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Front Cover: On the last Sunday of June each year Catholics from many parts of Indonesia, as well as some Muslims and Hindus, travel to attend Mass at a Javanese type shrine to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at Canjuran in Central Java. Enthroned inside the shrine is a marble statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus representing Christ the King. [See Annals 2013/6 pp.2-8]. The mass is celebrated by the Archbishop of Semarang and priests from the surrounding areas. Our cover photo this month is of the tall, golden sunshade beautifully decorated with flowers, that signifies the Presence of the King in Javanese culture. It is raised over the altar after the words of Consecration at the Mass, and remains until Holy Communion has been distributed. The bishop and the concelebrating priests celebrate Mass in the Roman Rite in Javanese, and are vested in albs of batik cloth, and stoles of the same material, decorated with adoring angels in Javanese style.

Back Cover: Annals Australasia turns 127 this year. Help support Australia's oldest and most popular Catholic journal by encouraging your friends and relatives to subscribe.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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WHEN WE contemplate ourselves we are troubled ... when we contemplate God we are restored.

– St Bernard of Clairveaux, *De Diversis*, v. 4-5. From The Roman Breviary, 2nd reading at Matins, Wednesday in the 23rd Week of the Year.

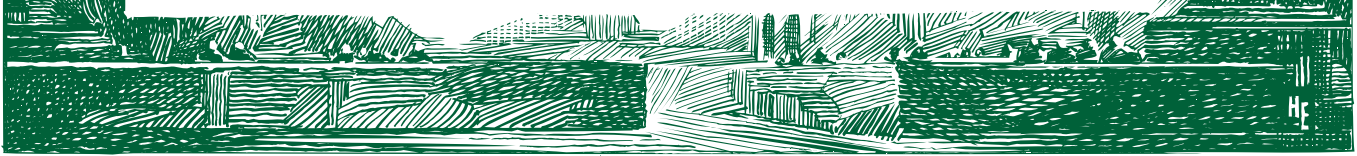


n the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.



DO not
have Jesus Christ
on your lips,
and
the world
in your heart'

- St Ignatius bishop of Antioch, [35-107 AD] *Letter to the Romans* 7,1ff.
We have six letters that Ignatius wrote to Churches that he visited on his way to Rome where he was martyred in the Flavian Amphitheatre, known as the Colosseum. Ignatius is the first writer known to have used the term 'Catholic Church'. See chapter 8 of his letter to the Christians of Smyrna, now Izmir in Turkey.





A PRAYER FOR EVERY PART OF THE DAY

LORD OF ALL hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no care could
destroy,

Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of
the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane
and the lathe

Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon
of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace.
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to
embrace,

Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the
day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is
balm,

Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the
day.

– Jan Struther [1901-1953] pen name of Joyce Anstruther, an English writer who created the character *Mrs Miniver* for a column in the London Times. President Roosevelt credited the column with hastening America's involvement in the war, and Winston Churchill said that *Mrs Miniver* had done more for the Allied cause than a flotilla of battleships. The film adaptation of *Mrs. Miniver* was produced by MCM in 1942 with Greer Garson in the starring role.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD

To ask whether this Supreme Intelligence is good and loving is a further question. Christians also believe that the Creator requires us to live according to moral rules and that this unique Creator will judge each of us after death. These are two further impediments to belief for many moderns.

GOD, EVIL AND SUFFERING

Reviewed by George Cardinal Pell

I WAS WELL into reading my friend Fr. Brendan Purcell's beautiful small book on suffering, when the earthquake struck in Central Italy. Although more than one hundred kilometres away most people in Rome were woken at 3.40 am on August 24th as the buildings shook. I turned on the light to make sure I wasn't imagining things and the lamp in the centre of the room was swaying from side to side.

I was tempted to go and stand in the doorway but the movement ceased after a couple of minutes. At the epicentre of Amatrice they were not so lucky, as the whole ancient village of houses, built before the anti-earthquake regulations were drawn up, was thrown down and collapsed into rubble.

Later I realised that this was the place where spaghetti Amatriciana was first created and 2 euros from every plate sold in Italy is now going to the earthquake appeal.

Other villages were also destroyed completely and about 300 people died.

Norcia, the birthplace of St. Benedict in 480 AD and his sister St. Scolastica (and much earlier, of the emperor Vespasian who helped destroy Jerusalem in 70 AD) escaped more lightly. Although it, too, was above one of epicentres, they benefited from the building regulations introduced by Pope Pius IX in 1869, in one of his last

Brendan Purcell, *Where is God in Suffering?* Veritas, Dublin, 2016. Copies: ring or email your closest St Paul Book and Media Centre.

decisions before the end of the Papal states, and from following the subsequent construction requirements. The earthquake caused no deaths there.

The saints' birthplace is marked by a Benedictine monastery in the town square and while the chapel was extensively damaged the buildings remained standing. The



young community of about fifteen monks, mainly from the United States, and led by Fr. Cassian Folsom, was evacuated to Rome as a precaution.

Why does God allow such events to occur, as well as many other types of disaster? This question is asked differently by those studying the problem of evil philosophically or theologically, by those on the edge of a disaster, and by those who find themselves, with or without their loved ones, at the centre of the suffering.

Why does God allow so many bad things? Perhaps the good God is not all powerful or perhaps the all-powerful Creator, the Supreme Intelligence does not love us and is either disinterested or even capricious? The ancient Greeks and Romans saw their gods in this light. Is God vengeful?

Evil and suffering constitute the most formidable argument against monotheism, for those who believe in the existence of One, Good and Transcendent Creator, God. I believe that the intellectual arguments now available to be drawn from biology, e.g. the discovery of DNA, and from physics and chemistry and the fantastic improbabilities necessary for evolution from the Big Bang to humans, mean that the rational or metaphysical path to the Supreme Intelligence is easier for us than in the past. Thinkers are coming to God from or through science.

To ask whether this Supreme Intelligence is good and loving is a further question. Christians also believe that the Creator requires us to live according to moral rules and that this unique Creator will judge each of us after death. These are two further impediments to belief for many moderns.

Fr. Purcell deals with all these questions, and many more, with wisdom and compassion. This work could not have been written by a young person because the author's formidable learning is leavened by the insights of a long life lived according to Christian teachings. While it is not an easy read, it is always enlightening, never turgid and occasionally deeply personal and encouraging, as the author reveals how he sought out and found Christ, the One who loves us most, in the difficulties he himself encountered.

Not all suffering is caused by natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis and bush fires. We also have the mystery of death, of human suffering, especially of children and of the innocent and the terrible evils humans inflict on one another. Recently we have become more aware of the suffering of animals.

Stephen Fry and the Australian Peter Singer are two of the atheists Purcell strives to answer. For Fry bone cancer in children convinced him God does not exist and for Singer God is either evil or a bungler.

Fëdor Dostoevsky, a Russian believer, especially in his 1880 novel *The Brothers Karamazov* has provided us with the figures of the Inquisitor who condemns Christ for his belief in freedom, and Ivan who rejects a God who allows children to be tortured and killed. Through these characters Dostoevsky was grappling with the consequences of the nineteenth century attempt to murder God which meant everything was permitted. Hitler, Stalin and Mao exemplified this in their twentieth century atrocities.

The case for unbelief has rarely been set out as powerfully as it is in this Russian masterpiece and Purcell

A Bulwark

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH faces enormous challenges, obviously, but none so daunting as communicating the Good News, which translates to helping millions around the world. Whatever one's personal opinion of Catholicism (I am not Catholic), the church remains a bulwark against Western secularization and the growing culture of choice. Is it really desirable, just for starters, that the leader of the Christian church embrace the destruction of human life in the womb?

One may make painful personal choices as the law permits, but even non-Catholics can find solace in the barricade that men and women of conscience erect between human beings and the abyss of relativity. If the church means nothing to some, it is at least a welcome noisemaker in the public square, fearless in making the argument that life does matter.

Without the Catholic Church — the largest charitable organization in the world — millions of the world's least fortunate would suffer

— Kathleen Parker, columnist with the *Washington Post*: "A world of good done by the "unchanging" church," *The Dallas Morning News* on March 13, 2013

is at his best as he explains how the atheist position not only rejects the promise of an afterlife where all will be well and love will prevail, but believes nothing exists outside the space-time universe. Indeed it is based on a rejection of the world as it is, an exaltation of feeling above reason and a hatred of the human freedom, which God gave us and does not control.

Purcell quotes G.K. Chesterton who pointed out the importance of humility, and the obligation to be grateful for all that is good. He does not try to whitewash the situation because suffering and evil are the great mystery. But goodness, truth and beauty also require an explanation, and believers and the overwhelming majority of people know that they outweigh the sadness even in this life.

We get a brilliant exposition of the Old Testament figure Job, as he wrestles and argues with God about his own innocent suffering; hear the stories of Etty Hillesum who refused to escape and perished in the Holocaust; of the blessed Chiara Luce Badano who died of bone cancer at the age of eighteen; and of Eddie McCaffrey who lived until he was thirty with muscular dystrophy, and told us "you don't solve problems, you love them".

As a follower of the Focolare spirituality of Chiara Lubich the founder, Fr. Purcell believes, as all Christians do, that Christ suffers with us and for us, but that the crucial moment, what Lubich called the "divine atomic explosion," was when Christ dying on the cross felt, at least momentarily, that God his Father had abandoned him. Jesus forsaken, who plumbed the depths of human suffering is our Redeemer; he saved us in his helplessness. The crucifixion means what it says.

The final chapter is also unusual, because it avoids the customary silence and half-truths to outline the Christian imperatives as we strive to move beyond the evil and destruction of Islamic terrorism.

This is a gem of a book and the different chapters answer different needs.

For much of my priestly life, religious formation or education said little about God, about his nature and why we believe in Him. The resurgence of atheism should jolt us out of our silence and indifference as many youngsters, and the not-so-young, will be tempted to follow Fry and Singer into unbelief.

All those interested in how and why we believe, all priests and all those in religious formation, will find *Where is God in Suffering?* thought provoking, reassuring and well worth the effort it requires.

HIS EMINENCE GEORGE CARDINAL PELL is Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy of the Holy See. He is affectionately remembered by the Catholics of Melbourne and Sydney as their former Archbishop.

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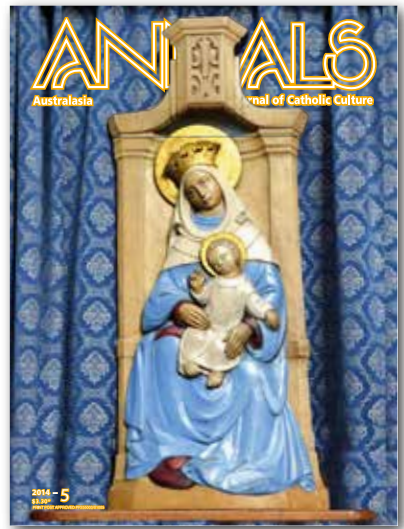
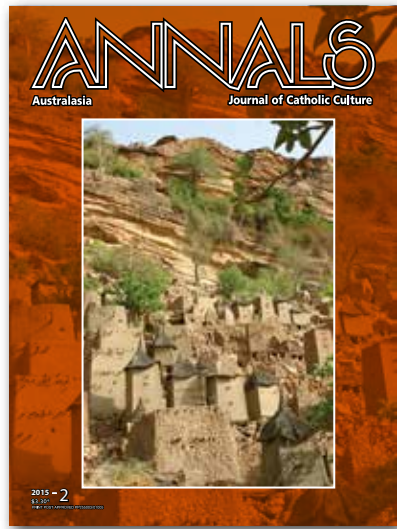
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These churches have an immense power to inspire the imagination of people of faith ... like time capsules which vividly bring to mind the spirit of the early Church of Rome

ANCIENT ROMAN CHURCHES

By Graham Hutton



HERE IS an old saying, 'Roma, non basta una vita'¹ and if a life time is not sufficient, then four days at the end of a holiday in Tuscany is certainly far too short a time to do any kind of justice to the most wonderful city on earth.

However, that was all the time that my wife and I had and so we decided that we would discipline ourselves and concentrate on our favourite ancient Roman churches, and in particular on their beautiful mosaics, at the expense of the splendours of the renaissance and baroque periods which we so love and even, though here we made a couple of exceptions, at the expense of trekking around some of the classical remains of the city.

These churches have an immense power to inspire the imagination of people of faith being, as my wife observed about half way through our trip, almost like time capsules which vividly bring to mind the spirit of the early Church of Rome, at first persecuted and then triumphant but always exhibiting a profound sense of the numinous.

Basilica of San Clemente

No church better exemplifies this than the Basilica of San Clemente. Whereas most of the churches which we visited are palimpsests combining in one space many different periods of Christianity, in San Clemente three separate ages are discretely preserved in the three levels of today's site.

One first enters the twelfth century church as it was built by Pope Paschal II in 1108 and, although the church has a baroque shell, one is astonished to find a perfectly preserved medieval interior. As with so many of the churches we would visit, San Clemente has a most beautiful pavement designed by the Cosmati family.



The Four Crowned [Martyred] Saints, by Nanni di Banco, a master sculptor of the Guild of stonemasons of Orsanmichele, Florence, ca. 1415. The two rightmost figures were sculpted from a single piece of marble. The hair and beards were once completely gilded.

The family flourished in Rome between 1190 and 1300 and developed a form of *opus sectile* geometric mosaic which gives a unique beauty and style to the churches in which it was employed.

The second most striking aspect of the upper church are the elegant rows of antique columns. But it is the ancient choir which is the church's crowning glory. Composed of panels of white and coloured marble this choir has a curiously eastern feel about it and it is astonishing to learn that it was originally built by Pope John I (535-55) for the lower church and transferred when the new basilica was built following the extensive damage done to the lower church when Rome was sacked by the Normans in 1084.

In the apse of the church we saw the first of the many stunning mosaics which we were so looking forward to revisiting. This one is thought to have been based upon the mosaics in the apse of the earlier church and some of the tesserae may even have come from that mosaic although the style now is of a later Byzantine form as seen in the rich gold background.

We immediately saw at the bottom of the composition something which was to become a familiar favourite of ours: twelve long legged Roman sheep representing the Apostles gathered around the Lamb of God. Above them is a powerful image of Christ on the Cross with Our Lady and St John.

The Cross itself is portrayed as the Tree of Life springing forth

from lavish acanthus leaves and with the living waters flowing beneath it from which beautifully depicted animals drink, as they will do in Paradise. The two delightful deer who drink at the very foot of the cross remind us of the deer of Ps. 42 who are symbols of our longing for the living waters of salvation. For all the complexity of its imagery the whole composition has a primitive feel to it which is quite captivating and prepares us for our descent to the lower church.

And yet nothing can really prepare us for the experience which greets us when we emerge in the lower church. Excavated only in 1857 by the Irish Dominicans, the whole area is now beautifully lighted and, although much of the original building is difficult to read because of walls built to support the later church above, we get a very clear impression of its original dimensions. It is truly remarkable to think that this church was built in the fourth century, the first century in which public Christian worship was possible in Rome.

As we contemplated some of the fourth century frescos we got a very strong sense of the excitement which Rome's Christians must have felt when, after three hundred years of persecution, they were finally able to express in building and in art the faith for which so many had suffered and died.

However, San Clemente's mysteries do not end with the fourth century. We were now able to descend to a yet lower level where we found a beautifully excavated first century house with many rooms. This is believed to have been the house of St Clement, the fourth bishop of Rome and would have been used as a domestic church before

public worship was permitted for Christians. We know that St Clement himself was martyred and it does not take much imagination as we explore the rooms of the house to think of the first century Christians gathered here for their early morning Eucharist knowing the fate which awaited them if they were apprehended.

What we had seen in a few hours in the single site of San Clemente we were to see expressed repeatedly in all of the richness



The Upper Church of San Clemente, not far from the Golden House of Nero, and the Colosseum. The Choir was built by Pope John I [535-555] for the lower Church, and moved to the new Basilica when Pope Paschal II had it built in 1108, to replace the lower church damaged when the Normans sacked Rome in 1084.

which the Catholic tradition has to offer over the next few days.

Church of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs

A steep climb from the Basilica took us to the Church of the Santi Quattro Coronati, an ancient fortified abbey dating from the pontificate of Leo IV (847-55). Though not so old as many of the churches we were to see, the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs has one

of the most beautiful medieval cloisters in the whole of Rome.

Listening to the dripping water of the twelfth century fountain we were able to admire the exquisite work of the thirteenth century masons who had dedicated their work to the martyred masons and sculptors of the age of persecution.

On leaving the church we visited the lovely chapel of St Silvester dedicated in 1246 which has a Byzantine influenced fresco cycle depicting with great tenderness the curing of Constantine from leprosy by Pope St Sylvester. Particularly delightful is the depiction of Constantine covered in spots and looking rather sorry for himself as well as that of his baptism in which he seems to rub his chest hardly able to believe that he has been cured. The frescos are suffused with the spirit of a faith, simple and yet strong.

The next two churches on our itinerary had been Santa Maria in Domnica and San Stefano Rotondo, but (an occupational hazard in Rome) both were closed for restoration with no indication of when they might reopen.

Church of Sts John and Paul

A short step away from them, however, was the church of Saints

John and Paul, a church which we know existed as early as 499 when it is listed in the documents of the council of that year as *titulus Pomachii*.

