

from eminent ecclesiastics in *The Times* and elsewhere has made that clear. In the end it is dogma that they want. The memorialists perhaps, and by far the greater number of our countrymen certainly, mean by "Christian" "the highest," the attitude of mind that gives birth to hospitals, Barnardo homes, Prisoners' Aid Societies, the N.S.P.C.C. and the R.S.P.C.A. The clergy mean by "Christian" the dogmatic religion of the creeds. My own experience, after many a talk with laymen, is that they sit very lightly indeed to creeds and articles, in fact most of them doubt how much they are really believed by a large number of the clergy today.

What is aimed at by the higher clergy is authority to teach dogma in the Council schools, not perhaps all at once, but step by step. I venture to submit that if this happens it will be done without any real authorisation by the electors and will be not unlike a modern King Canute attempting to repel the religious spirit of these and future years.—I am, &c.,
E. N. MOZLEY.

Lynwood, Clotholme Road, Ripon.

"TALK ABOUT THE LAND"

SIR,—I should not ask for editorial indulgence in replying to Mr. Bates's letter in your issue of August 8th if *England and the Farmer* were my book, as he persists, by speaking of me again and again as "author" and the book as mine, in suggesting. I wrote to you as editor, not as author, and, though I did choose the team, a year's illness intervened between selecting the authors and writing my introduction and attending to the editorial work. Whether or no this absence both from the subject and from personal writing accounts for the indifferent quality of that introduction which Mr. Bates refers to so witheringly, this absence and these conditions did place me in a position of detachment greater than is the lot of most editors. If, therefore, the writers in the book did come to that agreement which Mr. Bates attacks without giving the reader any clear idea of what it was, its spontaneity and freedom from editorial manipulation or interference sufficiently disposes of the latter part of Mr. Bates's review.

In his letter, Mr. Bates mentions a number of works he consulted before writing. It seems a pity, then, that, being so equipped, he did not relate what the contents of the book were and, upon this basis, advance his objections to them. I will give two examples of his complete failure to do so. He referred to Mr. Gardiner's essay as "Teutonic ideology" and a plea for "dancing round the maypole," and again in the letter as Teutonic and as "cowardly" and "in bad taste" because it criticised a "West Country rural experiment" without mentioning it by name—neither, by the way, does Mr. Bates. These are serious charges and to make them without any kind of indication as to what Mr. Gardiner's essay was about is a particularly gross misuse of the critical function. Mr. Gardiner's essay advocated the development of regional centres of rural life under the guidance of estate-owners and his criticism of the "West Country experiment" was based on what he believed to be the failure there to embody the regional idea. I cannot imagine a proposal further removed from the State autocracy of Germany.

Or take what he says about Dr. Picton's "essay on diet." Mr. Bates runs off to the hardships of the "wife of the labourer"—what would she think of Dr. Picton's proposals? What these proposals are the reader is left to guess. And so with all the other essays, with the exception of Sir George Stapledon's. The reader is completely in the dark as to their contents; all he gathers is that Mr. Bates is very supercilious about them, and I maintain as editor of the book that such methods are a travesty of criticism.

Take, again, the point about 1830. In his review, Mr. Bates dismisses the plea for restoring a balanced and rotational husbandry as sentimentalism. "Those who remember *The Village Labourer* will thank God" that things are different today. Did not *The Village Labourer* deal with the conditions of 1830? Yet Mr. Bates has the audacity to say in his letter than he did not refer to 1830. Again, the review says—"One gets tired of the argument that the farmer is the victim of *conservative* (italics mine) political-plutocrats." The letter says—"I did not say that the book was anti-conservative."

Without going further into other points mentioned in my letter which Mr. Bates does not attempt to answer, I think that these examples are sufficient to bear out my contention that Mr. Bates dealt unjustly, disingenuously and by innuendo with the book. My complaint as editor was that he gave a false and misleading impression of it, and his letter, in the points already mentioned and the further one that the actual arguments were not novel (why should they be?—I never claimed that they were so) only stresses the need for that protest. It is surely axiomatic that to discredit a book without defining its arguments and by misrepresenting fragments of them here and there is contrary to the true principles of the reviewer's profession.—Yours, &c.,
H. J. MASSINGHAM.

