

A SUBSCRIPTION OF
ONE GUINEA

ANNUALLY
ENTITLES
YOU

TO

- (1) A copy of every C.T.S.I. publication issued during the year priced 6d. or under.
- (2) Free admission to the Society's Annual Conference, including the Reception.
- (3) Rich spiritual privileges

The Society Needs Your Help!

Full particulars from :—

The Catholic Truth Society of Ireland

Veritas House,
7 & 8 LOWER ABBEY STREET, DUBLIN.

MILITANT ATHEISM



**SOVIET RUSSIA PREPARES
NEW OFFENSIVE**

No. 1451.

MILITANT ATHEISM

SOVIET RUSSIA PREPARES NEW OFFENSIVE



Translated from the French



PRINTED IN IRELAND

Daile d'ea Cluist :

DUBLIN :

Comluist na Fírinne Catoilice i nÉirinn
CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY OF IRELAND

7 7 8 Spáto na Mainistreachá Soctair
7 & 8 LOWER ABBEY STREET

MILITANT ATHEISM

All rights of reproduction and translation reserved in all countries. Copyright vests in Commission Internationale 'Pro Deo', Geneva.

On September 18, 1934, Russia was admitted to the Assembly of the League of Nations. It was a victory for Militant Atheism.

The Soviet Government and the Union of Militant Atheists are intimately related, the latter being no less than an official organ of the Komintern which is morally identical with the former. The Central Council of the Union is a sort of Ministry of Irreligion, directly subsidised by the State. Russian membership of the League of Nations, therefore, constitutes a new power-station of Godlessness to which Christendom must give attention.

The strength of this anti-God power-station may be judged from the facts given in a pamphlet by Rev. J. de Bivort de la Saudée, S.J., published by the Bureau of The International Pro Deo Commission, and translated from the French for the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland by Rev. William Erdozain, S.J.

THE STERN FACTS.

Father de Bivort de la Saudée says:—

We cannot blind ourselves to the stern facts. A sixth part of the world is now labouring under systematic religious persecution. The leaders of the Communist Party in Russia no longer conceal their intentions. "In the cause of the second Five Year Plan," writes Loukatchevsky, "we must develop anti-religious propaganda on a very wide scale."¹

¹Loukatchevsky: "Leninistic Marxism: Militant Atheism" Moscow, 1933-'34, p. 102.

NIHIL OBSTAT:

RECCAREDUS FLEMING,

Censor Theol. Deput.

IMPRIMI POTEST:

✠ EDUARDUS,

Archiep. Dublinen.,
Hiberniæ Primas.

Dublino, die 14 Nov., anno 1936.

And again²: "We must arrange for new nuclei of propagandists and agitators—qualified atheists."

The Union of Militant Atheists is becoming more and more perfectly organised. Now, it is assuming a positively aggressive attitude. Since its second Congress, in June, 1929, it has grasped the necessity of transforming itself into a rigidly-disciplined army unafraid of advancing. Yaroslavsky has noticed that "the religious organisations will not dissolve without a struggle, they will not yield to us the field of battle without fierce resistance."³ Now there is not much time: in 1937 religion should have disappeared completely from Russia. It is, then, a terrible struggle which is at hand: the persecutions of recent years in Russia would seem to have been only a foretaste of what is to come.

The chief calculates his forces. Yaroslavsky observes: "It is difficult to count the number of godless in our country. I have tried several times to do it, but each time I have got no more than approximate figures. However, it may be said that we now count the godless by dozens of millions."⁴

However exaggerated this declaration may be, it is certainly on the way to being realised literally. In 1928, the Union of Militant Atheists counted in the Soviet Republic from 240,000 to 250,000 members; at the beginning of 1930, about

²Loukatchevsky: "New Anti-religious Manual," Moscow, 1933, p. 343.

³Antireligioznik, No. 2, 1934, p. 2. Quoted by the chromographed text of the "Report on the 3rd Session of the International Conference Pro Deo" (10-11 Sept., 1934). The present study, indeed, is based in part on the documents which the bureau of this I.C., established in Geneva, was kind enough to communicate to us.

