited with an important role in helping his country to avoid the worst of the world financial crisis from 2008 onwards, though he may well find steering between the shoals of deflation and inflation more difficult in his new job. He has clear views on the reform of international finance, based on his experience in government as well as working with Goldman Sachs in Toronto, New York and London. He studied at Harvard, then at St Peter's and Nuffield Colleges at Oxford, when he met his English wife. His two children have British and Canadian citizenship. The Carneys are typical of an innumerable Canadians whose links with the British Isles are renewed every generation as younger members come on vacation, to re-establish family links, to study and perhaps to work for a few years. Often they choose spouses with whom they return to Canada.

I am a typical result of such a match, having been born in Montreal yet lived in Britain most of my life. I remember being singled out as 'a Yank' because of my accent on my first day at school; I was not familiar with the word, but instantly disliked it. Now I sound to most like a typical Englishman, but I have no problem with my joint loyalties. Why should I? The two countries share a language, a history, a legal tradition and a deep-seated loyalty to the Crown. The combination provides a common mindset that enables Canadians to slip easily into jobs here (and British people do the same in Canada). And contrary to popular claims, largely made by those who watch too much American television but do not read many books, Canadians have a sense of humour that can be elegantly deprecating but cutting in the parliamentary arena. When the great Canadian novelist Robertson Davies found himself hailed as a Booker Prize finalist on arriving at Heathrow after 50 years of previously anonymous travel, it was suggested that he came from somewhere as boring as Sweden: he responded by writing an article in *The Daily Telegraph* proposing a boringness competition with the Swedes.

I suspect that much of the reason for the belief in dull Canadians can be traced back to Mackenzie King, the long-time Liberal prime minister of the last century whose obscure and tedious speeches enabled him to claim he meant something completely different from anything the Opposition claimed. The later Tory prime minister John Diefenbaker was not without his own sense of worth, but he admitted to asking himself during his first six months in the Commons how he managed to be elected, then wondered afterwards how all the other members got there.

Inevitably there have been disagreements between the two countries, ranging first from complaints about inadequate subsidies from London and then British kowtowing to the Americans, to arguments over copyright law and the occasional, often well-justified refusal to follow the British lead on the international stage.

A drawing apart became apparent from the early 1960s onwards when the British naïvely started to

let the imperial links slip and Canadian governments petulantly determined to show their independence of colonial rule. Britain believed in the glorious future of a federating Europe, and Canada, deluding herself that she could be an effective bridge between Britain and the United States, cocked a snook at her British-inherited institutions by pretending to share the Americans' dismissal of anything inherited from the colonial past. A sharp change was signalled when the Canadians arrested a Spanish fishing boat in their Atlantic waters in 2005 and the Blair government endeavoured to steer a neutral course between Canada and Europe. The result was an outburst of British anger at the EU's presumption in sending an ultimatum to fellow subjects of Her Majesty.

Since then the European political experiment has gone seriously wrong. Today the British recognise that they are caught in the tentacles of a political union alien to their traditions. They are yoked to the euro, a financial experiment which they have not joined but which is costing them vast sums as it lurches out of control. Canadians are equally aware that they have neighbours to their south who are even more capable of influencing them without realising or caring. The loosening of the imperial strings gave Canadians a cherished independence, but it also left them free to be ignored, as they found when they withdrew their troops from Nato in Europe.

The two countries share a language, a history, a legal tradition and a deep-seated loyalty to the Crown. The combination provides a common mindset that enables Canadians to slip easily into jobs here (and British people do the same in Canada).

The much vaunted reform espoused during the constitutional square dancing led by the arrogant Pierre Trudeau gained them little. Despite making grumbling threats about a republican future, Canadians are ever more conscious that casting off the monarchy would send them sliding into America's arms just as surely as it would destroy any British resolution to resist increasing demands for a European superstate.

A growth in Canadians' self-esteem has been noticeable since they started to tackle their inflation and abandoned an image as the boy scouts of the world. They increasingly recognise the value of the Queen as their Head of State. As the best loved and best known woman in the world, she represents a combination of spiritual, historical and social continuity which bypasses the tawdry compromises of democratic government that are becoming ever more apparent. The monarchy is increasing in popularity, particularly among young Canadians. Like immigrants in other parts of the Commonwealth, new Canadians show little of the inferiority complex forecast by republican sympathisers. If some are surprised on arrival in Canada by the colourful pageant of royal government they are soon delighted and reassured by the stability this guarantees.

When Canada ceased making submissions to the Imperial Honours List in 1935, some nationalist politicians dismissed royal honours as fripperies unsuited to a democratic North America. Paul Martin, the High Commissioner in London, boasted of being the only man wearing no decoration at formal dinners until he was mistaken for a waiter at the Soviet embassy. Despite the honours ban several Canadian prime ministers have been appointed Companions of Honour. Jean Chretien received the Queen's personal gift of the Order of Merit and Conrad Black became Canada's third ennobled press baron of Fleet Street. As fast as Canadian governments have tried to reduce institutions inherited from Britain new ones have appeared. An Order of Canada was started in 1967. A Chief Herald of Canada was appointed by the Queen in 1984 to grant new coats of arms, do genealogical research and record family pedigrees. The governments of the ten provinces have set up their own royal honours systems. In addition a wide variety of organisations enjoy royal patronage under the umbrella of the monarchy, often headed by members of the Royal Family.

In Ottawa a handsome new magazine, *The Dorchester Review,* champions the central role of the Crown in Canadian history. The titles Royal Canadian Navy and Royal Canadian Air Force have been restored; and a close personal alliance exists between David Cameron and Stephen Harper as they jointly battle financial deficit and their armed forces co-operate in Afghanistan while trade is growing rapidly between their countries as well as other Commonwealth members.

It is surely significant that Britain and Canada have elected Conservative governments during each decade of the past fifty years. But few people have thought to mention this.

David Twiston Davies was the Obituaries Editor of The Daily Telegraph.

back to contents

The Physiology of Belief

Will Emkes

Most of us have watched, however fleetingly, a TV God Channel. To hypnotic chanting, the converted stumble forward to proclaim themselves for the Lord. 'Brought to Jesus' cries the ample-bellied preacher. He will usually have a Cadillac outside, and a string of properties, and his church will be a charity for tax purposes. Conversion is good business.

God is not the only form of conversion business. People can be brought to Marx or Milton Friedman, Apple or PC computers, global warming or cooling. People can worship the living. Remember Anthony Blair entering Downing Street in 1997 with weeping crowds strewing flowers in his path. It was as close as the socialists ever got to Christ entering Jerusalem. Here were the three components of belief; an enemy, a dream and a prophet. Or Mrs Thatcher ascending the stairway of Conservative Central Office after her first victory in 1979, pausing to quote St Francis to a sea of rapt faces. The socialist enemy vanquished, the dream realised, the prophet ascending.

Pick up a newspaper. Here is a church through whose doors the faithful hurry each morning to enjoy their prejudices. Most people read newspapers, magazines and political commentary to avoid being challenged. *Guardian* and *Telegraph* readers alike do not wish to be prised from their settled opinion, but rather, open their paper in order to have it massaged. Nobody reads the *Daily Mail* in the hope of being persuaded that Labour has consistently directed our economy towards a prosperous efficiency. Similarly *Guardian* readers don't expect to find the truth of the free market on page two. Typically, once a person has opted for a left or right wing politics they surrender their political virginity for life, lie back, and enjoy it. The newspapers are there to reassure them each morning they are right.

It is not surprising that so much of our political debate degenerates into sterile arguments in which opinions begin to resemble counters in a relentless game of swapping cliché, designed for the most part in order to fill a silence. Is there such a thing as 'reasoned' political debate? Could it ever be that reason is the deciding factor in our political judgments? Any reasoned argument is at the mercy of the will, nothing more than a convenient and adaptable screen for appetite.

Concerns with political questions will always be directed. Political argument, the writing of articles and speeches, is a coercive activity. The goal is not simply to point out rational connections between statements but to compel belief in a particular one. Take, for example, Mr Miliband's most recent diagnosis of welfare reform policy as 'irrational'. Are we to believe that Mr Miliband is an intrepid rationalist with an unwavering confidence in the power of reason – especially his own – to solve such a demanding social dilemma? Such talk is nonsense and for this reason. I do not recall a politician ever reporting in distress that on some fundamental political question his mighty reason has forced him into concluding that his policies are awful, not even the third best measures to be implemented.

People are more willing to accept political arguments when they have had similar arguments with themselves, that is, they are more willing to accept their own arguments than those they read. Yet at the same time we constantly undergo mini-realisations about the world. We cannot anticipate these any more than we can schedule a time to have them. If such moments just come to us unbidden then why should we be receptive only to those that fit within a particular framework? Perhaps we accommodate only those thoughts to which we are already receptive. So how are we to explain the business of political conversion? Is it rational, or is it, like falling in love, a temporary psychosis with the long term consequences only realised once we wake up to the true reality of the loved one's face?

We must remember that there is such a thing as a rational change of mind. It is an arranged marriage of opinion, rather than the biochemical bushfire which is like falling in love or converting to a new political creed. Floating voters rarely convert, they weigh the consequences. Rational people often recognise their irrationality and act against it. Many former Tories would never vote for the present government, just as there are many socialists who cannot stomach Ed Balls or Harriet Harman. Family and background are noticeably important to such people.

There are those who are as prone to conversion as some people are to catching cold. Arthur Koestler was a man not merely convinced but actively enthused by practically any intellectual, political or mental scheme that came his way. There were numerous British intellectuals of Koestler's time that converted to a belief in the official Russian interpretation of

Marxist dialectics, only to suddenly convert back to the Western point of view having failed to detect the falsity of Stalinism for many years.

This is the political equivalent of that kind of religious conversion after which ordinary, decent, thinking people come to believe that their lives have not only been a futile waste but merit eternal damnation. Tolstoy's conversion in later life to a strange form of primitive Christianity is a similar example. It would, however, be wrong to think such conversions are unusual, or afflict people with weak personalities. This would be to pander to the myth of the 'irrational enemy' as a reinforcement for your own delusions. We are all conversion fodder.

These and other scenarios are discussed by psychiatrist William Sargant in his book *Battle for the Mind*. Sargant's book argues for a mechanistic model of conversion based on the experiments of Russian neuro-physiologist Ivan Pavlov and his famous dogs. In doing so Sargant is able to say something about the way people hold and change their beliefs – how they are created, shaped and broken.

Pavlov and visitors with dog in his laboratory

The phenomenon that interested Sargant was not the model of classical conditioning for which Pavlov is usually remembered, but rather, the findings he recorded shortly after his laboratory in Leningrad flooded in 1924. After the flood Pavlov found that a strange change had come over his dogs – the traumatic experience had reversed the previous conditioning Pavlov had implanted. After the flood his dogs were unusually suggestible to new patterns of behaviour. Sargant's book combines Pavlov's findings and his own experiences treating shell shock and other combat neuroses to articulate a model of what he termed 'transmarginal collapse'. This is Sargant's terminology for the process of rebuilding assumptions and opinions about the world in order to avoid the complete destruction of brain activity after a period of prolonged trauma. Firstly, a person is subjected to a period of intense trauma. The trauma continues until a person begins to behave differently from what was previously expected from them. Their personality shows signs of breaking down and new ways of thinking can be implanted intentionally or accidentally. These new ways of thinking are then easily accepted.

Sargant's book points to the way that people learn and internalise belief systems. Our political opinions are the result of conditioned behaviour patterns, independent of free rational thought, whatever that might be.

Yet the wiring can be changed by stresses, stimulated or accidental, that are beyond a capacity for response. Sargant's book certainly tells us a great deal about old style Catholic conversions. Putting the fear of God and eternal damnation into the minds of believers will certainly ensure a smooth transition to the path of righteousness. Perhaps also, the ease with which Hitler took power can be at least partly explained by the collective trauma that Germany suffered throughout the First World War. Tolstoy's autobiographical work provides two key examples of trauma suffered prior to his conversion; the slow and drawn-out death of his brother and his witnessing a beheading in Paris.

When the Führer spoke, it was if the Russian physiologist's bell was ringing the old tunes of Imperial Germany. When a fundamentalist ascends the pulpit, it does not matter what message he brings, it can be anything from Christ's redemptive grace to the truth of the open market, if the ears that listen are sufficiently stressed the harvest of souls will be great. The same goes for any political meeting, even a remote one watching TV, which has high expectations and an unstable and charged audience.

We need to understand conversion and the first step is to understand the more subtle manifestations of Sargant's work. One of the great blunders of the Western political psyche is the belief that our opinions are invariably the result of careful scrutiny – the product of reason. We are, more often than we suppose, merely suggestible to certain ways of thinking – a bio-chemical loyalty. As Sargant argues, the more we deny this mechanism of the brain, the more susceptible we become.

Will Emkes is a journalist.

back to contents

Conservative Classic — 50

Brideshead Revisited, Evelyn Waugh

Myles Harris

By a strange chance, I wrote my first book in the little study behind the painted library at Piers Court in Gloucestershire, Waugh's first family house. The Georgian pile had been lent by a friend who strongly reminded me of Rex Mottram, the Canadian in *Brideshead Revisited*. To be alone in this large house, to sleep in what was the master's bedroom, was a daunting experience. I would wake in the middle of the night expecting to see his angry ghost demanding why a Lieutenant Hooperish figure such as myself had crept between his sheets.

Although Waugh had long sold Piers Court stories still circulated about him among the villagers. He was a formidable drinker, sometimes returning from London and having to be lifted out of his railway carriage by two porters. By an even stranger coincidence an Irish uncle of mine by marriage, Father 'Batty' Collins, was, years before, one of his parish priests. Batty always knew when Waugh was in the congregation because there was a white five pound note in the collection plate after Mass. Five pounds was a considerable amount of money in those days, especially in a small country church unfrequented by 'the quality'. It greatly softened my initial view of Waugh as a ruthless, sarcastic snob who used the church as a social pose. If he was, why would he pray among ordinary folk and hand out large sums in charity?