SIR,—Mr. Bates makes some wild statements. I challenge him to say precisely and exactly which of my ideas originated "east of the Rhine." As far as I know the greater number of them were distilled from the sweat, blood and tears of many years of effort on the soil of my Dorset farms and woods. My criticism of Dartington Hall occupies exactly one and three quarters of a page out of seventeen

pages of packed writing: the chapter is not therefore "largely an attack" on that experiment, unless by drawing a picture of another way of tackling the problem of remaking rural England, one based not on theories or sentiment but on seasoned experience and proven example, this be so.—Yours, &c.,
ROLF GARDINER.
Springhead, Fontmell Magna, Shaftesbury.

"BLOOMSBURY LIGHTHOUSE"

SIR,—In your issue of August 1st you published a letter from "Holborn Warden" complaining of the ineffectiveness of the blackout at the Ministry of Information. To this letter there was the following postscript:

"One often hears it asked why the building is not camouflaged; several people in the Ministry have told me that this has been forbidden by the University of London, who don't want their new walls spoilt. As deaths in the immediate neighbourhood have reached three figures, I hope this story is a canard."

The suggestion thus made in respect of the University of London is both untrue and unfair and I shall be glad if you will immediately publish in *The Spectator* an apology for allowing an allegation of this nature made by an anonymous correspondent to appear without verifying the facts.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
FRANK HORTON,
University of London,
Vice-Chancellor.

SWITZERLAND'S LANGUAGES

SIR,—May I supplement the facts about Switzerland in "A Spectator's Notebook" in your issue of August 8th by stating that the number of the national languages is now not three but four? *The Times* of July, 1937, contains a brief reference to the rejoicings in the *Engadine* when the Swiss Parliament decided to give Romansch the status of a fourth national language. Switzerland today is, as you say, "an island of freedom surrounded by a sea of tyranny," and the action of the Swiss Parliament in dignifying and sustaining the distinctive culture of a small section of its people—some 50,000 in all—forms a valuable precedent.—Yours, &c.,
EDWARD MACCURDY.
Oakdene, Ashted, Surrey

BERSERKS ON BICYCLES

SIR,—In *The Spectator* of August 1st "Janus" pointed out the difficulty that magistrates had in dealing with motoring offences committed by soldiers. I fancy that when a man dons his uniform he feels he is no longer bound by civilian laws on the highway. The other day a case in point occurred down here. An elderly woman was knocked off her bicycle at a crossing where the lights were in her favour by a soldier on a motor-bicycle coming the other way with the lights against him. She protested, saying had he not noticed the lights, to which he replied "My good woman, don't you know there is a war on?"—Yours faithfully,
VERONICA S. BATCHELOR.

Hill Wootton House, Nr. Warwick.

"POLITICAL IMPROBABILITY"

SIR,—Mr. Brogan is entitled to his own judgement in reaching a constitutional and political conclusion which is the opposite of that reached by an ex-Lord Chancellor and the late British Ambassador to Washington, although I doubt whether he has yet their political maturity. He is, however, in error on a point of information in referring to the Inter-State Commerce Commission as concerned with a general control over transport. It is concerned with the regulation of and charges on goods transported, which is a very different matter, i.e., it is precisely concerned with interstate commerce. Mr. Brogan's statement that I "appear to think the relations between England and Scotland are federal" is eloquent of his mood, but I shall not waste your space or my time by comment on it. For the rest, it is regrettable that no British statesman has yet made any proposals in response as concrete or bold in the direction of reciprocal Anglo-American citizenship as Mr. Wendell Willkie made last February. America waits.—I am, &c.,
GEORGE CATLIN.
2 Cheyne Walk, S.W. 3.

"LOOKING BACK"

SIR,—Your reviewer of Señor Arturo Barea's two recently published books is correct in taking to task the publishers of the smaller work on Spain for referring to *The Forge* (Faber) as a novel, instead of as an autobiography. This clerical error was corrected, but not in time for the review copies, unfortunately. To refer to the admirable anonymous translation of *Struggle for the Spanish Soul* is, however, incorrect. This Searchlight book was never written in Spanish, as far as we are aware, and the author's merit is therefore the greater for his grasp and usage of the English language.—Yours sincerely,
MARTIN SECKER AND WARBURG, LIMITED.

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