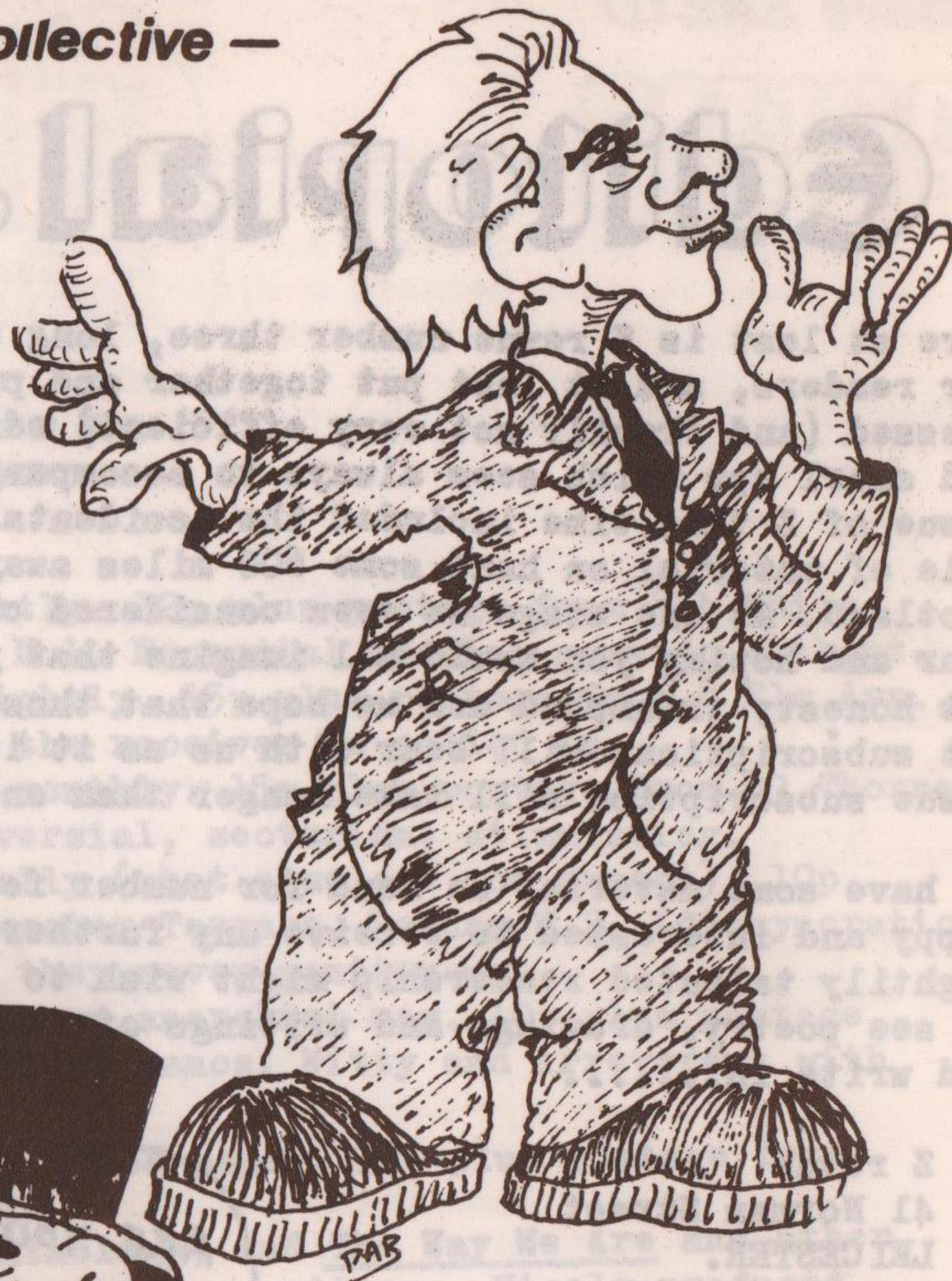
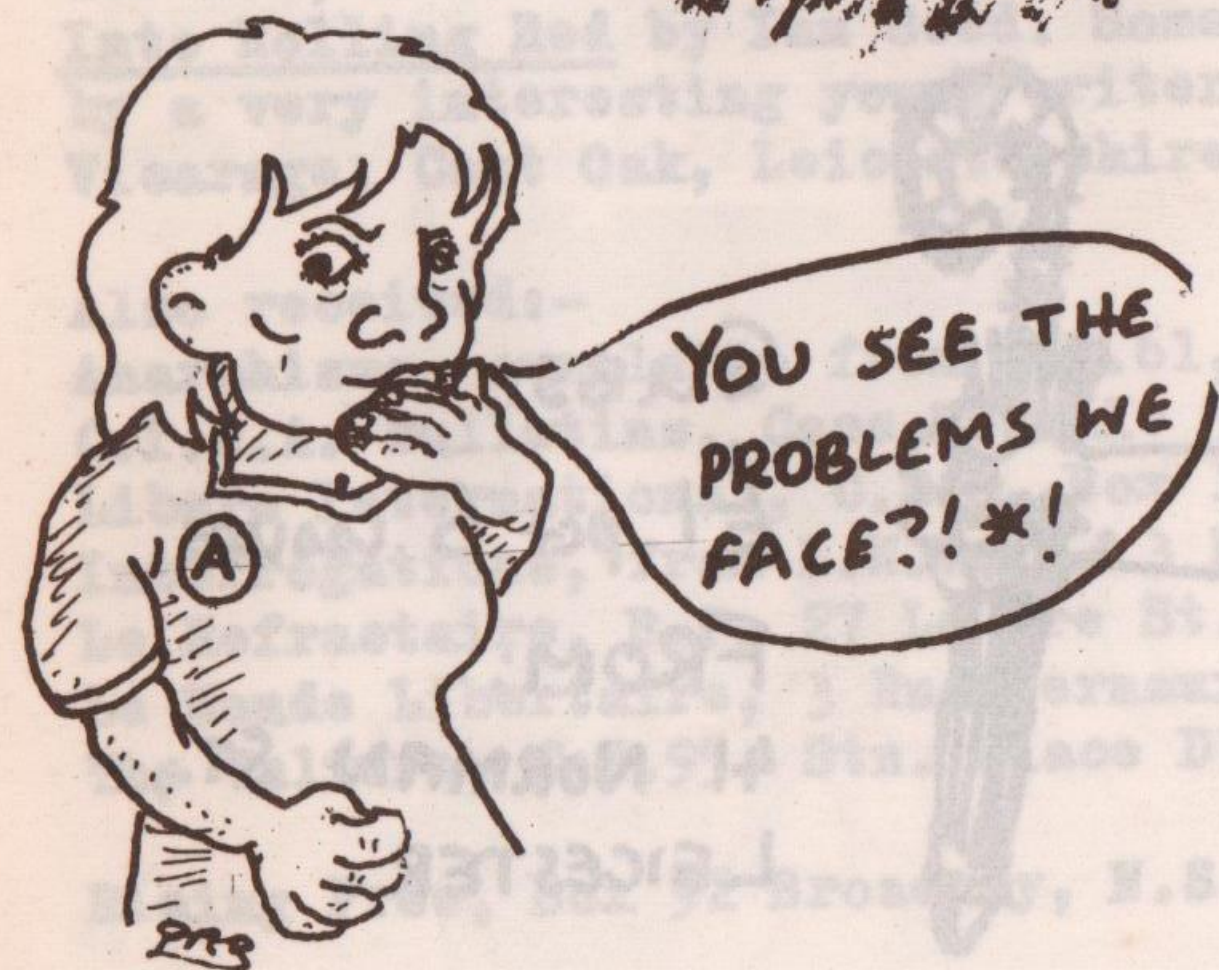


Meet the Z-Editorial Collective —



Z REVUE

No. 3



Andrew DARLINGTON

ELECTRIC POET

Electric poet, I accuse you.

Erupt insane images in crazy juxtaposition
across retinal ceilings and genital basements.
Create religions out of cities,
show them gods in the visions of gipsies.
Be the germ.