Parts of the original church remain but the chief interest lies in the excavations below which show that two Roman houses dating from the second and third centuries had been used as a place of Christian burial, rare if not unique in that the burials must have taken place

within the city walls, prohibited at the time by long standing Roman law.

One of these houses belonged to the Christian senator, Pammachius. Saints John and Paul, officers at Constantine's court, had withdrawn into retirement following the accession of Julian the Apostate. Refusing to be recalled into the service of the pagan emperor they were beheaded and then secretly buried by Pammachius. We can still visit these excavated houses and see one of the earliest Christian wall paintings of the famous *orantes or pray-ers*.

Church of Saint Gregory the Great

After walking down a charming road to the left of Saints John and Paul from which we looked back to catch a lovely glimpse above us of the outside of the apse, we arrived at the Church of San Gregorio Magno.

No Englishman planning a tour of Rome's ancient churches could miss this church since, although it contains little of the original monastery built by Pope St Gregory I, it was the place where that Pope commissioned St Augustine and sent him forth to convert the English.

A chapel on the right of the church has preserved the stone bed on which St Gregory is thought to have slept and his lovely episcopal throne, carved in marble with fine classical reliefs, is now situated in front of an ancient altar where it can be seen at close quarters.

Basilica of Saint Mary Major

The next day was a Sunday and we had the joy of attending Mass at the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. However, since it is likely that readers will be familiar with this great building and since space is too short to do any kind of justice to such a stupendous place, I will say no more other than to observe that the baroque exterior

The Perpetuation of Punishment

IFANCY that the surliness of the hansom cabman must be chiefly created by the haughtiness of indignant ladies. I could tell many stories to the everlasting credit of cabmen. Once, I remember, I was leaving the house of some politician in Berkeley Square literally without a penny in my pocket. A hansom cabman, innocently supposing that a man in evening dress must have money (which is almost infinitely untrue), came up and offered to drive me to Battersea. I told him the exact facts - that I had no money at all, and was not even very certain of getting it tomorrow. He drove me back the whole of the way by his own request for nothing. Those stories are not told as jokes in *Punch*.

Now, I knew a cabman who stole. He did his turn of imprisonment, and came out of it as few men do, fundamentally healthy in his aim and point of view. He had often driven me, and he still spoke to me as a free man speaks to another, and told me that he did not want, if he could help it, to be driven to such desperation again; and I made him promise always to let me know before he was so driven. He could not get a character for any employment; he could not offer what is called a "deserving" case to any organized charity. He told me that he meant to hawk a basket of flowers, and I gave him the money to buy it as naturally as I would have given it to any of my own friends. The man's attitude was entirely human and conceivable; I did not doubt his sorrow for his first sin, and I do not doubt it now. I felt quite certain that I was simply putting straight a path that had not gone very crooked. I went away into the country; when I came back he had been put in prison again for hawking flowers without a licence; without the licence that he could not get. And his old conviction was brought up against him.

- G.K. Chesterton, *Lunacy and Letters*, Sheed & Ward, 1958, p.126

and the sheer size of the building should not be allowed to mislead the visitor; Santa Maria Maggiore is one of the oldest churches in Rome and its interior with its wonderful archaic columns and ancient mosaics could keep the lover of paleochristian art occupied for days.

Fortunately some of the best early mosaics in Rome are contained in several churches close to Santa Maria Maggiore and so, although it was a Sunday and the following day the Solemnity of the Assumption, we were able to move backwards and forwards between various well attended Masses in order to see some of our favourite works of early Christian art.

Even before the icon became the distinctive form of Christian art *par excellence* artists were using mosaics to tell the story of their faith and to my mind there is no

art form which better captures the marriage of things earthly and things heavenly which is the essence of our incarnational faith. The skill which early Roman Christian artists showed in using the mosaics to create a luminous and yet truly human depiction of Our Lord and the saints is often breath taking and one can look for hours at these mosaics and still find oneself discovering new details none of which is without profound significance and all of which bring joy and pleasure.

GRAHAM HUTTON is the founding partner of the private equity firm Hutton Collins. He studied History at Cambridge and Theology at Oxford as an Anglican before converting to Catholicism in 1982. He serves on a number of charity boards, including the *Christian Heritage Centre* as well as *Aid to the Church in Need*, UK, of which he has been chairman since last year.

1. Silvio Negro "Roma, non basta una vita

Grim-visaged scolds at the Ministry issue Sharp Warning

CATS TO STOP MIAOWING

By Alister Kershaw

IF THE French Ministry for Social Affairs wants to retain my good will—and I have reason to believe that the phrase which recurs most frequently during its deliberations is ‘What will Kershaw think about this?’—if, I say, the ministry wants me to go on surveying it with a benevolent and tolerant eye, then it will kindly withdraw that revolting administrative circular which it’s just sent out to the country’s prefectural authorities.

And let there be no nonsense from the ministry about not knowing what circular I mean; it knows perfectly well: I mean that debased document which, if its instructions are observed, will enwrap the entire nation in joyless and indeed positively spectral silence.

I’ve been very patient about this matter—I’m even beginning to think foolishly indulgent. When, some years ago, the ministry placed a stern ban on motor horns in Paris, I assumed that some hot-headed youngster had got control and that they only needed a little time in which to settle down.

And this, let me emphasise, in spite of the fact that I had been a devotee of Paris motor horns ever since I came to France, my blood pulsing every time I heard the stirring Wagnerian clamour of a few hundred drivers enmeshed in a traffic jam.

But the new directives, as I understand it, will render a man liable to ferocious penalties if he so much as ventures to utter a discreet cough.

‘The hawking of wares,’ says the circular with a villainous scowl, ‘by means of cries, songs, trumpets, bells or other instruments is forbidden.’ A nice lookout, I think you’ll agree: nothing to stop some high-pressure salesman from getting a hammer lock on one at one’s own door and pouring out his relentless patter but just let some ancient artisan attract attention to his goods with a whistled stave or a merry carillon and the poor wretch is apparently to be thrust howling into the stocks.

Circuses—and this, I rather fancy, will give you some idea of the type of men we are faced with—will no longer parade through villages and provincial towns to the accompaniment of drums and bugles. The idea is, one gathers, that they’re to arouse the public’s enthusiasm by tiptoeing around in dead silence with a hand-dog look on their faces. I suppose one must think oneself lucky that the lions haven’t received a blue paper forbidding them to roar.

Quite possibly, in fact, they have: at any rate, the grim-visaged scolds at the ministry have included in their circular what amounts to a pretty sharp warning to cats to stop miaowing and dogs to go easy on the barking. And just to round things off, they’ve laid down a blanket prohibition on letting off fireworks, crackers or firearms in the street, unless advance permission has been obtained. Who, I put it to you, is going to go through the unimaginable horrors of French bureaucracy in order to put a match to a Catherine wheel or a Bengal light? Quite apart from the fact that, by the time he’d filled in all the necessary forms, stood in the regulation number of queues and been ignored by the prescribed quantity of minor but all-powerful officials, any frolicsome desire to let off fireworks would long since have given way to a bleak dejection at ever having got involved in the business.

There will, however, still be some noises left in the streets—namely, the noise made by the authorities themselves. When one thinks of the rumpus kicked up about twenty times a night as police cars go rocketing down the boulevards barking like heart-broken sea lions, to cite only one instance, the gagging of a couple of innocent tomcats and the stifling of gangsters’ natural impulse to let off firearms cannot but strike one as ever so slightly grotesque.

Anyway, the cards are now on the table. The ministry knows where I stand: let it think well before deciding to maintain its present position.

— ALISTER KERSHAW, poet, writer and broadcaster was born in Melbourne in 1921. He died in Sury-en-Vaux, France in 1995. He left Australia for France in 1947 and for some years was private secretary to the British writer Richard Aldington. The above piece was one of around one thousand written in the 1960s when Alister was the ABC’s Paris Correspondent. See *A Word from Paris*, Angus and Robertson, 1991, pp.46-48.

Art as a centralised arm of government has become sturdily entrenched and analogous to the prickly pear or the rabbit, while the great wide vacant expanse that is the Australian mind offers limitless space and ideal conditions for propagation on a grand scale'

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

By Giles Auty



DDLY, although I narrowly missed meeting Elizabeth Durack in person in Perth not long before she died I feel that I know her nonetheless in many significant ways thanks largely to the present excellent book of her art and writings edited by her daughter.

Long before I became a writer about art or other more general subjects myself I was also a professional painter who happily enjoyed the privilege of working among a group of unusually talented artists and writers then living in the far West of Cornwall.

Many of the older artists working there had served in the Second World War and were thus, in the main, in no mood at all to be told what to think or do by a then rapidly growing breed of politically correct art bureaucrats employed by the British state.

What a contrast that provides to a present-day world where often inept, state-run art is sadly prevalent in almost all Western countries including our own.

Throughout her long life, which spanned the years 1915 to 2000, Elizabeth Durack showed an acute dislike of pretentiousness and poor public policy whether that involved the visual arts, initiatives regarding Australia's earliest inhabitants or more or less any other example of self-righteous folly which comes readily to mind.

Much of the content of this particular book of her writings

Elizabeth Durack : Art & Life, Selected Writings, edited by Perpetua Durack Clancy, Connor Court 2016, 262 pp., \$29.95. Copies: 0497-900-685

is composed of letters of unusual length which combine pragmatism with a strongly poetic strain. Frequently their recipient was Elizabeth's daughter Perpetua who has edited the present collection with commendable insight and care. Humour, intimacy and informality abound yet behind it all one senses a steely and consistent sense of purpose from Perpetua's mother. How welcome the latter attribute would be in almost any aspect of current Australian life where it is



generally notable now only by its absence.

Just a few weeks ago we were treated as a nation to the prospect of 'gender fluidity' being taught to five year olds in our public primary schools. What in God's name is happening to our country?

At the time of writing, by contrast, I have just learned about public celebrations which are to be held shortly in Melbourne and Sydney to honour the life of Mao Tse-tung, China's former, supposedly great 'humanitarian' leader who is considered otherwise by many to have been the greatest homicidal maniac in human history. For those who like me believe the latter to be the case may I recommend Frank Dikotter's *The Cultural Revolution: A People's History, 1962 - 1976* (Bloomsbury)? The author's diligent research discloses many previously unknown but horrific facts.

It is not hard to imagine the degree of outrage either of these recent events would surely have provoked in Elizabeth Durack yet both seem to be assimilated quite easily now by 'the post-modern mind' if one may - if only as an act of charity - describe it as such.

Elizabeth Durack was educated in Perth by the nuns of the Loreto Convent but lived during her holidays on a vast family cattle station in the Kimberley. As the time approached for her first communion she was worried she would fail in her knowledge of the catechism ... "But we all passed and Father MacMahon told Sister Ita we

were exceptionally good and better than the boys he had examined the previous day. On asking one of them what was the first thing Moses did after crossing the Red Sea the reply had been *he dried himself*.²

Here is a book which is at once serious and informative yet often delightfully funny. I have travelled very extensively in Australia myself yet of course never knew the earliest decades which the author describes. Generally those times strike me as at once more backward and primitive yet *better* in almost all other important aspects than the country we live in today. Living in Australia only during the past couple of decades I nevertheless feel conscious occasionally of the presence of a ghost of the rougher, tougher but more fundamentally decent Australia which I never knew in person.

In the late 1930s Elizabeth Durack married Frank Clancy, a Sydney writer and journalist. Just after the Second World War Elizabeth put on a show of 100 paintings naming the exhibition *Time & Tide*. The show opened in Perth but then travelled on to Sydney where it was summarily slated by the then critic for *The Sydney Morning Herald* Paul Haeffliger. She was included nonetheless in the famous show *Recent Australian Art* held in 1961 at the Whitechapel Gallery in London.

In the early 1960s Elizabeth began renting a run-down house in Broome and using it as a painting studio. Her presence there coincided with a visit from H.M. the Queen and Prince Phillip and her description of the event probably provides a very accurate cameo of small town life there half a century ago. I have visited Broome only once myself following a flight totalling 18 hours made from Bathurst in a light aircraft. The town by then had been much influenced by the presence there of British industrial tycoon Alistair McAlpine who helped give the town a welcome sense of potential

The Right Way

HALT AT the cross-roads, look well and ask yourselves which path it was that stood you in good stead long ago.

Then take that way, and you will find rest for your souls.

– The Prophet Jeremiah , vi,16

importance. On the way there our tiny aircraft flew over the aboriginal settlement at Yuendumu which I knew previously only from paintings I had seen in London at an enterprising gallery run by a young woman from Melbourne, Rebecca Hossack. Throughout Elizabeth Durack's fascinating book I kept finding mention of interesting people and places known to both of us.

Yet, all of that, I agree, is largely a matter of personal and peripheral interest.

What intrigues me much more is the extent of the agreement I feel with someone from a wholly different background and time concerning contentious issues which continue to plague life not just in Australia but in the Western world in general. In the course of the book I encountered strong arguments advanced by Elizabeth herself as well as by outsiders who had managed to influence or impress her. Essays by two such found their way into the magazine *Quadrant* during the mid-1980s. Both concerned aboriginal lifestyle and welfare and contrasted such matters with the government policy then current.

Those articles aside, two of the more passionate arguments Elizabeth advanced herself concerned the cleverly concealed ills wrought by political correctness and the role played by the Australia Council in nurturing similarly harmful forms of covert, political behaviour. For 60 years *Quadrant*

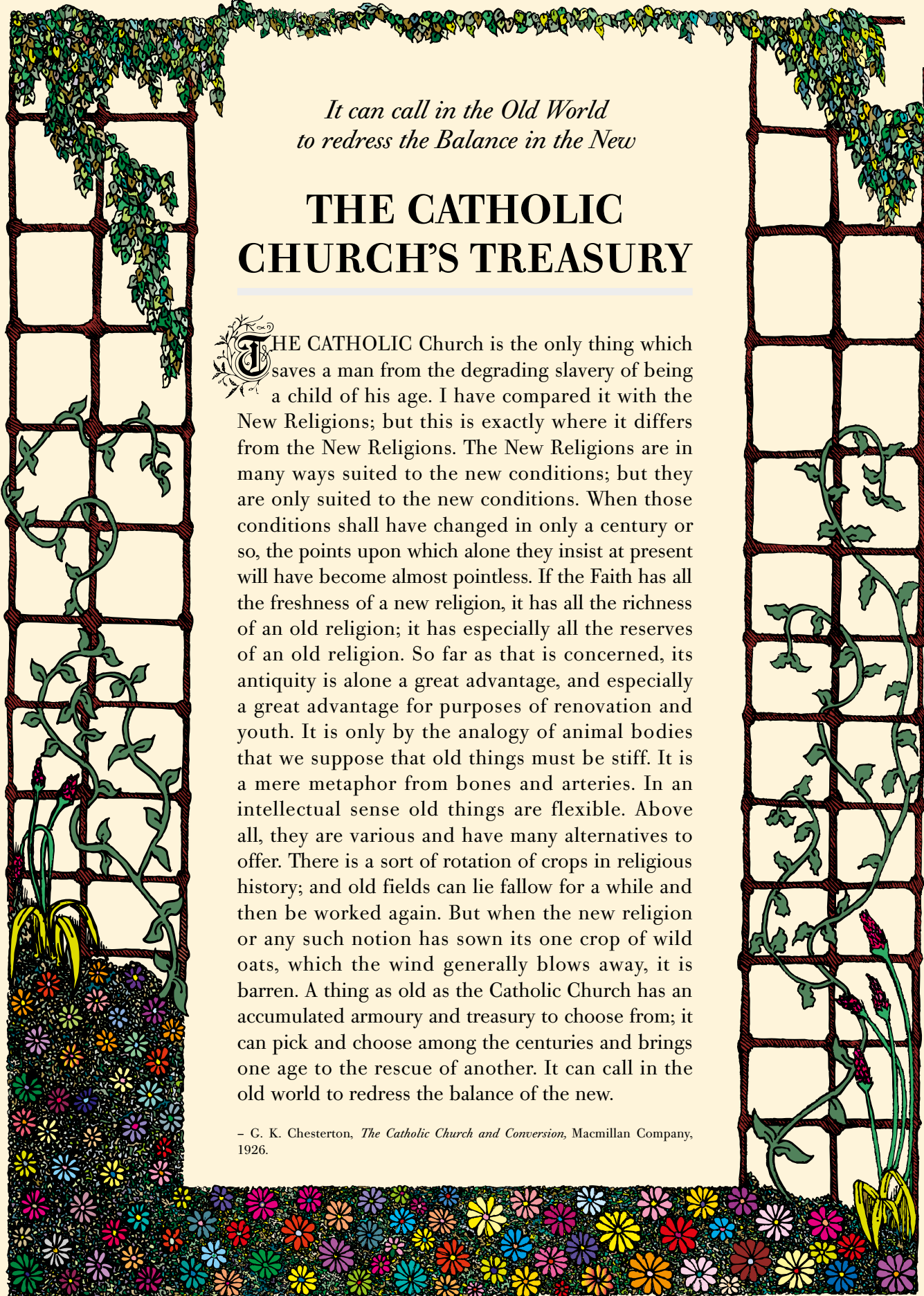
has been Australia's leading independent artistic and intellectual magazine yet has been punished recently by the Australia Council through the sudden removal of its annual grant.