⁴Antireligioznik, *loc. cit.*

600,000; and today, several millions. Not only does the anti-religious offensive continue methodically in Russia and abroad, but (what is more), its activity is intensified in the most varied fields.

A decree of February 26, 1934, describes in detail the new constitution of the Union of Militant Atheists in the Soviet Republics.¹ The cell is the basic organisation of the Union—in workshops, factories, collective farms (Kolkhoz), as well as the various units of the Red Army. If it comprises less than fifteen members, the cell is to be directed by an 'organizer'; if it is more important, by a bureau composed of three or five. If an establishment has several guilds, an organizer is to be assigned to each. The list of members of the U.M.A. is to be kept on a special register. Besides their cards as Union members, they are to receive the Militant card, which shall be collected or endorsed by the regional or urban councils. The provincial councils are to be maintained. The workers on the regional council of the U.M.A. will be responsible, apart from their work in the midst of national minorities, for the organisation of concerted campaigns, for anti-religious work among children, for scientific work and the information department of the Union. Finally, the executive committee at the head of this vast atheist organisation is suppressed, and periodical meetings of the local Councils are substituted for it. These are to treat of the different questions that affect the Union's activity. The *plenum* and the *praesidium* of the Central Council shall be upheld and administered by the President, or, failing him, by his colleague or the secretary concerned.

¹The complete text of this decree, signed by the Central Council of the U.M.A., will be found in the "Antireligioznik," Nos. 2 and 3, 1934.

In this way, the whole of the population of the Soviet Republics is exposed to the influence of the militant godless, who neglect no method of propaganda in their endeavour to destroy religion. "The school," writes Loukatchevsky, "is the realisation of anti-religious education. The Press, the cinema, the radio, literature and art, in Soviet hands all make war on religion."²

THE ATHEIST SCHOOL.

Of all these weapons, anti-religious instruction in the schools is undoubtedly one of the most powerful in destroying the "religious ideology" in the rising generations. The Commissariat of Public Instruction adopts the most perverted inventions in its work of uprooting from the Slavonic soul the smallest shoots of Christian tradition. The proselytes of militant atheism seem to see them sprout unceasingly in the hidden recesses of conscience, even among the youth who are so ignorant of the civilisations of the past. The teachers in the anti-religious school are trained with the utmost care. Those Christians who have remained at their post, on the condition of hiding their true sentiments, are subjected to a continual espionage by the G.P.U., as well as by their pupils. In the "Izvestia," of March 26, 1929, Lounatcharsky was already writing: "The schoolmasters who believe (in God) are an absurd contradiction: the sections of Public Instruction ought to profit by every occasion to replace them by anti-religious teachers." Some months later, in June of the same year, at the second Congress of the Godless, the same Lounatcharsky, then People's Commissary for Public Instruc-

²Loukatchevsky "New Anti-religious Manual," Moscow, 1933, p. 330.

tion, stated dogmatically: "Instruction for us, cannot be other than communist; consequently it cannot be anything but anti-religious."

And again, quite recently, at the second meeting of the Anti-Religious Scientific Institutes, held at Moscow from the 13th to the 15th of June, 1934, the principle was affirmed "that the Communist education of the child necessarily includes its anti-religious education."¹ Even more, the "Bezbojnik," of June 17, 1934, defines that "the Soviet educational institutions should train up Militant Atheists." In spite of this, the Atheists of Moscow are not satisfied that this work is carried out with sufficient vigour. It is the "Bezbojnik" again, November 17, 1934, that publishes, not without a measure of satisfaction, a recent letter from the Commissariat of Public Instruction to all the directors of the regional sections affiliated to this Ministry.

This letter is intended to strengthen anti-religious action in the schools. Are not the school-teachers to be considered as "the fundamental cultural force in the Soviet campaign"? The letter renews and defines the instructions of September 5, 1931, in several paragraphs.