You are the cerebral guerilla.

Electric poet, the word is the precision cutting tool
of mind revolution.

Sabotage the hoardings,
contradict the commercials,
translate their A.C. into your D.C.
and their D.C. into your A.C.,
work to undermine their mediaocracy.

Electric poet, They have turned the idea into a consumer commodity,
destroy them before they destroy you,
make every vowel count.

Resurrect christ in neon,
vomit Jerusalem across their screens,
masturbate the apocalypse
through their typography and headlines.

Electric poet, fuse the electric global village.

Multiply yourself across every Railway newsstand
in the country, hide within Supermarket checkout
queues disguised as trading stamps, leap out
from Bingo cards and football pools.
Mass-produce yourself,
infiltrate the somnambulistic publishing house,
besiege the television studio,
slink in shadows through cosmic airways,
dance bizarre from grooves in black plastic,
invade Sunday supplements, preach from the tabloids,
peer bemused and genial through party political
broadcasts.

Electric poet, advocate insanity, antagonise with legends,
howl at the moon, mock with mythologies,
short-circuit the neon constellations.
Speak the vocabulary of the people,
be a cerebral fifth columnist,
inspire insurrection in slums and tenements,
hypnotise the factory worker,
corrupt his children with hope and questions.

Electric poet, explode ideas.

Use the media to destroy the media.
It's the only voice you've got they'll listen to,
be brash, ecstatic, alive, and free,
and de-disinfect life.

Electric poet, there is not much time.

Do it now. This is your role.
Sing the body electric,
make the world breathe.

ELECTRICK POET. ELECTRIP POET. ELEXTRIC POET.

They fear you already,
they threaten to cut off your grants,
they attempt to censure you,
they take Allen Ginsberg to court,
they accuse you of unsanitary habits and
proliferation.

Electric poet, plead with the eyes of an Oxfam poster,
sing with the visions of psychedelic angel
down cathode ray tubes,

out-proselytize the salesman,
outbid the political con-man,
out-eulogise the capitalist,
out-argue the priest,
be ridiculous.

Fight pendulum people with visions
and subversive literature,
measure your humanity with insanity,
insult them out of apathy,
insert life into the rhetoric of the death culture.



The MARTYRDOM of MAN

Readers of Lilian Wolfe's reference to Winwood Reade's book The Martyrdom of Man in Z-Revue 1 may be interested in knowing more about this widely read but little known masterpiece and its author.

William Winwood Reade, who died a hundred years ago at the age of thirty-six, came from a comfortable middle-class family. He was a nephew of Charles Reade, the successful dramatist and novelist who wrote The Cloister and the Hearth, and when he left Oxford in 1859 he tried to follow a literary career himself. He quickly published a story called Charlotte and Myra (1859) and a novel called Liberty Hall, Oxon (1860), the latter drawing on his experience at Oxford — which he seems to have found as useless as Edward Gibbon had a century earlier — and including his initiation into the Freemasons. Then came The Veil of Isis (1861), a history of Druidism interpreted as the forerunner of Freemasonry, including the first signs of his growing anticlericalism. But his books were unsuccessful, and Reade turned to other pursuits.

In 1862 he went on an expedition to West Africa to investigate the stories about great apes which had reached Europe and were arousing particular interest in the light of Darwin's Origin of Species (1859). Despite his ignorance and inexperience, Reade made a remarkable series of journeys, and on his return wrote a book about them called Savage Africa (1863). He decided to become a professional explorer, but first spent three years studying medicine, working at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, and then at the Southampton Cholera Hospital during the 1866 epidemic; he also published another unsuccessful novel called See-Saw (1865). In 1868 he returned to West Africa, where he travelled further up the Niger than any previous European, but where he also caught various fevers which nearly killed him and permanently damaged his health; he returned to England in 1870 and again wrote a book about his adventures called African Sketch Book (1873). In 1873 he yet again returned to Africa as the Times correspondent during the Ashanti War, and yet again wrote a book about his exp-

periences called The Story of the Ashantee Campaign (1874). But his health rapidly deteriorated, and he died of tuberculosis soon after publishing The Outcast (1874), a novel about a Victorian parson who loses his faith and is socially ostracised.

Winwood Reade was a minor explorer and an unsuccessful writer. His expeditions were quickly forgotten and so were his books, with one exception — The Martyrdom of Man (1872), which is one of the most remarkable works of the nineteenth century, causing a considerable stir when he published it at the age of thirty-three and continuing to change people's minds as it was republished again and again on into the twentieth century. The thing which did more than anything else to make the book famous — or infamous — was the author's attitude to religion. Charles Reade said in an obituary article that if his nephew had lived longer he would not only have "won a great name" as a writer but would probably have "cured himself, as many thinking men have done, of certain obnoxious opinions which laid him open to reasonable censure" (Daily Telegraph, 27 April, 1875). These opinions were most powerfully expressed in The Martyrdom of Man, in the preface to which Reade said that his "religious sentiments" were "expressed in opposition to the advice and wishes of several literary friends, and of the publishers, who have urged me to alter certain passages which they do not like, and which they believe will provoke against me the anger of the public".

These passages upset not just his friends and publisher but also, as they had warned, the intellectual establishment at large. Several papers refused to review the book at all, and those which did described it variously as "worthless", "wild", "mischievous", "vulgar", "indecent", "blasphemous", and "profane". It used to be said that the book got no favourable notice until the twentieth century, but in fact the secularist press picked it up at once. Charles Bradlaugh's National Reformer gave it a long and enthusiastic review during 1872, and the Secular Chronicle printed extracts during 1874. It soon became what one historian of the freethought movement has described as "a kind of substitute Bible for many secularists" (Warren Sylvester Smith, The London Heretics, 1967) and what its latest introducer called a "gospel for heretics" (Michael Foot, 1968).

During the century of its existence The Martyrdom of Man has sold about 200,000 copies, an astonishing achievement for an unorthodox work by an unknown author. More important, it has had a profound effect on its readers — as recalled by Lilian Wolfe. George Orwell, who called it "that queer, unacknowledged masterpiece", said that "it is probably the unacknowledged grandparent of the 'outlines' so popular today" (New Statesman, 17 August 1940).

Indeed its most powerful single reader was the author of the most successful "outline" of all — H.G.Wells, whose Outline of History (1920) sold ten times as many copies ten times as fast, acknowledged The Martyrdom of Man as "one book that has influenced the writer very strongly", and stressed its first essential aspect of intellectual unity by calling it "an extraordinarily inspiring presentation of human history as one consistent process". Orwell described the process by calling the book "a kind of vision, or epic, inspired by the conception of progress. Man is Prometheus; he has stolen the fire and been terribly punished for it, but in the end he will turn the gods out of heaven and the reign of reason will begin". (Tribune, 15 March 1946).

Orwell also stressed a second essential aspect of the book — its direct tone: "The book is, as it were unofficial history....Reade was aiming at the emancipated, at people not frightened of the truth, but his book was essentially a popular one repudiating almost from its first pages the values of bourgeois society....Reade was an emancipating writer because he seemed to speak as man to man, to resolve history into an intelligible pattern in which there was no need for miracles. Even if he was wrong, he was grown up....People felt that for once they were getting history from someone who knew the facts and yet was not a professor — not a hanger-on of the upper classes and the Established Church." F.J.Gould stressed a third essential aspect of the book — its eloquent style: "It is a passionate 'outline of history'The story of human sorrows through the ages in Asia, Africa and Europe reads like a prose drama" (The Pioneers of Johnson's Court, 1924).

