

'CHRISTMAS BEGINS WITH CHRIST'

By Dr John Lester

THIS WEEK WE CELEBRATE that extraordinary moment two thousand years ago when God gave us His own Son.

Jesus was a revolutionary. He was out to change the world.

Many revolutionaries who have lived since Him have appeared to be more successful. They have wielded enormous power, or gained enormous popularity.

Yet Jesus was never impressed by numbers. Many religious men have converted more people than He did. He was offered fame, power and riches, and rejected them all. His answer to numbers was strategy. He had the secret of changing men and teaching them to change others. It is the secret of permanent revolution which few others have ever grasped. He is still remembered, when most have been forgotten, and nations have been built on His teaching.

Britain is one such nation.

I thought of her age old values. A craftsman once said to me as I watched his painstaking work, 'My boy, whatever is well done, however humble, is noble.' This nation was built on hard work.

The world did not like us devaluing the pound. It was a French Cabinet Minister who gave tongue to what the world felt. He said that he did not mind us devaluing the pound but he hated the fact that we said we were not going to devalue when we knew we were going to. This nation was built on honesty.

There would be more of us here to enjoy this Christmas if twenty-five years ago some had not considered that the highest gift a man can offer is to give his life for his fellows. This nation was built on love and sacrifice.

Some deny the existence of right and wrong. They have been the basis of our system of government and our

laws, and other nations have seen fit to copy us. Our nation was built on this belief.

Our nation is under attack. We are attacked from within by those who persuade us to lower our standards, and then alter the law to suit our living. We are attacked from without by those who say that our views no longer matter anyway.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*Born beneath a starry sky,
With the oxen standing by,
Born to say to you and me,
'In My Name you can be free,'
Christmas begins with Christ.*

*Weary now of jewels, gold,
Seeking still for joy untold?
Fearful though the prospect be,
In My Name you can be free.
Christmas begins with Christ.*

*Timid child, woeful man,
Why refuse to hold My Hand?
Reach, I hold It out. O see,
In My Name you can be free,
Christmas begins with Christ.*

MURIEL BURRELL SMITH

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We have so often been wrong. We must accept criticism because of it. We are criticised by the world when we do not live up to the standards we profess: we should welcome such criticism. But the bitterest attacks are directed not at us but at our standards.

We may allow the simple standards on which this nation is built to be killed. But the ghost of those standards still haunts the conscience of a world where more and more demand their own ends.

Can we now offer relived standards

to the entire earth, so that in a spirit of change we can help to build a world that is a real family?

This is something that we can take on regardless of our reduced military strength or the weakness of our pound. Jesus was not a rich man, but he did have an idea, and he did have a world vision.

We too can have a policy East of Suez without an army East of Suez. For instance our history is intertwined with India. Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma, knows that unless a change in the hearts of the Indian people can come and come quickly, that subcontinent is doomed. As a Christian nation that is our responsibility too. Gandhi is raising a force who can bring that change. In spite of the needs of his own country, Gandhi brought his force of Indians to Europe—to help us to find again the quality of life which once we tried to give to his land.

These men and women were from all castes and creeds. They knew their needs and faults, but they also knew they could change, and they shared that experience with us.

In the same spirit, four British trade unionists will celebrate this Christmas in India, far from their families. They have demonstrated in their own factories and docks that if men change, production and pay go up, while disruption and dissatisfaction go down.

They have gone at Gandhi's request to bring their experiences to the docks in the ports of India. It is the ports which are the lifeline in any hunger crisis.

This is the work of the ordinary man. Jesus gave us His philosophy, He gave us a world outlook, and He gave us a strategy. He left it to us to make His hope of a reborn world our reality.

continued overleaf

continued from previous page

That birth two thousand years ago was no accident.

To everyone who listens in silence God will reveal the next steps of His amazing strategy for our planet.

He will also show us how to change, and where we need to change.

Will you celebrate Christmas in the babble of the inn, or in the silence of the stable?