1. The teachers in regional departmental and municipal sections of Public Instruction are bound to exercise, in the course of their rounds of inspection, particular care in the control of the anti-religious activity carried on at school in connection with school work or outside of class, and must second the masters in a practical and methodical manner.

2. The regional and departmental pedagogical journals should publish local experiments in anti-religious activity at school, and draw attention to those which produced the best results.

¹Cf. Bezbojnik ("The Godless") of June 29, 1934.

3. A minimum of anti-religious matter, in proportion to the standard of the book, shall be introduced into regional school manuals, presented in a lively, clear and convincing style.

4. Every measure will be taken so that the schools may be provided with methodical manuals of anti-religious instruction for the use of the masters—Moscow editions—and with all the Educational Equipment determined by the findings of the Commissariat of Public Instruction and of the central council of the Union of Militant Atheists.

5. The schools shall be instructed as to the necessity of assisting, in an orderly and methodical manner, the Educational Cells of the Union of Militant Atheists.

In spite of the declarations of the Soviet authorities, who are impatient to see the triumph of the Bolshevik ideology, whilst reassuring the governments represented at Geneva, the school-teachers do not seem by any means to relax their anti-religious determination. Those of Voronege would even seem to have distinguished themselves in this sacrilegious proselytism.

According to the "Antireligioznik"¹ a Bolshevik school-mistress thus exposes her method: "My aim is so to educate the anti-religious children, that they may become conscious and well-trained assailants in the fight against religion, at school, at home and in the street. The work begins with the children nine years of age. Stories are told to them with this object. The talks consist in putting them in the presence of a practical problem in the fight against religion. After an address (of this kind) I have asked the children if they would like to fight against religion. . . . Immediately they suggested talking among other groups about what they

had just heard, insisting at home on the abolition of crucifixes, persuading other children to imitate them, writing anti-religious posters and putting them up in various places at school and in the streets . . ." And the school-mistress concludes: "The duty of teachers consists in pointing out faults and in directing the children's anti-religious enthusiasm into one effective channel. They must feel themselves members of the great anti-God army."

The giving to a child of this consciousness of a rigid solidarity with "the great anti-God army," is not regarded as a matter of small importance in the Soviet anti-religious education. He is thus put in touch with other children or youths belonging to accredited groups of Militant Atheists, such as the Red Pioneers and the Communist Youth. This contact strengthens and develops the malformation begun at school. If we are to believe a recent testimony, that of the Vice-President of the Union of the Militant Atheists,¹ hardly likely to outrage truth in this matter, "the organisation of the Red Pioneers performs with honour the will of Lenin, with regard to systematic anti-religious education, one of the essential elements of which is the fight for an anti-God philosophy."

PROPAGANDA THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE PRESS.

Similarly with the schools, the Press is enlisted for Soviet atheist propaganda work; it blasphemes foully against God, and emits the poison of Bolshevik materialism into the minds of men.

The State publishers continually produce anti-religious publications of varying degrees in value. Bibliographies of such works are from time to time printed in the "Bezbojnik" and

¹Antireligioznik, No. 7, 1930.

¹Cf. Bezbojnik, May 29, 1934.

the "Antireligioznik." From the same State publishing-houses blasphemous posters are issued destined to cover, on occasion, the walls in the large towns.

Investigations, most varied in kind, are pursued with the object of intensifying the work of irreligion. It may be a Congress of the librarians of Russia, called together to discuss means for the perfecting of the anti-religious influence of libraries, and for the inspiring of all Soviet literature with this one atheist spirit.¹ Or again, it may be an enquiry under the form of a circular sent to the public at large. One of these begins by explaining that the central Committee of the Council of Militant Atheists and the State publishers have undertaken the publication of pamphlets and books for the use of believers; it goes on to appeal to "the mass of readers", asking them to help in a task which is considered "difficult and full of responsibility." All are asked to answer the following questions, which were reproduced in the "Bezbojnik," May 1, 1932.