These three aspects of The Martyrdom of Man combine to give the book that biblical, evangelical status which it rapidly gained and only recently lost. Like most such works however, it is curious and confusing at first reading. To begin with, it has a dual origin. Reade had intended to write two books — an historical study of the part played by Africa in the development of civilisation, based on his own observations; and a scientific study of the intellectual evolution of man, based on his reading of Darwin's Origin of Species. But the two projects were gradually modified and eventually unified. Reade said of the former: "I was gradually led from the history of Africa into writing the history of the world"; and the latter was forestalled by Darwin's own book, The Descent Of Man (1871). Nevertheless the first three chapters of Reade's book emphasise the influence of Egypt on the Greeks, of Carthage on the Romans, of Ethiopia on the Arabs, and of negro slavery on the Anglo-American Europeans; and the last chapter of the book is an epitome of Reade's projected study of The Origin of Mind.

The construction of The Martyrdom of Man must be seen in this context. Reade divided the history of mankind into four stages — the rise of ancient civilisation from primitive culture he called war; the rise of irrational ideas about the world and man he called religion; the rise of modern Europe he called liberty; and the coming rise of man he called intellect. Chapter 1, "War", describes the classical empires of the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Persians, Greeks and Macedonians, Phoenicians and Carthaginians, Romans, and Arabs. Chapter 2, "Religion", describes the semitic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Chapter 3, "Liberty", describes some exploits of European peoples of Germanic descent — the Barbarian invasions, the rise and fall of medieval society, the Crusades and Explorations, the growth and abolition of Negro slavery. Chapter 4, "Intellect", goes back to the beginning again, and describes the physical evolution of the universe, the biological evolution of plants and animals, and the psycho-social evolution of man; in it Reade presents his naturalistic interpretation of all human behaviour and his positivistic interpretation of all history as perpetual progress. The book may seem to be about the past, but it is really about the future — Reade looks from what man has been to what man shall be.



On a practical level, Reade expected three inventions which would follow all those made before his time and which would make further progress possible — "a motive force which will take the place of steam", "aerial locomotion" and even space travel, and the manufacture of synthetic food. On a theoretical level, he did not transcend his age — he has no doubt that modern Europe was moving in the right direction, and he had faith in the infinite power of science and technology — but he saw his age as only one in a continuous process. The next stage was the abolition of religion — "this long and gloomy period of the human race" — and the complete liberation of the human mind. Not that Reade was an atheist. When Thompson Cooper said of The Martyrdom of Man that "in this work the author does not attempt to conceal his atheistical opinions" (Dictionary of National Biography, 47: 361), he only revealed his own failure to read the work. Reade did not believe in a future life or a personal god, but he did believe in the unity of all life and in a Being beyond human understanding; he rejected deity and immortality, but accepted the fashionable agnosticism of T.H. Huxley and Herbert Spencer. He recognised the part played by traditional religion in the past, but repeated that it would have no place in the future. "Men die, and the ideas which they call gods die too"; Christianity had destroyed the old religions, and now "Christianity must be destroyed". But he did not wish to destroy all religion, and he put humanism in the place of Christianity: "Those who desire to worship their Greater must worship him through mankind". He believed in the unity of man as of all life: "There is only One Man upon the earth".

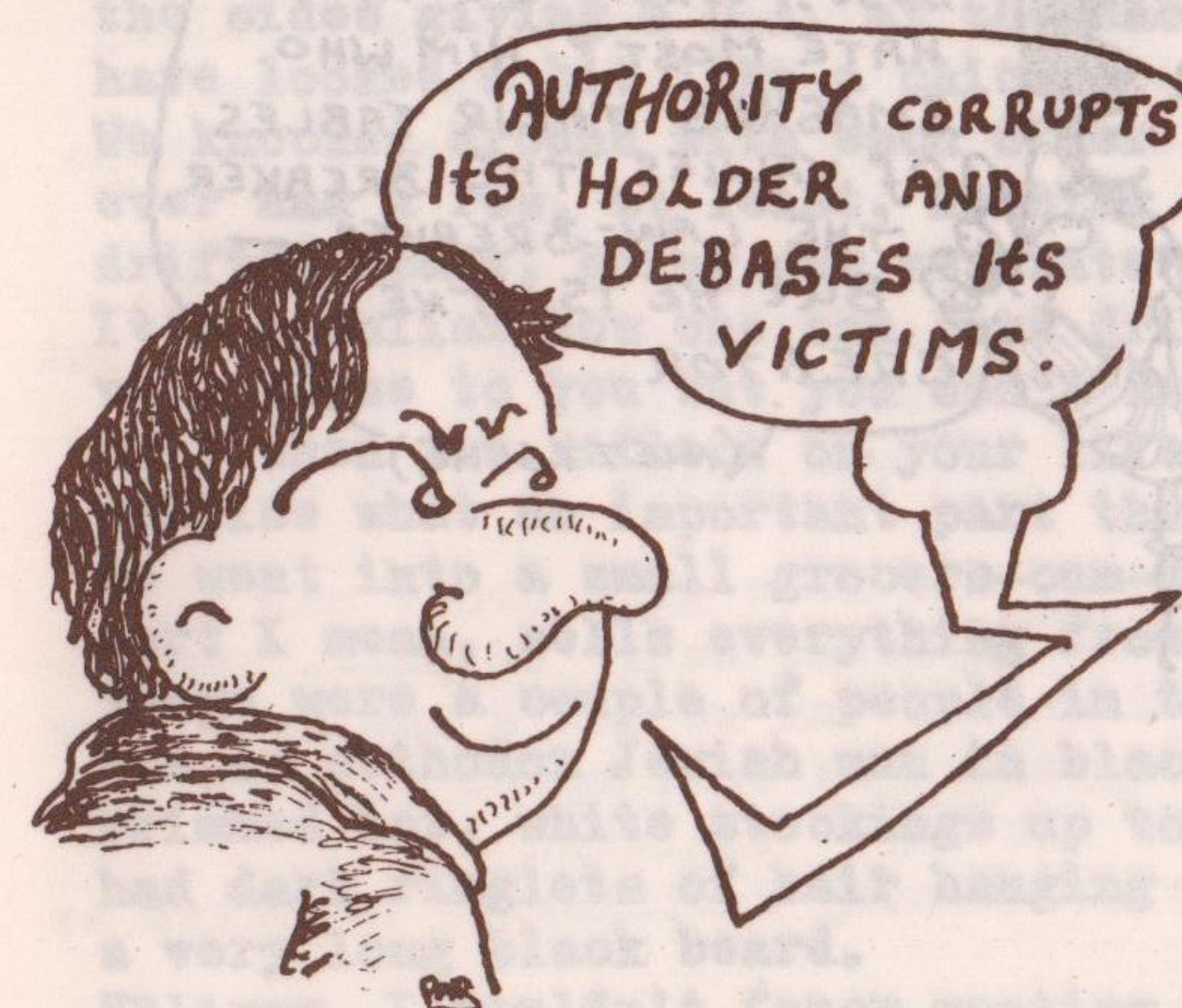
Reade's political position was ambiguous. Orwell called him "a sort of irregular ally of the Socialist movement, fighting chiefly on the religious front". But this is true only in the sense that the whole freethought tradition — whether it is called radicalism, secularism, rationalism, ethnicism, humanism, or libertarianism — may be seen as an intellectual parallel to the political left. Reade looked forward to a social, even socialist, utopia — "The world will become a heavenly Commune" — but he was himself no socialist; indeed he was a member of the Conservative Party. Writing just after the Paris Commune, he called Communism "only the old caste system revived" and denied the possibility of rapid progress either through or against the state. "Human nature cannot be transformed by a coup d'etat, as the Comtists and Communists imagine. It is a complete delusion to suppose that wealth can be equalised and happiness impartially distributed by any process of law, Act of Parliament, or revolutionary measure.... A government can confer few benefits upon a people." He believed in the civilising mission of European capitalism and imperialism. He believed that the liberty, equality and fraternity of the future would emerge from the slavery, inequality and enmity of the present.

by a long and painful struggle.

Most freethinkers have been happy pessimists; Reade was an unhappy optimist. "I give to universal history a strange but true title — The Martyrdom of Man. In each generation the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it therefore unjust that we also should suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?" A century later, who can say that we are any nearer to the end of the martyrdom of man? Lillian Wolfe, who was born in the year Reade died, was one of thousands of people who have tried to hasten the process he described. After all, if there is no progress in human history, what justification is there for the martyrdom of man?