Elizabeth Durack spent much of her life living among and gaining a daily insight into the workings of often remote aboriginal communities. She even invented a fictitious aboriginal *persona* - the painter Eddie Burrup - for what seemed perfectly valid personal reasons. Hers was an attempt, in short, to see and understand a particular world through the imagined eyes of another and seems to me to be no more culpable than the invention of such persons in written fiction - or even in the plays of Shakespeare. But happily the dreaded word 'appropriation' hardly springs to mind in the case of Othello.

Let me quote now briefly from one of the two articles I have mentioned from *Quadrant*: "It does not require a weighty report nor one of those wordy compilations of teams of experts to see just how closely *our* Third World conforms to the general pattern elsewhere. Ours, however, contains some special distinguishing elements - notably financial support on a grand scale from the nation's coffers in order to maintain it in all its sanctity and to keep it careening on its present course".

Elizabeth did not necessarily condone or agree with either of these thought-provoking articles, but used both as fertile and constructive starting points for further *informed* discussion. Her own passionate commitment was based above all on on-the-spot experience.

Today we live in an era in Australia where conformity of thought and practice - generally imposed on us by public service employees - rules far too much of the practice of our lives. I am no more comfortable in such a climate than was Elizabeth Durack. For example, last night I began to read



*It can call in the Old World
to redress the Balance in the New*

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S TREASURY

THE CATHOLIC Church is the only thing which saves a man from the degrading slavery of being a child of his age. I have compared it with the New Religions; but this is exactly where it differs from the New Religions. The New Religions are in many ways suited to the new conditions; but they are only suited to the new conditions. When those conditions shall have changed in only a century or so, the points upon which alone they insist at present will have become almost pointless. If the Faith has all the freshness of a new religion, it has all the richness of an old religion; it has especially all the reserves of an old religion. So far as that is concerned, its antiquity is alone a great advantage, and especially a great advantage for purposes of renovation and youth. It is only by the analogy of animal bodies that we suppose that old things must be stiff. It is a mere metaphor from bones and arteries. In an intellectual sense old things are flexible. Above all, they are various and have many alternatives to offer. There is a sort of rotation of crops in religious history; and old fields can lie fallow for a while and then be worked again. But when the new religion or any such notion has sown its one crop of wild oats, which the wind generally blows away, it is barren. A thing as old as the Catholic Church has an accumulated armoury and treasury to choose from; it can pick and choose among the centuries and brings one age to the rescue of another. It can call in the old world to redress the balance of the new.

— G. K. Chesterton, *The Catholic Church and Conversion*, Macmillan Company, 1926.

Katie, who attended Little Flower School in Bethesda till eighth grade and then went to Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart for high school, gave tribute to the 'excellent, faith-filled education at both schools' in the same interview. At Rio, she has won four gold and one silver medal and also testifies to the fact that she says a Hail Mary before she swims.

OLYMPIC SIGNS OF CONTRADICTION

By Wanda Skowronska

JUST BEFORE the 2016 Olympic Games began in Rio, Cardinal Orani Tempesta blessed the Olympic torch at the feet of the Statue of Christ the Redeemer. Images of Jesus with arms extended were beamed into homes around the world. This was not supposed to happen but there it was.

Father Omar Raposo, rector at the Christ the Redeemer Sanctuary, located at the base of the statue, said the blessing, though it had not been scheduled by the Games' organizers; it was requested by Rio Catholic mayor Eduardo Paes.

Amidst the Olympic hype, full of body focus, neo-pagan symbolism and lavish spending, this was one of the signs of contradiction, a reminder of the Saviour, the true light of the world, contrasted with an earthly Olympic flame. It was a sign to be followed by several others during the games.

Let me say at the outset I am not a sports aficionado so my observations are random observations from the mainstream media coverage of the 2016 Rio

games. Along with the rest of the world, when I saw the Fijian Rugby team win gold and engage in initial leaps of joy, suddenly I was part of the global audience hearing them sing a hymn of thanksgiving (in four part harmony) cameras rolling all the while.

You might have predicted this if you had read the *Fijian Rugby Blog* - for you would have read the words of player Leone Nakarawa who said that 'we know that being

impending 100 metre sprint, whether they were atheist, Islamic or Hindu, they had to watch him make the sign of the Cross before he assumed his position before the run. And they saw him make his way into the Olympic history books with his 'fastest man on earth' speed of 9.81 seconds, making him the first athlete to win three consecutive Olympic gold medals in the 100-metre dash.

It is reminiscent of Meseret Defar, Ethiopian runner, who after winning the 5,000 metre race in London's 2012 games, pulled out a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and showed it to the whole world. She had carried the holy card of the Virgin Mary with the Baby Jesus for the entire race

Perhaps the most dramatic 'rags to riches' sporting tale of 2016, is that of Simone Biles, the 19-year-old Texan

who made her Olympics debut in Rio. Simone was born in Columbus, Ohio to parents with drug addiction problems. Her father left the family when she was young and with her siblings, Simone alternated between her mother and foster care.

The turning point of her life came not with the swathe of



Three million mainly young people greeted Pope Francis when he offered Mass at the beach at Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, in July 2013 at the conclusion of the 28th World Youth Day.

here is not from our strength but from God and its all God's plan that we are here" - but then, you probably don't read the *Fijian Rugby Blog*. On it Fijians assert that God is the ultimate motivation of their playing.

Then, as the world waited in anticipation of Usain Bolt's

Olympic medals she won with her flawless gymnastic performances (4 gold and one bronze) but with her being adopted by her Catholic grandparents, Nellie and Ron Biles who gave her the chance to develop her talent. The grandparents are the silent Olympians behind the medals, as they transmitted the Catholic faith to Simone and her sister, and homeschooled the girls.

If you wonder whether the faith has made its mark on her, Simone has said publicly that she travels with a statue of St. Sebastian, the patron saint of athletes, and she also carries a rosary her birth mother gave her. She says a Hail Mary before each event. Again, Simone is not backward about being forward with her faith, and her public testimony about her faith, while sometimes omitted in secular accounts, still manages to get through in many magazines around the globe.

I first heard the name Katie Ledecky during these Olympics, and like the rest of the world, have been amazed at this swimmer seeming to shoot through the water like an arrow, almost a swimming pool length ahead of the others. Then I wondered where her seeming simplicity and psychological groundedness came from. No chest beating hype from her at all.

In an interview in the *Catholic Standard* on July 28, American swimmer Katie Ledecky revealed something of her inner life saying, 'My Catholic faith is very important to me. It always has been and it always will be. It is part of who I am and I feel comfortable practising my faith.'

Katie, who attended Little Flower School in Bethesda till 8th grade and then went to Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart for high school, gave tribute to the 'excellent, faith-filled education at both schools' in the same interview. At Rio, she has won 4 gold and one silver medal and also testifies to the fact that she says a Hail Mary before she swims.

Not a bed to be made and re-made

I WAS ASKED tonight why I refuse to have truck with intellectuals after business hours. But of course I won't. 1. I am not an intellectual. Two minutes' talk with Aldous Huxley, [BBC music director] William Glock, or any of the *New Statesman* crowd would expose me utterly. 2. I am too tired after my day's work to man the intellectual palisade. 3. When my work is finished I want to eat, drink, smoke, and relax. 4. I don't know very much, but what I do know I know better than anybody ... My mind is not a bed to be made and re-made.

— James Agate (1877-1947), London drama critic and diarist, in *Ego* (1943)

Ledecky has long admired her hero American super-athlete Michael Phelps who is off the radar with his extraordinary performances in many swimming styles - with 23 gold medals over 5 Olympic games. *Time* magazine exuberantly announced, 'The utter dominance of Michael Phelps has been the reigning story of the Rio 2016 Olympics' and yet, there is another story behind the story.

Phelps, like some high achievers, got lost and sought stimulation in the wrong places, did drugs and got arrested in 2014. Feeling that his career and his life were over, being depressed, he even contemplated ending his life. The hidden force of spiritual witness plays its part here for Phelps received guidance from devout Christian and NFL legend Ray Lewis.

As one account states it, he went to rehab and Lewis gave him a book, *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren which Phelps read and which helped him transform his life. This book has sold 40 million copies and is similar to Victor Frankl's *The Search for Meaning* in speaking spiritually to a wide range of people.

As a result of his friend's intervention, rehab and reading the book, Phelps is spiritually grounded in his belief in God and in care for his family. Phelps has given great testimony to various media outlets to his belief in Christ, that spiritual Olympic gold medal which every believer receives.

While Rio was not just about winning gold, but about doing one's best, it is interesting that superstars at the latest Olympics, despite their physical achievements, have given public witness to their spiritual core.

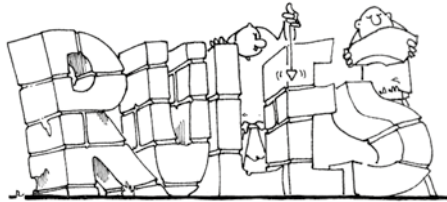
One might have expected this in a Catholic country such as Poland where on 2 Nov 2015, soccer fans unfurled a long poster with the message 'Stand and defend Christianity' and before another match, unfurled a giant banner of Christ's face.

To have such symbols beamed around the world at the Olympic Games, with its pagan ritual, body worship and earthly success, is a stark sign of contradiction, especially for the secular mainstream media who, who in a post-modern, morally relativist age, have had had to film them. Missionaries can only dream of this coverage.

The superstars gave witness to the One above all earthly achievement, in a simple, uncomplicated way, without complex theological points, giving witness to the Gospel to all four corners of the earth.

WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has recently been awarded a PhD in Psychology/Theology at Melbourne's John-Paul II Institute. She has done voluntary work for the Catholic pro-life organisation Family Life International, and is a regular contributor to *Annals*.

VIRTUAL SPACE AND CHANGE



WITH THE invention of movable type in medieval times, followed by other improved ways of connecting—better ships and roads, trains, planes, automobiles, and the Internet—technology raced ahead of us. In our own time the most striking example of the acceleration of technology has been Moore's Law, under which the density of transistors on chips has doubled every 18 months. The performance of single processors long rose in tandem with the transistor count, and even after that relationship stalled in the mid-2000s, the switch to devices using many processors kept the performance curve pointing upward.

This exponential rise in capability has greatly augmented the pooling of knowledge from different sources to achieve the creative synthesis described by the 19th century mathematician and philosopher Henri Poincaré: "To create consists precisely in not making useless combinations, and in making those which are useful and which are only in a small minority.... Among chosen combinations, the most fertile will often be those formed of elements drawn from domains which are far apart."

Drawn in part from the Internet, the newly created knowledge gets deposited back on the Internet,

increasing its scope and accelerating the development of technology. Burgeoning knowledge in turn drives rapid change—it advances technology, transforms business institutions, and changes how markets work and how people interact. Governments, social institutions, and our brains struggle to keep up.

Even the nature of change itself has changed. Living creatures started out evolving in one dimension defined by the physical world and another defined by the biological world. Then came humans, who added a third dimension—the artificial one engendered by tools and technology. Now, with the widespread use of the Internet, a fourth dimension has been added—that of virtual reality, or cyberspace. It is indeed appropriate to consider this last dimension as real and distinct from the tools and technologies of the past, because however fast those things may have changed, the rate of change in the virtual space is much faster. It took a lot of time to build physical infrastructure—railroads, highways, bridges, skyscrapers, and so forth. But in virtual space, entire new infrastructures can arise overnight, as Google and Facebook have proved.

I now believe that our minds, bodies, businesses, governments,

and social institutions are no longer capable of coping with the rapid rate of change. And it is obvious that this change is indeed more rapid than any comparable change that came before.

Think of the many years it took Barnes & Noble to build its retail chain of U.S. bookstores. The company set up its first bookstore in 1917, and by 2010 it was operating 717 stores. It took time for the company to find the proper locations, lease them, and stock them with inventory, and still more time to build them into viable businesses. The company was limited in what it could do because only certain physical locations were suitable for retail stores. Compare that long history to the rise of Amazon.com, which started in 1994 and was operating in virtual space throughout the United States by the next year, putting a bookstore in every home that had an Internet connection.

Barnes & Noble responded with an online strategy of its own, one that now gives pride of place to sales of e-books, and the company continues to fight on; meanwhile, competitor Borders was liquidated. Both constitute sterling examples of the "creative destruction" of capitalism, as the economist Joseph Schumpeter put it. But the fact that entire business models can come and go that fast is extraordinary. It also indicates the challenges that rapid change presents to other institutions.

— William H. Davidow, a cofounder of *Mohr Davidow Ventures*, excerpted from "Our Tools Are Using Us," in *IEEE Spectrum* [49/8, August 2012].



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BOOK REVIEW

The famous Split that resulted in the mid-1950s proved to be not only political but also religious. It divided the Catholic Church as well as the Labor Party, and had the unfortunate effect – not foreseen at the time – of diminishing and marginalising the social teachings of the Church

B. A. SANTAMARIA

By Karl Schmude



BY ANY measure B.A. Santamaria was the most remarkable Catholic layman of 20th century Australia: remarkable in his public profile

and political impact and in his religious and cultural influence. Yet he was also a controversial figure whose activities were both applauded and resented.

Competing mythologies swirled around him, positive and negative – from being celebrated as a national hero who preserved Australia from Communism in the 1940s and championed vital religious and cultural causes in the 1980s and later, to being reviled as a clandestine organiser plotting a Catholic takeover of Australian society.

Gerard Henderson's biography strives to reconcile these conflicting interpretations, and paint a balanced portrait of a complex man. He draws not only on his personal knowledge of Santamaria – he worked for him in the early 1970s – but also on extensive research of private papers and published studies as well as personal interviews.

Santamaria embarked early upon the career for which he became nationally recognised, that of political activist and commentator. Joining the Catholic intellectual group, the Campion Society, in the early 1930s, he was soon appointed by Archbishop Mannix – whom he

Santamaria: A Most Unusual Man, by Gerard Henderson. Miegunyah Press, (rrp \$59.99).

Copies: 03 9035 3333, or
mup-contact@unimelb.edu.au

called 'the greatest man I've ever met' – as the founding editor of the *Catholic Worker* and deputy director of the Bishops' Australian National Secretariat of Catholic Action (ANSCA).

The ideological and military conflicts of the Spanish Civil War (1936-38), and subsequently

World War II, threatened Australia's national security, and Santamaria played a crucial role, through The Movement which he set up from the late 1930s, in defeating Communist power in the trade unions and the Labor Party.

Nearly half of this biography is devoted to an analysis of these turbulent years and its varied outcomes – on the one hand, Santamaria's effectiveness in overcoming Communist control of Australia's industrial and political structures, while, on the other hand, the confusion that unfolded over the proper relationship between religion and politics in Australia.

The very effectiveness of The Movement's efforts in repulsing Communism gave rise to a wider political objective – that of using the new control of the unions to shape a larger agenda, through the Labor Party with which the unions have long had a structural relationship, and implementing a Catholic social programme.

Henderson reflects at length on this development. An immediate cause of confusion was Santamaria's simultaneous holding of leadership positions in two separate organisations – ANSCA, as a specifically Catholic body of social formation, which operated under the Bishops' control, and The Movement as a political task force that, while formally subject to Church direction, worked with secular organisations and was practically independent.



A deeper reason for the confusion was the varied interpretations of Catholic Action, based as these were on European experience rather than Australian political and cultural conditions.

Henderson argues that Santamaria did not appreciate two realities about Australian politics. One was shaping decisions through a non-party political organisation like The Movement, which was not 'the traditional Australian way of doing politics'; and a second was that, given the sectarian prejudice against Catholics as a minority in Australia, any attempt to implement through the Labor Party (which was traditionally associated with Catholics) a religiously inspired social programme, however noble an aspiration, was likely to be counter-productive.

The famous Split that resulted in the mid-1950s proved to be not only political but also religious. It divided the Catholic Church as well as the Labor Party, and had the unfortunate effect – not foreseen at the time – of diminishing and marginalising the social teachings of the Church, so that they would not cause continuing disunity among the Australian Catholic people.

A second issue of importance addressed by Henderson is Santamaria's understanding of ordinary Australians. On the one hand, he was, in the best sense, an ordinary person: born in the (then) working-class Melbourne suburb of Brunswick, the son of a large and successful Italian migrant family; a passionate supporter of Australian Rules football (he remained, to the end, a life member of Carlton);

and a man who, in his personal relations, was notably humble – at times, excessively self-deprecating – and who never sought to claim superior status. While not courting the attention of national leaders, he attracted the respect of Robert Menzies and Malcolm Fraser, and on his deathbed was visited by then-Prime Minister John Howard. He received a State funeral and was

through his creation in 1988 of the monthly journal, *AD2000*), but in accommodating doubt, and even abandonment, which is commonly based on confusion and the temptations of life, and relates to the Church's mission that Pope Francis has stressed so strongly, that of reaching out to the 'lost sheep' Christ loved so deeply – and so unfathomably.

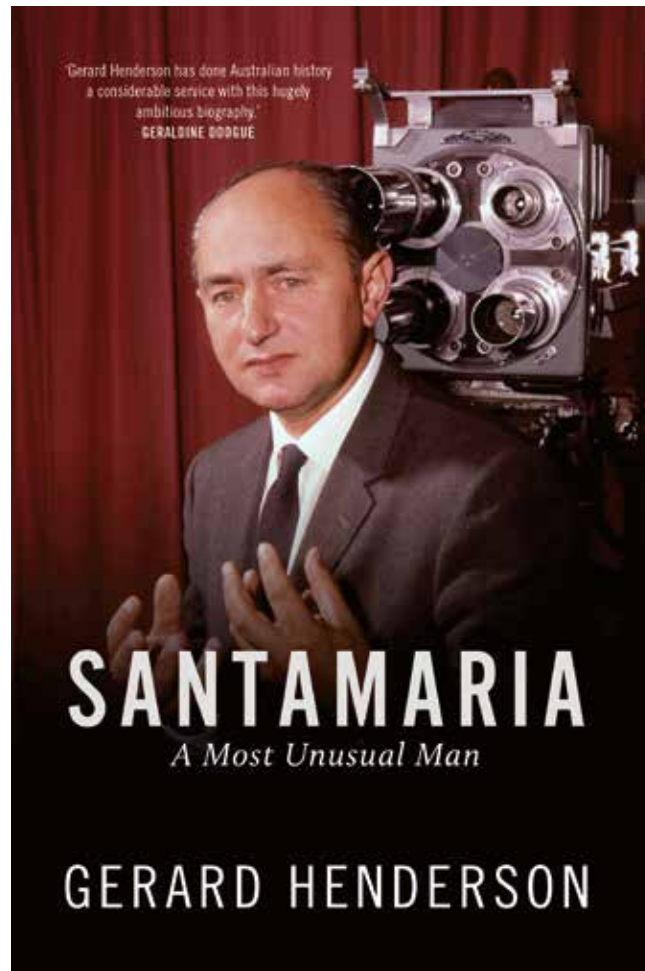
Henderson quotes the judgement of the Melbourne writer, Terry Monagle, who worked for Santamaria in 1972:

While he was personally kindly to those he met, I think fundamentally he had little confidence in the mass of people. Despite his political passions there was a lifelong reluctance to test out his ideas in the political market place. He never stood for public office, but invented a role for himself and his organisations that he grandly described as a 'prophetic shock minority'. The strange assumption in this is that majorities can never be right, only minorities.

Gerard Henderson has adopted a fair approach to the life of an admirable Australian Catholic, and his overall achievement has been to provide a rounded assessment. He pays tribute to Santamaria's strengths, notably his clear-eyed grasp of Communism, his early interest in the

Asia Pacific and opposition to the White Australia policy, and his strong Catholic faith, while also acknowledging his personal and organisational flaws.

Santamaria finally comes across as more than 'a most unusual man': he was unquestionably unique, as a Catholic layman and an Australian leader.



posthumously offered the nation's highest honour, the Companion of the Order of Australia, which was declined by his family in accordance with his own wishes.

On the other hand, it can be argued that he nursed a narrow view of religious and political loyalty – not in the sense of countering dissent against Catholic beliefs and morals (which relates to the intellectual integrity and institutional credibility of the Church, and which he addressed

KARL SCHMUDE is a Founding Fellow of Campion College in Sydney and formerly University Librarian at the University of New England in Armidale NSW.

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If there is one sentence that explains the referendum result, it's this one from the website of the Advertising Standards Agency. 'For reasons of freedom of speech, we do not have remit over non-broadcast ads where the purpose of the ad is to persuade voters in a local, national or international electoral referendum.' In other words, political advertising is exempt from the regulation that would otherwise bar false claims and outrageous promises.

BREXIT:

THE VIEW FROM LITTLE-LUFFINGTON-ON-SEA

By Sam Simmonds



HANKS PARTLY to the excellent and cogent article by Giles Auty in a recent issue of *Annals*, it will not have escaped the

attention of readers that on June 23rd this year a vote was taken in the (then) United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on whether the UK should remain within the European Union. The result of this Referendum has, to the astonishment of almost half the British population (who should have known better) polarized the nation like nothing since, possibly, the Reformation in the sixteenth century, or the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth.

The ideological divide among British citizens is only slightly less dramatic in the (totally fictitious but entirely representative) township of Little-Luffington-

on-Sea. This delightful, if somewhat anachronistic, place is distinguished from the relative metropolis of Greater-Luffington-in-the-Marsh (also fictitious, and also representative) by fifty kilometres or so of distance and the vastly



differing nature of their respective industries and their urban, rural and/or maritime cultures.

The good burghers of the coastal resort had long nursed the gravest suspicions that, since Britain joined the European Economic

Community (the EEC, later the EU) in 1973, things had definitely 'taken a turn for the worse'. Specifically, they felt – and complained (on the very rare occasions on which they were asked for their opinion) - that they had 'lost control'.

Little-Luffington-on-Sea made a modest but thriving living from tourism, farming, fishing and a few other, more pastoral, pursuits. Trouble was, some faceless bureaucrats in Brussels (or was it Strasbourg – or both? – nobody was quite sure) kept telling them how to run their holiday boarding houses, what fish they could and could not catch, how much butter was to be produced, and so on. Worse, overloaded rubber

boats kept turning up along the shoreline, filled with desperate-looking and (possibly) diseased foreigners claiming asylum as refugees. Worst of all, these invaders were not only taking the bread out of the mouths of Little Luffington's residents but also

taking their jobs and claiming astronomical sums in benefits, to boot. (They knew this was true, because several very well known politicians had told them so in the months leading up to the Referendum.) Naturally, Little Luffington's residents voted overwhelmingly to 'Leave'.

Those residents of Little Luffington-on-Sea who found themselves surplus to local labour requirements (and there were quite a few), in order to earn enough money to keep body and soul together, understandably commuted daily to Greater-Luffington-in-the-Marsh, which had acquired in the last forty years an enviable reputation as a centre for finance, technology and UK-European co-operation.

Came the Referendum, the vast majority of Greater Luffingtonians voted to 'Remain'. No surprise there, then, either: outside Europe, they could see, even if they didn't actually have to emigrate, that the companies that employed them would almost certainly cease to exist, and Greater Luffington would, inevitably, disappear back into the marsh for which it had originally been named. After all, every single one of the other – heavy – industries for which the town had been famous in earlier centuries had become unprofitable and had been forced to close down.

Back in the real world, elsewhere in the kingdom (still, for the time being, united), Scotland and Northern Ireland voted equally strongly to 'Remain'. The canny Scots, keenly aware, as always, of the side on which their bread was buttered, wanted to have no truck with being cast adrift from a major economic lifeline because of the vagaries of a vote in a referendum that seemed to treat them as an afterthought or a minor province of Greater Westminster.

And the good Ulster folk were quick to realize that a 'Leave' decision would create, for the first time in the history of the British Isles, an international land border

with a foreign country. (The Republic of Ireland was in no way connected with or affected by the Referendum and would in any case remain within the European Union.) The need for this unprecedented frontier, with the very real possibility of formal Customs posts manned by armed guards, was blindingly obvious, one would have thought, but apparently had not occurred to those whose duty it was to safeguard the welfare and the future of a nation. Needless to say, many of the residents of Northern Ireland immediately rushed to acquire Irish passports so as to neutralize the situation. And the other possibility, that of a reunited Ireland, was also immediately raised, for the first time in several centuries.

Into this comic opera scenario – as entertaining and unlikely as anything conceived by Gilbert and Sullivan – stepped several equally unlikely figures, many having occupied senior positions in government.

For instance, a political party by the name of United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), led by Nigel Farage, had been formed twenty-five years earlier and by this time had one Member of Parliament in the House of Commons, three representatives in the House of Lords, and was the largest UK party in the European Parliament, with 22 Members. It had 488 councillors in UK local government and seven members in the National Assembly for Wales. Other figures emerged from within the ranks of the ruling Tory party, notably the redoubtable Boris Johnson (a previous Mayor of London) and the more devious but equally influential Michael Gove.

As soon as the Referendum 'Vote Leave' and 'Stronger Together' (Remain) campaigns started, the issues quickly became clear. First was the economy – especially economy with the truth. As the New Statesman website suggests: "Promptly after the Referendum result was announced, the official



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Obama: Parochial schools harm peace efforts

U.S. PRESIDENT Barack Obama has argued that parochial schools are an impediment to the establishment of a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. Speaking to a crowd in Belfast, during a trip to Northern Ireland for a G8 summit meeting, Obama said that “segregated schools” block the path to full reconciliation. “If towns remain divided, if Catholics have their schools and buildings and Protestants have theirs, if we can’t see ourselves in one another; if fear or resentment are allowed to harden, that encourages division, it discourages co-operation,” he said. Ironically, President Obama made his comments just as Archbishop Gerhard Müller, the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, told a crowd in Scotland that religious education upholds the dignity of the human person. Archbishop Müller said that Catholic schools should promote “all that is good in the philosophies of societies and human culture.”

– Catholic Culture.org June 18, 2013

Leave campaign wiped almost its entire website from the Internet. The site – which previously included the suggestion that the EU budget would be sent back to the National Health Service and included promises about trade deals – now just has a message thanking supporters.

“If there is one sentence that explains the referendum result, it’s this one from the website of the Advertising Standards Agency. ‘For reasons of freedom of speech, we do not have remit over non-broadcast ads where the purpose of the ad is to persuade voters in a local, national or international electoral referendum.’ In other words, political advertising is exempt from the regulation that would otherwise bar false claims and outrageous promises. You can’t claim that a herbal diet drink will make customers thinner, but you can claim that £350 million a week will go to the NHS instead of the European Union. The Leave camp promised us all a unicorn and now claim they merely hinted at the possibility of a pony.”

For the record, Nigel Farage, Boris Johnson and Michael Gove all swiftly distanced themselves from the main platforms of the campaign.

But, although the ‘Remainers’ were not innocent of some

mendacity, either, does any of this really matter? When a politician stands up to address us, do we not suspend our disbelief, just for a while? Is there an Australian electorate anywhere boasting voters who can honestly say that the issues concerning their home town on which they were asked to support their candidate have been conscientiously followed up and implemented, rather than that candidate being required to follow their party line, willy-nilly?

What, in my opinion, really accounted for the result was described by a commentator quoted in the New Yorker, who said: “What has certainly happened is that decades of globalization, deregulation, and policy changes that favoured the wealthy have left Britain a more unequal place, with vast regional disparities. The legacy of increased national inequality in the 1980s, the heavy concentration of those costs in certain areas, and our collective failure to address it has more to say about what happened [in the Referendum] than shorter term considerations from the financial crisis or changed migration flows.”

This view was certainly reinforced by ‘vox pop’ interviews, especially with older, retired working men in the north of England. All large

conurbations in Britain (the ‘Greater Luffingtons’), as well as the whole of Scotland and most of Northern Ireland, were very clear in their belief that remaining in Europe – with all its faults – was preferable to the vague alternatives on offer.

It is worth noting that for every thirteen ‘Leave’ votes, there were twelve ‘Remains’. If, as the most senior politician in the highest office in the land, you commit the country, whose citizens you were elected to represent, to a Referendum the result of which is capable of dismembering the very country in which you stand, a single yes-no, in-out vote *will not do*. In other words, if you ask a silly question, you must expect a silly answer.

The administration of the European Union may well be seen as chaotic, nonsensical and unpredictable to those who see themselves as victims of such remote high-handed mayhem. However, as has been pointed out many times, the best way to fix the problem, however long that may take, is from within it, rather than pontificating about it from a distant ivory tower.

Giles Auty well stated in his recent article, “The ambitions of Europe’s unelected elite are at least as remarkable as their frequent absence of sense – or of their terrifying inability to foresee inevitable consequences of their actions.” To which many supporters of the ‘Remain’ campaign might respond with a rueful ‘hear! hear!’ in respect of the fatally careless actions of Britain’s recently departed (*albeit elected*) Prime Minister.

One of the most famous and familiar of all political truisms – now two centuries old – is: “Every nation gets the government it deserves.” Giles and I are both from the UK originally and, though we take different positions on this issue, I doubt that he would wish thus to condemn the inhabitants of the land of our birth.

SAM SIMMONDS is a writer, broadcaster and film and video producer. Sam has worked in all aspects of media in the UK and Australia.



'HARK WHAT DISCORD FOLLOWS'

By William Shakespeare

THE HEAVENS themselves, the planets,
and this centre
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order;
... But when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues and what portents, what mutiny!
What raging of the sea, shaking of earth!
Commotion in the winds! frights, changes, horrors
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixture! O, when degree is shak'd,
Which is the ladder of all high designs,
The enterprise is sick. How could communities,
Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,
The primogenitive and due of birth,
Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,
But by degree stand in authentic place?
Take but degree away, untune that string,
And hark what discord follows. Each thing [meets]
In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,
And make a sop of all this solid globe;
Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead;
Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong
(Between whose endless jar justice resides)
Should lose their names, and so should justice too!
Then every thing include itself in power,
Power into will, will into appetite,
And appetite, an universal wolf
(So doubly seconded with will and power),
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And last eat up himself.

- Troilus & Cressida, Act 1, scene 3, lines 74-124

G.K. Chesterton is not an anti-Semite ... He does not hate the Jews. He is not their enemy. His ideas did not contribute to that tragedy that is the flashpoint of the twentieth century: Hitler's systematic attempt to annihilate the Jewish people in the Holocaust.

CHESTERTON AND ANTI-SEMITISM

By Dale Ahlquist



THE NAME Israel means 'The one who wrestles with God'. It was given to Jacob, the Number Three Hebrew Patriarch, after an

all-night bout with the angel of the Lord. And the people of Israel have indeed been wrestling with God ever since.

They have also been wrestling with everybody else. Being the Chosen People may have certain advantages, but it is also a tremendous burden, whether in carrying a sacred ark across a desert or maintaining an exclusive place of worship or dealing with a carpenter who claims to be divine or being scattered across the world as a nation without a country or, most recently, becoming a country without a world.

G.K. Chesterton says, 'The world owes God to the Jews.' Higher praise would be hard to come by. He calls them a 'noble and historic' people, but he, too, is aware of their ongoing wrestling match with God and neighbor. He says, 'Jews are a race in a unique and unnatural difficulty, cutting them off from the creative functions of a soil and the fighting responsibilities of a flag.' Their social and political dilemmas are not their fault, but their own plight has caused problems for Christians, whose traditions are entangled with theirs.

Chesterton sincerely tries to disentangle all of it, and if nothing else, understand it. Solving riddles is his work as well as his play. Consistently attacking racial theories,

Chesterton and the Jews – Friend, Critic, Defender by Ann Farmer (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Angelico Press, 2015) 530 pages, US\$21.95 (paperback)

dismantling determinist philosophies and doubting conspiracy theories, Chesterton lays out a philosophy in his writing that represents complete thinking. And we see all of him in it. There is no secret Chesterton. He is truly an open book. He has explained himself better than anyone else has ever explained him. He has done it by being immensely prolific and profound, immensely quotable and open-hearted.



Joy and love of truth

What is most evident in his voluminous writings is his joy and his love of truth. He is a good man, and people have been drawn to that goodness. He tells the truth, and people are drawn to that truth as well. Yet there are people who find his truth-telling irritating. Unable to attack his truth, they attack his goodness in order to discredit his truth. The reasoning is that truth spoken by a hypocrite may be disregarded. Unfortunately for Chesterton's critics, the facts of his life have not fit their theories. It keeps turning out that he really is good, perhaps even heroically good.

And so it has proved much easier to ignore him than to contest him. Ignoring him has proved to be an effective strategy: this literary giant is strangely absent from the curriculum, this once popular figure left out of early twentieth-century history, this master of controversy not invited to be part of the public debate.

However, just in case a Chesterton revival should kick in and he show up again and get noticed, his critics always keep ready a reliable handful of mud that can be flung at him to make him go away again. This Chesterton, they say, was, as everyone knows, an anti-Semite. A rabid anti-Semite. Therefore, not only can he not be a saint, he cannot even be taken seriously. Case closed again. Crisis averted. It was right to have ignored him.

But those of us who love Chesterton are distressed by that ugly accusation. And, though it seems to come as a shock, those of us who love Chesterton do not hate the Jews. And what is even more shocking, Chesterton does not hate the Jews, either.

Ann Farmer has devoted an entire book to the subject. The result of years of research, it is longer than most biographies of Chesterton. She has made a thorough and nearly exhaustive case defending him against the charge that has continually and recklessly been brought against him.

So let it be proclaimed still again: G.K. Chesterton is not an anti-Semite. And since that term is a slippery one, let us be even more specific: He does not hate the Jews. He is not their enemy. His ideas did not contribute to that tragedy that is the flashpoint of the twentieth century: Hitler's systematic attempt to annihilate the Jewish people in the Holocaust.

Though Chesterton never lived to see it happen, he warned the world that it could happen. And he had hoped to prevent it. In criticizing the critics, one has to walk a tightrope, because in defending someone against the charge of anti-Semitism one can in the process get the label stuck to oneself.

Misrepresented and misconstrued

Ann Farmer keeps her balance. She is careful and calm, scholarly and objective in presenting a massive amount of material with almost three thousand footnotes. She not only allows Chesterton to explain and defend himself, but she gives his accusers plenty of time at the podium.

In citing both the periodicals of his own time and the scholarly

studies on anti-Semitism since, she reveals one very troubling trend: Chesterton is constantly misrepresented and misconstrued, his comments torn out of context, his arguments disparaged and dismissed.

The literature repeats the anti-Semite epithet relentlessly and reflexively, and – especially in the case of London's Jewish Chronicle – with the worst adjectives and under inflammatory headlines. It is not surprising that Chesterton writes as



Israel Zangwill pointing something out to Chesterton as they left a Joint Select Committee Meeting of both Houses of Parliament in London on Stage Censorship. Israel Zangwill was a close associate of Theodore Hertzl founding father of the state of Israel.

much as he does about the subject: he is responding to what has been written about him. He shows much more graciousness and patience than is shown to him. For the most part he jokes about the 'legend' of his anti-Semitism, but his wife Frances confided in a diary that he was 'not a little hurt' by the accusation.