1. Which books produce the strongest impression on you with regard to the destruction of your religious ideas and outlook? Do your best to remember their titles, and indicate them.
2. Which particular passage in these books undermined your faith or confirmed you in your atheism?
3. Which anti-religious books failed to convince you when you were yet a believer? It is not necessary to sign your answers, but do not forget to mark how old you were when you became anti-religious; also your social position at the time. Indicate also your sex and your standard of education. Address your reply to the Antireligious State Publishers.

¹Cf Antireligioznik, No. 3, 1934.

Books, pamphlets, tracts, newspapers of every kind—all unite in their efforts to root out religion to the triumph of the proletarian ideology. Among the works published in Russia with this destructive object in view the following² are to be seen particularly recommended by the Bolshevist organs:

Leninist Marxism: Militant Atheism (1933-34).

Antireligious Manual for the Workers.

The Philosophy of the Godless.

Religious Feeling and Crime.

Anti-religious Instruction at School.

Programme of the Workers' Anti-religious University.

Anti-religious Correspondence Course.

How to Fight Religion.

The Campaign against God.

Soviet Legislation destined to furnish the Godless with legal means of combating believers.

During recent years hundreds of anti-religious books of this kind have been issued by the State Press. We may add to the above list the titles of some Moscow periodicals, genuine organs of Militant Atheism, such as Bezbojnik, Antireligioznik, the illustrated Bezbojnik, Neuland, etc., and we shall have some idea of the renewed activity of the Soviet Press in this field.

EXHIBITIONS AND LECTURES WITH SLIDES.

Exhibitions must be mentioned among the methods used by Stalin's Government with the object of making irreligion penetrate into the masses. During the course of the year 1929,

²We borrow this list from the chromographed text of the "Report to the 3rd Session of the I.C. Pro Deo" (September 10-11, 1934).

a central anti-religious museum was inaugurated at Moscow. Conceived and subdivided in accordance with the materialistic idea of evolution, it imparts in a few hours, according to a witness¹, a complete anti-religious education. The "Bezbojnik" of June 10, 1934, declares that it had been visited by hundreds of thousands of workers. It constitutes an active centre of propaganda, sending anti-religious exhibitions into the rest-parks, the workshops, the public works, and the "kolkhoz". This central museum alone is stated to have organised and circulated in the provinces of Soviet Russia between December, 1932, and November, 1933, six hundred and seventy-nine little travelling exhibitions, which also were destined to spread the Atheism of Marx and Lenin. Its library has more than 30,000 volumes which are at the disposal of those who work for the downfall of religion. After giving this information, the article in the Bolshevik paper conjures the Soviets, as well as the Councils and cells of the Militant Godless, to increase still further the number of collective visits to the museum, reminding them that the believers who by this visit were incited to take their first step into Atheism are numerous.

In order to enable Communists of only average culture to take an active part, at little expense, in this diabolical propaganda, it is made possible for them to acquire, for a few roubles, lectures prepared by the Central Council of the Union of the Godless, and with them a series of lantern-slides.

The following titles are given in "Anti-religiuoznik" No. 3. 1934:

The Pope of Rome in the Service of Capital (5 roubles).
Religion in the service of International Bourgeoisie (10 roubles).

¹Marcel Koch in "La Russie d'aujourd'hui," April, 1934.

Woman liberated from religious tyranny (6 roubles).

The Imperialist war and Religion (10 roubles).

These illustrated lectures help to strengthen the powerful action of the theatre, the radio, and above all of the cinema, all of which have their part in this remorseless struggle against any form of Deism. Christianity is the chief target for the guns of the godless, but no religion is spared by their batteries.