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The Martyrdom of Man was first published in 1872, and was reprinted more than twenty times during the following fifty years, an introduction by F. Legge being added in 1910. After 1924 it was reprinted by Watts, four times with Legge's introduction, and then six times from 1931 in the Thinker's Library with a new introduction by John M. Robertson. In 1968 it was reprinted yet again by Pemberton in the Humanist Library, with a new introduction by Michael Foot (the paperback edition is still available at 95p).



AFTER CURFEW

"Probably think we
can't see 'em"
my oppo whispered
through the nightsight
clear as clear two
figures groping

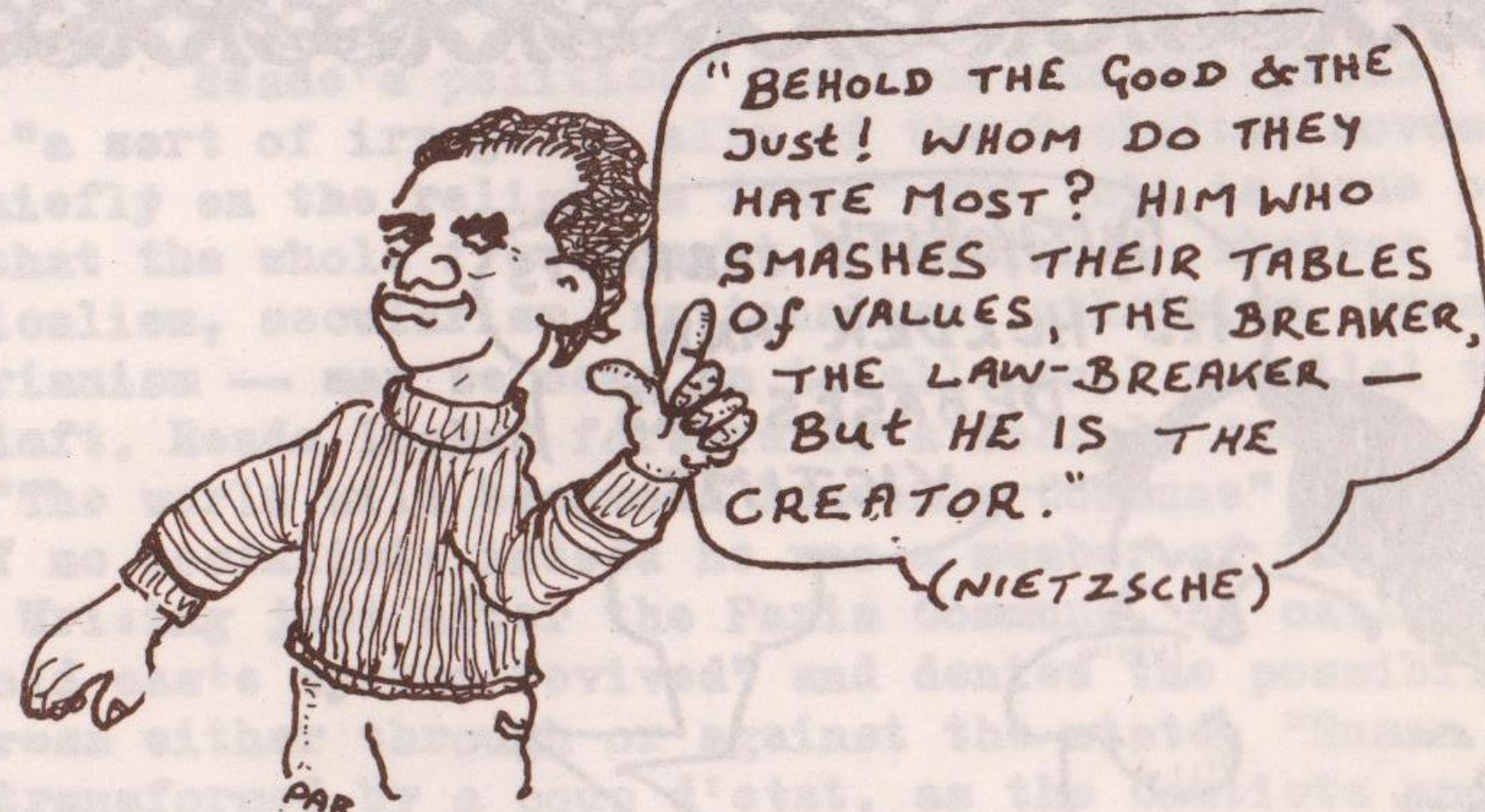
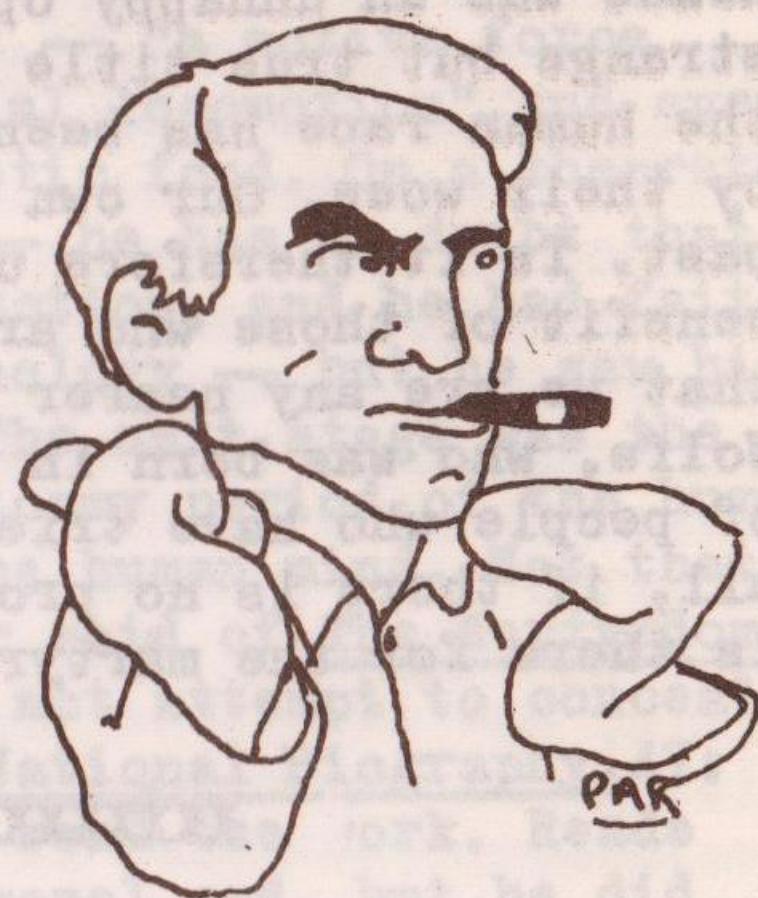
"probably planting a
booby trap" Sarge said

we shouted warning,
all by the book

they paid no
never mind, too busy

doing what they were doing

we shot..they stopped..dead
"dirty beasts" the officer said
when we got close enough to
have a proper look
"making love out there like that..
don't they know there's a war on?"



"BEHOLD THE GOOD & THE
JUST! WHOM DO THEY
HATE MOST? HIM WHO
SMASHES THEIR TABLES
OF VALUES, THE BREAKER,
THE LAW-BREAKER —
BUT HE IS THE
CREATOR."

(NIETZSCHE)

Mike Humphrey

The SMALL TICKLE or The Saga of Stoke Newington Pt. 1

Monday night.

"Skint again. I've only got a bob on me" I said to Dave.

"I've got a couple of bob, enough for subs and a packet of fags" Dave retorted.

"Yeah, I've got some fags on me as well. should last me tonight" I said, "got any matches, Dave?"

"A few. We'll have to get some Mick".

Dave and I went everywhere together and we shared everything. If we only had one fag between the two of us, we'd have half each, that's how it was with us.