Nevertheless cradle Catholics (those born in the Faith) have always been suspicious of people like Waugh. Why would anybody join a religion so utterly foreign to the modern British mind? A religion that insists that the God who cast the Milky Way across the sky is physically present in a brass box in one of those decrepit, brick Catholic Churches you might pass on your way to work? Who but the most eccentric believe that the Virgin Mary ascended to heaven on a cloud, or that an elderly German in an apartment overlooking the Tiber has a direct line to God on the subject of contraception?

Why then did Evelyn Waugh, a literary genius of extraordinary perception, who in his greatest novel, *Decline and Fall*, put into the mouth of a doubting Church of England vicar the words 'I couldn't understand why God had made the world at all', convert to a religion that requires a total surrender of reason? Even stranger, he converted to one that insisted every one of its doctrines was directly inspired by God, and that all other religions – including the Church of England, especially the Church of England – were false, against reason, perverse and blasphemous – and anybody who continued believing in them, having once met a Catholic, a particular form of God's Grace, was bound for Hell. A Waugh joke? Unlikely. He wrote to Edward Sackville West at his conversion:

> *Conversion is like stepping across the chimneypiece out of a Looking-Glass world, where everything is an absurd caricature, into the real world God made; and then begins the delicious process of exploring it limitlessly.*

The usual explanation of Waugh's conversion is that he was a middle class snob longing to be accepted by the English upper classes, and the old English Catholic aristocracy, exclusive and few in number, held a particular appeal. Waugh's snobbery is confirmed by his treatment of his enlisted men during his army career – his commanding officer had to post a guard outside his rooms in case one of them tried to kill him. To see it as the reason for his conversion does him a disservice.

The key to his conversion, and to *Brideshead Revisited*, is his marriage to Evelyn Gardner in 1928. It lasted a year. In 1929 she confessed to him that a mutual friend, John Heygate, was her lover. In reality Heygate was one of many. The newly marrieds separated, Waugh later writing 'that he did not know it was possible to be so miserable and live'. In 1930,

in despair, he fled to the certainties of the Roman Catholic Church. Waugh claimed to be convinced 'on firm intellectual grounds, but little emotion (that) the Christian revelation was genuine'.

Three years later, still a Catholic, he applied, with the help of influential clerical backers, for an annulment of his marriage on the grounds of 'lack of real consent'. This rather dubious reason (was one of the spouses mentally incompetent?) must have raised eyebrows. Surprisingly it was granted, for annulments were extraordinarily difficult to obtain especially in those days. In 1937 he married Laura Herbert, a cousin of Evelyn Gardner, and a member of an old aristocratic Catholic family, the Herberts.

It was at this time that Waugh, besotted by the aristocracy, who were equally besotted by him – was introduced to the Lygon family. In 1931 the head of the family William 'Boom' Lygon, (because of his booming voice) the Earl of Beauchamp, had gone into voluntary exile following his exposure as homosexual. On being told of Lygon's orientation, King George is said to have remarked: 'I thought men like that shot themselves'.

Waugh became entranced by the Lygons, with whom he formed a close friendship. He used Madresfield, the Lygon family seat, its inhabitants and the father's exile, as models for *Brideshead*, but the plot is not about homosexuality and a fall from grace in an earthly court, but about the sanctity of marriage and a fall from God's grace.

It is an unashamedly conservative work, for Waugh never made any secret of being repelled by anything modern (he once described the RAF as not being quite English), it is a story of the call of the Old Faith, of a return to values that can no longer be understood. Values that have absolutely nothing to do with materialism, politics or modernity, that depict the deepest recesses of the Catholic mind, a metaphysical world that exists outside or parallel to our own, which, whether or not we believe it, is the basis of our existence and demands our allegiance. It is why *Brideshead* always disappoints progressives who set out anticipating a gay romance (soon perhaps even a gay marriage solemnised by a Catholic priest obliged under threat of being jailed to perform Cameron's new religious ceremony) but instead find themselves sidelined by a far more important story.

It revolves around the exile and return of Lord Marchmain, the head of an ancient aristocratic Catholic family. Marchmain has lived abroad for years with his mistress. He is in exile because he has flouted Roman Catholic teaching on marriage and divorce. Catholics can divorce, but they cannot remarry, nor can they marry other divorcees. If Marchmain dies without renouncing his mistress, he will burn in Hell.

Herein lies the secret of *Brideshead Revisited*. Like Marchmain, Waugh had divorced one wife and married a second. While Marchmain had become a Catholic to marry his first wife, Waugh became a Catholic between wives. A second marriage was therefore denied either man. Marchmain fled to Venice, while Waugh, although he must have known that no human law can supersede God's, obtained an annulment of his marriage through a technicality of Catholic canon law. However the church temporal, Vatican, Pope, cardinals and its canon laws, are mere props to the reality of the church spiritual, God's law on earth. No earthly power, even the church, can dissolve the teaching of Christ on the indissolubility of marriage. Waugh's second marriage could therefore be considered as a spiritual fraud. The fact he felt compelled to write *Brideshead*, suggests that he was utterly convinced of the genuineness of the church spiritual, that it was the only thing that made life meaningful, and he feared damnation.

Charles Ryder, the hero (Waugh), meets the family through Marchmain's alcoholic and homosexual son Sebastian Flyte. Charles is later to fall in love with Sebastian's sister, Julia, who by that time will be divorced and will later become engaged to Charles. If she is married when Marchmain dies, Charles Ryder, as Julia's husband, will inherit Brideshead. If not the estate passes to Bridey, the eldest son.

When Marchmain announces he is returning to Brideshead to die, Bridey, an unimaginative 'Penny in the slot Catholic', 'In goes Penance, out comes Grace' explains to Charles that God's grace is always open to Catholics as long as the slightest breath of life remains in their bodies. A priest is therefore summoned to hear Marchmain's final confession. The family, long separated, gather around the bedside. At first the priest is turned away by the old man. However the priest, a cheerful Irishman, returns and Marchmain, a second or so before he expires, makes the sign of the cross signifying his desire to be forgiven and re-enter God's grace. He dies absolved of sin and his soul will enter Paradise. Julia believes she has witnessed a miracle of grace and tells Charles that though she loves him, now she can never marry him or live in sin. Charles is later received into the church, knowing he too can never marry again.

Waugh paints a vivid picture of the misery and confusion surrounding the Church's doctrine on sex and marriage. Believers are toys in its all-powerful hands while the church itself believes it is ruled by terrifying, all-encompassing spiritual reality. There are strong hints that Charles Ryder's decision to accept a life of celibacy after Julia refuses him is what Waugh felt he himself should have done. The legalistic theology by which he did escape is returned to in

a later novel, *Men at Arms*, in the character of Guy Crouchback, a Catholic who realises he can still sleep with his divorced wife Virginia without committing a sin because the church does not recognise divorce, even among non-Catholics. Virginia when she learns of this cold-hearted betrayal walks out.

The novel's most powerful line is at the end. Charles (Waugh) returns to Brideshead during the Second World War as an army officer. The house and grounds are now a barracks. The last time he saw the chapel it had been desanctified, the light indicating God was present in the tabernacle extinguished. Charles finds the chapel has been re-consecrated for the ordinary Catholic soldiery, the lamp re-lit. He kneels in front of it to say 'an ancient, newly learned form of words'. Perhaps this is as close as one will get to understand what it is like to be a Catholic, or to enter Waugh's mind.

back to contents

Reputations — 39

John Buchan

Alistair Miller

It is easy to parody the derring-do novels of John Buchan with their hearty Edwardian heroes and their diabolic villains; and Richard Usborne (in *Clubland Heroes*) and Alan Bennett (in *Forty Years On*) both did an expert job. Usborne, writing back in 1953, notes that Buchan characters are almost always 'at, or near, the top of the form' and 'honourably exhausted with over-work' – for which the cure is 'honourable exhaustion, in the open air'. Aggressive well-being requires you to 'have walked about twenty miles, ridden thirty or bicycled forty' in a day – nothing like a long walk 'to blow introversion out of the system' – and to take a cold plunge before breakfast. Archie Roylance acquired a limp in the Great War but he still 'rode, steeplechased, played polo, flew aeroplanes and watched inaccessible birds'. And a typical Buchan heroine would be a first-class shot and able to 'keep a cool head in a panic of stampeding horses'. Bennett, writing in 1969, has more fun in a spoof dialogue between Richard Hannay, Sandy Arbuthnot and Edward Leithen – three of Buchan's best-known characters. Hannay reveals the identity of the arch villain to be George Ampersand, 'our second most successful theologian', attended by Sandro his valet, 'a cripple of the worst sort'. Leithen asks if he is sane, to which Sandy replies 'Sane? He is brilliantly sane. The second sanest in Europe.'

Isis Idol, Oxford, 1899

More serious is the commonly levelled charge that Buchan was a racist and anti-semite. Undoubtedly, references to 'nigger bands' and rapacious Jewish financiers in the Richard Hannay novels do not read well 90 years on, and, though infrequent, are sufficient to disturb the sensibilities of the modern reader. The most notorious of these comes early in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* when Scudder refers to 'a little white-faced Jew in a bath-chair with an eye like a rattlesnake'. It can be argued in Buchan's defence that the 'casual racism' of some of his characters is merely indicative of attitudes prevalent at the time, not of Buchan's own views; and that most of Buchan's portrayals of Jews (for example, Mr Eric Lowenstein, the Jewish financier in *A Lodge in the Wilderness*) are, in fact, sympathetic. But in the end we should judge Buchan by his own words and deeds, most notably by the tireless work for the Jewish National Fund that culminated in his name being inscribed in the Golden Book in Jerusalem – not an accolade accorded many of his critics.

As for the thrillers – Buchan called them his 'shockers' – they still set the standard by which others of the genre are judged. Buchan's style is taut and vivid, his language spare, his plots skilfully contrived, and

the pace, often furious but always controlled, keeps the reader turning the pages. He was a born storyteller. But there is always another dimension to a Buchan thriller, something indefinable that raises it to a higher level. John Buchan was a scholar and classicist, his literary tastes were wide, and his accomplishments and achievements, as soldier, lawyer, publisher, journalist, historian, administrator, parliamentarian and statesman (he died in office as Governor General of Canada), not to mention devoted countryman, fisherman and mountaineer, were prodigious. And it is the unexpected glimpses of these other worlds, the sudden illumination of the prose by a vivid description of the landscape, a sympathetic character sketch, an acute psychological observation or a profound idea, that tantalises.

Buchan's ability in particular to depict landscape and nature, to evoke the atmosphere of a place, its *genius loci*, and to integrate it into the fabric of the story, is quite often breathtaking. According to the eminent literary critic M R Ridley, it is unrivalled in modern English literature, a judgement echoed by Douglas Hurd in his introduction to *The Free Fishers*. Consider, for example, a passage from *The Island of Sheep*, the final Richard Hannay adventure, in which Buchan describes in a few short paragraphs a duck shoot that takes place in the early hours of a bitter January morning on the gale-scourged mudflats of north Norfolk. Hannay and his son Peter John have dug 'their graves' and lie crouched in their holes in thick darkness waiting for the dawn. A little after six, the darkness starts to thin:

> *There was another spell of eerie quiet, and then it seemed that the world was changing. The clouds were drifting apart, and I suddenly saw a brilliant star-sown patch of sky. Then the whole horizon turned from velvet-black to grey, grey rimmed in the east with a strip of intense yellow light. I looked behind me and could see the outlines of the low coast, with blurs which I knew were woods, and with one church-steeple pricking fantastically into the pale brume.*
>
> *It was the time for the geese, and in an instant they were on us. They came in wedge after wedge, shadowy as ghosts against the faintly flushing clouds, but cut sharp against the violet lagoon of the clear sky. They were not babbling, as they do in an evening flight from the fields to the sea, but chuckling and talking low to themselves.*

It is a marvellously evocative set piece. But this ability to depict landscape was no accident: it was the fruit of a discriminating eye, a formidable first-hand knowledge of flora and fauna, and a highly cultivated literary and aesthetic sensibility. The thrillers were no more than pot-boilers, entertainments produced for a mass audience ranging from soldiers at the Front to the King (who enjoyed his novels), and dictated to his secretary. If we wish to take the full measure of John Buchan as a writer, and as his other accomplishments fade from memory, it will be as a writer that he will be remembered so we must turn to his more serious works.

Buchan's literary corpus is impressive and includes his monumental history of the Great War published in 24 volumes from 1915 onward; meticulously researched biographies of Sir Walter Scott (George Trevelyan judged it 'the best one-volumed biography in the language'), Montrose, Cromwell and Augustus; a fine quartet of evocatively titled historical novels of which he was particularly proud – *The Blanket of the Dark*, *Midwinter*, *Witchwood* and *The Free Fishers*; his memoir *Memory Hold-the-Door* (reputedly John F Kennedy's favourite book); and countless other works of fiction and non-fiction (over one hundred in all) – an output all the more remarkable when one considers the severe and recurring pain he suffered from a duodenal ulcer for much of his life.

Those who have made a serious study of Buchan's literary output (notably M R Ridley and David Daniell) remark on the richness and complexity of his language, his faultless ear for rhythm and his unerring ability to choose the right word. At Oxford, Buchan had studied the classics ('Greats') and learned 'the virtue of a clean, bare style, of simplicity, of a hard substance and an austere pattern'. But the landscape of Buchan's beloved Scottish Border country, in which as a child he roamed free, seems also to have played its part. For A L Rowse, Buchan's style ran 'beautifully clear like one of his own Border streams'.

However, Buchan's more serious novels are invariably romances, and the escapades of his adventurous heroes as they embark on exhausting and exhilarating journeys are far removed from the humdrum exigencies of everyday life. This was out of fashion even when Buchan was writing; his literary contemporaries, after all, were Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and T S Eliot. Yet as an artist, Buchan is acutely self-aware, and he elaborates his views in a revealing essay entitled The Novel and the Fairy Tale. In it he defends the Victorian novel against the modernist charge that it lacks realism or psychological profundity. He says of the Victorians that 'They did not believe that the pathological was the most important thing in the world, and that the most characteristic thing about a house was the adjacent dunghill.' Moreover the Victorian novelists crafted their stories so that the protagonists revealed their character through their deeds – not through psychological analysis. In the modern novel, by contrast, 'Pages of tortuous analysis

had to be waded through before the hero could kiss his wife or eat his breakfast.'

Buchan argues that like all great literature, the Victorian novel is in direct line of descent from the folk or fairy tale, and deals in the enduring themes of human experience and human longing. Like the folk tale, it tells a good story by drawing on classic themes, its characters are recognizable, there is a clear moral outline, and, above all, there is an optimism that, despite 'the stubborn brutality of things', human nature can transcend itself. So it is that the hero is born. In Buchan's novels the hero is engaged in a spiritual quest for his soul. It is perhaps no surprise that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (references to which abound in his work) was a profound influence. Buchan's fiction is therefore doubly refreshing: it is escapist in the best sense of the term, and its underlying themes are universal.

The other great theme in Buchan's work is the fragility of civilization. In his thrillers it takes the form of the battle between the forces of good and evil, where those who are good, good because they possess the virtues and are fundamentally decent, are pitted against those whose intellects have been cut loose from those decencies. So a Buchan hero might be a philistine like Hannay, but a philistine who has common sense, virtue and decency on his side. Whereas the villain is typically brilliant, cultivated and suave, a denizen of the Establishment (an interesting role reversal here), but has become perversely destructive in his political aims and ambitions.

Buchan's villains are essentially rationalists: they seek to make everything anew – and must therefore begin by destroying everything that is old. By contrast, the heroes of Buchan's historical novels are rooted in the values, causes, traditions and ordinary decencies of their communities. In *Midwinter*, for example, the eponymous leader of the moor-men, hill shepherds and charcoal-burners warns Alastair Maclean, the dashing Jacobite, that his cause will fail because it has not enlisted the ordinary people of Old England: 'England you have not touched and will never move'.

Buchan was a Tory in the Burkean mould and his political perceptions were acute. He writes in *Montrose* that good government is 'an organism perfected by degrees with checks and balances', and that statesmanship requires two qualities above all: 'the conception of wise ends and the perception of adequate means'. The great power of The House of Commons lay in that 'it was the people of Britain who were governing not a batch of supermen'. Members were giving voice to 'the thoughts and emotions of the ordinary man, whom Burke believed to be in the long run wiser than his leaders'. Buchan believed that our civilization must ultimately rest on the Christian church and he worried (as T S Eliot worried) that Europe was no longer 'a Christian continent'. Christianity alone engenders humility, teaches 'the transcendent value of every immortal soul', and can, in Balfour's words (quoted in one of Buchan's essays), 'penetrate and vivify the inmost life of ordinary humanity'.

What of John Buchan the man? He is often described as complex or complicated, as being full of paradoxes and unresolved contradictions. But when analysed, a German psychiatrist famously found no neuroses at all. Buchan's lack of introspection reveals rather a man who was utterly secure in his values and ideals. Though brilliantly versatile, he was notably generous, particularly to the young, and was said to have 'a genius for friendship'. In tributes paid by his friends, it is his zest for life, his generosity and warmth of spirit that shine through; and it is clear that these qualities ran very deep. When he died, the editor of *The Times* said that they had never received so many tributes; they simply poured in 'from men of all walks and conditions of life'.

It is fitting that in *Sick Heart River*, Buchan's last novel, Leithen's quest is finally resolved among the Hare Indians of Northern Canada, not in material success, or Homeric bravery, not even in the Platonic ideal of reason and beauty, but in a tender act of brotherly kindness motivated by his realisation that it is through self-sacrifice and service to others that we find our immortal souls.

Alistair Miller is a teacher.

back to contents

Roy Kerridge

The Siege of Sidney Street (1910), in which two policemen were shot dead, is part of London's East End history best remembered for the attendance of the then Home Secretary Winston Churchill complete with top hat and gun. Everyone laughs whenever this is mentioned. Since the Bolsheviks involved are always called 'anarchists', and their leader, one Peter the Painter, the Siege is vaguely regarded as an exercise in art student 'peace and love', absurdly broken up by an 'over-reacting Establishment'. Peter the Painter has entered folklore as a dreamy long-haired poet. His real-life history is rather different. He had once worked as a house painter and when his long planned Russian Revolution became reality, he ended his days as a ruthless commissar. These mistakes happen. When I was moved from a pre-prep school to a state primary, I felt overjoyed to meet a boy who told me that his father was a painter.

'What does he paint? Houses? Oh, I wouldn't paint those. I'd paint pictures of animals.'

Hitler, on the other hand, is often derided for having been a house painter, particularly in the 'democratic' USA. Another mistake: he painted landscapes, rather wishy-washily, and began adult life as a dreamy art student – one whose dreams came true, unfortunately. So the popular idea of Hitler in reality fits Peter the Painter, and the popular idea of Peter the Painter resembles the young Hitler. Obviously it is very difficult for most people to imagine an artistic murderer. Someone who writes or paints cannot be bad. This exaltation of intellect has led to another fallacy: that a house painter is not a skilled craftsman but a stupid man who has failed all his exams.

***

One of the difficulties encountered by the folklore collector is that sooner or later his victims discover what he is after. As soon as people realise that they possess folklore they give it up in embarrassment and shame. This happened to the English long ago, but fortunately many Jamaicans and other immigrants have not yet come to to this fatal realisation. They have songs:

Lend me a love to dry me tears,
Lend me a love, lend me a love.
Oh me brother love and me sister love.
Lend me a love to dry me tears
Oh me mother love and me father love
Lend me a love to dry me tears

They have stories: 'When God make Adam out of clay, the Devil was watching from behind a tree. Him see how it done, so him make a whole heap o'clay people, but him can't make them move. He know that God is going to make Adam come to life, so him watch and him watch to see how it done. But God know that the Devil is there all the while, so He call out, 'Hey Devil, do you like fry dumpling?' The Devil nod greedy-like. 'Take this money and buy some flour and I'll make us some dumpling', God say.

The Devil so happy, 'cos him love fry dumpling, so him run to Morrison's and get all the flour him can carry. As soon as he gone, God breathe the breath of life into Adam and so the Devil never find out how it done. Him get dumpling, but him never get a Creation of his own. That what make him so mad to this day.'

Jamaicans have memories of African pagan ideas, many of which were once Celtic pagan ideas also. Water goddesses abound in West Africa. In West African pidgin-English they are called 'Mammy Water'. There is a flourishing cult of Mammy Waterism in Nigeria, with fetish priests in attendance to her watery majesty. In Jamaican patois, Mammy Water is called 'mermaid', even though she is found in freshwater pools and rivers. Some country Jamaicans throw offerings in the water and pray to her, claiming that mermaids are the messengers of God.

'Nothing in the Bible about mermaid, them thinkin' of hangel', my church friend Mrs Wiltshire told me.

back to contents

ETERNAL LIFE

It is Lent again and it brings much confusion about the place of fasting in both ancient Judaism and in Christianity. It goes along, as Jesus pointed out, with a great deal of false piety, spiritual self-advertisement and sheer puritanism. We recall Our Lord's denunciation:

> *When ye fast be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.*

Fasting was not a big part of Judaism and it is not meant to dominate spiritual life in Christianity. But there is a well-reported tendency among the seeming religious of all faiths to advertise their devotion in terms of their feats of personal renunciation and denial. This is sometimes taken to extreme lengths, as in Sir David Frost's quip about, '…the masochist who liked to take a cold shower – so he took a warm shower.' The obligation to fast prescribed for the faithful Jew was largely limited to Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement – and the surrounding days. The Pharisees decreed two extra days of fasting every week – Monday and Thursday – the better to flaunt their own phoney piety. This innovation was their own, as there was not scriptural or traditional authority for it.

There is a place for fasting in the Christian life and the church is clear on the matter: Fridays in recollection of the crucifixion and then Lent and Advent in preparation for Easter and Christmas. Indeed the church has many more feasts than fasts, not only the major festivals of Our Lord and the Virgin Mary, but scores of saints' days. Feasting is more natural to Christianity, which is a world-affirming faith: for God regarded all that he had created and saw that it was very good. Unfortunately the puritanical streak runs deep and there are those who are only happy when they're miserable. Some use fasting as a fraudulent way of transmuting necessary economy into spiritual virtue. They have their reward. In our own times, things have taken an even more bizarre turn in the spectacle of thousands starving themselves throughout Lent as a means of slimming. That is not self-denial, but narcissism. They have their reward too.

Fasting can also become a perversion even in the name of spirituality. For aeons, devotees of all religions and none have fasted and flagellated themselves, stood for hours in freezing water or walked on hot coals, in order to produce vivid sensations in themselves which they equate with spiritual blessings. They are nothing of the kind. These experiences are only extraordinary psychological states or examples of self-indulgence. Peculiar psychological states are no measure of holiness.

A young novice goes one morning to the Father Abbot and says, 'Oh Father, I must tell you, after my day's fast I saw a vision of St Peter.' The Abbot nods and sends the lad on his way. A week later the novice returns and says, 'Oh father, I really must tell you, after my two days fast I saw a vision of the Blessed Virgin.' Again the Abbot nods serenely and sends him away. After about a month, the boy comes back again and he can hardly control his excitement: 'Father, you must listen to me this time. After my three days fast, I saw a vision of Our Lord himself!'

The Abbot sits up straight, folds his arms, looks straight at the young monk and replies: 'Well, we really must stop all this fasting. These visions are clearly interfering with your prayers.'

Funny feelings in the tummy, or anywhere else are not marks of increasing sanctity. And exotic or fashionable notions of 'spirituality' are not the same thing as true faith. The life of faith, as those who have really tried to follow it will tell you, is largely one of patience and perseverance in the daily round, the common tasks. As George Bernanos' priest says in *The Diary of a Country Priest* – one of the best of 20th century novels – 'You must learn to accept being mildly bored.'

What then shall we do to keep Lent? Along with a moderate abstemiousness from chocolates or the booze, I would say, whatever you do, keep away from that shelf in the high street bookshop labelled Mind, Body and Spirit. It will only lead you astray

Peter Mullen is Assistant Priest at St George's Headstone, Harrow.

back to contents

A Gifted Psychopath

Anthony Daniels

The Pike: Gabriele D'Annunzio, Poet, Seducer and Preacher of War, Lucy Hughes-Hallett, Fourth Estate, 2013, £25.

Every age likes to believe that its vices are peculiarly its own, unprecedented in history. We lament the shallow buffoonery of our political class as if it were something new, as if there had been a time not so long ago when public figures had some depth of character or probity. But history, including that of political frivolity, is a seamless robe. There are always forerunners of the worst characteristics of any age; among them was Gabriele D'Annunzio.

D'Annunzio was an exquisite: a poet, novelist, aesthete, Lothario and, in effect if not quite literally, a mass murderer. He was clearly that most dangerous type, the gifted psychopath. Lucy Hughes-Hallett's long biographical study has a significance well beyond that of its subject, which in any case is great enough. I do not think one could come to the end of this book without one's aversion to bellicose political rodomontade considerably heightened, however strong it might have been before. This is achieved without any shrillness on the author's part, for she understands that shrillness would have lessened the impact of her book considerably. She is content to let things speak for themselves: and they say a lot.

The author wisely begins with a summary of D'Annunzio's most famous exploit, his putsch in the Adriatic city of Fiume, which was followed by eighteen months of increasingly chaotic and violent rule; of his literary achievements and of his place in history. If one is going to read a book whose text is 642 pages long it is as well to be reassured at the outset that one is not going to waste one's time, and this the author successfully does. Even the repetitive nature of his love affairs is important as illustrating the sheer persistence of his exploitative character. If you are interested in the connection between psychological and political pathology, you will be well-rewarded by this book.

D'Annunzio was clearly born a prodigy. By the age of seventeen, in 1880, he published two volumes of verse and, in order to increase sales, put it about that he had died. In other words, he understood very early that, in the modern world, self-advertisement is the new queen of the sciences, at least if you want fame and fortune.

He mastered several languages, possessed great erudition, was enormously productive, had a fine knowledge and appreciation of music, and knew a great deal about art. He always wanted everything about him, down to the last detail, to be of the finest, even if some of his taste would now be to us insufferable. His poems are still widely read in Italy (he is said to be one of the greatest Italian poets) and it is this book's only major defect that it gives us very little idea of the quality of his verse, some of which ought to have been printed in Italian with translation.

Physically, D'Annunzio was by no means prepossessing, but he must have been enormously attractive to women because he had a very long succession of beautiful, talented or aristocratic mistresses. He was completely uninhibited sexually (there is a photo of him in this book, stark naked lying on a beach, without the faintest attempt to hide his genitalia), and he was something of a fetishist with a necrophiliac tinge. He was a bad father and dropped his lovers as if they were outworn beasts of burden, but his hold on their imagination and affection must have been considerable, because some of them agreed to meet him many years after the end of their affairs. He was a brilliant demagogue, able to move a crowd to passion with words that, when analysed, meant very little. They roused emotion while bypassing thought.

He was devoid of scruple, utterly unconcerned for others and saw nothing wrong or dishonourable in running up huge bills at other people's expense. He felt as unbound by social convention as by morality of any kind, regarded luxury as his due, and given the choice between the deaths of a thousand ordinary men and forgoing his favourite chocolates for a day or two he would unhesitatingly have chosen the former. It is astonishing that in a book of this length there is not a single instance by its subject of a disinterested kindly act; this might, of course, be the result of the author's method of selection, but I rather doubt it.

Philosophically and politically he was a complete mountebank, but the one thing of which, unlike most mountebanks, he could not be accused was cowardice. Before and during the Great War he showed enormous physical courage, becoming an aviator when aviation was more dangerous than Polar

exploration; his derring-do by sea, land and air during the war was incontestably courageous and would have been admirable had he possessed any other morally-admirable qualities.

His political philosophy – a noisy xenophobic nationalism combined with a taste for violence both for its own sake and as the supposed forge of national character and greatness – was about as unpleasant as a political philosophy could be. He was instrumental in Italy's needless and disastrous entry into the First World War, which cost it 600,000 lives and gained it nothing. There is no evidence that the deaths of so many young men in such horrifying conditions gave him even a moment's pause. He made no moral distinction between putting his own life in danger, as he was entitled to do, and putting the lives of untold numbers of others in danger, which was another thing entirely. He disguised the sheer awfulness of the results by pseudo-spiritual pronouncements about glory and willing sacrifice. The world was for him nothing but the screen to project and magnify his own histrionic personality upon; and the Italy that he claimed to love was certainly not the Italy of ordinary Italians, for whom he had nothing but disdain or contempt. He was John the Baptist to Mussolini's Christ, and only refused full support to the Duce because he could not tolerate a position of subordination. While in power in Fiume, however, there is no doubt that he developed many of the Fascist techniques.

D'Annunzio's thirst for fame and notice either derived from or caused an inner emptiness His soul was in effect a bottomless pit, or rather a whirlpool that sucked everything within reach into it and destroyed it. The Italian Prime Minister, Francesco Nitti, a decent man, summed up D'Annunzio best: he noted 'how methodically and assiduously he cultivated publicity,' how there was 'something artificial about everything he said or did.' He 'had no programme, nor true passion, nor any sense of moral responsibility.' He said that 'Italy is just the latest of the many women he has enjoyed.' Everything that D'Annunzio said or did was a performance, and the only important question for him was its effect upon the audience,

As one reads Nitti's estimate, one cannot but think of our own political class: D'Annunzios all, but with the flamboyance, literary talent, and interest removed. D'Annunzio was not only important for the history of his country, but as the harbinger of a type, probably more prevalent now than when he began his career, for whom to be is to be seen, One question this excellent book does not answer – this is not intended as a criticism, no book can cover everything – is why so patent a mountebank should have exercised so great an influence over so many of his countrymen. We cannot say that it is because Italians are peculiarly susceptible to flummery and bogus sentiment: we, after all, have had our Anthony Blair.

back to contents

A German Saint

Nigel Jones

Not Me: Memoirs of a German Childhood, Joachim Fest, trans Martin Chalmers, Atlantic Books, 2012, £20.

In recent years, presumably in pursuit of its pan-European dream, the BBC in referring to the Second World War has taken to replacing the word 'German' with the all-encompassing term 'Nazi'. Thus we hear about the 'Nazi invasion of Poland' or 'the Nazi occupation of France' or 'the Nazi Holocaust'. Never, from these references, would we gather that Germans were involved in any of these events: it was merely the actions of the evil ideology of Nazism, presumably a temporary visitation from another planet.

The historian and journalist Joachim Fest, who died aged 79 in 2006, just after completing this honest and revealing memoir of his childhood and youth in Hitler's Germany, was never a Nazi. Nor were any members of his Prussian, Catholic (an unusual combination) family. Indeed their adamant refusal to have anything to do with the party or regime got them into the serious trouble which is one of the main themes of the book. But they were Germans and unwillingly shared the fate of the rest of their country in the years 1933-45. A fact which gives the lie to the BBC version of history: that Nazis were some sort of alien species which conveniently disappeared in 1945.

The Fest family in the Weimar Republic of the 1920s and early 30s were unusual in that they were ardent supporters of the democratic republic at a time when many members of their conservative bourgeoisie milieu were gravitating towards the Nazis as a bulwark against the rising threat of the other totalitarian doctrine on offer, Marxism, which had attracted so many members of the working class into the Communist party, along with most intellectuals.

The Fests, led by the family patriarch, Joachim's schoolteacher father Johannes, regarded Nazism and Communism as twin evils, no better than each other. Johannes Fest bravely made no secret of his anti-Nazi views. He refused the new regime's requirement of all teachers to join the party, which, after Hitler came to power in January 1933, cost him his job and livelihood – reducing the respectable middle-class family at a

stroke to humiliating relative poverty.

Nor were the consequences of Johannes' defiant stand merely economic. Visits to the family home by the Gestapo became a regular occurence as an increasingky oppressive state sniffed around the roots of Fest senior's dissidence, and started to inquire why his three sons would not join the Hitler Youth. Opposition such as that of Johannes may have been quiet and passive, but to a doctrine which – like Catholicism – demanded the 'whole man', any dissent was dangerous and potentially deadly.

Partly to escape the Gestapo's unwelcome attentions, young Joachim and his brothers were sent to a Catholic boarding school at Freiburg, deep in the distant Black Forest. But the family's anti-Nazi values had already been inculcated into him, and when the boy was found drawing caricatures of Hitler on his desk, he too was in danger of arrest. Fest's response to the terror around him as it increasingly impinged on the private sphere was an 'inner emigration' into the world of the imagination and literature. As German armies battled in the snows of Moscow in the winter of 1941/42 Joachim was absorbed in the drama of another war – Schiller's portrayal of Wallenstein, the central figure of the Thirty Years' War which had devastated Germany in the 17th century.

But the Fest family, like all Germans, could not avoid the baleful consequences of the defeat of a regime they had detested. In 1944, to avoid conscription into the Nazi Waffen SS, Joachim joined the Luftwaffe with the help of a sympathetic friend who protected him from a Court Martial. The war's end saw him surrender to Americans who passed him to the French, who imprisoned him at a camp near the cathedral town of Laon. Although food and creature comforts were short, conditions were relatively relaxed, in contrast to the hell endured by his family back in Berlin, where his father barely survived starvation while held captive by the Russians.

The fate of the Fests reflected that of their nation: torn in two, with a gaping hole where their hearts should have been. The title of this moving Memoir, taken from Matthew's Gospel: 'Others may betray you, but not me' – reflects Johannes Fest's iron determination not to compromise with evil, cost what it may. Joachim Fest's admiration for his father is the golden thread running through this book. It lit up the course of his own life too: a determination to understand what his father, family and Fatherland had gone through dictated his post-war study of contemporary history, his career as a controversial conservative editor on Germany's most respected conservative newspaper, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and his rather ponderous, but always serious, biographies of Hitler and the Führer's sorcerer's apprentice, Albert Speer.

As death drew near, Fest penned this very different book which may well turn out to be his most enduring legacy. Sardonic, touched with Fest's dry humour and his zest for life, and also achingly honest, I am not surprised that it was a bestseller in Germany. Certainly it should be read as a vivid warning of what happened when Europe's most populous, cultured and industrious nation lost its mind and its soul. We must all hope that the devils that possessed Germany in those years really are, as the BBC would have us believe, dead, and not merely sleeping.

back to contents

Otter Country

Celia Haddon

Otter Country. In Search of the Wild Otter, Miriam Darlington, Granta, 2012, £20.

Some wild animals are the object of human devotion, while others equally interesting, are ignored or even persecuted. Otters are among the lucky ones. They have a special place in peoples' hearts and, in particular, in the heart of Miriam Darlington, a published poet. In *Otter Country*, she tracks down not just the otters living in Britain but also their place in our literature.

When the last wolf was killed in Scotland in 1700, otters became Britain's largest native predator. They too were persecuted. 'No sooner does one venture down the river (Thames) than traps, gins, nets, dogs, prongs, brickbats, every species of missile, all the artillery of vulgar destruction, are brought against its devoted head,' wrote one of our greatest nature writers, Richard Jefferies, in 1883. Since then the otter's public image (like the wolf's) has shifted from that of vicious pest to conservation icon, largely because of two books: *Tarka the Otter* by Henry Williamson and *Ring of Bright Water* by Gavin Maxwell. As a child, Darlington read both books and fell in love with otters. She joined the Otter Trust, a pioneering conservation organization set up for captive-breeding. Young Miriam started her own campaigning newsletter, *Otter News*, distributed to her family and neighbours.

By the 1970s otters were on the edge of extinction in England. Not because of otter hunts and trapping, though these didn't help, but because of the DDT and other chemicals that poured into our rivers off agricultural land. These accumulated in the fish that were eaten by the otters. Like the peregrine falcons and other birds of prey, at the top of the food chain, the otter population was poisoned *en masse*.

Miriam's first encounter with an otter in the wild was in the Highlands of Scotland. She watched it through

the window of her camper van. This started her on a quest for the elusive animals. 'A water level odyssey following… the undulated mesh of blue veins that is Otter Country', as she poetically puts it. Though she herself comes from Devon, the county of *Tarka the Otter*, her first otter-watching trip was to the Island of Skye where Gavin Maxwell wrote *Ring of Bright Water*. His otters were not the native British species. These wild animals were captured for him to order. Indeed, his obsession with making wild creatures into pets cost the lives of several unfortunate would-be pets that died before they even reached him. Now that otters are a protected species, what he was doing would be illegal. This was part of the darker side to Gavin Maxwell's life in Skye, as Darlington reveals. By hiding some of the reality of his life, his idyllic book became a best seller.

From Animal Discovery Online

These explorations of otter literature, otter history and otter facts are skilfully knitted together with accounts of her own attempts to actually spot an otter. Unlike Maxwell, she recounts the difficulties of her quest – the agonising Scottish midges which torture any exposed flesh, the hours of watching without seeing anything, the marshy river banks and the Dartmoor bogs which swallow up her wellies. Though her actual sightings are rare and short, the journeys into otter country are a joy in themselves. She learns to find the spraints, otter droppings made up of fish bones and scales and smelling like lavender or jasmine tea. These are the scent marks deposited on little heaps of sand or knots of dried grass, messages for other otters, which we humans with our poor sense of smell can never understand. So elusive is the otter, that estimates of otter numbers are based not on sightings but only on spraints.

In the steps of Henry Williamson, she discovers how the concrete and tarmac of today have changed life for the modern otter. High up on Dartmoor the rivers that begin their run to the sea may be largely unchanged, but elsewhere, like the Somerset levels, the anti-otter fencing and light reflectors and the special otter tunnels fail to protect scores of otters from the traffic. Cars now kill as many otters as the otter hunters used to. Darlington has fallen for the claim that the otter hunts, unlike the traffic, frequently spared the life of the otters they hunted. In my childhood experience of otter hunting in the late l950s the cornering of a small frightened animal by hounds and men with sticks in the river itself was always without any mercy whatsoever.

Modern otter road casualties often make a final journey to Cardiff University otter forensic lab. Darlington goes where many otter lovers would not, to watch a stinky otter corpse being cut up for science. The whiskers are cut and bagged, so is each internal organ. This particular otter body is yet another road casualty, with broken skull, jaw and leg. Its last supper was frog and several small fishes. She also visits the rivers Lea and Wandle, formerly canalised sewers, now being cleaned up. Once Izaak Walton, the famous angling writer who thought nothing of killing an otter and making it into gloves, wrote about fishing trout in the Wandle, but Darlington finds no otter spraints there though there are now otters in the Thames as far down as Windsor.

It is this realism and her eye for detail that makes *Otter Country* into an outstanding book. Accuracy is what puts Miriam Darlington up there with Richard Jefferies and Henry Williamson. These nature writers, whose prose was simpler than hers, knew what they saw, noticed what they saw and described it well. They were not sentimental in their love of wild things. Neither is she. Occasionally her poetic prose goes over the top but most of the time she writes so beautifully that she is a worthy successor to the earlier great nature writers. Our otters, so nearly made extinct by the unthinking use of chemicals, are now found all over England except for Kent and some parts of Sussex. *Otter Country* is a story of survival and hope. Celebrate this by reading it.

back to contents

Birth of the Tea Party

Lindsay Jenkins

America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism, Anatol Lieven, Oxford University Press, new edition 2012, £12.99.

Professor Lieven now teaches at the Department of Defence Studies at Kings College, London after an earlier career as a British journalist with the *Financial Times* and *The Times,* mainly in the former Soviet Union and South Asia. He spent five years as a Senior Associate with the Carnegie Endowment for

International Peace culminating in the first edition of this book.

This is not a comfortable book to read: in part this may be because Lieven is more at home with the wider Russia, the land of his forebears, and the subject of three other books as well as many articles, and he is not naturally in tune with his present subject. Nor is it always easy to follow his arguments: ideas jostle ideas within one paragraph, often heavily footnoted, and leaving the reader looking for a way out. The signposts to conclusions when they come are too often clothed in 'isms'. None of which detracts from the importance of analysing the current apparent impasse of Republican politics, which is the ultimate focus of this updated edition of his 2005 study.

Anatol Lieven traces the recent re-emergence of what he calls radical strains of American nationalism in particular the rise of the Tea Party movement and the radicalisation of the Republican Party. He attributes this to the effects of 9/11and the influence of America's alliance with Israel, but mainly to the accelerating economic decline of large parts of the white middle classes. What Lieven describes as nationalism, the almost unthinking allegiance to the Star Spangled Banner, the Creed and American exceptionalism, no longer makes total sense for those financially stricken. That is why, says Lieven, these people are turning with zeal and intensity to ideologies which contribute to the paralysis of effective government in what is still by far the world's most powerful country.

Lieven rightly recognises 'the unique American combination of power, omnipresence, innocence, and ignorance *vis-à-vis* the rest of humanity'. In the past, he writes, extremes have tended to right themselves. Today he worries that terrorism and consequent American involvement in the Middle East bind the country in a hopelessly deteriorating situation because of the need for oil and the American attachment to Israel. But already Lieven's concerns are being overtaken by events: in short order, energy costs are reducing as shale oil takes over. Further, his analysis of America's attachment to Israel should be part of a wider vision of the rising radical Muslim threat, which some might argue is not simply linked to Israel and would exist even if Israel were not there. Radical Islam is destabilising America's allies in Europe as well as in the Middle East and North Africa. Analysis should therefore be wider and deeper than is discussed in this book.

To view Obama solely through the prism of race is wide of the mark. It is easy to poke fun at unfounded allegations that Obama was born in Kenya, but if Lieven had looked more closely he would find that Obama shut down any investigation of his past and paid very many millions to do so. Obama's 2008 campaign, which should have revealed warts and all, instead shut down debate and investigation. Volumes of serious questions remain. Who was behind Obama's move from New York to Chicago and his non-job as a community organiser? Who paid for Obama to go to Harvard Law School (almost certainly Saudi or Wahhabi money)? Why as President of the United States of America did Obama kiss the hand of the King of Saudi Arabia?

For those of us outside the USA, the wilder excesses of the Tea Party have certainly entertained in an eye-brow raising way. But again surely Lieven would recognise that Sarah Palin (now dropped by Fox, her major platform, and *en route* to obscurity) or Christine O'Donnell's failed Senate run in Delaware would be part of that self-correcting ordinance to which he rightly points. Stripped of its peripheral concerns, the Tea Party expresses a key issue: it stands for Taxed Enough Already and was a cry from the grass roots to an apparently deaf and unheeding Washington. It grew from protests over the Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP) bailout bill signed by President George W Bush not long before he left office, and then ten days before the protest, by the ARRA stimulus bill which President Obama signed. The protest began to take off on the day of the annual US deadline for submitting tax returns, Tax Day April 15, 2009. It is not clear how, once the froth has blown away, Lieven can call such a grass-roots rebellion **'**hard edged nationalism**'**.

That grass-roots cry has not yet reached the spot. Today Obamacare adds to the woes. Mitt Romney was not *street smart* enough to tackle the Obama machine and win even though he was right on US finances. Nor was he helped by social issues in some cases, notably an extreme abortion policy that would have most of us flinching. Republicans after two Bush Presidencies had run out of momentum. But they have time to pull themselves back to a winning position before 2016. If they fail it may well be another Clinton White House. Surely Lieven's self-correcting mechanism will stop a third Clinton term?

Lieven praises the image of America: economically successful, a pluralist democracy, open to all. He is right and that is still the case. Economic recovery now under way will push the wilder issues farther to the edges of national debate. Perhaps the biggest domestic issues challenging the USA remain pork barrel politics and depths of corruption both sides of the aisle and in every state. He might find that they are a key to his assessment of the paralysis at the heart of government. But Lieven gave those critical concerns at best a glance.

back to contents

No Honour in her own Country

Christie Davies

Ban This Filth: letters from the Mary Whitehouse Archive, Ben Thompson (ed), London, Faber and Faber, 2012, £16.99.

Ban This Filth consists, as the title implies, very largely of letters written by or to Mrs Whitehouse, now in an archive at Essex University. The letters deal with Mrs Whitehouse's great crusades against blasphemy, obscenity and 'unnatural vice' and particularly against the organization that in her mind had come to be the incarnation of all three – the BBC. There are also some letters involving Moral Rearmament, an organization with which Mrs Whitehouse was closely associated but which she chose to keep in the background.

Much of this book is tedious because the letters are quoted at great length, indeed often in full. To make matters worse, while the connecting text linking the letters is in a typeface that is clear and easy to read, the print used for Mrs Whitehouse's letters is small, ugly and faint. If you wish to entice people carefully to read dull primary materials, the last thing you want to do is to make them physically difficult to read. Few people under forty will have ever heard of Mrs Whitehouse. Those who will remember her with interest are over forty, most of them well over forty, and if they have to stop reading in order to hunt around for a stronger pair of reading glasses, they will forget what they went to look for, return without them and give up in frustration.

It is difficult to know what kind of book this is. The title, the cover and the price suggest that it is for popular consumption but there is not nearly enough filth here to allow the common reader to experience that intense moral indignation which constitutes one of life's great pleasures. The endless unabridged letters bulking out the book to over four hundred pages, really only belong in an academic monograph. Yet this is NOT a scholarly book, for there is no index and no proper notes and references.

Ben Thompson is described on the cover of the work as one of 'Britain's most respected cultural critics', which does not exactly inspire confidence in him. Thompson further admits (p 384) to 'normally liking' plays that are 'a simple piece of leftist agitprop', when admitting that Howard Brenton's *The Romans in Britain* was indeed crass. Mrs Whitehouse had the theatre performing that play prosecuted for having 'procured persons for an act of gross indecency in a public place' but lost the case when it turned out that what her solicitor thought was an actor making use of his *membrum virile* to commit the act turned out to be mere simulation using a very large thumb. Mr Thompson has written 'widely acclaimed collections of rock journalism', music not geology, and he has noted that pop music set off a serious conflict within the BBC. Lord Hill, the Chairman of the Governors, learned that a Boxing Day broadcast was to feature a song about walruses by a then fashionable group of young male singers and musicians known as the Beatles. The song contained a line about a pair of women's unmentionables descending, which Lord Hill, a man with advanced medical training, thought grossly indecent. Accordingly Hill instructed Sir Hugh Carleton Greene, the BBC's ultra-liberal Director General and Mrs Whitehouse's greatest enemy, to remove this particular piece of unspeakable filth. Greene refused. Less than a year after this bitter spat Greene 'was left with no option but to announce his retirement as director general'. Mrs Whitehouse rejoiced at his departure, for it was she who had drawn Hill's attention to the Beatles' smut.

Yet in the long run what difference did Greene's departure make? In her crusade against the BBC Mrs Whitehouse won many tactical victories but she failed in what she saw as her main mission, which was to reverse the tide of adverse social change that had begun in the mid-1950s, somewhat before the dawn of BBC liberalism. From the mid-1950s onwards there was a steady decline in the degree to which ordinary people adhered to, attended and supported the churches of Christian respectability from which Mrs Whitehouse drew her support. The trend has continued inexorably and the BBC has merely followed it. Ben Thompson well understands that her war against filth was just one part of her general crusade to restore and protect Christian values and influence; so indeed was Prohibition in America in the 1920s, led by the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Yet in the end he gets it wrong in suggesting that others, such as feminists, may successfully take up her causes in the twenty-first century. He is wrong in the same sense that the medical profession's current justified concern about alcohol is not a revival of the crusade against booze of the WCTU.

What Mrs Whitehouse did achieve was to force the BBC to reveal the nastier side of an arrogant institution that treated all who did not support its liberal package of prejudices with condescension and contempt. Mrs Whitehouse was one of the first victims of this institutional scorn and it is to her credit that she fought back as well as she did. No one today trusts the BBC. Everyone knows that its ideological range is forty shades of pink and that its multiculturalism does not extend to conservative Christians. This is clear

from many of the letters. Sir Charles Curran on 15th January 1973 wrote to Mrs Whitehouse that he was quite happy to put out matters offensive to Christians but not to Sikhs because the latter were a minority. It was the birth of political correctness. Ironically it was to be a scriptwriter from East Enders who later wrote, and had performed, an abominable play that seriously insulted the Sikhs.

Thompson suggests that the 1996 Broadcasting Standards Commission now lodged within Ofcom is the kind of body she always strove for; but it is far more likely to put down voices agreeing with her world-view than those offending against her memory.

Christie Davies has debated with Mrs Whitehouse in both the Cambridge and the Oxford Unions.

back to contents

T S Eliot's Treachery

John Jolliffe

Tarantula's Web: John Hayward, T S Eliot and their Circle, John Smart, Michael Russell, 2013, £19.95

John Hayward, though crippled from his twenties by muscular dystrophy, achieved a remarkable career as critic, bibliographer and anthologist. But the most significant years of his working life were spent sharing a flat in London with T S Eliot, in the time before Eliot's wonderfully happy second marriage. Eliot was constantly seeking comments and advice on the early drafts of his works, especially his masterpiece, *Four Quartets.* As an American, he worried endlessly about striking a wrong note in his quest for perfectly idiomatic English. In this by far his greatest debt was to Hayward, and the way in which they eventually fell out is described in the most tragic of many tragic pages in this book.

Hayward was born in Wimbledon in 1905, the son of an able and hard-working doctor from whom he was later estranged. He was sent to Gresham School in Norfolk, where his two chief friends were W H Auden and John Gielgud, and his passion for poetry and the theatre never faded. He met Francis Meynell, creator of the Nonesuch Press, even before he went up to King's. The Press concentrated on well-crafted editions of lesser known authors, and Hayward edited Congreve, Rochester and more importantly John Donne for them, the latter bringing him into harmonious contact with Eliot, though at this stage he seemed to Hayward to expect his readers to share 'an asceticism which is easier to admire than to emulate'.

What excited him about Rochester was not just his notoriety; it was the setting of Restoration England 'when the experience of the older generation was no longer of use to men who felt they had to make a new set of values for every occasion', forerunners in a sense of the post 1918 world, 'weaving life into a mad jazz pattern, ruled by Pantaloon'. … 'restless, aimless, hectic, fearful, futile, neurotic', as Hayward himself put it. In Bloomsbury, this often did not add up to more than instant self-gratification, intellectual as well as physical. Those who went in for it seldom realised that it is simply not enough to jettison, indiscriminately, all previous systems of conduct: you need to replace them with something ultimately better. The subject of Rochester also brought him into contact with Graham Greene, who remained a faithful and helpful friend.

Hayward then embarked on a passionate love affair with Elaine Finlay which lasted till 1932, by which time her own health had suffered dangerously, and the pace and progress of his own creeping paralysis had steadily increased. He supported himself in his wheel-chair by a torrent of high-brow journalism: between 1929 and 1937 he wrote no less than two hundred pieces for the *TLS*, as well as other reviews and articles in the *Times, Daily Mirror, New Statesman, Life and Letters* and *The Spectator.* He was helped by the generous, undemanding friendship of Lady Ottoline Morrell, who pointed out gently that were it not for his terrible disability 'you might not get to know people as you do now… or have such heart to heart contact with them'. He was touched by her kindness and her presents (which included a salmon at Christmas) … and told her that no-one had ever taken so much trouble with him before.

He made enemies too, especially the now largely forgotten Dr Leavis, whose 'desiccated intellectualism' he compared unfavourably with the romanticism of Housman. Then in 1935 Eliot, who had fled to America three years to escape from his seriously deranged first wife, returned to London. Two years earlier, Hayward had moved to a spacious flat in Bina Gardens in Kensington, where he entertained most of the well known literary names of the period. For a semi-paralysed man his social life was almost unbelievably hectic, and could not possibly be equalled today.

When the war came he was able to leave London and the blitz through the generosity of a fellow book collector Victor (Lord) Rothschild, who had rented Merton Hall, a fine Elizabethan house in Cambridge, as a retreat for his young family. He installed Hayward as a kind of caretaker, with various domestic responsibilities, made hugely difficult by wartime conditions. Hayward suffered a good deal in the freezing winters, with only Lord Rothschild's endlessly helpful butler (and three Cézannes) for company. For

a time there was a fellow lodger, most unwelcome to Hayward, in the shape of Lord Gerald Wellesley, an effete part time architect and former honorary attaché, soon to succeed suddenly as ninth Duke of Wellington, on the death in action of his nephew, the previous duke. By contrast, the book really comes to life again with the arrival of the first draft of *The Dry Salvages*. Here as elsewhere, Eliot gives the impression of revelling in obscurity for obscurity's sake, but editing it gave Hayward an opportunity worthy of his acute literary powers. Eliot effusively recognised this and wrote 'I cannot find words to express a proper manifestation of my gratitude for your invaluable assistance'.

In 1946 he moved back to London, to the flat in Carlyle Mansions which he would share with Eliot for the next eleven years. The arrangement worked harmoniously at first, but eventually broke down under Hayward's increasing physical helplessness. Eliot too spent some time in the London Clinic. In 1957 he abruptly married his new secretary, Valerie Fletcher, in a secret ceremony and decamped from the flat, giving Hayward no more than forty-eight hours' notice. By any standards this method of deserting a helpless victim was cruel beyond measure. Plainly there were grave faults on both sides. Hayward's friend Christopher Sykes, a clever if erratic man, may have the last word. 'If he was one of the most courageous men I have ever known, he was also one of the most treacherous and mischief-making.' Smart only mentions the mischief in general, without details. But this is a remarkable and engrossing book about a very clever and determined man.

back to contents

Conservative Heroes

Alan Medenhall

Forgotten Conservatives in American History, Brian McClanahan and Clyde Wilson, Pelican Publishing Company, 2012, $26.95.

Growing up in the South, I used to hear folks say, 'Give me that old-time religion.' Although that old-time religion had all but vanished by the time I was born, I knew exactly what was meant by it. In *Forgotten Conservatives in American History*, the authors seem to be declaring, 'Give me that old-time conservatism', a conservatism fearful of an expanding federal bureaucracy, opposed to military adventure around the globe, enthused by free market economics, wary of reckless nationalism, and loyal to the principles of liberty.

Amid the flurry of books lately published on 'conservatism', why would we need one consisting of biographical vignettes of landmark conservative Americans? McClanahan and Wilson say that it's because the labels 'liberal' and 'conservative' have been divorced from their traditional meanings.

If, as the authors claim, 'words are themselves weapons in the eternal campaign of designing men to achieve power and exploit their fellows,' then it is essential for a label like 'conservative' to correspond with the person it defines as accurately as possible. What does it *mean* to be conservative and what does conservatism *look like*? The answers to these questions will differ from person to person, but the authors emphatically disagree with the neoconservative establishment that is all too happy with bloated government.

The book provides profiles of American thinkers who have defined, and ought to continue to define, conservatism. These men are the exemplars; they show us what conservatism means and looks like; they supply the images and ideas that inform the concept. They share certain values, principles, and practices. From their commonalities – which include a commitment to limited government, laissez faire economics, private property, decentralization, a sense of place and locality, and non-intervention, we can infer what 'conservatism' means, and (according to McClanahan and Wilson) that it is mostly compatible with libertarian thought.

There are sixteen portraits, some of families and paired thinkers, others limited to individuals, ranging from James Jackson and John Taylor of Carolina to James Fenimore Cooper, Grover Cleveland, H L Mencken, William Faulkner, and Mel Bradford. The list is not meant to be exhaustive and the authors are concerned about *forgotten* conservatives whose legacy requires restoration. What links these thinkers, as McClanahan and Wilson make clear, is their agreement with conservatism as it was defined and described in Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*. (Although focused exclusively on American figures, *Forgotten Conservatives in American History* is like a miniature version of Kirk's more extensive tome.) Kirk's traditionalism and exercise of the moral imagination guided McClanahan and Wilson in their selection of subjects.

This book is valuable not so much for the details it reveals about its subjects – the chapters are too short for great depth – but for what it reveals about the conservative tradition in America which, with its individuals, has been forgotten.

The authors, *à la* Kirk, suggest that the tradition has to do with valuing prescription, which represents 'established custom and wisdom' as opposed to

'rational speculation'; that it ought to approach change (which is inevitable) with caution and sobriety; that it ought to honour the Constitution and heed the warnings of the Founders, at least those who were suspicious of centralised power and reluctant to engage in irresponsible and unnecessary warfare; and that it ought to respect and celebrate the variety of human experience rather than coerce individuals into designed, compulsory schemes of uniformity.

Conservatism is even richer and more complex than one excellent description can provide for, and that is precisely why the authors take issue with the popular and vulgar understanding of conservatives as ideologues who embrace 'Machiavellian tactics against opponents and against the American people', who glory 'in big government', and who fervently plan to 'project American armed force around the world, the national debt be damned'. Such associations are the fault of the neoconservatives, although conservatives of the Kirkian stripe are, in some respects, to be blamed as well because, out of neglect or passivity, they let those with meaner motives appropriate the 'conservative' label.

McClanahan and Wilson are not willing to part with that label. Rather than finding another word for their tradition, as others have tried to do – I am thinking of such groups as 'traditionalists', 'paleo-conservatives', 'porchers', 'Burkeans', and so on – McClanahan and Wilson hope to take back what is rightfully theirs. One gathers that they would baulk at Francis Fukuyama's recent advice in *The American Interest* that so-called 'conservatives' ought to begin looking to Alexander Hamilton and Theodore Roosevelt for inspiration.

How strange to suggest that conservatives ought simply to pick figureheads whose non-conservative ideas represent good short-term political strategies rather than to extend already established conservative beliefs and conventions. Fukuyama apparently thinks that conservatives can sustain conservatism by rejecting it. In light of this disjuncture, McClanahan and Wilson's tenacity brings great relief and sincere hope.

McClanahan concludes with an essay describing his experience as a graduate student. More than anyone else, graduate students, particularly conservative ones, would profit from this book. McClanahan and Wilson have provided several portraits of understudied conservative minds, and students can now expand these portraits into more extensive studies or dissertations. If only we had another Kirk to enlarge this corrective project into an American conservative genealogy of the likes of *The Conservative Mind*. That the *Forgotten Conservatives in American History* was published at all suggests the possibility remains. back to contents

A Disappointed Prodigal

Penelope Tremayne

House of Stone, Anthony Shadid, Granta, 2012, £14.99.

Anthony Shadid, who sadly died just before *House of Stone* reached the bookshelves, was a distinguished American author and journalist: foreign correspondent for the *New York Times* and Baghdad bureau chief for the *Washington Post*. The book has received unstinted praise in the USA, one reviewer calling it 'an unforgettable meditation on war, exile, rebirth and the universal yearning for home'. This is rather over egging the pudding for he and his family, the Shadids and Samaras, had come to America as voluntary settlers; they were not exiles or refugees. He certainly writes vividly and nostalgically about 'the hills that drew my ancestors from Syria in their exodus many centuries before'. They came from the Yemen, and 'when we think of home, as origin and place, our thoughts turn to Isber's house'. But Isber (the author's great-grandfather, whom of course he never knew) did not build that house until the 1920's. When Shadid saw it in 2006 it had long been in ruins and his cousins and relations still living in Lebanon did their best to persuade him not to rebuild it. At times he seems to muddle dates or generations, telling us at one point that tiles for Isber Samara's house and those round it had all been imported from Marseille, which 'in the 1800s suggested international connections and cosmopolitan fashionableness' – qualities which he emphasises that Isber yearned for. In the eighteen hundreds Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I had already agreed that the Levant should belong to France, and no doubt many hopefuls imported much more than tiles into Beirut. But Isber, born in 1873, did not make his fortune until 1918 selling grain at top prices to a war-riven and starving population.

Shadid says that when he first walked through Isber's door, he felt no connexion with the place; it must have developed as he worked, for he fills the next three hundred pages telling us how strong and deep it grew. He gives detailed descriptions too of Isber himself (with bright blue eyes, which apparently proves his Yemeni descent) his wife and relations. Some of these had been among the first of the family to emigrate, reaching Oklahoma and Kansas around 1894, where they began as pedlars and labourers, and worked their way up to become shop keepers, owners and merchants. They were Orthodox Christians who

were kindly welcomed and helped along by American Christians of other denominations regardless of differences. More interesting are Shadid's references to the absence of religious persecution or even serious quarrels in the Lebanon itself, either between Christian denominations or between Moslem and Christian; except in the case of the Maronites, whom he sees as having been advanced by the French and so grown too big for their boots. He saw no peace between Sunni and Shia, and significantly he shows the Shia hold on Hezbollah from its beginnings.

There is a lot of interesting material in this book; and much that is horrifying is bypassed: rightly so, for *House of Stone* does not aim to tell us about the blood and destruction that filled Shadid's own working life as a front line newspaperman; he wants to show us a kinder, warmer picture of homecoming and old ties of kinship but I was not really convinced. Shadid finds little or nothing in common with his relations living in Lebanon and so fills a great deal of the book with details of his struggles with workmen and dealers and the impossible ineptitude or the open-hearted delightfulness of the natives: the routine material for accounts by Anglophones of settling in Provence.

The inescapable fact remains that he and his family are no longer Lebanese. For four generations they have been American citizens by birth and fought and worked for America. It was Isber's wish as well as theirs that his sons abandoned their home and remade themselves in the New World. I would have liked to find this reality acknowledged a little more clearly. And I would like to know what was in Isber's own mind in the 1920s. In 1911 when some of the Samaras emigrated, it was to save their sons from being drafted into the Ottoman army, but a decade later that empire was dead and an independent Lebanese nation had been born. Shadid repeats many times that the old trader wished above all else to establish himself and his descendents as 'gentlemen' (an ambition which he seems to have tried to fulfil partly by lining his house with a great many encaustic tiles). The Turks were gone now, and he must have known that in sending his children to America he was pushing them down again to the bottom of the ladder. I cannot help thinking that he had taken a hard look at what before the Great War had been Syria and the Levant, and realised, as politicians did not, that those things had gone for ever.

Would Anthony Shadid's dream of re-Lebanising himself have been fulfilled if he had lived? In the last few pages we learn that he has a new wife and a new child. Earlier in the book he has told us of talks he had with someone who had just made that very transference: from the USA to Marjayoun. Tongues loosened by whisky, this man had admitted he did not really know why he had decided to change countries, and seemed already to be regretting it. T's are not crossed, but we are left with the feeling that both men already knew it was a mistake.

Shadid was a brave man; he was twice shot and wounded, and once beaten up and imprisoned, but stuck undaunted to his job. He seems also to have been gentle and understanding, which makes it sound sadly ironical that death should have caught up with him just before his book reached his readers, or his beloved olives and creepers had come to full fruit. Perhaps it was not. He had already seen, and shared the perception with us, that there is no future for Lebanon now: only wars and revolutions and destruction, on to whatever the bitter end may be.

back to contents

Elizabeth I's MI6

Merrie Cave

The Watchers: A Secret History of the reign of Elizabeth I, Stephen Alford, Allen Lane, 2012, £20

The first Elizabethan Age was a paradox. In school textbooks it is a success story: the restoration of political stability, exciting voyages of discovery and expansion overseas. It also left a rich artistic heritage full of household names like Shakespeare and Sir Walter Raleigh. The dazzling portraits of the Virgin Queen present her as an ethereal goddess arousing feelings of tender and romantic patriotism.

It certainly didn't feel like a golden age at the time. In 1558 England was an unstable nation which had swerved between Catholicism and Protestantism during the previous 30 years. Ordinary people were frightened and longed for a more secure future but this hope was dashed by the manic hostility of a belligerent Europe and Papacy who regarded Elizabeth as an evil Jezebel who should be overthrown. Worse still, there was no clear succession so the way was open for a *coup d'état.* The Queen resisted attempts to find her a husband, for she realised that her single state was a better way of preserving the realm. At no time until 1940 was England in such danger.

Stephen Alford has been able to work from the remaining fragments of original documents which give authentic feelings of anxiety. He emphasises this situation by mapping out the imaginary consequences of Elizabeth being assassinated in her coach. (There were several assassination attempts). Anybody reading Alford's introduction without knowing the end of the story would dismiss the Elizabethan reign as a failure.

The Watchers (government spies) didn't know that Elizabeth would die in her bed in 1603 and had to take every plot and rumours of plots seriously. Nor did they know that many of the conspirators were badly organised. For them disaster or success lay in the security of the Queen's person.

At first Catholics were treated leniently and most of the priests went along with the Anglican settlement. Catholicism was strongest in Lancashire and in the North generally. Recusant families often sent their women and children to church and heard the mass in secret. The Northern Earls' Rebellion in 1569 was easily and ruthlessly crushed for the leaders had relied on Spanish and Scottish help which never arrived. However the Papal Bull of 1570 brought a relatively tranquil period to a dramatic end. Elizabeth was now declared a bastard and a heretic and Catholics were now traitors to the state or they were disobedient to their Church. The government was now forced to open ' a window into men's souls' and the Catholic martyrs died if they faltered over 'the bloody question': the acceptance of her sovereignty. In 1572 the horror of the massacre of St Bartholomew's Day in Paris showed what could happen in London. A special prayer of public repentance was published: 'Save us from the lions' mouths, and from the horns of the unicorns; lest they devour us, and tear us in pieces, while there is none to help.'

Some of the most interesting chapters in the book are the detailed accounts of the strange, wandering lives of the spies and the Catholic exiles. Many spies and informers were needed but fortunately spying was a thriving trade as London was full of ambitious young men looking for adventure, money and patronage while many of its inhabitants were Protestant refugees from war-torn in Europe and were also keen to help the cause. At the top of this secret world were the Queen's Secretaries: Lord Burghley, Robert Cecil, Sir Francis Walsingham, assisted by Thomas Pheilipes, an expert in codes and ciphers. All of them, high or low needed special qualities of guile and resource; as always in wartime some of them were common rogues. Anthony Munday roamed around Europe, was accepted as a pilgrim at the English College in Rome under an assumed name and then revealed its secrets in pamphlets: *English Roman Life*. Back home he helped his former colleagues to the gallows. Charles Sledd was one of the most feared priest hunters who compiled an invaluable dossier of all the Catholic exiles in European main towns. He knew all about their lives, families and what they looked like. Some of them were double agents like Gilbert Gifford who broke the Babington plot but came to a bad end in a Parisian prison. Christopher Marlowe has often been cast as the Elizabethan poet-spy but the evidence is flimsy. Certainly one of the witnesses of his brutal stabbing, Robert Poley, was. He completed twenty-six missions and was important enough to have secret postal addresses in Antwerp. Among the Catholic priest-exiles, two stick in the mind: William Allen was founder of the English seminary in Douai and spiritual leader of the English Catholics in exile. He supported the idea of England's invasion by the Catholic powers. Edmund Campion, known to many from Evelyn Waugh's biography, was a powerful symbol and exponent of the Catholic cause.

The story became even more dramatic with the arrival of Mary Queen of Scots in England in 1568. Her connivance at her husband, Lord Darnley's murder had resulted in her imprisonment in Loch Leven, from which she escaped to throw herself on Elizabeth's mercy. Elizabeth disliked the idea of rebellion against a lawful sovereign, but did not want a war with Scotland so Mary was incarcerated at various remote castles. For nineteen years intrigue and conspiracies, encouraged by the Spanish King, the Pope and all the Catholic exiles, whirled around Mary who had a much better claim to the English throne than its occupant. But her character and diplomacy were no match for her Machiavellian cousin and her watchers. The government were anxious to convict Mary of these conspiracies but were dismayed at Elizabeth's hesitation in wanting her killed in secret. Eventually clear proof of her guilt arrived with the Babington Plot and both Houses of Parliament petitioned for the execution of 'the monstrous and huge dragon'. When at last Elizabeth signed the document of execution, it was sent so quickly, she had no time to change her mind. The Queen was so sensitive to the charge of regicide that for the first time Burghley was dismissed from the royal presence.

What was the legacy of these troubled years? Elizabeth herself hated the tortures and wanted banishment for the guilty rather than death. She cried at the news of Campion' execution, whom she remembered meeting as a bright boy at Oxford: 'Is there to be no end of the shedding of blood'. The Papal Bull may have been an 'ineffective gesture of the medieval world against a new style nation', but the struggle was inevitable because the conflict in England was part of the wider religious conflict which was only resolved at the end of the Thirty Years War. Religious intolerance was replaced by political fanaticism at the French Revolution, but prejudice against Catholics lingered on in this country until the second half of the last century. In today's Cold War the work of the Watchers, embodied in MI6 and GCHQ, remains essential, at least as much as our conventional forces.

back to contents

Modern Christian Martyrs

Brian Eassty

Christianophobia, Rupert Shortt, Rider Books, 2012, £20.

Perhaps it is because Christianophobia is such an ugly, awkward word. In an age when everything is treated as a brand, Islamophobia seems to roll off the tongue. This has perhaps helped to push it to pole position in the hierarchy of hatreds. There must be some reason why talk of Islamophobia seems everywhere while one looks in vain for any mention in the media of the persecution of Christians.

In this long overdue gathering of material on the subject in all its aspects, it is soon made clear that, if the suffering of Christians is ignored and sidelined, it is not because it doesn't happen or because of any deficiency in the kind of brutality which creates international outrage when other communities are the victims. Indeed, it provides compelling evidence that Christians are subject to a wider range of types of persecution than the adherents of any other faith.

Long before the end of this book, the reader feels he has supped full of horrors, but Shortt is keen to make us confront the subject matter full on and there is always more sickening material to come. Predictably one needs a strong stomach to read the evidence from North Korea, which he keeps almost to last.

Making his case country by country, Shortt describes the relatively well- known threats, the slow bureaucratic grinding down once routine in the Soviet Union, now prevalent in China. He also introduces us to less familiar ones: the existence of militant Buddhists in Burma or the tense community relations in some parts of India. Hindus sparked by envy show hostility to materially successful Christians, an echo of the predicament of Jews in much of Europe in the last century.

In the chapter on Pakistan, graphic details are given of the extent to which the accusation of blasphemy is blatantly used to intimidate. Christians live with murderous anarchy as a neighbour, for even children can be burned alive in their homes by a mob seemingly believing that a Koran was cut up and used as confetti at a Christian wedding. Shortt gives many such examples. Meanwhile, for those who believe the Arab Spring has changed Egypt for the better, there are tales of arson attacks on churches and Coptic Christians being attacked and mutilated by vigilante groups much as before. The only difference is that they are now told that Mubarak is not around to 'protect' them from 'Islamic justice'.

Shortt suggests why such persecution goes unnoticed. He points out that it is rare, though not unknown, for a Christian to become 'radicalised' as a response to oppression. Taking their example from Jesus, Christians expect to be given occasions to turn the other cheek, one result of this perhaps being the displacement of Christian communities across the globe. They choose to leave rather than fight, including tragically those in its Biblical heartlands. This situation can be contrasted with the response of Islamists who, having learned that the most effective bully portrays himself as a victim, make Christians suffer in Egypt for cartoons published in Denmark: a kind of theological butterfly effect.

However, Christianity also faces threats from the bien-pensant attitudes of many in the West. The kind of illogical thought which condemns the censure of any religion as racist indicates a pernicious ignorance. It is all too easy to believe the story of the Christian refugee children from the Middle East pulled out of assembly by overzealous teachers who assumed from their appearance that they were Muslims.

In this country we have had some incidents of anti-Christian prejudice: a nurse was sacked for offering to pray for a patient and British airways tried to stop an employee from wearing a cross. However, compared to the stories Shortt tells from around the world such cases hardly amount to real persecution, for lives were not threatened. One hopes that Shortt's comprehensive record will convey a message to those Christians in more fortunate circumstances and encourage them to be braver.

One thing that is heartening amid the relentless gloom of this book is the number of times the words 'after international pressure' occurs about some positive development. It remains to be seen if we in the West, privileged with religious freedom our co-religionists elsewhere can only dream of, care enough to exert that pressure.

back to contents

The Doctors' Dilemma

Merrie Cave

Although the general public has an insatiable interest in illness, it shrinks from death, this attitude being more pronounced in recent decades. So while newspapers often run serious articles and reviews on medicine, TV and films tends to shrink from the fundamental questions which hospitals and surgeries provide. Is this because modern man, fearful of facing his own mortality or the agony of serious illness, has shut death away in hospitals and hospices? Perhaps, as Lindsay Anderson said, 'the absurdities of human behaviour are too extreme – and too dangerous – to permit us the luxury of sentimentalism or tears. But by looking at humanity objectively and without indulgence, we may hope to save it. Laughter can help.'

I am thinking of the old *Carry On* Films, (Doctor and Nurse) and *Doctor in the House* starring the unforgettable James Robertson Justice as Sir Lancelot Spratt – several medical friends remember meeting surgeons just like him in the forties and fifties. This tradition continues with the sitcom *Doc Martin* which is amusing but occasionally serious in a light-hearted way. *Casualty* is the longest running emergency medical TV series in the world (over twenty years) and here serious themes are tackled, although the outcomes are predictable. One of the actors told me that the producers insisted on medical accuracy. They had to practise medical procedures such as giving injections. In one of the episodes, the senior clinician's partner dies of cancer while he is trying to persuade an anorexic girl, near death, to accept treatment; he eventually succeeds. The senior nurse opines to the girl's father that the anorexia is her lifeline; without it life would have no meaning. A young boy fakes injuries in order to play truant because he is looking after his mother who should be continuing dialysis but misses her appointments. All ends happily of course.

Britannia Hospital (1982) was the final part of Lindsay Anderson's trilogy of films about the adventures of Mick Travis (Malcolm McDowell). He is an investigative reporter who is secretly filming the activities of a Professor Millar's scientific experiments while the hospital is eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Queen Mother to open their new wing. Outside, demonstrators are blocking entrances to the hospital; they are protesting about an African dictator in the private wing and the demands of the other private patients. Inside there is black farce, often hilarious. The chief administrator succeeds in making a bargain with the demonstrators' leader: the private patients are thrown out and a few ambulances are allowed in. One of them contains the Queen Mother. Eventually the demonstrators break into the hospital and attempt to disrupt the mad professor's presentation of his project which is a brain wired to a body made of transplants from several different people. Its robotic voice declaims a speech from *Hamlet* 'What a Piece of work is man'. The film was much criticised at the time for not attacking the Health Service, perhaps because of its anti-Trade Union stance.

An earlier American film (*Hospital,* 1971, director Paddy Chayefsky) has many similarities to *Britannia Hospital*. Both hospitals typify the chaos and incompetence only too often found in British and American hospitals. Indeed the ethos of both is strikingly similar.

George C Scott gives a fine performance as the Senior Clinician (Dr Bock) of a Manhattan hospital at the end of his rope: his wife has left him, he is estranged from his children while the teaching hospital to which he has devoted his career is in a mess. We first see him in his room asleep alongside a large empty vodka bottle. The phone rings and Bock, lighting a cigarette, struggles to the phone to be told that one of his interns has been found dead in a patient's bed. The cameras track to a hilarious example of non-communication often present in large organizations: (A nurse finds the intern, Dr Schaeffer, dead. We do not know yet that there is a lunatic at large who has killed him. She returns to the ward station to tell the other nurses.)

Did you know Dr Schaeffer is in bed number 84 and is dead?

What are you talking about?

Yes the one who is always feeling our arses.' 'What do you mean he's dead?'

I mean he is dead.

Go and look for yourself , he is dead.

This pointless exchange is repeated while one of them continues to type. A temporary nurse, not recognising Dr Schaeffer asleep on an empty bed, mistakes him for a patient and plugs an intravenous line

into him possibly containing insulin. In a subsequent row between Dr Bock and the Matron over the nurse's apparent carelessness, Bock delivers the line,

'Where', he shouts 'do you train your nurses matron? Dachau?'

We follow Bock through the throes of despair. Later we see him trying to kill himself with an intravenous injection of potassium, used in American judicial executions. Sometime later in the script he soliloquises out of a window about the astonishing technical developments of medicine, which have not been sufficiently exploited because of the uncertain human element. The machines have worked well but kindness and competence have evaporated, as we are about to learn.

Bock is rescued from his suicidal state when he falls for Barbara Drummond (Diana Rigg) the daughter of a psychotic patient from Mexico. Father and daughter have been practising bare-foot medicine in Mexico's rural areas and their activities illustrate both the popularity of complimentary medicine and a dubious devotion to the practices of primitive people in this decade. *Père* Drummond, once a physician in Boston but now insane, has a Mexican dancer singing and casting spells like a witch doctor in his room. When he is eventually cornered he admits to murdering his victims in protest against the 'inhumanity' of modern medical treatment. Bock helps Drummond and his daughter to escape back to Mexico but refuses to go with them. He turns down the chance of romance and a new life to return to the hospital and sort out the mayhem, demonstrating the often-derided sense of responsibility of the professional middle classes. His last line as he turns away is 'Somebody has got to be responsible.'

back to contents

Struggling to Pay the Piper

Gerald Place

It's easy to talk glibly about funding cuts and where priorities should lie: less easy when you are personally affected. And if cuts are inevitable, who picks up the slack? The Arts is a tempting area, for they can get private funding which they do to a larger extent than many realise. Education, of course, is a very unpopular area from which to withdraw funding, but a great area for tinkering with. The violinist Nicola Benedetti complained about the poor provision for instrumental lessons in schools, always regarded as the icing on the cake by governments of all persuasions.

There has been a recent shift in nomenclature from Adult Education to Lifelong Learning and from students to 'learners'. And this has resulted in a radical change in funding, much of which has been diverted to courses which lead to qualifications – literacy and numeracy, predominantly for school leavers. In spite of trillions being spent on state education we have a situation similar to that when the adult education movement began. The first adult classes in reading were provided by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge as early as 1699, and by the mid-nineteenth century Quakers like Joseph Sturge and William White had set up institutions which taught not only reading, but grammar, arithmetic and geography, with book clubs and savings banks also. The cynics would point out that this was well before everyone was entitled to at least ten years of free education to master these skills.

Since then the availability of adult education has flourished along with the subjects offered and it seems a shame that subjects like art, ceramics, music and many craft skills, which do not lead to a qualification, should be sidelined, and abandoned. For several years I have led a local-authority class in the performance of Baroque music. This was unique, because it included both singers and players, as opposed to an amateur orchestra or amateur choir. It was open to all instrumentalists of roughly Grade Six standard and above and any singers, and also gave members the opportunity to make solo contributions. Like many evening classes it was a lively social group who both learned and performed together, and many have gained in confidence.

Part of our downfall was that many in the class were retired or nearing retirement. This group used to be the backbone of most evening classes – the people who had the time to devote to these activities and means to pay the modest fees 'Not enough people under twenty', came the decree...and that was that.

Arts funding is in a muddle. The 2011 budget trumpeted many reforms to help charities. 'Do the right thing for a charity, and the government will do the right thing by you. It's a big help for the big society',

Mr Osborne assured us, and the changes were broadly welcomed by the arts world. Then in the 2012 budget, in an attempt to curb legal tax avoidance, he proposed a cap on the amount that could be gained in tax relief, including charitable giving. Most recently we had a U-turn returning us to the *status quo* for charitable giving. We were left with an uneasy feeling that the government had suddenly realised the crucial role of philanthropy when state funding is scarce.

However, let us turn to two inspiring examples: one in the opera house and one in the theatre – beacons for private and corporate support of the arts in this country.

Audiences at Covent Garden will have noticed the asterisks beside performers' names that indicate that they are members of the Young Artists Scheme. Indeed four of the artists in the current season's production of the monumental *Les Troyens* by Berlioz were participants in this scheme. After a chequered start, the scheme was originally named after Alberto Vilar, who ceased contributing in 2002 and left a large hole in the funding of the wonderful rebuilt Floral Hall. It is now funded by the Oak Foundation through a Danish lady, Jette Parker. It was suggested that using her name rather than that of the foundation would indicate a personal rather than an anonymous involvement, for she has a large say in how the money is spent.

The scheme is now celebrating its tenth year and current and former members have just given a performance of Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims*. The programme offers two years' training for up to ten singers, a conductor, two repetiteurs and a stage director. Trainees work full-time as salaried company members and receive daily coaching in all opera disciplines as well as private voice lessons. This may seem a bit of a backwater, but it is a prime example of private funding stepping in to fill an important gap, although the Royal Opera receives considerable state funding for its main operation. The road from conservatoire to opera house is a rocky one, and many a promising talent has burned out through premature exposure. The trust, as well as offering advanced training also apportions stage experience, and in addition to small roles young singers may understudy major roles, which means that there are stand-ins on hand without the Royal Opera having to scour the world for a replacement when illness strikes at the last minute.

One of the most spectacular donations of recent years was the £10 million given to the National Theatre by Lloyd Dorfman, the single largest donation ever given to the Theatre, and the fruits of his generosity should be seen when the redevelopment of the theatre complex is completed by 2014. The 300-400-seater Cottesloe will be named after him and should be re-opened in the autumn of 2013. But this is not all Dorfman has contributed to the National. Travelex is his company, started 34 years ago with one shop in Camden, and he has been underwriting tickets of £10, now £12 tickets, at the National Theatre, making performances available to all for the last eight years. Nearly two million of these seats have been sold, of which 360,000 were bought by people who had never booked before. A similar scheme which he funded at the Royal Opera attracted many people who had never been to the Opera House before.

The last word should go to Hayden Phillips, chairman of the National Theatre: 'I hope [this donation] will act as a spur and inspiration to other philanthropists, as a powerful demonstration of faith in the arts.'

Gerald Place is a singer, conductor and workshop leader. In a varied career he has recorded music from Byrd to Boulez.

back to contents

Wanted: An Artistic Revival?

Charles Thomson

Killing the Emperors, Ruth Dudley Edwards, Allison & Busby, 2012, £19.99.
Art and the Revolutionary Human Fruit Machine, Alex Pankhurst, Earl's Eye Publishing, 2012, £10.99

A new figurative sculpture has been installed on the fourth plinth of Trafalgar Square. Shockingly, although the figure is in military uniform like the figures on the other three plinths, the uniform on this figure is not one of the British Empire, but one of Nazi Germany. Even more shockingly, the body within is not of bronze but the crucified corpse of Gavin Truss, the Head of the Central London School of Art. By now you may have guessed we have strayed into the realms of fiction. This incident occurs in *Killing the Emperors*, the latest novel from Ruth Dudley Edwards, and Truss is a fictional character.

To call it a novel would lead to false expectations. It is a satire, or an allegorical and vituperative rage against the contemporary artworld, which is prominently

represented by the likes of Tracy 'bed' Emin and Damien 'shark' Hirst. Edwards' straightforward but ruthless romping plot involves a series of art-caricaturing murders of (fictional) art world notables, the plinth display being derived from the Chapman Brothers' *Fucking Hell* Jesus- and Nazi-themed exhibition.

There is not a great deal of suspense in her ostensible murder mystery, but a catharsis for those who are incandescent about the state of contemporary art. One example is the purchase for the nation in 2000 for £23,000 by Tate director, Sir Nicholas Serota, of Piero Manzoni's *Merda d'artista*, a title helpfully translated on the Tate web site as *Artist's Shit*, and consisting of 'tin can, printed paper and excrement'. Fact and fiction tend to overlap, but this is a real life example bought with real money.

The knighted and benighted Serota is one of Edwards' prime targets, not least because of his cavalier rejection of the Stuckists, a group of artists I co-founded in 1999 with Billy Childish (who has since left) to promote contemporary figurative painting with ideas, and oppose Postmodernism's so-called conceptual art which lauds as art not only ordure, but also assorted underwear, dirty beds, neon signs, dead sharks and light switches. The book's heroine, Baroness Ida 'Jack' Troutbeck, and her circle take a resounding interest in the Stuckists, who over the last fourteen years have become identified as the main artistic spokesgroup to call for more traditional values.

One of Troutbeck's friends, former civil servant Robert Amiss, tells another, BBC presenter Mary Lou Dinsmore, about an open letter condemning Postmodernism sent by Childish and myself to Serota along with a copy of our manifesto *Remodernism,* 'which called for a new spirituality in art, culture, and society to replace post-modernism's spiritual bankruptcy.' On learning that Serota's response was 'no comment', Dinsmore exclaims, 'What a contemptuous ****'.

Stuckism has always evoked a strong response for its ideals both from the public and other artists. It has grown from a 13 strong London and Kent entourage to an international movement of 237 Stuckist groups in 52 countries with an estimated 1,500 members. It can count amongst its accolades a major exhibition in 2004 at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool and the inclusion of texts in the Penguin Modern Classics book, *100 Artists' Manifestos: From the Futurists to the Stuckists*, edited by Alex Danchev.

Nevertheless, just as much as it enrages most conceptualists for its outspoken criticisms of their radical sacred sharks, it leaves many traditionalists fuming for its frequent indifference to their hallowed academic mores. The Stuckists do not look back to the High Renaissance as the peak of aspiration, nor even to the Salon art of the Nineteenth Century (Frederick Ross's Art Renewal Centre exists for that). As New York Stuckist Terry Marks observed:

> *I have seen a resurgence of 19th century, classical style painting, but the Stuckists don't do that. We don't all work in the same style or use the same themes or subject matter. We all choose to be painters, but not as if rock & roll, television, cars, cinema, jazz, and the whole 20th century never happened. We're saying, 'Let's use paint to describe our lives now. We're all interested in working representationally, but not necessarily with realism.'*

Some Stuckist artists do indeed study and practice rules of perspective, modelling, tonality and so on – one of the founding members, Charles Williams, was the top student in his year at the Royal Academy with the prize for anatomical drawing. Marks herself not only studied perspective at the New York Academy of Art but followed in the footsteps of Da Vinci with the observation of dissected cadavers. Many Stuckists have had art school training (or what passes for it in contemporary establishments), but others are unashamedly self-taught naïve artists or have deliberately turned their backs on sophistication to pursue a raw vision.

The Stuckists are Modernists, or, to use their own term, Remodernists, inasmuch as they accept the innovations and potentials of Modernism, but believe that these have been misused, at times idealistically and at others cynically, for theoretical, short-sighted and/or commercial ends, rather than the true purpose of art for communication, insight and revelation – in other words, for a spiritual end.

Jung declared 'Enlightenment is not imagining figures of light, but making the darkness conscious'. This can lead to some unexpected, hazardous and even seemingly reprehensible explorations. Edwards does not examine the Stuckist ethos to this depth, but identifies with their call for the artist to prove themselves by what they show, not by what the critics say about what they show. Thus Baroness Troutbeck's accusation to Truss, the fictional art school head, is that 'children come to you from school hoping to create. Your job is to give them the skills that enable them to find themselves. Do you teach them to draw?' This is by no means inimical to the Stuckists, but is not in itself the whole answer to art's woes.

Coincidentally, another book has simultaneously emerged to address the same issues. This is an interesting contrast to *Killing the Emperors*. Far from going in with all guns blazing and fangs bared, it slowly builds its narrative through a complex character

interaction. It is *Art and the Revolutionary Human Fruit Machine* by Alex Pankhurst. It also exposes the falsity of the art world and manages a mention of Manzoni's overpriced tin can with the dubious contents. The alternative which Pankhurst advances is a painter who has been overlooked for many years, but the description of his 'amazing talent – overtones of Monet crossed with Constable, plus a nod to Edward Seago' reiterates a cliché approach, enjoyable and potentially worthy, but not sufficient to justify any status approaching either Monet or Constable, both of whom were steadfastly revelatory, not treading safely worn ground.

A painting by Stuckist artist Jane Kelly, also a journalist and contributor to this magazine, reveals an artist of note. She has worked hard to achieve competency in figural depiction, and has gained a respectable though by no means dazzling skill. What elevates her to a serious rank is the philosophical consideration that is illuminated in a simple but brilliant idea, for example in her painting *If We Could Undo Psychosis 1*. The title itself is potent poetry, the painting a continuation, showing Adolf Hitler in a famous pose in front of the Eiffel Tower, not as in 1940 the uniformed conqueror, but instead as a lounging tourist in a homely red jumper. She manages to distil the greatest 20th Century puzzle of evil into a simple, but arresting symbol, which evokes without being prescriptive, the holidaymaker/tyrant's face an ambiguity which we are left to resolve.

My own painting *Sir Nicholas Serota Makes an Acquisitions Decision* features a somewhat less momentous question but gains a mention in *Killing the Emperors*. It shows the Tate director behind a large pair of red knickers, wondering if they are 'a genuine Emin … or a worthless fake'. Stuckist artists stand as individuals. Sombrely, Philip Absolon shows the unemployed in his painting *Job Club* as a row of skeletons, each with particularised skulls based on the people he shared unemployment with. Joe Machine manages an equally bleak atmosphere with sailors and prostitutes locked in anguished pleasuring, but has recently traced a trajectory into a restatement of Old Testament myths.

Beauty is also to be found in Stuckist work, perhaps the prime exponent being Paul Harvey, who has followed in Alphonse Mucha's footsteps to provide images for Job cigarette papers and can easily rival the Czech artist with the complexity, inventiveness and luxuriant colour of his visual odes to the female. Ella Guru plumbs a burlesque and often transgendered demimonde. Bill Lewis and Mark D are both mainly self-taught, the former exploring the mystery of mythology and the latter the vanity of celebrity. Annie Zamero expressionistically caricatures politicians; Eamon Everall uses Cubist technique to celebrate domesticity; Jonathon Coudrille evokes surrealist Cornwall; John Bourne paints simply to retrieve memories; Peter Murphy uses gold leaf for both Cathedral icons and Jimi Hendrix. Abby Jackson relishes painterly intricacy to celebrate mascara and lament the demise, and sometimes suicide, of childhood heroines, Elsa Dax to reincarnate Greek mythology, and Alexis Hunter to record female sexuality. Shelley Li depicts fashion models as if in a dolls' house; Jasmine Maddock makes toy cats come alive. Edgeworth Johnstone, Jacqueline Jones and Chris Yates paint exuberantly to define their imagination, Charles Williams to record shopping and living rooms.

A hitherto undefined aspect of Stuckism is as a major visual record of life in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, far more free ranging and explorative than any previous movement, encompassing a host of styles and subjects including the psychological and naturalistic. The artists I have mentioned are UK-based. The project of record and expression continues across the world with artists such as Jiří Hauschka and Jaroslav Valecka in the Czech Republic, Hamed Dehnavi in Iran, Godfrey Blow in Australia, Odysseus Yakoumakis in Greece, Artista Eli in Spain, Nick Christos and Virginia Andow in the USA.

This is outside Edwards' agenda, which is mostly about the overthrow and demise of the Naked Emperors of Art. One senses a huge sigh of relief that in fiction at least, those seen as foisting nonsense on the rest of the world and profiting obscenely get their come-uppance with a vengeance. The vengeance is paramount and its vicarious glee takes precedence over literary considerations. It is an unapologetic catharsis, but *en route* manages to pack in enough information to make it, despite being a work of fiction, a factual milestone. Its real genre is not so much literary as in the realm of conceptual art, but anti-conceptual, or in the Stuckist usage anti-anti-art, and it will be remembered for its crusading zeal after many of its literary rivals have faded from view.

Meanwhile the Stuckists, as well as staging exhibitions of painting, documenting their thoughts and lives in YouTube videos, and publishing books, intend to continue their annual demonstrations against the Turner Prize outside Tate Britain, which predictably fails to include even one Stuckist work in its collection. Perhaps we should put the paintings in tins.

Charles Thomson is a founder of the Stuckist Movement.

back to contents

IN SHORT

Contagion: How Commerce has spread disease, Mark Harrison, Yale University Press, 2012, £25.

The English physician William Budd said in 1865 that 'war and commerce left pestilence in their wake and might do so again.' Wars were less of a problem at that time but the growth and spread of commerce were bringing new dangers as well as increased prosperity. *Contagion* describes the spread of disease and the attempts of governments to control it.

From classical times, Europe had not suffered major epidemics until the 14th century. Since that time increased trade between countries and continents has allowed disease to travel by camel train, steamship or plane, with ease. Plague once hidden in its reservoirs in remote parts of Asia, could now escape to infect other parts of the world. Until a century ago, we did not know what caused plague or yellow fever. Although bacteria had not been discovered, most doctors and their patients were aware that there was some infective agent at work. There were other theories: some theologians, Christian and Moslem, saw epidemics as divine punishments on a sinful population. As recently as 1864, an outbreak of cholera provoked the Archbishop of Canterbury to declare a 'Day of National Humiliation'.

From the 16th century, governments and merchants were more pragmatic. They realised that 'fevers' took time to manifest themselves. Time was a useful diagnostic tool and so the idea of quarantine developed. Ships and travellers from places where fever flourished were obliged to wait for days or weeks after reaching their destinations to see whether any one on board became ill. If the rules were enforced strictly, they were quite effective, but there were drawbacks. Sea captains and merchants complained about the delays and of course smugglers ignored the rules. There were arguments for centuries about the cost and effectiveness of quarantine and governments used it selectively to benefit their own ships. Sometimes the restrictions were criticised for being inhumane. In 1844 the case of the 'Éclair' became a *cause celebre* when two thirds of its crew died on a voyage from West Africa. There was an outcry in Press and Parliament: should these poor men have been left on board for weeks instead of being moved to the Naval Hospital at Haslar?

International conferences were held regularly from the 1850s to coordinate the efforts to control the spread of disease. At last the League of Nations set up the FAO with the same purpose. Today, the World Health organisation can warn of impending epidemic diseases of people and animals. Diseases like SARS or Avian flu do not take the world by surprise but there is no complete protection against such illnesses. The word 'plague' has a medieval ring to it, as in the Black Death, but there were outbreaks even in the 20th century. In Manchuria, 60,000 people died of plague in 1911. It occurred even in Europe, where there was a serious outbreak in Oporto in 1899 and a few cases in Glasgow, soon afterwards.

Dr Harrison has written an absorbing account of the interplay of disease, commerce and politics throughout history. Not only does he deal with these broad issues but he mentions some of the colourful personalities whose ideas influenced events. Without the benefit of modern science, they were often men who achieved goals for which they had no training: Pope Clement IX eradicating rinderpest, or Dr McWilliam piloting a gun-boat down the Niger when captain and engineer were dead of yellow fever.

James Docherty

The Gospel of Political Correctness, Peter Mullen, Bretwalda Books, 2012, £7.99.

In this examination of modern mores and manners the Rev Peter Mullen, an ardent and eloquent defender of the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, turns his back on the sonorous phrases associated with those works, and instead tells his tale in a style which, although recognizably biblical, is served up with large dollops of Estuary English and modern slang.

We follow the life of Bossy aka the Moderniser General aka the Great Facilitator, as he attempts, along with his twelve groupies, to spread a politically correct gospel, one which is constantly in thrall to the Latest Thing and backed by the mantra that 'the Truth is greater than the facts'.

Born in Islington to Wayne and Rubella, 'up from Essex, out of the city of Southend', the story unfolds in south east England, not the middle east because, 'there's all sand there and no human rights, and that'. Out go Capernaum, Caesarea and Emmaus, in come Neasden, Cheam and Romford.

The traditional gospel narrative is playfully parodied. We have a recognizable Sermon on the Mount at Primrose Hill ('Buggered are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for there's not much of that

around these days'), the turning of water into strong cider at the celebration of a civil partnership in Soho, and a Prodigal son in Hampstead asking his father for 'the portion of goods that falleth to me that I may go unto Brighton and get totally wrecked and shag everything that moveth'. The feeding of the 5,000 takes place at a rock festival on the Isle of Sheppey: 'There's a lad here which hath a small basket of garlic bread – like unto that which is on the starter menu in Carluccio's – and two sardines'.

Threatening to derail Bossy's utopian schemes are the evil forces of reaction, they 'that do sit in the chief seats at the Carlton Club', they 'that put on the thick tweed suit or off-times the striped trousers', they that 'eat not of the five portions of fruit every day'. And, of course, James Delingpole. In short those who would deny the nanny state, 'Fogey and the old farts'. (Incidentally, a Last Supper, heavily reliant on lentils, is the opportunity for some wonderfully flatulent humour.)

Mullen has fun at the expense of both a smug, condescending metropolitan élite (particularly the BBC) and the feckless underclass they affect to care for, but heartily despise. Here is Big Brother in both its guises, an Orwellian attempt to impose suffocating orthodoxy, and, in its modern understanding, vacuous celebrity.

Fittingly the tale climaxes in the Dome, with an X Factor style confrontation, adjudicated by Poppy Pilates. Bossy's denouement is brutal.

'Then saith Pilates unto Fogey, "And what shall we do, then, with this Bossy...?"

And he did cry out, "Let him be satirised"'.

Which he duly is, a stand-up comedian being satirised on either side of him, an onlooker observing, 'He modernised others. Himself he cannot modernise.'

Part Python, part Viz comic, part acute social comment, this book would be ideal for the guest bedroom, ready to amuse and offend in equal measure.

Mark Watterson

back to contents

The Salisbury Review

Published quarterly in September, December, March & June, volume commencing with September issue.
Annual subscription rates: £20, Europe/surface rest of world £25.
Airmail rest of world: £27, Single issues £4.99.
ISSN: 0265-4881.
Printed in the UK by The Warwick Printing Company Ltd.
Typesetting — DASH
Design — Jessica Chaney

Web site: http://www.salisburyreview.co.uk

Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Dimitri Sokolenko.

For Queen and Country.

The Constitutional Monarchy Association supports our Monarchy.

We believe the Monarchy plays a crucial role in maintaining the stability, welfare and dignity of the nation. And we are honoured to have a Queen who has devoted her entire life to the services of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.

If you are interested in helping and wish to find out more, please contact us.

A subscription of just £20 a year gives you a glossy quarterly magazine, invitations to private events and access to our network of like-minded people.





The Constitutional Monarchy Association

CMA

The Constitutional Monarchy Association
PO Box 5307, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 3DZ, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1279 465551 Fax: +44 (0)1279 466111 Email: enquiries@monarchy.net

www.monarchy.net