A few years ago this was affirmed quite explicitly by Stepanoff: "We must work in such a way that every blow aimed at the traditional structure of the church, every blow struck at the clergy, may attack religion in general. Even the most blind will see how necessary is this decisive struggle with the pope, whether he call himself pastor, priest, rabbi, patriarch, mullah, or Pope; the fight must go on no less remorselessly against God, whether He call Himself Jehovah, Jesus, Buddha, or Allah¹"

And last July, with like cynicism, Comrade Olechtchouk professed this hatred on the part of genuine Communists for every form of belief in God. In an article under the title "Reply to a Believer"² he wrote: "It is impossible to trace a sort of line of demarcation between true Christians and 'Christians'. All believers resemble each other fundamentally. As Marx said, every religion is the opium of the people, an instrument in their exploitation, a means of doping the workers. That is why we are opposed to all religions."

AN ANTI-RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC LOAN.

If the Soviets are redoubling their activity to the end that

¹Stepanoff: Problems and methods of anti-religious propaganda, Moscow, 1923: quoted by "Documentation Catholique," April 19, 1930, col. 1010.

²"Bezbojnik," July 29, 1934.

in 1937 they may be able to rejoice in the triumph of the second Five Year Plan, experience has shown them that religious aspirations are so deeply rooted in the soul, that they remain even when the economic and social structure of a country is overthrown.

So they are endeavouring to lend a "scientific" character to their atheistic campaign. They hope thereby more surely to attain their end. With the monstrous paradox of Stalin in mind: "I am opposed to religion because I am in favour of science," they try to show that the two are mutually contradictory, forgetting, or ignorant, of the fact that before an act of faith is made, the reason ought to accept it as reasonable; and that if an act of faith requires grace, it is nevertheless the adherence of the intellect to divine truth.

Recently they launched an "Anti-religious Scientific Loan", which is to act as a stimulant to the activity of their "scientific men". The scientists who subscribe to the loan are dispensed from spending money like the common run of mortals. They are only bound to promise in writing to give lectures and to publish "scientific" anti-religious articles. Fidelity to their undertaking takes the place of spending. One must, therefore, be ready for new discoveries by these kept "scholars", some of whom have already arrived at the conclusion that "the Christ of the Gospels never existed"¹

Only a few months ago, from June 13-15, 1934, the Congress of "Scientific" Institutes devoted to the spread of Atheism, summoned delegates of 28 anti-religious institutions to Mos-

¹This conclusion is that of the "Manual of the Anti-religious Workers' Clubs" published under the direction of M. Loukatchevsky.

cow: anti-religious sections of the Institute of Philosophy of the Communist Academy, of the Institute of Public Hygiene, of the Institute of Pedagogy, etc. Among the questions treated, the members sought to discover the apologetical arguments of the believer, and (we quote "Bezbojnik") the reasons preventing him from "getting rid of religious prejudices"; the methods employed in "unmasking the counter-revolutionary rôle played by the churches in the service of Imperialism; and in particular the counter-revolutionary rôle played by religion and the church in the country of the Soviets."

In their "scientific" anti-religious campaign, the Communist leaders seek, in point of fact, to establish the necessary link binding together Religion, Capitalism, Imperialism and Fascism, in the popular mind. Each and every member of the Third International ought, by this means, to experience for these realities (which he already considers to be the odious idols of the old capitalist society) an instinctive and simultaneous aversion.

FAMINE AS A MEANS OF PROPAGANDA.

The campaign waged by the Godless proceeds in the intellectual domain as well as in the juridical. The Commissariat of Public Instruction is not alone in fostering Communist anti-religious activity by its periodic decess. The other ministries contribute in like manner to the methodical persecution of believers. Thus, the Commissariat of the Interior promulgated on April 8, 1929, a decree which forbade all religious associations:—

1. To organise funds for mutual assistance, co-operative unions, unions for production
2. To distribute material help to their members.

3. To organise either prayer-meetings for children, young people and women, or meetings, groups, clubs or general biblical, literary, manual-work or religious-instruction sections . . . etc . . .
4. To organise outings or playing-fields for children.
5. To possess libraries, reading-rooms, sanatoriums or dispensaries.