Dave was asthmatic and had been ever since he was a baby and it's possible that this caused him to have a barrel chest and a slightly humped back, which made it look as though his neck grew out of his chest! He was thin with dark brown curly hair, parted in the middle. In spite of his asthma he could run quite fast but not over too long a distance and could climb trees and walls better than any monkey!

Me? I was a head taller than Dave and my hair was pushed back at the sides giving a D.A. at the back and cropped at the front. Must have looked a bit like a chicken!

We knocked around with each other for about two years and hardly ever had a row, at least, nothing serious. In the end we just drifted apart, going our separate ways.

It's peculiar how one can just drift apart from someone who's been very close to you but you don't immediately feel any loss. It's only when you reflect on your life, possibly years later, that you realise what an important part they played in your life.

We went into a small grocers-cum-everything shop, you know the sort I mean, sells everything from elastic bands to rat poison! There were a couple of people in the shop and the one being served was an orthodox Jewish man in black frock coat and black wide brimmed hat, white stockings up to his knees and black shoes. He had dark ringlets of hair hanging down both sides of his face and a very long black beard.

"Blimey, I wouldn't fancy meeting him on a dark night down a coal cellar!" said Dave.

"I bet he's really a spy for Mosley's blackshirts!" I quipped.

"Wonder if that's his wife with him," laughed Dave, pointing to

the other person in the shop, a big fat raggedly dressed woman, with both her stockings rolled down to her ankles.

The shop stank of pickled gherkins, paraffin and wet sawdust, and we went up to the counter and stood behind the fat lady.

"See what I see beside the till, Dave!" I whispered.

"I can bloody see 'em!" said Dave out of the corner of his mouth.

We were always looking for something to nick, especially fags or money, but we usually only got a packet of biscuits or something.

Piled up by the side of the till were about six packets of blue five shilling copper bags, the big tickle at last!

The man in black walked out of the shop, waving his hands about and muttering to himself in Hebrew.

"Must 'ave spent a farthing more than he intended to!" whispered Dave.

As the shopkeeper was serving the fat lady Dave's hand slid round the side of the till, covered one of the bags and withdrew as quick as lightening.

"Plenty of bags left," I thought, "a dollar's not going to get us very far."

"Five Weights, please, an' a box of matches," said Dave, as calm as you like!

The shopkeeper turned to get Dave's order and as he did I made a quick glance behind me to make sure nobody else had entered the shop, all was clear. My hand shot out, picked up another blue packet and it was in my pocket just as the shopkeeper turned round.

"Anything else?" enquired the shopkeeper.

"No thanks," replied Dave.

"Yes, son?" referring to me.

I didn't really want anything but I had to buy something to allay any suspicions that the shopkeeper might have and I bet he had plenty! I was shaking all over and my legs felt like water, I hope he didn't see me, Christ, never again!

"Got any wagon-wheels?" I said to him, trying to sound innocent.

I paid for the wagon-wheel and believe me, I just wanted to run out of the shop but I walked out, quite slowly, feeling as though the shopkeeper was pointing a gun on me and was going to fire it just as I reached the door!

Dave was waiting outside and when he saw me a grin broke out all over his face and he shouted, "Come on Mick, we'll be late." and with that we both ran up the road as fast as we could and no-one or nothing could have stopped us. We pelted at full speed through the school gates and went straight to the boys' toilets.

Dave opened the blue bag, "These are bloody farthings!" he cried as he looked in the bag.

It was getting dark by this time and there was only one light on in the toilets, so to get a better look he had to tip the coins into the palm of his hand.

"Christ, tanners!" he yelled.

"Bloody hell!" was all I could say.

We counted the money out, five pounds in sixpenny pieces.

"The crafty old git," said Dave, "does that to stop people nicking 'em. Didn't stop us though did it?"

He laughed, then I laughed, a wave of relief engulfing both of us but my legs started to ache due to all the running we had done. I hadn't told Dave that I had also pinched a packet, I was waiting to see how he was going to share out his bag. I didn't think he was going to fiddle me out of my share, it didn't even cross my mind, I mainly wanted to surprise him.

"That's rifty-bleedin'-one each," said Dave, "we'll have a ball in the club tonight. Pepsi's all round!"

He shouted the last three words at the top of his voice.

"Shut up, yer berk! Someone'll hear yer!" But we both started laughing again.

"We'll have a better time than you think," I said, my hand going into my pocket, pulling out the other blue packet.

"Soddin' 'ell!" said Dave.

The bag I had got had five pounds in large silver; two bobbs and half crowns, and I counted out fifty bob from my bag and he counted the same from his, so that we would have five pounds each in mixed silver. That way it wouldn't look so suspicious.

When we got into the club, we didn't go too mad with the money, except for buying Pepsi's for all our close mates and Dave went out and bought a load of fags, three large Player's each. We handed them around as though we had a tobacco plantation in our back yards, but it was all right as it was normal practice to do this when any of the lads had earned any extra money.



It's funny how some kids act, or grown people for that matter, when you've got away with something and are totally different when you get caught! There was this kid called John Coleman who must have had six or seven fags and a couple of Popsi's and was hanging around us as though we were the only friends he had in the world, trying to cadge whatever he could, yet when Dave was caught nicking a plastic wallet from Woolworth's, about six months previously, and was put on probation, this kid was going around saying things like "it's his own bloody fault, he's only got himself to blame," and "you wouldn't catch me stealing anything." Yet here he was, filling his face with all the stolen goods he could get his hands on, the two-faced little sod!

We left the Youth club at about a quarter to ten and walked home, intending to stop on the way at the fish and chip shop. Christ, fish and chips on a Monday! Never heard of such a thing; Friday was fish and chips day, the rest of the week a bag of chips if you were lucky.

"Balls," I said, "The bloody chip shop's closed on Mondays!"

"Come on. Mate, we'll go over to the off-licence and buy some Tizer and crisps," consoled Dave.

"How much yer got left, Dave?" I asked.

"'Bout three an' 'arf quid."

"Yeah, so've I."

The Youth club opened three evenings a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday and we managed to get there on most of these evenings, going to the pictures or just hanging around the local cafe on the other evenings or the week. Weekends it was either fishing or swimming depending on season and weather.

Wednesday... Dave liberated another bag of silver from the shop and on Friday I managed another one. Twenty quid! We were living like lords, thinking we could go on like this forever, smoking large Player's instead of Weights and lighting them with Swan Vestas instead of penny week matches!

It took the shopkeeper quite a while to realise that his money was missing, so it just shows you how much profit he made out of that shop. A proper little gold mine it must have been. Most probably he's been robbing people for most of his life only he'd be the last to admit it, but I bet he'd be the first to cry "Thief!" to anyone who'd steal so much as a biscuit from him.

Anyway, Monday came round again and it was Dave's turn to try for another packet. So he goes inside, whistling his front teeth out, while I waited outside.

"Get out of my shop, you thieving little bastard!" yelled the shopkeeper. "Call the police! Call the police!"

My heart sank. Dave came out of that shop as though he'd been shot out of a cannon. I didn't need any prompting, I was beside him and running like hell. We heard the shopkeeper shouting and screaming out something to the effect that the police were on their way. We

jet propelled our way down the main road, then cut through some back turnings, across the common, up along Church Street and into the park. They'd never catch us. We knew this area like the backs of our hands, every alley and back turning and all the short cuts. We were sweating and heaving, and Christ, did my legs ache! It took a few minutes to get our breaths back, with Dave speaking first:

"The fat bastard, I 'adn't even nicked anything 'cos there wasn't any money there. I asked 'im for some fags and 'e started screaming at me!"

"Bleedin' 'ell, that was a close shave!" I gasped, not fully having my breath back. "It's funny, yer know, Dave, he could easily have set a trap for us and caught us red handed."

"Maybe he didn't really know who was pinching the money and didn't want to take a chance on losing any more. Still, he done us a favour." Dave suddenly burst out laughing, rolling on the grass, clutching his stomach, with tears rolling down his face.