Jews have every right to be on guard against hatred and hostility toward themselves. However,

because of an often hair-trigger sensitivity on the subject, most Gentiles are very hesitant ever to venture any criticism at all of the Jews.

Chesterton is not. It is a matter of impartiality; he distributes his criticism to everyone and without malice. With America, he denounces Rockefeller and Carnegie and Ford on philosophical grounds, along with American 'hustle' and commercialism. Yet he praises the democratic experiment, the pioneer spirit, and 'the typical American' as opposed to 'the ideal American'.

With Germany, he calls out the dangerous fallacies in Bismarck and Hitler and the 'German Professors' and Prussianism (which is militarism and racialism), but he praises the German peasant, German music, and of course, German beer.

With his native England, he openly attacks imperialism, industrial capitalism, a corrupt Parliament, and a crumbling culture, but he praises the countryside, the thatched roofs, the English sense of humor, and the pub. With the Jews, he praises their loyalty to their families and to each other, their stubborn refusal to let their own identity disappear, their great

intelligence and creativity. But he explains his concerns about the 'cosmopolitan' Jew, and the 'secular' Jew, and the 'financial' Jew. The first is not restrained by a patriotism to the country in which he lives, the second is not restrained by his religion, and the third is not restrained by anything. None of the three represents the whole of the Jewish people or even the majority, but they represent a problem for the Jews.

Burrowing in a hole, or Standing on a Mountain

ONE OF THE very greatest and most human geniuses of the not very human seventeenth century was John Bunyan. His work is rightly regarded as a model and monument of completed English. But compare for one moment the moral atmosphere of the allegorist who wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress* with that of the allegorist who wrote *Piers Plowman*. They are both symbolical pageants of human life under the light of religion. Nobody will deny that the Puritan masterpiece is a more complete and coherent work of art; for the national language and literature have become more complete and coherent. But if it comes to broadmindedness, to brotherhood, to a survey of the mighty world, of every class, every problem, every political ideal, then Bunyan is burrowing in a hole while Langland is standing on a mountain. It is very right and even very glorious that Bunyan's statue at Bedford should stand facing the place where he lay in gaol; but there stands no statue on the Malvern Heights, where the great tribune of the Middle Ages saw his vision of justice for the whole world; the corporate common people gathered into one gigantic figure, labouring through clouds and confusions: till, in the last phase of mystery, he turns on us the terrible face of Christ.

— G.K. Chesterton, 'Introduction to a New Edition,' of *A Short History of England*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1924, p. x.

To deny the problem does not solve it. It is pointless to talk about Shylock and not mention the word 'usury'. Chesterton warns, 'A race simply rushes on to ruin when it thus ignores all that other people say about it.'

It is true that Chesterton's harping on international finance being controlled by Jews can be compared with Hitler's harping on the same subject. But looking in a rearview mirror one tends to see things backwards. Chesterton may have blamed international banking on a few rich Jewish families, but Hitler blamed everything on all the Jews.

Early critic of Hitler

And the proposed solutions are quite different. Chesterton only wanted to destroy the banks. Hitler wanted to destroy the Jews. Especially forgotten is that Chesterton is one of the earliest critics of Hitler when the rest of Europe, especially England, is still asleep. And he lambasts Hitler

for picking on the most famous scapegoat in history.

While attempting to present a balanced portrait, Farmer concedes, sometimes too easily, that Chesterton makes some unfavorable observations of the Jews, and she does not always expand more fully on his favorable comments. She generally reports the hostile criticisms of Chesterton without any filter, but at a couple of points she quietly observes that his critics come off as not only paranoid but savage. The evidence shows that they have failed utterly to understand Chesterton, and they have wrongly portrayed him as an enemy. Even if they do not agree with his assessment of the



problem, even if they resent it being presented as a 'problem', they are unfair and dishonest when they characterize Chesterton as being malicious.

She argues persuasively that Chesterton's main motive is the safety of the Jews because he sees that their position in Europe is insecure. It explains why he was enlisted by Jewish Zionists at a time when many Jews themselves were not Zionists.

She also explains how Gilbert Keith Chesterton was drawn into a complicated controversy that he might have been able to approach differently had not his brother Cecil been sued for libel by Godfrey Isaacs, a Jewish businessman who had been implicated in the Marconi Scandal, a case of insider trading that involved British cabinet members, one of whom was Godfrey's brother Rufus. Ironically, Chesterton's loyalty to his own brother made him understand the loyalty of the Isaacs brothers.

Shaw, Wells and the Chesterbelloc

A significant section of the book is given to exploring the ideas of George Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells, both of whom had much more distasteful theories about the Jews than Chesterton. They wanted the Jews to assimilate and thereby disappear, and they did not rule out heavy-handed, tyrannical measures to see their goals achieved. But their reputations have never suffered among the Jews the way Chesterton's has. The reader is left to infer the reason: Chesterton is a Christian, the other two are not.

Though Farmer writes at length about the "Chesterbelloc," she concludes that G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc are actually two different people who have two different theories about the Jews, though they continue to be clumped together and regarded as one four-footed beast.

And then there is that old and unpermitted objection that some of his best friends are Jewish. But

this argument cannot be so easily sneered at. There is not a believable explanation why the Jew-hating Chesterton has lifelong Jewish friends who adored him. There are even cases of Jews who do not want to meet him because of his reputation, but who become his friends and admirers after getting to know him and end up puzzled by what all the fuss was about.

Farmer gives quite a bit of space to the most interesting of these, the Jewish poet Humbert Wolfe, who regretted his earlier attitude toward Chesterton. And while he kept the company of Jews, G.K. resisted having anything to do with his own relative, the British fascist A.K. Chesterton. G.K. would not even answer A.K.'s letters.

While Farmer's treatment of the 'best friends' argument is well done, she will probably be taken to task for speculating that his very best friend, his wife Frances, was of Jewish descent.

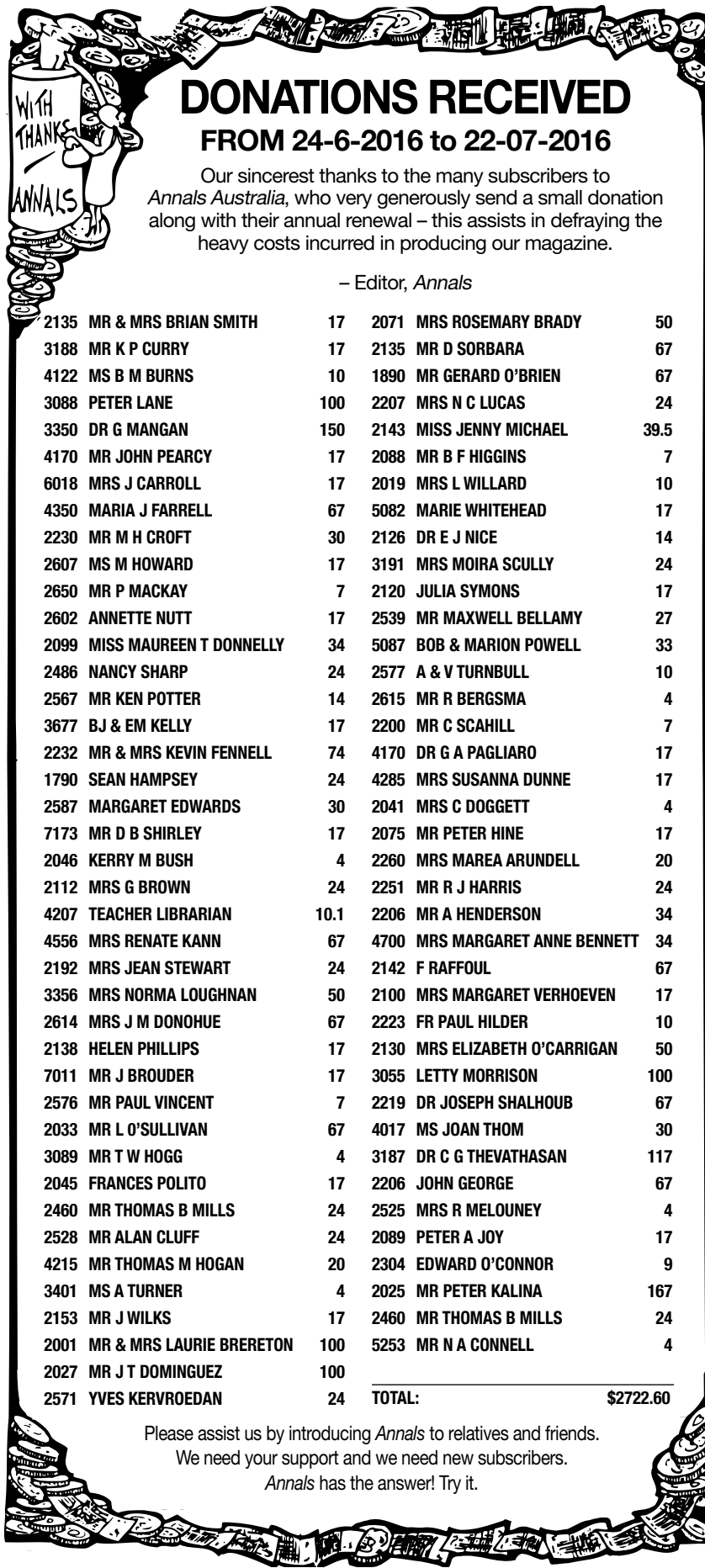
In sum total, the book is a powerful defense of Chesterton, and the conclusion is especially provocative.

Farmer shows that Chesterton's prophetic insights about the Jews have been unjustly ignored. Moreover, those who have criticized him for even saying there was a 'Jewish Problem' have become the very people who are now saying there is an 'Israel Problem', but who, of course, are frightfully quick to deny that they are anti-Semitic.

This long libel against Chesterton must finally come to an end, and I hope that this fine book will help bring that about. His ideas about the Jews may not be convincing to everyone, but at least let it be admitted that he has loved and has not hated the Children of Israel.

And let the Jews stand up with Rabbi Stephen Wise and say, "A blessing to his memory."

DALE AHLQUIST is an author, public speaker and convert to Catholicism from Evangelical Protestantism. This review is reprinted with permission from *The Defendant* (Spring 2015), the quarterly newsletter of the Australian Chesterton Society.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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Because the Romans, and to some extent the Greeks, thought it degrading and socially unacceptable for a great man to appear in public as either a singer, or a performer, they suppressed both consciously and otherwise, all mention of anything that would suggest such an occurrence.

SONG OF THE NAZARENE

[Part Three]

By John Colborne-Veel

IN THE FIRST century, singing was widely used as a means of amplifying the voice. Out of necessity, public speakers addressing large crowds, would have to sing or chant to be heard; for this reason most of Christ's public teaching must have been delivered in song.

Hebrews 2.12, quotes Jesus as saying, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee." The Greek verb used here meaning 'to praise' is the root from which our word 'hymn' is derived.

Apart from the Last Supper, this is the New Testament's only allusion to Jesus singing. St Jerome's Latin translation says simply *laudabo te*, 'I will praise you'.

Once again this raises a question: if Our Lord sang, why wasn't it mentioned in the New Testament? The answer to this question should be of great interest to musicians, because it has a direct bearing on the status of music

in the Catholic Church which was counter cultural as far as the Roman attitude towards singing was concerned.

Roman Attitude to Singing

Because the Romans, and to some extent the Greeks,

thought it degrading and socially unacceptable for a great man to appear in public as either a singer, or a performer, they suppressed both consciously and otherwise, all mention of anything that would suggest such an occurrence.

In the Eastern Byzantine Empire, the state's attitude to singers, musicians, and performers was such that their names were entered in a register. From that time on, they were deprived of the right to inherit or appear as a witness in court.¹ The Eastern Byzantine Church refused them the last sacraments and excluded them from baptism and holy communion.²

Their status was no better in the eyes of prominent pagans. When Julian the Apostate tried to reintroduce paganism he wrote to the High Priest issuing orders that effectively banned performers from having any contact with the pagan priesthood. The following was part of Julian's tirade: "Therefore let no [pagan] priest enter a theatre, or have an actor or a charioteer for his friend; and let no dancer or mime approach his door."³



King David and his harp forming the base of the column honouring the Immaculate Conception of Mary, in the Piazza di Spagna, Rome.

It would appear that as far as the Roman Empire was concerned the status of entertainers was such that it was illegal for them to take part in any form of state religion. Though highly paid and pampered, they were simply social outcasts.

The sheer hypocrisy and blindness of the society's attitude to singers and performers can be highlighted by briefly outlining the history and practice of Greek and Roman voice production in relation to the great orators who naturally came from the upper class.

The Roman Empire's foremost public speakers were orators, a profession that can be likened to that of a modern-day barrister. Orators spent a lot of time, 'singing their own praises' and generally thought of themselves as the cream of society. Many orators became famous by having their best speeches published and writing glowing personal accounts about contemporary life, some even wrote learned treatises on public speaking. However, in all this vast output no Roman orator ever admits to actually having sung a speech. This is surprising because orators certainly used a form of song to deliver their speeches, and the technique can be traced from the time of the Roman Empire, back to Ancient Greece.

Greek Learning and the Romans

In 307 BC, a pupil of Theophrastus named Demetrius of Phalerum fled from Athens to Egypt; where he subsequently organised Ptolemy's famous library and founded a line of scholars and scientists through whom Hellenic literary traditions and learning was eventually passed down to the Romans.⁴

From the third century BC onward, this line of Hellenic culture started to influence its Roman counterpart; in fact, many of the early leading figures in Latin literature were Greeks. The Roman statesman philosopher Aemilianus Scipio (185-129 BC) maintained

a coterie of poets and scholars as friends and advisors. The main aim of this so-called Scipionic Circle was to blend the best of Greek and Roman thought, and, their influence on the Republic's culture was immeasurable.⁵

Cicero (106-43 BC) observed that,

"When they had heard Greek orators and learnt about Greek Literature and procured Greek instructors, our people became unbelievably keen speakers."⁶

Marcus Tullius Cicero was Rome's most accomplished orator, and, his writings on the subject of public speaking contain much of interest. Cicero thought that the ideal orator should have:

"The acuteness of a logician, the profundity of a philosopher, the diction virtually of a poet, the voice of a performer in a tragic drama and the gestures, ... of an actor at the top of his profession."⁷

Cicero's first two ideals speak for themselves, as does the last, the others however mean more than an initial glance might suggest and should be of great interest to all who are interested in voice production.

Singing and Oration

In singing, correct diction and placement of the voice assure good tone production. Cicero is referring to this when he writes about "The diction of a poet," and Roman poets expected their works to be sung. For example, Pliny the younger (AD 61-113) mentions lyric poetry, "Which calls for a chorus and a lyre."

Pliny was proud of his poetry because it has been, "Sung and set to the cithara or lyre by Greeks."⁸ Likewise, when Cicero talks of, "The voice of a performer in a tragic drama," he is referring to singing. Roman tragic actors, spent years training their voices, and carefully warmed up before a performance by singing a set number of chants and arias.

Cicero described the tragic actor's warming up process, and

noted that they started by,

"Throwing themselves flat on the ground. From there they declaim; and the sounds they utter grow gradually louder and louder. Then when they have finished their stage appearance, they come back and sit down, and in that position they regain control of their voices, so to speak by gradually bringing them down from the highest treble to the deepest bass."⁹

In other words, a Roman actor's vocal technique was akin to that of a modern day opera singer.

Roman speakers, liked to model their style on that of the great Greek orator Demosthenes (384-322 BC), who sang his speeches, and being somewhat fussy about intonation, employed an assistant to sound the pitch with a whistle.¹⁰ Cicero noted that his elocution teacher Roscius was: "Fond of remarking that the older he gets the more he wants the flautist who accompanies him to moderate his speed and intensity."¹¹ Adding to this, Cicero mused that:

"It should be a very great deal easier for ourselves, too, to quieten our tones down - and even change them altogether."

Singers and the Lower Classes

The Romans had no real interest in music, unlike the Greeks; they regarded professional entertainers, and especially singers, as belonging to the lower classes. Horace (65-8 BC) relates that, "Even during the time of the Roman Empire, Phoenician and Syrian female musicians, whose reputation for immorality was known would be found in the Ambudajarum Collegia...and in the Circus offering themselves."¹²

The Roman social elite did not condone its members associating with performers; in 65 AD Nero caused a national scandal and alienated himself from Rome's upper class, when he appeared publicly in the theatre as a professional musician; then added insult to injury the following year

by repeating the performance at the Olympic and Delphic Games in Greece.¹³ Upper class Romans tolerated their peer group indulging in almost any form of vice, except, singing and playing in public.

To avoid any direct mention of their leading citizens performing in public, Roman society adopted the use of euphemisms; this effectively stopped sung prose from being consciously considered as anything more than public speaking.

If the Gospel had portrayed Jesus as a singer, it would have estranged a large proportion of the Roman Empire's population..

Greek and Roman attitudes to music have affected our aesthetic judgment; and to some extent this is reflected in modern translations of the Bible where there seems to be a tendency to do away with musical references. A good example of this process is provided by Hebrews 2:12 quoted above; in the Bible Societies' 'Good News' edition of the New Testament, Christ's words: "will I sing praise unto thee" have been retranslated as, "I will praise you in their meeting".