Thanks, too, to measures taken by the same Commissariat of the Interior, ministers of religion are deprived of their rations card¹. Together with their children they are classed as non-workers, and *ipso facto*, dispossessed of their civic rights. Consequently they can only obtain work by publicly abjuring their faith. The children of clergymen are bound to disclaim their parents in public.

M. A——, a Russian Orthodox, but recently escaped from the Soviet Hell, witnessed the following poignant scene:

A young man's father had just been arrested, and his family was destitute. M. A——, out of pity, arranged for him to work with him. "At the end of a month" (we quote literally the authentic witness) "some wretch reported to the proper authorities that he was the son of a 'pope.'² Horrors! The son of a 'pope' in a Soviet organisation! A general meeting was called. Administrators and employees were to decide the fate of the boy. This 'enemy of their class,' sixteen years of age, had, first of all, to listen to all the insults addressed to his father. Then the President proposed to make him deny

¹The "Izvestia" of November 29, 1934, published a decree announcing the abolition of the "bread-card" from January 1st, 1935. However, this measure did not affect the situation of the clergy; the priests, deprived of the right to work, cannot earn the money necessary for subsistence.

²That is, of a priest.

his father in public, at the peril of losing his place. Everybody in this country has to agree, for it is one's daily bread that is at stake. The poor child trembled; large red blotches stained his face. 'Are you going to deny your father?' What were his thoughts at that moment? Of his father dying in Siberia, or of his mother and sister whose lives depend only on his assistance? 'Are you going to deny him?' Poor, poor Sacha—what did you live through at that moment? A scarcely perceptible voice: 'Yes, I deny him.' The meeting was adjourned, and the people went away without looking at one another. A week later the priest's family heard the news that he was dead; as for Sacha, he dared no longer raise his eyes to meet ours when we happened to meet."¹ The list of these unhappy renegade children is published from time to time in 'Bezbojnik'.

The G.P.U. attached of late to the Commissariat of the Interior, continues its work: "It spies upon, arrests, deports and executes priests and obstinate believers"². As Professor Mirkine-Guetzevitch, secretary-general of the International Institute of Common Law, has very justly said³:—According to law in Russia at the present day, "the G.P.U. is, in fact, master of the citizens of the Soviet. The G.P.U. can without trial, by virtue of secret rules and instructions, unknown to all, arrest, exile, execute, without even being bound to publish the names of its victims. The 'Practice' of the G.P.U. is clearly more inhuman than its 'law' and its rights . . . but . . . these laws and decrees go counter to the

¹"Le Chemin du Golgotha," Press of the Bureau of the C.I. "Pro Deo," Geneva, 1934, p. 24.

²Report to the 3rd Session of the C.I. "Pro Deo," September 10-11, 1934.

³"Cahiers des droits de l'Homme," February 20, 1930.

most elementary demands of morality and of the conscience of contemporary democracy. They constitute a monstrous attack upon the 'statement of the rights of man.'

In 1930 the Commissariat of Labour and of the Workers' Syndicates was bidden, at the 15th Congress of the Communist Party "to organize and to intensify anti-religious propaganda. One must not wonder, then, that the 'believing' workers should be eliminated from State undertakings, and *ipso facto*, be deprived of their card for food-rations."

The other Commissariats (Agriculture, War, Justice, etc.) give similar support at law to all those who endeavour to destroy religion, which is considered by the Soviets to be an essential part of the old capitalist society.

INTOLERANCE A DUTY.