Well, what with all the excitement and that, the sight of this made me burst out laughing as well! If that shopkeeper had come up to us at that moment, he could have led us away to the con shop and we would've laughed all the way there!

We walked around the park for about half an hour, throwing sticks up into the trees and trying to skim flat stones onto the lake to try and make them bounce, when suddenly a voice boomed out behind us:

"Oy! Stop throwing them stones, you'll hit one of the ducks!"

We turned around and saw that it was a park keeper in his brown suit and Roy Rogers hat.

"Fuck yer ducks!" said Dave.

"And you can stop that swearing an'all, you little bleeder!"

"Hark who's talking!" retorted Dave, "Who d'yer think you are, God Al-bleedin'-mighty or summat - anyway, we ain't 'urting yer bloody ducks!"

"If you're not out of this park in five minutes, I'll call the police and don't let me see either of you in here again!"

"Ballocks!" Dave swore at the park keeper.

At that, the parky tried to grab Dave, but was far too slow for him; he just stepped back and to the side, leaving the parky holding on to the wire that went round the lake. We both started running towards the park gates and when we were outside, we started singing, as loud as we could:

"I've got an 'at but it ain't like that,

ol' rotten 'at!

ol' rotten 'at!

I've got an 'at but it ain't like that,

All parkies are bar-stards!"

We lit up a fag each and just carried on walking and talking, until we found ourselves back at the common we had crossed when fleeing from the shopkeeper. (To be concluded in Z-4)

Phil RUFF

I BELONG TO KRONSTADT

(to the tune of "...Glasgow")



I belong to Kronstadt
dear old Kronstadt town.
Whenever there's revolution
the Cheka puts it down.
I'm only an anarchist fellow
but I know where my sympathies lie.
So I'll belong to Kronstadt
and the sailors until I die

I belong to Kronstadt
Kronstadt there on sea.
Striving for self-management
and worker's liberty.
Whenever I see a commissar
I bring him down to size-
if they threaten the anarchist sailors
with discipline
they'll get a big surprise.

I belong to Kronstadt
though you might think I'm dumb,
I still believe in ANARCHY,
freedom for everyone!
So it's please fuck off to Lenin, boys
and right up Trotsky too;
if they think we'll bow to their
Bolshi-dictatorship
they'll know just what they can do!

I belong to Kronstadt
I'll tell you one more time,
don't listen to the Bolsheviks,
they'll have you down a mine!
Don't waste time with dialectics, boys -
a bullet's all they know -
we learned the hard way so we mean what we say,
let's show them who runs the show!

TROTSKY ON THE SAILOR OF KRONSTADT.

"...the pride and glory of the
revolution" July 1917.



"You will be shot like partridges"
March 1921.

Phil RUFF

YEVGENY ZAMYATIN

"The new totalitarian states, constraining their writers by directives of strict ideology and absolute conformism, succeeded only in killing the creative faculty within them. Between 1921 and 1928 Soviet literature had its glorious season of full flower. From 1928 onwards it declines and dies out. Printing, no doubt of it, goes on; but what gets printed?"

(Victor Serge)

*
* *

Yevgeny Ivanovitch Zamyatin is little known in Europe and completely unknown (by decree) in his native Russia. He was born in 1884 in the central Russian town of Lebedyan, studied naval construction in St. Petersburg and became a naval engineer. Whilst still a student, he became an active member of the Bolsheviks. His first story appeared in 1908 but he didn't take writing seriously until 1911-12, when he wrote "A Tale of Provincial Life" (published in 1913), a satire of life under the Tsar. In 1914 he was brought to trial for writing an anti-militarist novella ("At The Back of Beyond") and for several years published nothing more.

In 1916 he was sent to England to supervise the construction of ice-breakers for the Russian Government. Based on his observations of English life he wrote and published two satires after he returned to Russia - "The Islanders" (1918) and "The Fisher of Men" (1922). In 1922 he was imprisoned briefly by the Bolsheviks; in the same corridor of the same prison where he had been confined under the Tsar in 1906!

During the years of "War Communism" and the New Economic Policy he became one of the leading figures in the "Serapion Brotherhood" - an experimental literary school, distinctly libertarian - and continued to write his own stories, as well as becoming involved in the theatre. In "The Fires of St. Dominic" (1923) he satirised the Soviet Cheka in the form of a historical play, with the action set in Spain during the Inquisition.

He saw before most that the Russian revolution was sliding into an omnipotent police state which was leading it towards conservatism and stagnation:

"Let the flame cool down tomorrow or the day after tomorrow... But someone must see this today already, and speak heretically today of tomorrow. Heretics are the only (bitter) medicine against the entropy of human thought."
(1923)

This is a theme which is echoed in Zamyatin's most famous work, the novel "We" (1923):

"There are two forces in the world: entropy and energy. One means blissful repose, happy equilibrium; the other, painfully infinite movement."

The idea that the possibilities for change (revolution) are infinite that there is no final revolution, is something that he emphasises again and again, as we shall see.

Though Russian - and in his stories he shows repeated signs of the influence of Gogol and other 19th century Russian writers - Zamyatin curiously enough has his place in the 'English' anti-utopian tradition also. The influence of H.G. Wells in "We" is obvious (he published a study of Wells in 1922) and there are many similarities between it and Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World". The English translation of "We" appeared seven years before "Brave New World".

The story is set in the 26th century when everyone lives in a painless single state where all traces of individuality have disappeared even names are things of the past. Citizens are known only by their number. They live in glass houses, facilitating the work of the political police; wear identical blue-grey uniforms (shades of Mao's China); eat synthetic food and spend their leisure time marching four abreast in time with the Single State's anthem which is played to them through loud speakers. Sex is allotted to the citizens at stated intervals for a period of one hour (the "sex hour") and the partners must complete the appropriate pink form and counterfoil. Nothing is allowed to go unrecorded. "Sex hour" is the only time "Unifs" (Uniform - citizen) may lower the blinds around their glass apartments.

Lenin appears in the guise of "the benefactor", ruler of the Single

State who is annually re-elected by the unanimous vote of the population.

Basic to the existence of the Single State is the negation of freedom:

"Liberty and crime are just as indissolubly bound together as... well, as the motion of an aero and its speed: let the speed of an aero equal zero, and the aero does not move; let the liberty of man equal zero, the man does not commit crimes. The only means delivering man from crime is to deliver him from liberty."

Freedom and happiness are incompatible, one must choose:

"Happiness without freedom, or freedom without happiness - there is no alternative."

And to make sure that everyone makes the only choice permitted by the Single State, i.e. happiness without freedom, there is the "Bureau of Guardians" (the Cheka...). They guard the morals and behaviour of the State's "numbers". To save its flock from "deviations" the State thoughtfully provides special "Guardians" who spy on the "numbers", aided by the voluntary zeal of law-abiding "numbers" faithful to the State.

The narrator of "We" (the novel adopts the form of his diary) is a certain "D-503", an engineer like Zamyatin, who, through some abnormality retains elements of the ancient ("criminal") human instincts; he possesses an individual consciousness.

"No offence is so heinous as unorthodox behaviour", so says one of the guiding principles of the Single State. Uniformity of behaviour and thought, so basic to the nature of Leninism, rules supreme and so far unchallenged. But this "D-503" falls in love, another crime, with the female leader of an underground resistance movement (".....a still elusive organisation which has set for itself the goal of liberation from the beneficent yoke of the State") and is drawn into a plot to overthrow the State.

It is particularly worth noting that Zamyatin originally wrote "We" at the end of 1920 and into the start of 1921. The revolt of the sailors and workers at Kronstadt (March 1921), and the widespread series of strikes amongst the Petrograd workers against the "War Communism" of the Bolshevik Government which preceded it, must surely have influenced the direction of his writing.