PRIME MINISTER HAROLD HOLT HONOURED

AN MRA ASSEMBLY of 250 from many parts of Britain in the Westminster Theatre last Sunday, stood in silent appreciation of the Rt Hon Harold Holt, Prime Minister of Australia, whom Mr K D Belden, Chairman of the Theatre Trustees, described as 'a farsighted statesman of the Commonwealth'.

Mr Richard Thwaites of Melbourne, speaking for the youth of Australia, recalled the policy speech Mr Holt made last January at an MRA assembly. Mr Holt had challenged Australia to help create in SE Asia 'a constructive, assured environment in which Governments and administration can plan and carry through, with some certainty, programmes and reforms based on the rational use of resources.'

Mr Roland Wilson, Secretary of Moral Re-Armament in Britain, who has twice visited Australia, said that men and women of all ages from Australia were already bringing fulfilment to Mr Holt's convictions through their work in India, the Middle East and the European countries.

'Britain has particularly cause to be grateful for the force of Australians who have been generously sent here to help in the moral re-armament of Britain,' he said.

The forthcoming Monash Conference was 'a marvel of God's timing'.

'Our thoughts turn to this conference was 'a marvel of God's timing', meeting who deeply believe in what a morally re-armed Australia can do for the world,' said Mr Wilson.



photo Strong

After the show on 'Give a Dog a Bone's' first night at the Westminster Theatre: Margaret Burton (right) star of 'Annie' meets Sandra Michaels (Mickey Merry) and Neville Jason (Mr Space). Sandra Michaels shows them the new song book.

NEW CAST'S SUCCESS WITH 'GIVE A DOG A BONE'

'LAUGHTER', IT IS SAID, 'is the shout of recognition with which we recognise ourselves.' A glittering first-night audience of all ages laughed loud and long at the opening of the fourth season of *Give a Dog a Bone* in London's Westminster Theatre last week. Those like myself, seeing the pantomime for the first time, were captivated from the start by the warmth, gaiety and simplicity of the show, while those for whom *Give a Dog a Bone* has become a seasonal treat remarked gleefully on this year's improvements in sets and production and anticipated each favourite point with chuckling relish.

Children and adults love *Give a Dog a Bone* because they see themselves in the characters on stage. Pantomime is traditionally caricature. In *Give a Dog a Bone* Peter Howard took the basic elements of the human nature we all try to disguise or disown and presented them for our consideration—with riotous humour and painted in the primary shades of a

nursery tale. When King Rat and his squirming little family sang 'I'm out for myself and I couldn't care less', I squirmed as well, to think how often I had said the same thing. But when Mickey Merry, the Principal Boy sang, 'I care . . . for the rich and the rare, the poor and the bare, the plain and the fair . . .' I wanted to care too. In every character I could identify a part of myself: the Mouse or the Cat, the Wolf or the Lamb, the Pig or the Bear.

As entertainment it was delightful. Peter Howard's penetrating satire has the rare additive of compassion which spreads warmth without sentimentality. The exuberant charm of the artists, the music, the dancing, the costumes and the colour were each a treat in themselves.

Peter Howard said that *Give a Dog a Bone* 'is based on the belief that part of the heart of a child that is born within each of us never dies.' It was certainly alive behind the black ties and evening dresses last Thursday.

RICHARD THWAITES



The principal boy Sandra Michaels (Mickey Merry) with Neil Fitzwilliam as Ringo, the dog

GIVE A DOG A BONE

1967 season opens in
WESTMINSTER THEATRE
14 December – 27 January
Book and lyrics by
Peter Howard
Music by **George Fraser**
Directed by **Henry Cass**
and **Bridget Espinosa**

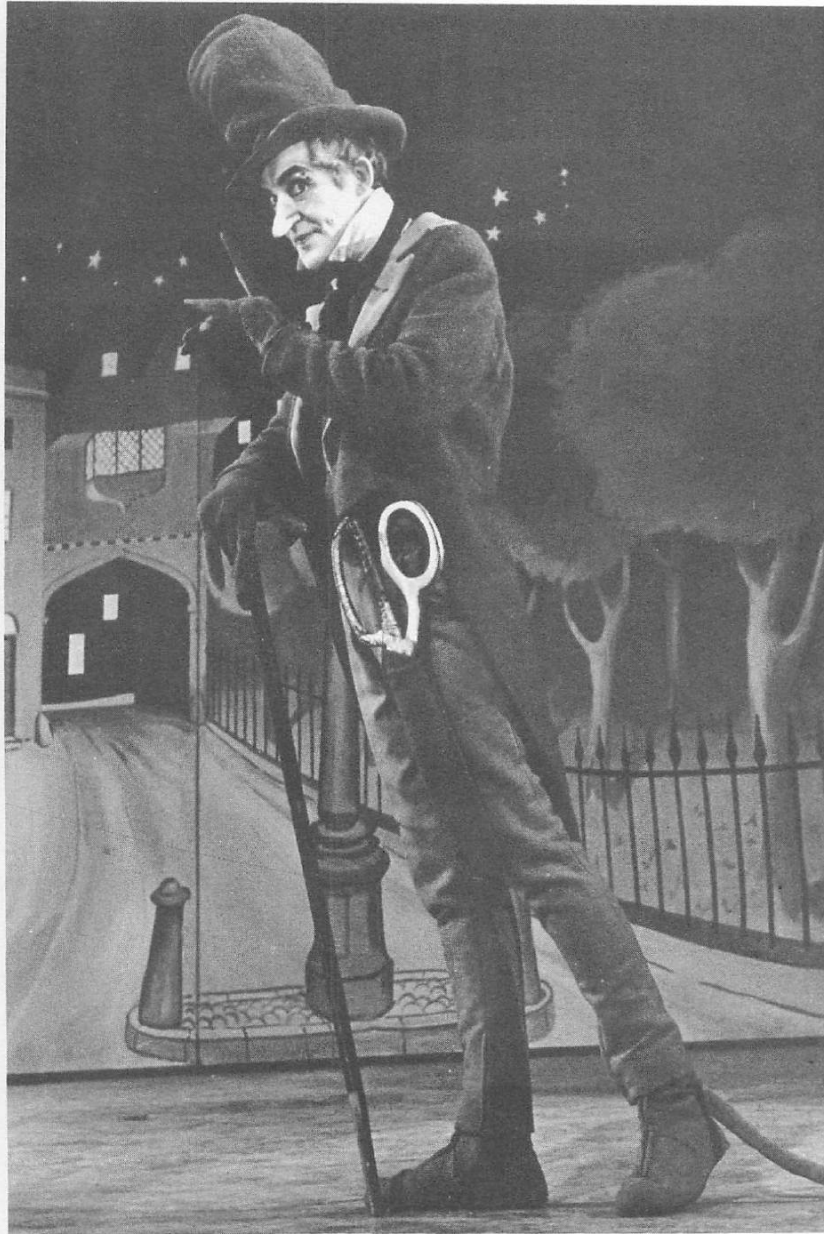
Photos by Houston Rogers
Further copies of this photo supplement may
be obtained from
4 Hays Mews, W1, price 3d postage extra

At the fairground





Neville Jason, Mr Space, with Ringo



Gerard Hely plays the Rat King



Denny Bettis, the Pearly King, argues with Ringo Bryan Coleman (second from right), Lord Swill, presides over Czardas dance in ballroom

(Below) At home with the Merry family, Len Maley plays Pa Merry and Rita McKerrow is Ma Merry



A LANDMARK FOR PANCHGANI

by Krishna

UNTIL RECENTLY, Panchgani, that cosy little hill town 63 miles from Poona, meant many things to many people.

It was taken for a tourist's haven, an artist's delight, a leisurely shopping place for the housewife and an abode for the peace-seeker.

But now, the common talk of the town is the Moral Re-Armament Training Centre which greets you as you come in from Poona.

MRA, in fact, has become a way of life there for the people and any conversation invariably turns on this absorbing topic.

After an interval of some five months, I visited the place last week and I could not but feel the tremendous impact that MRA has made on the life and thinking of the people.

In May last, the first concrete foundations of the Centre had just been laid; and now a three-storey residential building, a guest home and servants' quarters—a sizeable part of the huge complex to come—have come up.

Gently sloping down the huge tableland, the Centre presents a commanding attraction for miles around. The post-monsoon scene is striking—the lush green saplings, and the trees and meadows are themselves inviting.

With barely one month to go for the inauguration of the Centre, work is going on at a feverish pitch. A man was laying the dynamite charge for levelling the rock on the driveway; the tile-layer was minutely examining the tiles ready for placement; the masons were getting their instructions from the foreman; the painters, welders, carpenters, plumbers, gardeners, are going about their business in clockwise regularity. For all of them it is just not a day's work. There is a sense of participation in an immense, historic act ushering in a silent revolution that is gripping their thoughts all the time. To my mind, it is already proving to be the starting point of the biggest revolution since India's

independence—a revolution destined to cast aside prejudices, hate and greed that have been plaguing this country for quite some time.

Site Engineer Moghe, 32, of the New Trio Builders, says he feels younger in working there. 'The MRA Centre will take people and their minds away from purely selfish and materialistic considerations and make them more human.'

Ramesh Shah, who has been giving all his time and services free, says: 'People from eight villages are working here. They know what is going on here . . . the main thing is to change the individual and the best place to start is in oneself . . .'

Farming is the normal occupation of 80 odd villagers working on site. For the major part of the year there was little else for them to do. Now they have a full-time, all-year-round job. A hard-working lot, some walk two hours up hill and down each day. They put in seven additional hours at the site.

Dadoo Krishna Bansode of Nage-wadi village and Dinkar from Dande-

We can, we must, and we will generate a moral and spiritual force that is powerful enough to remake the world.

FRANK BUCHMAN at the launching function of MRA: June 1938.

gar village are two among these villagers who talk enthusiastically of their work.

Some of them have had their relations too put on the job. Hansabai, a middle-aged woman, has one of her boys doing odd jobs and she says with considerable pride: 'This boy won't like to go to our place, Wai. He wants to work here all the time.'

Lalji Chauvan, who can fix single-handed 700 tiles a day, hails from Poona. His brother also works on the job.

Laxman Haribhau Shinde, foreman for the masons: 'I have come to know here how to do good work. I know all about this Centre, and its aims to bring about a radical, moral change. . .'

The story of Jagannath, a 16-year-old boy, is fascinating and inspiring. He gets up at 4.30 am, goes to the local Bilimoria High School for cutting the hair of the boys and turns up at the work site at 8 am, and stays on until 5.30 pm. He has successively done the job of an excavator, concreter, welder and electrician and he has been there right from the

continued overleaf

European trade unionists speak in Poona

EUROPEAN trade unionists, now in India at Rajmohan Gandhi's invitation, addressed audiences of two thousand and five thousand in Poona last week. They spoke before open air performances of *The Forgotten Factor* in Hindi.

The group consists of Jack Carroll, a Bristol docker and a Branch Chairman of the Transport and General Workers' Union; Ron Howe, Deputy Convenor of Shell Chemicals near Manchester; David Mackie, Chairman of the Aberdeen Fish Market Porters' Committee; and John Soederlund, an organiser of the Swedish Transport

Trade Union. Speaking also with them on both occasions was Brian Robbins, former Secretary of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

On 15 December, Mr Goray, Mayor of Poona, and also the National Chairman of the Praja Socialist Party, welcomed the delegation. They were asked to address the city council then in session.

The trade unionists expect to be in India about two months and will attend a world conference for MRA beginning at the end of January at Panchgani, 160 miles from Bombay, when the new centre will be opened.

continued from previous page

foundation stage. He feels immensely happy that he has learnt several jobs, thanks to MRA.

Baburao V Karanjavdek organises the entire work in the morning. For him, every day begins on an entirely new and exciting note. Head gardener Devaram, works ceaselessly and merrily, and one of his sons is also on the site.

It is not only that people working on the Centre feel that it will usher in a change. The people of Panchgani share the same hope.

Municipal President B D Sawant is sure that the culture of the people of the area will undergo a vast change. 'Thanks to the MRA, there is a cleanliness everywhere and I am sure the hearts of the people too will be cleansed.'

The local Congress chief, Manishankar V Purochit: 'We don't have the money to perpetuate the memory of Gandhiji here. The MRA is fortunately doing it in its own humble way.'

Mrs Pangul, a nurse of the municipal dispensary earns Rs. 100 a month. She gives Rs. 10 to the Centre every quarter. She says 'The Centre has sprung up like magic. Nothing like this has ever been done or attempted in Panchgani . . .'

Hiralal Jedhiya, the Chief Sweeper of the town, has just painted his house. He says: 'I must first clean up my place and my thinking before I can think of changing other people. This is the lesson I have learnt from MRA . . .'

H S Davierwalla, one of the proprietors of the leading hotel, Il Palasso: 'The MRA Centre is the pride of Panchgani. We will all benefit by it . . . it has made Panchgani a lively place. We now feel we are MRA people . . . there is already a change in the morality of the people. The way men and women of MRA treat all with equality, getting the maximum work done with the utmost cordiality is amazing. In a few years, this is going to be a fine town, and MRA will lead and we will follow its steps . . .'

T M Vora, a co-owner of the Panchgani Stores, who is now in his fifties: 'We have been given the honour to be the hosts of MRA. The MRA Centre will also train a lot of

AMBASSADORS SEE EUROPEAN MUSICAL IN ROTTERDAM

AN UNUSUAL EVENT in Rotterdam drew ambassadors from The Hague as well as consuls-general from this largest transit port in the world. It was the Dutch premiere of the European revue *Je Mag Naar Buiten Leunen* attended by a crowded audience, including official representatives of Japan, the Philippines, Peru, Mexico, Canada and Britain.

An hour after the show in different parts of the auditorium one could see a member of the Dutch Cabinet, crane drivers and the management of the port, a militant Marxist and a top industrialist talking with the cast.

Last week the Chairman of the Port Authority, F Posthuma, received a delegation from the European force. As a man who has travelled many times to India and South America, advising the World Bank, he said, 'To change the mentality of the people in the ports and other branches of industry is the only way to effect the economic changes needed in the world.'

The head of the Catholic dockers later conducted the members of the cast around the port.

A number of Dutch have decided to travel with the cast this week to Caux, Switzerland, for the assembly.

Hunte speaks to multi-racial meeting in Smethwick

SMETHWICK, known worldwide in 1964 for its bad race relations, 'could be known afresh for its human relations of the 1970's, beginning now.' This statement by the West Indian cricketer, Conrad Hunte, met with strong support in Smethwick from Luther Thomas, Chairman of the West Indian Unity Association there, last Sunday.

Hunte outlined, to a multi-racial audience, action in the last three months in 12 cities to change the racial situation. A multi-racial, many coloured, mobile Moral Re-Armament force had been at work in twelve of the twenty-five cities in Britain with large immigrant populations. They had held meetings, shown films and talked with immigrant lea-

ders and responsible officials in housing and employment agencies and the police.

Hunte said, 'Our aim has been to enlist all races in these places in the large task of lifting the burden of hate and greed from the backs of all men, whatever their colour or class, so that everyone on earth is fed, housed, clothed and given an opportunity of work, education, in proportion to his abilities and aptitudes. This is a big enough purpose to unite everyone in the world.'

The Deputy Mayor of Warley (in which Smethwick is located), Councillor E Carter, congratulated Thomas and his friends for their forethought in inviting Hunte to speak and present the film *Voice of the Hurricane*.

young people . . . their future at least will be assured . . .'

Bapusaheb Babaji Umbarkar, President, Congress Youth Association, who runs a modest tea-stall, had this to say: 'Most of the stall-owners and shopkeepers have been contributing their mite to the Centre. I hope they will give more to make this nation stronger.'

The ever-smiling Behram Irani, owner of the Panchgani Trading Com-

pany: 'The MRA Centre will be a landmark for Panchgani. They are in fact putting this little town on the world map . . . There is a cry in India for a change and we hope MRA will answer that cry.'

And so, in a few weeks' time, as the Centre goes into full swing, this change that has come about in Panchgani will spread and engulf the whole of India and, eventually, the whole of Asia.