Along the lines of that very Catholicism which it parodies, anti-religion lays claim to universality. In their unfeignedly aggressive propaganda, the godless aim not only at a Soviet Russia—their wish is to conquer the whole world. They would freely accept this war-cry, which is the introduction to the first number of "Bezbojnik." "We have toppled the earthly Tsars from their throne; now we are going to dethrone Heaven's." Thus for several years has Moscow's militant atheism taken root in Western Europe, with all its revolutionary methods.¹

On November 15, 1930, at Bodenbach, in Czecho-Slovakia, the extremist elements of the International of the Proletarian Free thinkers of Vienna (International Proletarischer Freid-

¹In reference to the first phase of this world-wide invasion by the godless, see Mgr. d'Herbigny's "Les Sans Dieu," Paris F.N.C., and in reference to the following phases, see Rev. J. de Bivort de la Saudée: "L'Antireligion communiste (1917-1937)", Paris, Spes, 1937.

enker), influenced by Slavonic godless, broke away from the moderate elements, leaving these latter to fuse with the Radical-Socialist Freethinkers of Brussels and to form along with them the International Union of Freethinkers, they became a purely Bolshevist organisation, treating the turncoats as "parsons' servants" and making open profession of militant atheism. Their name, "Freethinkers," no longer indicates their true character: "We are opposed to freedom of thought, because, attacking religion on grounds of class, we can tolerate no belief which was used by the bourgeoisie as a political weapon during the historic period of Capitalism."¹ This was written in February, 1932:—"Freedom of conscience corresponds to a revolutionary victory by bourgeois ideology. Let us then do away with the term 'freethinker', which is out of date, and lay claim to the glory of atheism."

The I.P.F. (International of Proletarian Freethinkers) thereby repudiates all connection with the International Union of Freethinkers whose toleration and stagnation it holds up to ridicule. It accuses it generally of 'Bourgeois-reformism' and proclaims itself proudly as "the only world-wide organisation which guides the masses of the workers in the fight against the Church and the counter-revolution, under the aegis of revolutionary atheism."²

THE MENACE TO THE FAITHFUL OF EUROPE.

In view of such professions of anti-religious bias, it is not to be wondered at that the I.P.F. is an auxiliary of the Communist International of Moscow. The "Bezbojnik", March 10, 1934, clearly asserts this solidarity: "The genuine proletarian organisations which fight for the liberation of the workers in

¹"La Lutte," February, 1932.

²"La Correspondence Internationale," May 26, 1934, p. 859.

deeds, not in words, are part of the Communist International. The International of Proletarian Freethinkers (the Godless) is a section of these organisations. After the schism of November 15th, 1930, the I.P.F. transferred its centre to Berlin. On May 4, 1932, the Reich Government dissolved it throughout Germany. Thence its centre passed to Basle, and a little more than a year later, to Strasbourg. To-day its followers throughout the world are said to number 5,200,000; but five million of these are militant godless in Russia. On their own avowal,¹ "the I.P.F. absorbs all that is revolutionary and progressive in the International Atheist Movement."

In May, 1932, the Executive of the I.P.F. met together at Paris. A circular letter of the month of January,² intended to pave the way for the Congress, informs us that from that period the Directors of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers had as their programme:

1. To increase the number of its staff.
2. To issue a press-bulletin in German, French, English and Russian.
3. To guarantee the co-operation of qualified instructors to the sections.
4. To inaugurate, from March 1st, 1932, the publication of an anti-religious journal in German.
5. To arrange for the publication and widespread distribution of cheap propagandist literature, destined first of all for Great Britain and America, where the Godless Movement needs establishing further.
6. To organise the production of anti-religious films.
7. To set up a detailed plan of-action for every country.

¹Cf. "Bezbojnik," March 10, 1934.

²Cf. "Antireligioznik," January, 1932.

8. To arrange for the exchange of information and material for propaganda between the different units.
9. To foster in these units revolutionary rivalry.

At Paris, too, was held another session of the I.P.F. Executive, from May 6th-8th, 1934. Its object is clearly defined in one of the organs of the Komintern¹: "New weapons had to be forged for the fight against the Church, religion, and the barbarian Fascist culture." Then the proletarian leaders examined the work done since the Conference of August, 1932, and determined the "line of action for militant atheism during the coming months."

Here we print a few of their conclusions, published in the "Correspondance Internationale," June 23, 1934 (p. 984):

"The sections of the I.P.F. must penetrate more deeply than hitherto into the mass organisations of the Church and of Fascism. In the countries of Fascist dictatorship, the realisation of this task is a vital matter for the organisations of the atheist war.