The revolt breaks out on the "Day of Unanimity", when all the numbers are gathered to re-elect the Benefactor (the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party was in session during the suppression of the Kronstadt rising...). "D-503" is forced to escape with his lover, who is wounded, beyond the State boundary to the uncivilised world outside. Once there they plan a new revolution against the standardised painless life of the Single State. But D-503 is plagued by self-doubt and his newly discovered consciousness comes into conflict with his old self, conditioned to unquestioning obedience to the State. And here Zamyatin returns again to the question of perpetual revolution:

"...there can't be any revolution. Because our revolution... was the last. And there can't be any other revolutions. Everybody knows that."

"Dear man, you're a mathematician...even more, you're a philosopher, because of your mathematics. Well then, name the ultimate number for me."

"What do you mean? I...I don't understand - what ultimate number?"

"Why the ultimate, the supreme, the greatest number of all."

"Come, E-, that's preposterous. Since the number of numbers is infinite, what number would you want to be the ultimate one?"

"Well, and what revolution would you want to be the ultimate one? There's no ultimate revolution, that's for children. Infinity scares children, yet it is necessary for children to sleep soundly at nights."

To crush the revolution the State attributes the unrest to a disease called "imagination" and announces that the nerve centre responsible for this terrible malady has been discovered by the State's scientists, who can cure the trouble by performing an operation with X-rays. The "Guardians" are forewarned of the insurgents' plans and the revolution fails. "D-503", unable to reconcile his conflicting souls, submits to the operation and betrays his comrades to the "Guardians". Freed now of his troublesome conscience, he watches his lover being tortured with compressed air beneath a glass bell. She and the other insurgents are despatched to "the Machine of the Benefactor" (a guillotine) and executed publicly as official poets recite triumphal odes in praise of the "Benefactor" and the Single State.

This scathing futuristic satire of the emerging Bolshevik State confirmed Zamyatin as a target for the new orthodoxy of pseudo-proletarian writers, who no doubt recognised themselves in "We's" Benefactor praising poets. Already under attack for his principled

opposition to the Bolshevik dictatorship (Trotsky denounced him as an "inside emigre" and "that phlegmatic snob" in his book "Literature and Revolution"...), Zamyatin was systematically persecuted and harassed, dismissed from editorial posts, ignored by magazines and publishing houses, and finally denounced by his former comrades in the writers union.

Faced with a choice between renouncing his literary work or bowing to official command, he chose to stand by his ideals. Unexpectedly in 1931 Stalin agreed to Zamyatin's request to leave Russia and he lived out the rest of his life writing, surrounded by poverty, in Paris until his death in 1937.

Although the action of "We" is set in the future - and indeed can be interpreted as a prophetic warning against statism in general - it was primarily written as a warning against the totalitarian actions of Lenin and Trotsky (Stalin at this juncture was still lurking in the shadows...). This is something that George Orwell and Gorb Struve - really the only people who were prepared to write approvingly of Zamyatin amidst the Russophile atmosphere prevalent amongst intellectuals during the 1930' and 40's - failed to grasp. Not surprising when the naive self-censorship of most writers and intellectual "fellow-travellers" at that time is borne in mind! Accurate news of conditions in Russia under the Bolsheviks was deliberately suppressed by those in the know, and observers had to content themselves with the testimonies of tame Fabians like Shaw and the Webbs, and Moscow produced mystifications. All opinion unfavourable to the Communist Party was slandered and suppressed on all sides. Orwell perhaps should have guessed "WE's" contemporary relevance sooner than most; his own "HOMAGE TO CATALONIA" and "ANIMAL FARM" had been refused publication countless times because of their revelations of Communist Party hypocrisy. Only a few books brought out by such anarchists as Voline, Berkman, Goldman etc made any attempt to tell the real story. But Zamyatin himself made no bones about the purpose of "WE":

"Having become the most fantastic country in all present day Europe, post-revolutionary Russia will undoubtedly reflect this period of her history in a literature of fantasy. And a start has already been made in the shape of the present author's novel WE."

By utilising the socio-fantasy form pioneered by H.G.Wells, Zamyatin clearly wanted "...to reveal the defects of the existing social structure and not to construct some paradise of the future." -as he wrote to Wells.

In writing "WE" Zamyatin gave new vitality to this anti-utopian form inherited from Wells and passed it on to a new generation of English writers, directly influencing the better known works of Aldous Huxley - Brave New World - and George Orwell - 1984.

"WE" and the short stories he left behind him are bitter jabs in the face of authority, orthodoxy and tradition. Zamyatin was a heretic who could never accept the status quo:

"...true literature can only exist where it is produced by madmen, hermits, heretics, visionaries, rebels and sceptics."

And where they didn't exist or were killed off he called forth new heretics in his writings. As he wrote to Stalin in 1931:

"...no creative activity is possible in an atmosphere of systematic persecution that increases in intensity from year to year."

The disappearance of anything remotely approaching literature in the Soviet Union bears tragic witness to the truth that "literature is doomed if liberty of thought perishes." (Orwell) And the state is the surest guarantee of that doom.

In an age of servile acceptance of tyranny Zamyatin's writings stand out as question marks; brilliant tongue in cheek commentaries on contemporary life, with a peculiar surreal atmosphere attached to every action. They hold up the blindness and savagery of Russia's new oppressors for all to see and mock; the irreverent mocking of a man who sees the ridiculousness of a human existence without liberty.

The following work by Zamyatin is currently available.

"The Dragon and other stories" Penguin

"We" Penguin

"Literature, Revolution and Entropy" (IN "Dissonant Voices in Soviet Literature" eds P.Blake and M.Haywood. Pantheon)



Ian Seed

In Greens and Browns

Marilyn, I
could have breathed into
your dying lungs.

We could have discussed our
poetry, not in one of those
marble conversations, but in our
reactions
to instincts.

We could have huddled in
our sad smallness, two
naked children in
a heap of leaves.

But I don't really think
you would have been so intimate with
me. Instead, you would have
taken your eyes out, laid them
in your palms before me
and asked:
"Is that poetry?"



BOOK REVIEW

COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION by Gaston Leval. Published
by Freedom Press. Price £2.00.

In a recent interview in the Daily Telegraph occasioned by his seventieth birthday, Arthur Koestler remarked that during the 1940's the only non-Stalinist left wing intellectuals in this country had been himself and George Orwell. Disregarding the omission of Herber Read, one can see that one outcome of the situation that Koestler mentions was an all embracing unanimity on the left which stifled any general knowledge of the libertarian position. There remains to this day a general lack of non-Leninist intellectuals on the left (I alter Stalinist to Leninist here not because I consider they differ but because many contemporary leftists will accept the latter but not the former). One of the principal areas in which anarchism has felt this weakness has been in the analysis of the events in Spain up to 1939, especially after July 19th, 1936.

Many books have been written on this subject, and most of them have been interesting and informative, for people taught history in this country usually cover a syllabus of European history dominated by the assumption that Africa begins at the Pyrenees. But all the freely available works in English have previously been written from the standpoint of the putschist and the militarist rather than that of the student of social developments at the base of society. It has therefore been quite easy for anybody in this country to study the political developments in the Republican government during the conflict. It has been equally easy to acquaint oneself with the military history. And anarchists have even been able to read about and consider the role of the anarchist movement and some of its most prominent members during the period. Vernon Richards has even written a book, "Lessons of the Spanish Revolution", Freedom Press, quite excellent in its self imposed role, indicating certain lessons that anarchists can draw from the experience of their movement in these years.

But until the recent publication of Vernon Richards' sadly delayed translation of Leval's "Collectives in the Spanish Revolution", there has been no extensive and detailed analysis of the history

of what the people did on their own behalf and for their own ends while the war raged about them. Sam Dolgoff's collection, "The Anarchist Collectives", which borrows extensively from Leval, was published only shortly before this work, and Frank Mintz's study "L'Autogestion dans l'Espagne Revolutionnaire" is unfortunately not yet available in English.

Leval's work is a chronicle of people coming together freely into communal groups to carry on and develop their economic activity under their own control. They took over the land and decided together how best it could be worked. They established social facilities for the use of all. They adopted different methods of providing for their members, from free availability of goods to the family wage. They built schools for their children where there had previously been none, or where the previous schools had been inadequate. The concern for education among the collectives was so general that one may conclude that the desire to eliminate illiteracy in Spain was a greater spur to the libertarian revolution than some of the economic factors we usually consider primary.

This feeling was particularly strong in the rural areas, although in some ways the rural/industrial comparison is an unreal one in Spain, for the workforce in the most heavily industrialised areas were no more than secondgeneration city dwellers. In rural areas, and especially in the South, the anarchist idea was very much of the millenarian strand, and there was a long standing commitment of the peasantry to the libertarian collectivist ideal. In the rural collectives the CNT (libertarian union) and UGT (socialist union) worked together on distinctly libertarian lines. The only factor that might seem odd to a contemporary anarchist in this country was the assumption of the virtue of the work ethic.

"One sees that work was the major pre-occupation, dominating and imposing its law on everything; there was no place in the rules for the demand for personal freedom or for the autonomy of the individual." Page 127.

Another practice that seems to sit uncomfortably alongside a recollection of Bakunin's urging to "Destroy the documents", (which the writer only recalls because it seemed so impressive and intimidating a demand when met all that time ago), was the keeping of the most impressively detailed records of the produce and the consumption and the reserve supplies of all collectives. This was done to facilitate the supply of shortages whenever they might occur, and I believe most anarchists would find such strictly

functional paper work acceptable, at least while it fell short of being rampant bureaucratism.

Possibly because there was a much greater variety of product, service and size among the industrial collectives there occurred also a greater variety of styles of collectivisation. It also appears that in the towns the poisonous proximity of various organisations committed to state socialism had an unfortunate influence on the collectivised industries. Instead of a universal commitment to the common good on the part of the collectivised concerns a few actually operated as autonomous collectives and kept their profits and surpluses for distribution to the workers in the collective. Such a lack of social solidarity was not general, though there were other aberrations in the urban collectives. They tended not to abandon money, whilst the rural collectives did so to a notable extent. Also the urban collectives were ready to offer salaries double those of the workers to secure the services of technical experts. Whether these practices were justified in the extreme situation of the time is for the reader to decide. But their occurrence is a pointer to the collectives being organised by people with an experimental approach rather than by ideological bigots intent to prove their own blueprint. As a method of social innovation I would consider the experimental one much the healthier.

To return to my opening point, the Stalinist domination of the way we have looked at the Spanish experience has led to an important misapprehension concerning the collectives. People tend to associate them with the collectivisation experienced in Russia under Stalin, which was forced collectivisation. The impression is that the collectives in Spain were imposed by CNT guns. This is so far from being true that it is almost a complete reversal of the truth, which is not unusual in the authoritarian's technique of misrepresentation. The collectives in Spain were free in that none were compelled to join them and none were compelled to remain in membership. Furthermore co-operative and cordial relations were maintained with those peasants who preferred to work on as individuals without resort to the technical advantages of collective organisation. And while the central government in Madrid was systematically depriving the soldiers on the Aragon front, who were overwhelmingly CNT members, of both weapons and food so as to bolster up and ensure the wholehearted support of the more CP inclined troops of the Madrid front, the Aragon rural collectives fed these troops out of their own produce.

Another aspect of the Spanish experience of collectivisation which is widely ignored is that it was universally a technical success. The experience indicated that, at least in Spain during the years

1936 to 1938, by when most of the collectives had been destroyed by Stalinist thugs, people were inspired to work together for the common good. Productivity generally did increase and socially useful projects were undertaken. Both a greater area of land was planted and a greater yield per acre was achieved. These results compare uncomfortably for the Stalinist with the wretchedness and misery which was the most general result of the bureaucratically conceived and aridly administered campaign of collectivisation in Russia. But they do seem to indicate that collectivisation as a technique is of neutral value: what makes the difference is whether it is carried through as a popular activity or as an enforced policy; whether it happens in a libertarian or an authoritarian manner

But for all these smaller pointers of varying degrees of interest, the largest conclusion I would draw from Leval's excellent and fascinating study is that the Spanish collectives were able to organise and maintain production without the state, and that the whole experience was a life enhancing one for the participants. It called forth a popular resourcefulness in overcoming technical problems and a great generosity of spirit.

"There were no more orphans in Andorra or in any other collective village; all children without parents found a family." Page 125.

I recommend this book to libertarians for its detailed account of how the Spanish people sought to re-organise society in a libertarian communist manner.

As for the authoritarian socialist, with their masochistic justification of arbitrary state control, and especially to apologists of Stalin's policies in the 1930's, I also recommend it. They will read it as a fairy story.

Pete Miller.



Steve SNEYD POEMS

"Briton's Protection" Hotel

Guevara's to the bogwalls gone
with Bird & Marianne & God

looks like the
future's in

our own hands after all

just like it always was
up against the wall

Prague '68

The Czechs were bounced
the cashier said
Lenin's signature was forged &
after all he had the final word
...since he employed the Guard

Owl Light

the man who gave his girl
a baby because he
had nothing else to
give her

later killed her so he would
have someone who'd
listen to him

to whit the wise the
cunning
cops

who never heard a
word he said they'd

heard it all before.



Friends & Neighbours...

Freedom: anarchist fortnightly. 12p plus postage from 84b White-chapel High Street, London E.1. Essential reading many do without.

Peace News: pacifist fortnightly. 15p plus postage from 8 Elm Ave., Nottingham. Buy now before the receiver is called in.

Black Flag: anarchist near-monthly. 15p plus postage from 83 Thorne Road, Huddersfield. Controversial, sectarian, stimulating.

Minus One: egoist occasionally (what else can you expect). 10p plus postage from 186 Gloucester Terrace, London W.2. Idiosyncratic and obscure, besides which they never mention us.

Anarchism Lancastrium: northern anarchist mag. 10p plus postage from 16 Kingsmill Ave, Whalley, Lancs. Witty and irreverent with free gifts.

Views: interesting Edinburgh based paper. 12p plus postage from 17a Dublin Street, Edinburgh.

The Great Subject (a minianthology) and **The Way We Are** and other pieces by J.E.Lake. Poetry and other writings. Nicely produced and well worth reading. 10p each plus postage from Hilltop Press, 4 Nowell Place, Huddersfield.

An Anarchy of Words by Pat Parker. A very pleasant selection of short poems, introspective and thoughtful. 25p from 186 Gloucester Terrace, London W.2.

Into Rolling Red by Ian Seed. Some very nice poems in this booklet by a very interesting young writer. 20p plus postage from The Vicarage, Copt Oak, Leicestershire.

Also received:-

Anarchismo, available from C.P.61, Catania, Sicily.
C.I.R.A. bulletins, Case Postale 51, CH-1211, Geneve 13, Switzerland.
Libero International, C.P.O. Box 1065, Kobe, Japan 650-91.
Interrogations, from L.N.Vega, 3 Rue de Valenciennes, 75010 Paris.
Le Refractaire, B.P. 27 Le Pre St. Gervais, 93310, France.
Le Monde Libertaire, 3 Rue Ternaux, 75011, Paris, France.
The Vulture, C.P.95, Stn. Place D'Armes, Montreal, PQ H2Y 3E9, Canada.

Rising Free, Box 92 Broadway, N.S.W. 2007, Australia.

Editorial.

Here at last is Z revue number three, long and patiently awaited by our readers, and at last put together and published by the hard pressed (and frankly not very efficient) editorial group. The snags and snarl ups which seem always to accompany the production of an issue of Z this time included the accidental sending of the entire file of material on hand some 600 miles away to the far north of Scotland. At one stage we even considered calling this copy number four and hoping you would all imagine that you'd missed number three, but honesty triumphed and we hope that those of you who have taken out subscriptions will bear with us as it is now clear that a five issue subscription will take longer than one year to complete.

We have some material on hand for number four, but will always be happy and interested to receive any further offerings that our mightily talented readership might wish to send us. We are interested to see poetry, drawings and writings of all sorts. Please write on and write in.....

to Z revue
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