The Old Testament seems to have suffered from translators as well; among other things most modern translations have removed from the Psalms, interesting musical references¹⁴ addressed to the choirmaster; for example: Ps. 9-10, 'For the choirmaster: for oboe and harp': Ps. 54, 'On stringed instruments'; Ps. 60, 'To the tune of "the decree is a lily" in a quiet voice'.¹⁵

The Nazarene

'Ha-Nazir' (the singer) – may well originally have been a title that praised Our Lord's voice and song and role as a rabbi who sang. It is also more than likely that 'Nazareth,' his home town, took its name from its famous son: the Nazir Jesus, for 'Nazaeth' is not found in any of the Onomasticons or Town Lists of Galilee, that have survived from the first century AD.

The Leaven

THERE has never been a time when society was completely Christian; Christianity has never been more than a leaven working in the world, and its work is never finished. The Roman Empire had hardly ceased to be pagan before it found itself Arian. The Christianization of Western Europe was hardly complete when the Reformation came. The Church does not wait until she finds a sound foundation of natural truth and natural virtue ... She sows her seed broadcast among publicans and harlots, in the corruption of the great Roman and Hellenistic cities, in the welter of barbarism and violence of the Dark Ages, in the slums of Manchester and New York.

– Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1935, p.146

Fortunately, Jewish people have no inhibitions about their leaders singing; King David, for instance, was not only renowned for his diplomacy, bravery and wisdom but also for his skill as a poet and musical virtuosity (both vocal and instrumental); so it seems somehow fitting, that the Messiah should be known as the first great cantor of the Catholic Church.

Singing and the Early Church

From the beginning, singing was an essential part of Christian worship. In regard to this, the dignity and heartfelt nature of song in the early church is in stark contrast to the rather ephemeral and grandstanding nature of the

Greek and Roman orators' carefully contrived vocal gymnastics.

Mary's Song of Praise;¹⁶

The Sermon on the Mount;

Our Lord singing at the Last Supper;

St Paul and Silas singing in prison.¹⁷

In the second century, Christians "met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately amongst themselves in honour of Christ, as if to a god."¹⁸

The song of the Nazarene was carried by the Martyrs, who, "paid no heed to torture in all its terrifying forms, but undaunted spoke boldly of their devotion to the God of the universe and with joy, laughter, and gaiety received the final sentence of death: they sang and sent up hymns of thanksgiving to the God of the universe till their very last breath."¹⁹

JOHN COLBORNE-VEEL was a regular contributor to *Annals* until his death in 2013. For six years John was President of the Fellowship of Australian Composers. He was a distinguished jazz musician, composer and librettist, and wrote Australia's only jazz mass, *St Mary - A Festival Mass with Jazz Soloists* which was first played at the Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Randwick, NSW. This series of articles on the history of Catholic Music was his farewell gift to *Annals*.

1. The social stigma attached to entertainers preceded Christianity by hundreds of years
2. Ergon Wellesz *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1949 pp. 89 and 91
3. *ibid* p. 84.
4. Cassell's *Encyclopaedia of Literature*, Volume 1 p.265.
5. *Encl. Brit.*
6. Cicero, 'On the Good Life', (Penguin Classics p.240).
7. *Ibid.*
8. *The Letters of The Younger Pliny*, Book 7, xvii Letter to Caecilius, Penguin ed. p.195; iv, Letter to Allifanus, ed. cit.p.187.
9. Cicero, 'On the Good Life', Penguin p.329-330; 'On the Orator', 1 59-250.
10. Mircea Eliade *Encl. of Religion*, Volume 3 p.204 'Chanting.'
11. Cicero 'On the Good Life' Penguin p.331.
12. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music* p.6. See also footnote 27.
13. Boak-Sinnigen, *A History of Rome* p.307
14. In the *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (p.700), Willie Apel states: "the inscriptions of many psalms do not, as was formally assumed, refer to instruments but to standard melodies to be used for a given psalm. For instance, 'To the chief musician upon Gittith' actually means: 'to be sung to the main melody 'wine press (lilies etc.)' terms that indicate melody types similar to the Arab maqamat". Apel seems to have taken this information from: C. Sachs *The History of Musical Instruments*. [Apel is quoting from the King James translation of the Bible].
15. The correct translation can be found in *The New Jerusalem Bible*.
16. Luke 1:46
17. Acts, xiv, 25
18. *The Letters of Pliny the Younger*, Penguin Classics p.293.
19. Eusebius *The History Of The Church*, Penguin Classics p.275.



MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Reality stats

There must be a demographer (Bernard Salt?) who knows whether there is a statistical overlap between those who have divorced and those who support 'Marriage equality'.

Point? If divorced, you obviously don't believe marriages are equal, you believe your current marriage is more equal than any previous.

Apropos, why has Opposition Leader Bill Shorten changed his stance on the 'Marriage Equality' plebiscite? Simple – possibly too simple for proponent commentators: Shorten and likeminded trimmers seek to win 'Marriage Equality' supporters as a compensation for the Labor voters who have switched to the Liberals, Nationals, Greenies, Hansonites, Family Firsters, Xenophonites, ex-Palmerites and the one and only Senator Derryn Hinch.

Shorten cites his fear that the plebiscite will cause a rage of homophobic insult. He has said little or nothing on 'Marriage Equality' proponents who attempt to shut down debate on the matter.

In Shorten's opportunistic lexicon, shouldn't they be called heterophobes, and told to allow others the freedom of speech they used to win their current salient?

As it is, theirs is the intolerance of neo-puritans whose stridency is in ratio to their sense that their cause is regressive rather than progressive.

Equal public funding for both sides in the plebiscite may be contentious. But at least, it is fairer than corporate support for one side, even fairer than the Irish referendum, won on the basis of the huge one-sided contribution of an Irish millionaire living at rainbow's end in America.

Old morality

The moral objection to 'Marriage Equality' as against sentimental support for it is based on natural law in turn validated by the fact that no language has a specific term for homosexual unions.

Some, including Stephen Fry, argue from animal behaviour that homosexual relations are natural. Human beings are, however, of higher order – otherwise Fry would be able to cite the example of an elephant wearing the natural equivalent of Dr Condom's invention.

Is the distinction between gay and lesbian based on a misunderstanding: homosexual derives from the Greek 'homos' meaning 'same' it has nothing to do with the Latin 'homo' meaning man. Incidentally, long ago and faraway in Scotland your correspondent learnt that 'gay' somehow derived from 'the gay Gordons' but that this was a misprint for 'gey' meaning odd, strange, queer.

Gallipoli recalled

The current gap in World War I and II publications provides the opportunity to consider a book sure to affect perceptions of World War I, particularly Gallipoli; its title is, *Deutschland Uber Allah!* (Australian Scholarly Publishing, \$44).

Its sub-title, *Germany, Gallipoli and the Great War*, indicates that its author John F. Williams tapped an unusual source, German archives.

From these Williams obtained information destructive of the notion that the Dardanelles campaign was a sideshow compared to the Western Front. He quotes Grand Admiral Alfred Tirpitz: 'Should the Dardanelles fall, the world war has been decided against us.'

And from the same archives Williams finds a new protagonist of victory: U-boat Kapitanleutnant Otto Hersing. His



torpedoing of the battleships Majestic and Triumph, Williams argues cogently, was the decisive point of the campaign.

Here Williams takes issue with Australia's official war historian CW Bean who scorned the effectiveness of flat-trajectory naval gunfire against land entrenchments. Bean, Williams suggests, may have observed such gunfire but did not endure it, adding that the daily Majestic-Triumph gunfire was having a profound effect on Turkish morale.

As a consequence, the sinking of the battleships under the eyes of the Ottoman Turkish and British imperial forces boosted the morale of the former and lowered the morale of the latter.

The Williams work, text, bibliography, notes and index, runs to 200 pages. He mentions the detail of Bean's multi-volume official history and notes that it was published before the official histories of other campaign participants, giving it a pre-eminence.

Williams also tapped the work of American correspondents who, neutral until 1917, were based in Constantinople/Istanbul and reported how close the German-Ottoman Turkish forces came to defeat.

He also shows how important German commercial investment was when Turkey came to deciding which side to join. While emphasising the importance of Liman Von Sanders and the officers of the German military mission relative to Mustafa Kemal, Williams also emphasises the extent to which Von Sanders was responsible for the forced evacuation of Greek civilians from Gallipoli, an evacuation that resulted in the death of the majority.

He uses the terms 'war crime', 'ethnic cleansing' and 'genocide', usually applied to Armenians, remarking that Greek

Australians who celebrate Anzac Day are mostly unaware that it also marks the start of the extermination of a 2000-year old branch of their people.

Perhaps the ultimate distinction of the Williams work is that it makes no mention of Keith Murdoch's Gallipoli Letter, nor for that matter EF Benson's 1918 work of the same title (price two pence).

There again it makes no mention of what were potentially more noble documents: Pope Benedict XV's peace proposals from 1914 to 1917, their leitmotif that the war was, 'the suicide of civilised Europe'.

Williams does, however, include a telling quotation from Roland Barthes: 'Myth deprives the subject of which it speaks of all history. In it, history evaporates.'

To some this may sound like a variation on John Ford's, *The Man who Shot Liberty Valance*, and the line: 'When the truth becomes legend, print the legend.'

In *Deutschland Uber Allah!* John F. Williams has written a book that puts truth ahead of legend.

Sam's junket

Writing of the political class in the June issue, your correspondent had no idea that one of its youngest members,

Senator Sam Dastyari, would so quickly be revealed as – no cliché like the tip of the iceberg – but as the wishbone in the chicken chow mein of Chinese influence.

On the lazy Susan were revelations about his debt-reassignment dealings with Chinese business folk in relation to his positive views on South China's Sea policies.

Will Senator Dastyari play it again Sam? Probably. Like the generals Napoleon preferred, the senator is lucky; his promotion to the Senate front bench, courtesy Bill Shorten, meant he could beat a tactical retreat.

Light on a Dark Horse

THE TERRORS of the Rome under the Caesars reached a climax in the recitation of the poets. All the literature of the time, especially Pliny's letters and Martial's epigrams show what a nuisance the verse writer had become, and what immense demands he made on the time and patience of his friends whom he invited [corrogabat] to hear him read his own verse.

– J. D. Duff, *D. Iunii Iuvenalis Saturae XIV*, Cambridge, 1957, p.137.
'Corrogare' however means 'much more than he 'invited'. It is more like 'he pestered,' 'importuned'. Ed. *Annals*.



Had he still been on the backbench, he would have had to exit via the backdoor, tagged Disastyari.

Should he cease being point man in attacks on corporate misbehaviour? Never. He should return to it while making it clear to bank executives that he like them was motivated by greed, his relatively petty, theirs the pacemaker for the widening gap between rich and poor.

Bourke sight

The revelation of Dastyari's misdemeanours came from Latika Bourke (Fairfax Media) who deserved more credit from commentators who feasted on her cuttings and urged reform of the whole political donations business.

Even with bipartisan support, however, such reform will not be easy. There's a legal decision in place stating that a ban on donations is unconstitutional.

The strictures of Fairfax Media sit ill with its inclusion of Chinese propaganda supplements. But not so long ago, News Corporation ran pieces on the Chinese Century so flattering they were akin to kow-towing.

Little wonder that sections of the local Chinese community decided to celebrate the life and achievements of Mao Tse Tung (Zedong?). Envisaged was not a satire like the Mel Brooks comedy, *Springtime with Hitler*, say, *The Great Leap Backward*, based on the work of Pierre Ryckmans, scenery by Bill Leak, narrator Bob Carr.

Objections to the celebrations came from within Australia's Chinese communities, a sign that democratisation will come not through flattery but through the worldwide Chinese diaspora on song with the island communities of Hong Kong, Singapore, Macau and Taiwan and above all through the hidden archipelago of faith within mainland China.

Underemphasised is that the Chinese government, avowedly Marxist-Communist, is using classic capitalist means to achieve collectivisation of the means of production. It's as if the government's cyber specialists had hacked into any number of equity-funder companies. This tactic has

blindsided both the Right and Left, the first because of the tactics used; the second because the objective was until recently official policy.

Hence the move to acquire the vast Kidman properties, a collectivist fit for the already acquired lease of the Port of Darwin; hence also the attempt to acquire the NSW electricity grid, a collectivist fit to the already acquired Victoria and South Australia grid.

Class jaw

The key difficulty in discussing the political class is defining it. Your correspondent mentioned several of its segments. He now thinks its local growth was bipartisan; Gough Whitlam's Labor Government recruited journalists as staffers; his supplanter Malcolm Fraser reinforced the system by setting up a group of journalists to monitor the work of other journalists.

Somewhere along the line, these staffers acquired the anonymity accorded to public servants, possibly because they were inclined to leak and in so doing got the anonymity of sources.

But the political class expands like the universe – or a jelly-fish, trailing multiple tentacles. Think Senator Stephen Conroy played his resignation ace of spades and commentators predicted he would join the Kerry Stokes TV team. Think Peta Credlin announcing that she was adding a job at James Packer's Casinodom to her TV and print jobs with News Limited connections.

She did emphasise that lobbying was not part of her job description. It is fair to add that although Rupert Murdoch may have taken many a gamble, he is not pro the casino industry. His elder son Lachlan, now running the business with his brother James, does have a history of mutual financial catastrophe alongside Packer.

The possibility of Packer's gaining the licence rights to an Israel's casino has triggered concerns about it's being a first. Not so. Roman Army invaders were gamblers, most notably casting lots on the vesture of a condemned man tagged, Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews.

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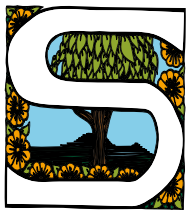
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St. Faustina died in late 1938. Just a few years later quarry-labourer Karol Wojtyla, the future Pope St. John Paul II, would end a hard day's work and go to pray at her grave before he had his evening meal. When he was older he was greatly helped by reading her diary, written in obedience to her spiritual director.

SISTER FAUSTINA'S DIARY

By Paul Glynn



SISTER FAUSTINA KOWALSKA, see *Annals* 2016/2, was a genuine mystic, and at the command of Jesus, and strongly encouraged by her Jesuit Spiritual Director who became quite sure of her genuineness, she began to write what is now a spiritual classic, the 644 page book “Diary—Divine Mercy in my Soul.” It comprises the messages that Jesus communicated to St. Faustina. Many see these as a continuation in modern times of the devotion to the Sacred Heart revealed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque from 1673 to 1675.

On page 115 of the authorized English translation of Faustina’s Diary, Jesus tells her: ‘Bring your ear close to my heart.’ There follow many pages of beautiful experiences of seeing Jesus during Mass, in her own room etc., with truly uplifting messages.

But in this Diary, written only because her Jesuit Spiritual Director told her she must, there are harrowing Dark Nights of the Soul, as there were in the lives of other saints – St. Therese of Lisieux and Saint Teresa of Calcutta.

For instance the entry for February 2, 1938, on page 553 of the 644 page Diary in its English version, eight months before she died of tuberculosis at the age of 33, she wrote:

‘Darkness of the soul. Today is the feast of the Mother of God and in my soul it is so dark. The Lord has hidden himself, and I am alone, all alone. My mind has become so dimmed that I see only phantasms about. Not a single ray of light penetrates my soul ... Frightful temptations regarding the holy faith assail me. O my Jesus, save me. I cannot say anything more. I cannot describe these things in detail, for I fear lest someone be scandalized on reading this. I am astounded that such torments should befall a soul. O hurricane, what are you doing to the boat of my heart ? This storm has lasted the whole day and night.’

Readers all around the world testify to being greatly helped by the Diary’s spiritual wisdom and encouraging practical guidance. Pope John Paul II canonized Faustina, as the very first canonized saint of the New Millennium.

On Divine Mercy Sunday, 2001 he said: ‘The message [Sister Faustina] brought is the appropriate and incisive answer that God wanted to offer to the questions and expectations of human beings in our times marked by terrible tragedies.’

One obvious and terrible Sign of the Times for St. Faustina’s mission and message, is the history of Poland from 1939 until the end of the Russian Communist Empire on December 8, 1991.

Hitler became Nazi dictator while she was a nun. In the Dairy she is often warned by Jesus to pray for Poland. Hitler had precise plans to exterminate all European Jews and all Poles. Post-invasion Poland was to be inhabited only by Germans, mainly farmers who would produce all the wheat and grains needed by the Third Reich, the Nazi Empire that Hitler promised was to last 1,000 years.

During five years of occupation the Nazis killed six million Poles – half of them Jews. The Nazis also exterminated one third of the Polish intelligentsia and the same percentage of Catholic priests. Hitler saw these two



Setting the Record Straight

THE TERM “auto-de-fe” does not mean execution, let alone burning at the stake, but is best translated as ‘act of faith’. The Inquisitors were far more concerned with repentance than with punishment, and therefore an auto-de-fe consisted of a public appearance by persons convicted of various sins who offered public confessions of their guilt and were thereby reconciled to the Church. Only very rarely did an auto-de-fe end with the offender being surrendered to the civil authorities for execution ... Turning to the fully recorded period, of the 44,674 cases, 826 people were executed, which amounts to 1.8 percent of those brought to trial. All told, then, during the entire period 1480 through 1700, only about ten deaths per year were meted out by the Inquisition all across Spain, a small fraction of the many thousands of Lutherans, Lollards, and Catholics (in addition to two of his wives) that Henry VIII is credited with having boiled, burned, beheaded, or hanged. Then, during the subsequent century (1530 to 1630), the English averaged 750 hangings a year, many of them for minor thefts. In contrast, the few who were sentenced to death by the Spanish Inquisition usually were repeat offenders who would not repent.

– Rodney Stark, *Bearing False Witness: Debunking Centuries of Anti-Catholic History*, Templeton Press, Pennsylvania 2016, pp. 121-122. Rodney Stark is not a Catholic.

classes as the ones that could inspire a Resistance Movement.

In the second half of 1944 Russian Communist forces defeated the Nazis in Poland, and ruthlessly continued the Nazis rule of oppression. They set up an atheistic government hell bent on destroying the Catholic Church and ridding the land of belief in God.

Religion was quickly banned from schools and universities, Catholic hospitals and charity organizations were taken over by the state, many monks and seminarians were forced to ‘go home’ and bishops and priests arrested. Cardinal Wyszynski was imprisoned for three years. Free trade unions were banned, many Catholic lay leaders were shipped to Siberian gulags. Catholic media was heavily censored.

However the gallant Poles fought back with spiritual weapons. The shrine of Mary at Czestochowa became a rallying place for the spirit. People from all over Poland kept walking there on pilgrimage,

despite government efforts to stop them. The devotion of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, with its striking ikon that Jesus revealed to Sr. Faustina, spread across the nation, strongly promoted by Cardinal Karol Wojtyla.

Unforgettable are those scenes on TV when that same cardinal returned to Poland as Pope John Paul II, inspiring the freedom revolution begun by Lech Walesa and Solidarity, beginning the end of the evil Communist Empire.

Throughout Faustina’s Diary, many messages from the Lord centre on the Eucharist and its utter essentiality and dynamism in a faithful Catholic’s life. However together with very beautiful Eucharistic passages there are some strong complaints from the Lord, firstly addressed to lukewarm communicants.

The Diary entry for 19 November, 1937 on page 494 reads:

‘After Communion today, Jesus told me, I desire to unite myself with human souls. Know my daughter that when I come

to a human heart in Holy Communion, My hands are full of all kinds of graces which I want to give to the soul. But souls do not even pay any attention to me; they leave me to Myself and busy themselves with other things. Oh, how sad I am that souls do not recognize Love. They treat me as a dead object.’

Jesus made a similar complaint to St. Margaret Mary.

Surely the saddest ‘Signs of the Time’ for practising Catholics living in today’s affluent West are the revelations of sexual sins by priests and religious committing formerly unbelievable, serialized crimes against children, leading to deadly depression, loss of belief and even suicide by the victims.

Diary, September 19, 1937, page 464 carries a heart- broken complaint from Our Lord. It goes a long way to answering the ‘why?’ ‘Why?’ of this sadder than sad religious criminality. It resembles that frightening verse 3:16 of the Book of Revelation, about Christ ‘spewing’ the guilty out of his mouth. And we receive the Eucharist in our mouth.

On that September day in 1937 Sr. Faustina received a heartbreaking message explaining how a priest or religious who receives the Eucharist daily can become a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

‘Today the Lord told me, “My daughter, write that it pains me very much when religious souls receive the Sacrament of Love merely out of habit as if they did not distinguish this food. I find neither faith nor love in their hearts. I go to such souls with great reluctance. It would be better if they did not receive me.”’

Seminarians and novices today are bluntly warned that the celibate religious life is full of real danger to oneself and to others, if one is not praying from the heart, daily.

“Brother” Andrew was an Australian Jesuit priest whom Mother Teresa had help her set up of the male branch of her Missionaries of Charity. In a retreat

he gave to lay people at 'God's Farm' near Margaret River, W.A. in the early 1990s he put it chillingly: 'Beware of a priest who does not pray. He is a dangerous man.'

When I was not long ordained, a nun asked me if I was going to be 'a Linen priest.' I had never heard the expression and asked her to explain. She replied,

'A Linen priest is one who regularly goes straight from the bed linen, to the altar linen for Mass, and then immediately to the breakfast table linen. No real preparation for Mass, and no real thanksgiving after Mass.'

Later I discovered she had a brother who left the priesthood. So she was warning me that the only real way for a priest to keep his vow of celibacy is taking time daily for 'prayer of the heart,' before and after Mass.

In May, 1938, Entry 1702 in Diary, Jesus again complained of priests and religious

'without love or devotion ... lukewarm ... neither good nor bad ... full of self-love.' Sr. Faustina's 'heart was seized with pain and I wept bitterly ... Then the Lord looked at me kindly and comforted me with these words: "Do not cry. There are still a great number of souls who love me very much, but my heart desires to be loved by all and, because my love is great. That is why I warn and chastise"

St. Faustina died in late 1938. Just a few years later, quarry-labourer Karol Wojtyla, the future St. John Paul II, would end a hard day's work and go to pray at her grave before he had his evening meal. When he was older he was greatly helped by reading her diary, written in obedience to her spiritual director.

Later as pope, releasing his second Encyclical, *Rich in Mercy*, he said that her Diary was very much in his thoughts as he wrote the Encyclical.

FATHER PAUL GLYNN, SM has spent 25 years as a missionary in Japan. Author of *A Song for Nagasaki*, and *Healing Fire From Frozen Earth*, Father Glynn is stationed at Villa Maria, Hunters Hill, NSW.



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BUILDING PROBLEMS IN BITHYNIA

By Paul Stenhouse



OME PEOPLE, looking back on the past find themselves rather like François Jacob, the famous French Nobel Prize-winning scientist who was born in 1920. When he searched his memory he found it difficult to recognize himself as a youth, and compared himself looking back on his early years, to a bird ‘contemplating the shell he has just broken out of, saying, “Me? In there? Never!”¹

If that is the experience of people who look back over such a relatively short space of time, one can sympathise with those whose school curriculum never included ancient history. How are such as they to cope with someone born not in 1920, like François Jacob, but in 61/62 AD like Caius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, [known as Pliny the Younger]?

It humbles us, surely, to realise that Qoheleth, the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes who wrote in Hebrew, in the third century before Christ, knew as we sometimes forget, that ‘there is nothing new under the sun’.²

Pliny was called ‘the Younger,’ because his uncle and adopted father was the famous natural historian Caius Plinius Secundus [the Elder] who died from the effect of gasses emitted by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in August 79 AD.

As he is more than likely an ancestor of some of our readers, just as many of his contemporaries would be, it more than repays our trouble to look at some of the issues he faced as Imperial Legate in Bithynia on the Asian side of the Bosphorus in modern-day Turkey, in North Western Anatolia, from 111 AD, and how he dealt with them.

Most of them are still issues that many of us have to face today and it may help to see how our remote relatives coped.



Pula, in northern Croatia, is close to Trieste, and across the Adriatic from Venice and Padua. Its amphitheatre is among the six largest surviving Roman arenas in the world. Its arena [named from the ‘sand’ that covered its area] was built between 27 BC – 68 AD. The amphitheatre was completed in 81 AD under the emperor Titus. It is one of 200 surviving Roman amphitheatres.

Take Nicaea for instance, where the first Ecumenical Council was held 325 AD. This biggish town in what is now Northern Turkey, was evidently in the middle of a building boom. A new theatre was almost finished, basilicas and colonnades had been planned and the money promised, but not much had been done, and a gymnasium had been burnt down and was in the process of being rebuilt. If that wasn’t enough of a headache for

the Legate, nearby, the people of Claudiopolis were busily excavating Baths in a depression at the foot of a mountain.

A shadow lay over all these works, and poor Pliny who was an amiable Legate, needed advice from the Emperor. Unlike the director of *The Gladiator* he had to do more than call in computer programmers who would create the illusion of a theatre. He was battling an illusion, and feared that ‘in our anxiety to save what had already been

spent, we would be throwing good money after bad’ – *ne dum servare volumus quod impensum est, male impendamus quod addendum est.*³

The problem was one all too familiar to State and Federal treasurers in our own day: even though the accounts hadn’t yet been audited – *neque enim ratio operis excussa est* – Pliny feared that the cost of the theatre would

exceed ten million sesterces – and all for nothing – *vereor ne frustra.*

His fears were better founded than the theatre itself: ‘immense cracks had appeared’ – *ingentibus enim rimis desedit et hiat* – either because of the ‘soft and moist earth’ – *solum unidum et molle* – or because ‘the stone was crumbling’ – *sive lapis ipse gracilis et putris*. As for the buttresses and foundations, Pliny found them ‘expensive and worthless’ – *non tam firmas mihi*

quam sumptuosae videntur.

Monies had been ‘pledged from local people’ – *ex privatorum pollicitationibus* – towards the cost of the basilicas [quadrangular buildings with 2, 3 or 5 aisles] that formed part of the ‘theatre’ but so far nothing was forthcoming.

Not keeping such promises must have been common in Pliny’s time, for one of the laws passed by Trajan obliged either the person who promised the money, or his heirs, to cough up the money; or else.⁴

The Gymnasium that had been burnt down was being rebuilt ‘roomier and more spacious’ – *numerosius laxiusque*. According to Pliny the work was poorly planned – *incompositum* – and the money that had been granted ‘would in all likelihood be wasted’ – *periculum est ne parum utiliter*.

Pliny went on to a different architect for a second opinion. This architect stabbed his rival in the back ‘by saying that the walls were not thick enough to carry the structure’ – *adfirmit parietes inposita onera sustinere non posse*. The walls were, in fact, twenty-two feet thick. The walls of the Pantheon in Rome were less than twenty feet wide and they had to support the biggest dome in the empire, so Pliny must have wondered about the advice he was given; though he quoted it to the emperor – just to cover his back.

Poor Pliny threw up his hands in horror at the proposed Baths being built in the depression at the foot of a mountain. He asked the Emperor to send him an architect who could advise him ‘lest we end up throwing good money after bad’.

How Trajan found time from his wars and administration to reply to his Legate in Bithynia only Barack Obama can tell us, but he gave Pliny *carte-blanche* with the theatre, ‘only let me know what you decide’ – *mihi sufficiet indicari cui sententiae accesseris* – and insisted that Pliny make those who pledged the money pay up.

He went on: ‘Greeks have an inordinate liking for gymnasia’ – *gymnasiis indulgent Graeculi* – and

ANNALS CROSSWORD NO. 92

<p>Across clues</p> <p>2 1960’s teenager; modern 4 Religious system based on Babism 6 Gaining money by working 8 Large reservoir for liquids or gas 9 Discontinue 11 Scottish dagger 12 Ancient Roman poet 14 City spared the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19) 15 Sixth month of the Hebrew calendar 16 Network of vertical and horizontal lines 18 To seize hold of 19 Black tropical American birds 21 List of options on a computer 22 Sellers of food and supplies 24 Unit of heat 25 Lyric poem</p>	<p>Down clues</p> <p>1 Author of three letters in the New Testament 2 Companion of Barnabas and Paul 3 Raised platform for speaking 4 Financial institution 5 To the interior 6 Piece of jewelry 7 Controls national affairs 8 Regal headpiece 10 Eastern rice dish 11 Domesticated animal 13 To invest with a knighthood 17 Scandalous information (slang) 18 Microorganism causing disease 20 District of central London 21 Just common, nothing special 23 To concede an argument</p>
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cautions that they must be made to understand – *suadendum est* – that they should be ‘content with what is sufficient for their needs’ – *sed oportet illos eo contentos esse quod possit illis sufficere*.

The use of *suadendum* indicates some displeasure on the part of the Emperor at the chicanery and corruption over the building of the Theatre and Gymnasia.

As for the architect that Pliny requests, well, says Trajan there

should be plenty of good architects in Bithynia. He warns, with a twinkle in his words, that it would be unwise to think that it would be quicker to get one sent from Rome: ‘the ones here have usually come from Greece’ – *ex Graecia etiam ad nos venire soliti sunt* – an imperial caution against ‘carrying coals to Newcastle’.

1. *The Statue Within*, Basic Books, 1988, p.15
 2. Ecclesiastes, 1,9
 3. *C. Plinius Traiano imperatori*, ‘De theatro Nicensium’ Ep. xxxviii [xlvii]

MOVIES

Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ

Nothing is ever as bad as rumoured. Indeed in some respects director Timur Bekmambetov's version of the Lew Wallace novel is superior to William Wyler's, perceived as classic since its release in 1959.

The new version is more consistent with the novel, depicting an early intervention in the story by Christ, played by Rodrigo Santoro; the new version also includes words spoken by Christ.

True, Jack Huston and Toby Kebbell as Judah Ben-Hur and Messala Severus do not match the gravitas of Charlton Heston and Stephen Boyd in the roles. But again a horse race between Ben-Hur and Severus in the new version repeats an actuality of Wallace's life; a Union general in the Civil War, he took part in a race against his fellow general Ulysses S. Grant – and won.

Wallace wrote his novel after a long discussion about religion with Robert G. Ingersoll, a noted sceptic of his time; published in 1880, it was later blessed by Pope Leo Leo XIII. The new version is the fourth movie remake (if you include two silent-movie versions); there was also a stage version that ran for more than 20 years in New York and also played in Sydney and Melbourne.

Some have criticised the new version for using computerised effects to enhance the excitement of the pre-climactic chariot race. Yet this is scarcely different from adding sound to the silent versions.

So far Ingersoll has not been accorded similar treatment even though he inspired disguised mentions in the fiction of GK Chesterton and PG Wodehouse.

M★★★★SFFV.

Louis Theroux: My Scientology Movie

The title betrays a defect of this documentary: its writer Theroux backs into the limelight too often. In mitigation, it has to be said that the Church of Scientology refused to co-operate, forcing Theroux and his director John Dower to resort to archival footage and dramatic re-enactments.

By James Murray

These may be solidly based on the evidence of a former senior Scientology official, Mark Rathbun and other ex-members, but re-enactments tend to be dubious.

Those of Theroux focus on allegations of violence by Scientology leader David Miscavige, seen in an archival clip embracing the system's stellar adherent, Tom Cruise.

Theroux's coup is to scan the secretive Gold Base facility in California. But he does not get to voyage with the SeaOrg elite whose uniforms appear to have been inspired by the US navy service of writer Lafayette Ron Hubbard, begetter of Scientology and its elements: engrams, Thetans and Xenu, *et cetera, et cetera*.

The funniest sequences are confrontations between camera-wielding Scis (to coin an abbreviation) and the camera wielding Theroux crew.

Theroux has made his reputation dealing imperturbably with odd folk in odd situations. His baffled expression makes it clear that Scis are not the least odd of odd folk.

M★★★★NFFV.

Pete's Dragon

The dragon doesn't look like one, well, not the scaly dinosaur kind. This being Disneyland, it looks more like a mammoth Airedale with wings that do not appear big enough for its body. There again, a bumble-bee's wing span scarcely seem big enough for its body.

Enough of aerodynamics, the dragon called Elliott finds Pete (Oakes Fegley) after the death of his parents in an accident that leaves him alone in the vast forest of the America's Pacific Northwest.

On the fringe of the forest is a timber industry township where a woodcarver called Mr Meacham tells the local the local children about an encounter with a dragon. He is played by Robert Redford who looks a bit carved himself (but not at all like Mickey Rooney who played the role in the 1977 version).

Bryce Dallas Howard plays Grace, a mother and game warden, who spots Pete in the forest with adventures galore to come.

Working from a Toby Holbrooks script, director David Lowery, gives the villain of the piece, played by Karl Urban, a mighty line: 'Follow that dragon.'

Do.

PG★★★★SFFV.

Sunset Song

Writer/director Terence Davies's take on part of the Lewis Grassie Gibbon's trilogy, *A Scots Quair*, is beautifully shot by cinematography Michael McDonough and impressively cast; Peter Mullan, Agyness Deyn, Kevin Guthrie and Jack Greenlees.

But Davies allows Mullan to go over the top as the patriarchal tyrant John Guthrie who takes the belt to his grown son Will (Greenlees) and, dying, pursues his own daughter Chris (Deyn). As her husband Ewen Tavendale, Kevin Guthrie gives the film a much-needed lift. But his descent into harshness, result of frontline service, is too sudden although Davies does contrive a stark battlefield sequence.

Dreary is the English word, dreich, not to say Calvinistic, the Scots. But why shoot in New Zealand, giving the impression of a croft with broader acres than those of Scotland? In fact the Guthries come across more as tenant farmers than crofters. And above all why the Burns anthem *Auld Lang Syne* sung English style with a soft 'S' rather than hard 'S'.

The ending features a lone piper in full regalia, not battle dress, playing *The Flowers of the Forest*, a lament for what might have been, and for *A Scots Quair* already shot in its entirety by BBC Scotland.

Why BBC Scotland should get together with Creative Scotland and the Luxembourg Film Fund is one of the puzzles of the money-go-round of independent film-making.

Your reviewer admits to prejudice; he spent boyhood time on crofts. They were not like this, being Hebridean.

M★★NFFV.

The Light Between Oceans

Hired as an island lighthouse keeper, ex-soldier Tom Sherborne (Michael Fassbinder) falls in love with and marries Isabel Graysmark (Alicia Vikander).

From the basic premise of ML Stedman's novel, writer/director Derek Cianfrance has fashioned a compelling romance wonderfully shot in Australian and New Zealand locations by cinematographer Adam Arkapaw.

Its core is Isabel, after two miscarriages, spotting a dinghy carrying a dead man and a living child.

Her next decision, with Tom's reluctant complicity, sets off a chain reaction involving Hannah Roennfeldt (Rachel Weisz).

The international stars, Fassbinder, Vikander and Weisz do not dominate. Australians Bryan Brown, Jack Thompson, Gary MacDonal, Jane Menelaus, Anthony Hayes and New Zealander Emily Barclay complement material which is essentially that of an *Australian Women's Weekly* serial back in the days when magazines published fiction as distinct from gossip.

M★★★★SFFV.

Sully

In the winter of 2009, Captain Chesley 'Sully' Sullenberger, and his co-pilot First Officer Jeffrey Skiles took off from New York's La Guardia airport aboard an Airbus A320, carrying 155 passengers and other crew.

Three minutes into the flight at 2,800 feet, a skein of Canada geese struck the Airbus, disabling both engines.

From this take-off, director Clint Eastwood, scriptwriter Todd Komarnicki put together a compelling reprise of the accident with Tom Hanks playing the role of Sully and Aaron Eckhart as Skiles.

Some might suggest that Eastwood expends too much footage on the post-disaster inquiry which suggested that computer data showed that Sully could have turned back to La Guardia and too little footage on Laura Linney who plays Sully's wife, Lorraine.

But Eastwood and Komarnicki worked from *Highest Duty*, the memoir Sullenberger wrote with Jeffrey Zaslow. In it, Sullenberger stressed that he wanted to show the common humanity in the disaster and the rescue.

Eastwood distils this as experience and courage beat computer data.

Sully is yet another of the aero-movies unlikely to be part of in-flight entertainment.

G★★★★SFFV.

Girl Asleep

Generally cult movies such as *Casablanca*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and anything involving the Three Stooges are serendipitous not deliberate. But director Rosemary Myers seems to be aiming for instant cult status with her movie of considerable, if bizarre charm, starring Bethany Whitmore as Greta Driscoll, a schoolgirl in suburban Adelaide, dealing with imminent maturity through fantasy.

Rosemary Myers may well succeed in her aim if only because so many of her talented cast play double roles including scriptwriter Matthew Whittet who not only adapted his own theatre piece but plays Conrad/Abject Man.

M★★★★NFFV.

Official Classifications key

G: for general exhibition;
PG: parental guidance
recommended for
persons under 15 years;
M 15+: recommended for
mature audiences 15 years and
over; MA 15+: restrictions apply
to persons under the age of 15;
R 18+: Restricted to adults,
18 years and over.

Annals supplementary advice

SFFV: Suitable For Family Viewing;
NFFV: Not For Family Viewing.
TBA: classification to be
announced

Nerve

Begins as another high-school movie; Venus (Vee) Delmonico (Emma Roberts) longs to leave her home on Staten Island but is shy – too shy to declare her interest in high school hero JP, or accept a scholarship to the California Institute of Fine Arts.

Her situation alters when she switches from higher education to hi-tech, hi-decibel as a participant in an on-line virtual-reality game involving prize-money and daredevil feats suggested by watchers.

Working from Jessica Sharzer's script, directors, Henry Joost and Ariel Schulman, appropriately enough, seem like video-game players trying to top each other in the risk-taking sequences.

Dave Franco comes on as Ian, Vee's rival and sweetheart to be. Juliette Lewis, trailing memories of *Natural Born Killers*, plays Vee's Mom, a nurse, anxious that Vee attends a local college.

The whole shebang is based on Jeanne Ryan's novel of the same title and does emphasise the point that watchers are complicit in the risk-taking of players. So where does that leave movie-goers?

M★★★★NFFV.

High-Rise

Working from the JG Ballard novel of the same title, director Ben Wheatley and scriptwriter Amy Jump multiply its horrific dystopian elements to a point where the actors appear to be wishing they were in the nth remake of *Frankenstein*.

They include Tom Hiddleston as Dr Robert Laing who finds himself linked to Charlotte Melville (Sienna Miller) in a modern block of flats designed by Anthony Royal (Jeremy Irons) whose genius is complemented by the snobbery of his wife Ann (Keeley Hawes).

MA15+★★NFFV.

Spin Out

Co-directors Tim Ferguson and Marc Gracie contrive entertaining and exciting opening and closing sequences. But the sandwich filling is a kind of Vegemite and Peanut Butter mix inspired by high and low

jinks at a Ute Muster and Bachelor & Spinsters Ball.

Ferguson who co-wrote the script with Edwina Exton is, of course, a valiant satirist and it may be he was seeking to send-up cliché outrageousness.

Xavier Samuel and Morgan Griffin play Billy and Lucy, young friends coming to a reluctant understanding that they love each other.

Their romantic mayhem may well attract a cult following but it is not likely to be a on the festival circuit, given the title's lack of originality: *Spinout* (one word) was the title of a 1966 Elvis Presley movie released on DVD in 2004.

M★★NFFV.

Snowden

Director Oliver Stone and co-writer Kieran Fitzgerald re-do the blurred portrait of Edward Joseph Snowden that emerged when he released thousands of National Security Agency files via WikiLeaks and *The Guardian* to the world.

Instead of a weedy cipher bod, Stone and Fitzgerald's first bold stroke is to present Snowden as a paratrooper in training at Fort Benning.

Only after he is injured and invalidated out of the army does Snowden volunteer to enter the security services. Joseph Gordon-Levitt embodies Snowden's toughness, physical and mental. Shaileen Woodley plays his girlfriend Lindsay Mills, a pole dancer.

Stone and Fitzgerald frame their story inside a documentary shot by Laura Poitras (Melissa Leo) involving *Guardian* representatives including Tom Wilkinson as Ewen MacAskill, his Scots accent so dodgy you wonder whether he might be an MI6 plant.

In a fine cast, Rhys Ifans is outstanding as Snowden's mentor, the enigmatic Corbin O'Brian (whose name echoes that of the villain in Orwell's *1984*).

Working from Luke Harding's *The Snowden Files* and Anatoly Kucherena's *Time of the Octopus*, Stone and Fitzgerald weave a story-line beyond Le Carré: Kucherena has been Snowden's lawyer since he took refuge in Russia.

Stone melds fact and fiction as he melds Gordon-Levitt with the real Snowden who remains sequestered in Russia. Whatever his future, it will dictate a sequel.

TBA★★★★NFFV.

Where am I going? (Quo Vado?)

Director Gennaro Nunziante sees obsession with a permanent, well-pensioned government job as being as Italian as spaghetti. With his co-writer Luca Medici, who stars as his comic character Checco Zalone, he sets up a situation where a minister decrees that the number of bureaucrats be slashed.

Only Checco, still living at home with his Mama and Papa, resists despite the offer of increased departure entitlements from his boss, played with adamantine mordancy by Sonia Bergamasco.

She couples this with postings to hazardous places with strange sounding names.

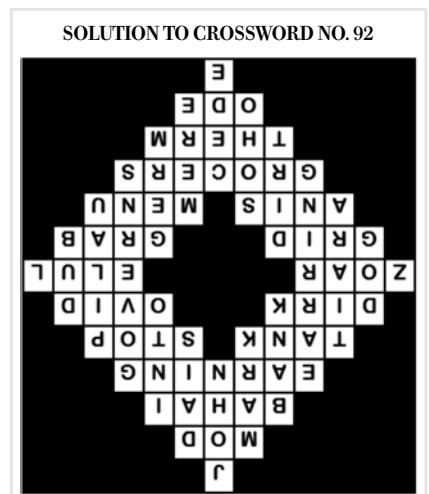
In one of these, abandoning his long time fiancée, he meets an environmentalist (Eleanora Giovanardi) who lives in accordance with the new normal.

The result is quick-fire ribaldry and hilarity that hits two targets at once: bureaucracy and political correctness which may find an echo in the world's most bureaucratized commonwealth.

M★★★★NFFV.

Bridget Jones's Baby

The comedy of manners that began with Helen Fielding's upmarket newspaper column,



Bridget Jones's Diary, continues. But now the manners are ill and the upmarket material has descended to the level of the more lurid women's magazines.

Bridget, played with an understandable world-weariness by Renée Zellwegger, cavorts with her original Mark Darcy (Colin Firth), a human rights lawyer, and a second-string beau Jack Qwant (Patrick Dempsey), a dating-website entrepreneur.

Result: she becomes pregnant. But which of her swains is the father of the child?

Sharon Maguire directs, the scriptwriters are Fielding, Dan Mazer and Emma Thompson (who gives herself a nice role as obstetrician, Dr Rawlings). Predictably there are flashbacks to best bits from the two previous *Bridget Jones* pieces.

Outstanding points? First, abortion is not even mentioned as an option; second, there's a lively satire on the current transition from trad TV to the kind where everyone is a reporter, and interviewers have discreet earpieces into which producers whisper questions (Surely not on our ABC?)

In the dénouement, there's a strong visual hint that another sequel may be in the pipeline: *Bridget Jones Finds a Nanny?*

M★★★★NFFV.

Storks

In this engaging computer-animated comedy, written by Nicholas Stoller and co-directed with Doug Sweetland, the storks have been diverted from baby to package delivery for the internet giant, Cornerstore.

Junior (voiced by Andy Samberg) accidentally activates a Baby Making Machine, producing a baby girl. He and his human friend, Tulip (Katie Crown) have to deliver the cute bundle before their boss Hunter (Kelsey Grammer) discovers the delightful disaster.

The frantic, noisy adventures of Junior and Tulip to find the baby's family add up to a happy ending for all including the storks who are restored to their true calling.

TBA★★★★SFFV.

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The Year of Mercy rosary set will be sent out to all those who assist this cause and **tick** this box.

Aid to the Church in Need a Catholic charity dependent on the Holy See, providing pastoral relief to needy and oppressed Churches

The theme of ‘The Burning of the Leaves’ is one of the oldest and most constant themes in poetry—the theme of transience, mortality, things passing. This theme is so standard that it has a name; Ubi sunt? which means literally ‘Where are they?’ in Latin. Where are they now?

“THE BURNING OF THE LEAVES”

By Meolsheachlann Ó Ceallaigh

IN PREVIOUS articles in this series, I have written commentaries on acknowledged great poems. This time around, I am going to be a little bit more adventurous and write about a poem which—though often included in anthologies — can hardly claim the same cultural stature as ‘Ulysses’ by Tennyson or Psalm 23 of the King James Bible.

The poem is ‘The Burning of the Leaves’ by Laurence Binyon, an English poet who died in 1943. Binyon fought in the First World War and his most famous poem is ‘For the Fallen,’ with its oft-quoted line: “They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old.”

As ‘The Burning of the Leaves’ is relatively unknown, I am going to quote it in full. Read it slowly, and savour it:

Now is the time for the burning of the leaves.
They go to the fire; the nostril pricks with smoke
Wandering slowly into a weeping mist.
Brittle and blotched, ragged and rotten sheaves!
A flame seizes the smouldering ruin and bites
On stubborn stalks that crackle as they resist.

The last hollyhock’s fallen tower is dust;
All the spices of June are a bitter reek,
All the extravagant riches spent and mean.
All burns! The reddest rose is a ghost;
Sparks whirl up, to expire in the mist: the wild
Fingers of fire are making corruption clean.

Now is the time for stripping the spirit bare,
Time for the burning of days ended and done,
Idle solace of things that have gone before:
Rootless hope and fruitless desire are there;
Let them go to the fire, with never a look behind.
The world that was ours is a world that is ours no more.

They will come again, the leaf and the flower, to arise
From squalor of rotteness into the old splendour,
And magical scents to a wondering memory bring;
The same glory, to shine upon different eyes.
Earth cares for her own ruins, naught for ours.
Nothing is certain, only the certain spring.

I first encountered this poem in a modern edition of Palgrave’s *Golden Treasury* when I was fourteen. Since then it has haunted me, and—while other poems that struck me as an adolescent seem less impressive now—my regard for this one has grown steadily with the years. I consider it one of the very finest poems in the language.

What is so remarkable about it? Well, the first thing to be said is that it is very accomplished. It’s a four stanza poem whose lines are fairly long, but the metre never falters, and each line develops the theme in a very natural way—there are no ‘filler’ lines. This in itself is quite rare.

Over the years, as the poem has seeped deeper into my mind, I have come to notice that the form harmonizes remarkably well with the subject matter. Its crisp, steady, gentle syllables remind me of the crackling of a bonfire. The emotion in each verse swells until the verse’s final line, when there is a dying fall reminiscent of a spark or a cinder falling to the ground. The entire poem has a trance-like, dreamy quality. Accomplished poets often like to introduce irregularities into the metre, to avoid this very ‘sing-song’ quality, but it is very appropriate here.

I have said in previous articles in this series that a great poem needs a great theme. The theme of ‘The Burning of the Leaves’ is one of the oldest and most constant themes in poetry—the theme of transience, mortality, things passing. This theme is so standard that it has a name; *Ubi sunt?* which means literally ‘Where are they?’ in Latin. Where are they now? There must be few human beings, even amongst the most cloddish, who have not been spurred into a poetic mood by the sight of their old school, or a yellowed photograph, or the ruins of a castle.

I must admit a particular fascination with this theme, as I am the world’s number one nostalgist. Even when I was a little boy, standing on the circle of burnt-away grass where the previous year’s Halloween bonfire had blazed filled me with a sweet melancholy. I get wistful about the most trivial changes and endings—such as the discontinuation of a bus route, or the parting of brief

acquaintances. So it's obvious why I would find the subject matter of the 'The Burning of the Leaves' compelling.

But this poem has something that most other 'Ubi sunt' poems don't. It's not simply a lamentation for the passage of time, and the disappearance of the past—it dares to also be an affirmation, almost a celebration. Lines such as these are both shocking and bracing, to a confirmed nostalgist such as myself:

Let them go to the fire, with never a look behind.
The world that was ours is a world that is ours no more.

Perhaps there is a unique relief in letting go of the things that we have held onto with the most resilience. Even the *idea* that we could possibly let go of them is strangely exhilarating—exhilarating and scary at once. We are so used (especially the nostalgists amongst us) to seeing ourselves as the playthings of time and change that the idea we can view these forces with equanimity—perhaps even with approval—is thrilling. We can warm ourselves by the very flames which consume all we love.

This sense of mingled shock and exhilaration is heightened by the violence of the language used:

All the spices of June are a bitter reek,
All the extravagant riches spent and mean.
All burns!

There is a glee to language like this. It would be merely glib if the poem did not contain a corresponding measure of melancholy and lyricism.

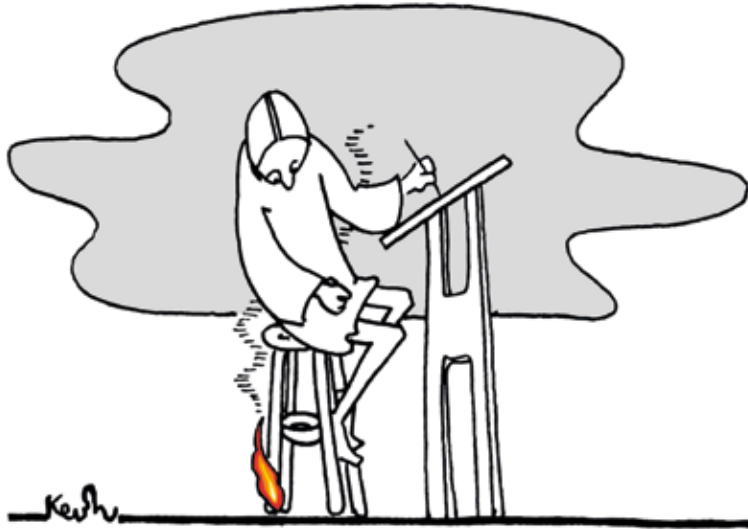
The single passage in the poem which has affected me the most strongly is this one:

The reddest rose is a ghost;
Sparks whirl up, to expire in the mist: the wild
Fingers of fire are making corruption clean.

The last line, indeed, is the line that has haunted me the most.

I think that we are all puritans—of one kind or another. Whether in the confessional, or in the gymnasium, or at the protest march, we are all striving towards some kind of purity.

The 'corruption' which we are trying to 'make clean' may be sin, or flab, or social prejudice. It might be one



of a thousand other things. But each of us—or most of us, at least—are trying to chisel away the parts of us (and the parts of the world) that do not correspond to our ideal, to our vision of perfection.

Sometimes the prospect that this will be painful or bitter is a strangely satisfying one. The poetry of this idea is expressed in the final line of Oscar Wilde's

autobiographical essay *De Profundis*, where he says of nature: "She will cleanse me in great waters, and with bitter herbs make me whole."

In Scripture, the image of purifying fire is a common one: "Our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29), "Your faith (much more precious than gold which is tried by the fire)" (1 Peter 1:7), "If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1 Corinthians 3:15).

Secular sources draw on this image too. Take Harold Wilson's famous reference to "the Britain that is going to be forged in the white heat of this [technological] revolution".

So this is a venerable image, one that seems to naturally occur to the human mind. But I don't think it has ever been expressed better than "the fingers of fire are making corruption clean". And

the line intensifies, of course, to the general air of exhilaration of loss.

Finally, the poem closes with a triad of single-sentence lines, the epigrammatic power of each one reinforcing the next:

The same glory, to shine upon different eyes.
Earth cares for her own ruins, not for ours.
Nothing is certain, only the certain spring.

That last line is so memorable and elegantly expressed that I wonder why it has not become a standard quotation. But then, I wonder why the poem as a whole has not been added to the ranks of all-time classics. I feel entirely justified in adding it to my series of truly great poems.

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