"The Session of the Executive has drawn the attention of the European and American section, in a special report, to the importance of Atheist work among the masses in the colonies.

"The experience afforded by the results obtained by the Indian section of the I.P.F. shows the great possibilities, as well as the weak points still existing in colonial work. . . .

"At present, 52 newspapers in all, in 14 languages, are published in the sections of the Capitalist countries outside the Soviet Union; 10 are illegal. That is a palpable and undeniable progress. But only in a small number of countries—in Germany, France, Bulgaria, India and Czecho-Slovakia,

¹"La Correspondance Internationale," May 26, 1934, p. 859.

has the atheist press been developed on a large scale.

"The Executive Committee has decided that the Fifth World Congress of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers shall be summoned for the first half of 1935, and it has charged all sections carefully to prepare for this Congress by means of mass activity, by the organisation of the one anti-clerical and anti-Fascist front, thus ensuring that the Fifth World Congress shall be a striking manifestation of militant atheism."

These declarations prove that the godless of the I.P.F. are vigorously conducting their campaign. If they are as yet relatively few in Western Europe, they are not thereby less of a menace to the future: the formation and progressive development of the 'unique' Communist-Marxist Front makes the spread of atheist propaganda a simple matter. Consequently we cannot remain indifferent to it.

The persecuted faithful of Soviet Russia know that they have our deep sympathy. On September 15, 1934, St. Peter's Cathedral, Geneva, the pastor, M. de Saussure, made himself the able interpreter of the sorrow common to all Christians, in words worthy of St. Paul.

Must not we hope to check the progress of militant atheism in Western Europe by means of truer justice and of a truly universal compassion for the working masses? With the sham fascination of prosperity to come, the Bolsheviks exploit, in the main, suffering and injustice, in order to foment class-war, and to fill the hearts of the people with the hatred which swells the ranks of the godless.

It may even be that this appalling campaign against Christianity is but the dawn of dogmatic union among Christians; for by compelling them to unite against a common enemy, this union of hearts will doubtless hasten on the union of minds. However this may be, this defensive union is impera-

tive. Pope Pius XI recently wrote of it: "We also must unite all our forces into a compact group, offering a solid front with a single intention to the evil ranks, which are the enemies alike of God and of the human race. In this strife, the issue concerned is the most momentous decision that can be asked of human liberty: For, or against God?—this is once more to be the choice that shall decide the fate of the whole of humanity. . . ."

Workers of Ireland

Unite Against Communism!

A new 2-colour 4-page leaflet exposing the anti-God determination of Communism. Should be distributed broadcast throughout Ireland.

Specimen Copies Supplied Free to Priests. Please enclose postage.

1/3 per 100; 10/- per 1,000.

(Postage extra)

VERITAS COMPANY LTD.,

7 & 8 LOWER ABBEY STREET,

DUBLIN.

THE ART OF LIFE

BY

Rt. Rev. Monsignor Frederick Charles Kolbe, D.D.

Cap. 8vo. 104 pages XII. Art. Cloth.

Price, 2/- : Post Free, 2/3

Monsignor Kolbe, in the pages of this notable book, tells us that the aim of art, spiritual beauty, is one of the ways of God and to see more of it is to see more of God. Art, being the expression of beauty, is subject to the laws of beauty. Every energy has its corresponding art, and man, with the power to love and to act, has command of the Art of Life, the greatest of the gifts of God. The Monsignor's object is to describe the energy, the genius, the means, the transforming touch, the material and the form of the Art of Life, which he defines as the Art wherein man, by the power of Grace, working through the Moral Sense illuminated by Faith, does with the instrumentality chiefly of prayer, transform the nature of the Soul into the Divine Beauty of Justice. This book for the cultured man of the world has irresistible charm.

VERITAS COMPANY, Limited,

VERITAS HOUSE,

7 & 8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin.