

# Horse sense

One of the most astonishing theatrical events we are likely to see this year...

THE GUARDIAN

It is a strong, serious dramatic look at the life and times of John Wesley, a hard and uncompromising subject.... Visually the show is stunning... carefully costumed, dramatically lit, strikingly staged and encapsulating a magnetic performance by Gordon Gostelow.... Gostelow's embodiment of Wesley is a towering, spellbinding thing to watch.... The effect is riveting.

LEICESTER MERCURY

There is a host of commendable things in 'Ride! Ride!' It tells a good tale colourfully and vigorously, laced with humour, frequently poignant and with pleasant music.

NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST

The considerable virtue of this serious musical play is its authenticity for much of it is based on the Journal and Letters of John Wesley.... It is a production that delights the eye. It is Hogarthian in concept, well costumed and lit.... All the characters are well defined and the chorus work is extremely strong from a company of 22 who plays many parts between them.

YORKSHIRE POST

The eighteenth century atmosphere is well captured.... Director Peter Coe triumphs to the full, achieving effects similar to those he imparted to 'Oliver!'

YORKSHIRE EVENING POST

In his day I have no doubt that Wesley reckoned anything to do with the theatre was the work of the Devil himself. But 200 years on I have a strong suspicion that he would applaud the use of the country's major theatres to present something of the Christian faith. Because, make no mistake, that is what 'Ride! Ride!' is all about. This is no fanciful production of something vaguely associated with Wesley and Methodism in this country. This is the real thing...

For all preachers, would be or practicing, ordained or lay, within a hundred miles' radius, a visit to the Grand Theatre this week should be obligatory...

It deserves to do well, because anyone and everyone even remotely interested in religion or social history should see it, or rather, experience it.

BBC RADIO LEEDS

Putting aside for a moment all that's in praise of 'Ride! Ride!' and the pleasure it'll give thousands of people — those who call themselves followers of Jesus will do well to ponder one of Wesley's comments in the first act of the musical: 'Give me 100 preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth.'

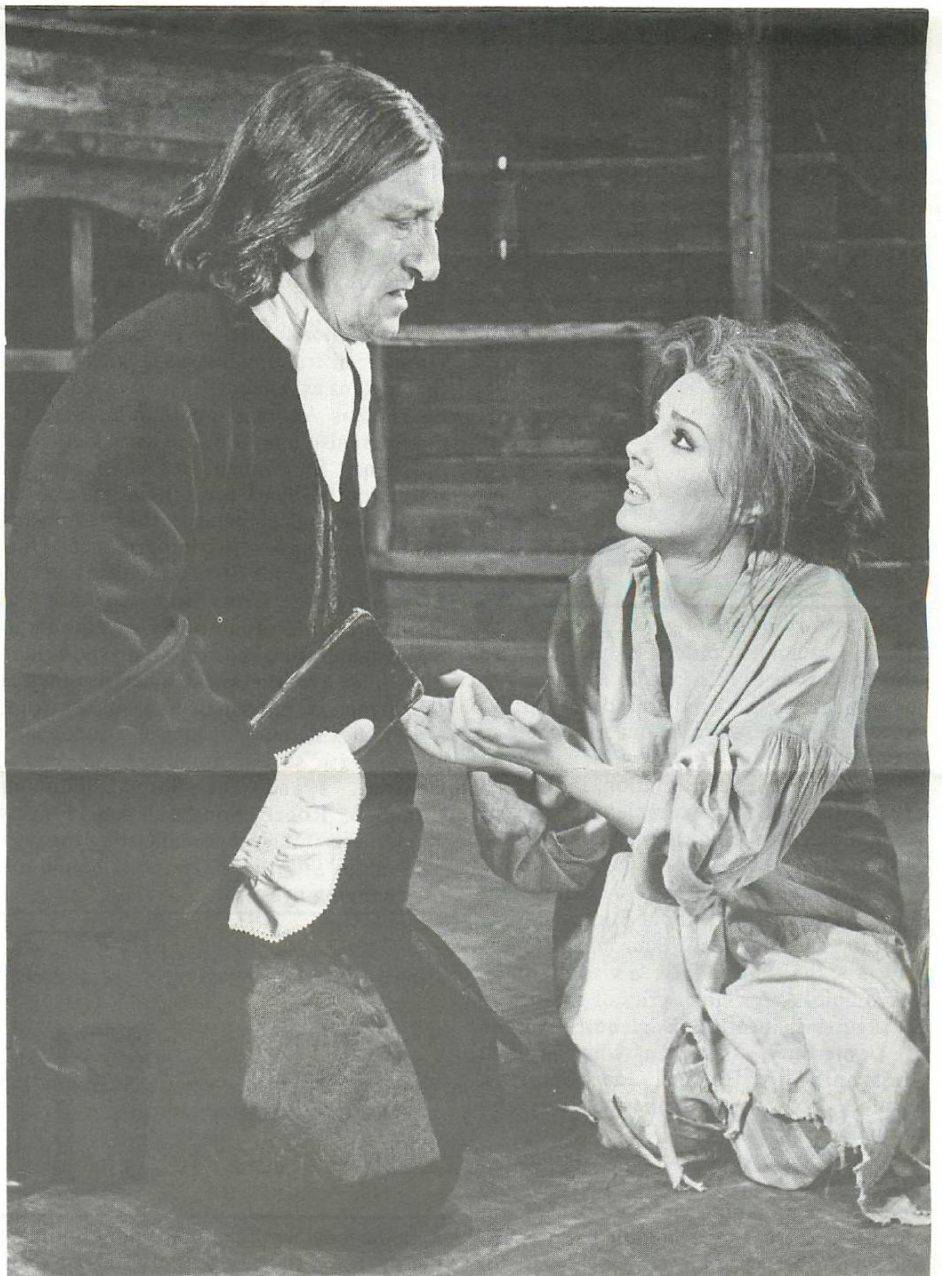
METHODIST RECORDER



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**NEW  
WORLD  
NEWS**  
FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

## 'Ride! Ride!', the Wesley musical, on the road



John Wesley (Gordon Gostelow) with Martha (Caroline Villiers) in the lunatic asylum, Bedlam — a scene from 'Ride! Ride!'  
Photo: Robinson



LEST ANYONE be astonished that a Jesuit be committed to Moral Re-Armament, let me explain. It is very simple. Ignatius Loyola and Frank Buchman received the same firm conviction from God. They believed that only men who had radically changed could be the tools God needs to change the nations and the world so that they become God-led. In the famous words of Frank Buchman, 'It's no use throwing eye-medicine out of a second storey window.' The fascinating book by Roger Hicks, *The Endless Adventure*, gives some marvellous examples of what I will try to tell you.

It can be noticed in recent history that those Christian revivals in England, America, Germany and Scandinavia, which have been authentic and lasting, always resulted from a profound personal encounter of one man or woman with God. Brought into living contact with God this individual could not help pouring out the goodness that he or she, though so unworthy, had received.

If we trace the history of change and reformation, the history of real happiness and peace, we see a golden chain of ordinary men and women who, being touched by the love of God, did not care for themselves but for others. Having experienced how God had freed them from selfishness, impurity, dishonesty and hatred, they were so profoundly thankful and happy that they became contagious. They became change-agents.

**'Mothers became frightened'**



The history of the origin of the monastic life and religious orders in the western Church illustrates this fact. It is amazing to see how rapidly these religious orders spread one after another throughout the whole of Europe and beyond and how they meant a reform, sometimes a revolution, in the lives of Christians. A first example might be the Roman patrician, Saint Benedict of Nursia. Most of us know his motto 'Ora et Labora' — 'Pray and Work' — we know the countless abbeys throughout Europe (Monte Cassino, St Gallen, Melk, Beuron, Solemnes); we know their hospitality: 'a visitor comes, Christ comes'. A whole series of great men: St Augustine, apostle of England; St Anselm of Canterbury; the men who brought Christianity to Holland and Germany: Boniface, Willibrord, Adelbert, Suitbert and so on.

As a second wave we see St Bernard of Clairvaux with his Cistercian monks. They were a reformation of the Benedictine monks, as these were becoming too wealthy and comfortable — the greatest dangers for men! Such a great number of young noblemen followed him in his austere life that mothers became frightened. Even in

mediaeval French romantic literature, 'la literature courtoise', the white or grey monks are the great helpers-in-distress. The French historian, Daniel Rops, published for the seventh centenary of the death of St Bernard a booklet entitled 'L'Arbitre de l'Europe', and the French Government issued a postage stamp. One sees in all the countries of Europe abbeys or ruins of abbeys of the Cistercian monks. The famous hymn 'Jesus dulcis memoria' is of St Bernard's inspiration and of his great love for the human life of Jesus.

A third strong movement was that of St Francis of Assisi and his Friars and Sisters.

## O when the saints...

by Father Bot S J

His conception of poverty meant a revolution. The Manger at Christmas, the Way of the Cross, are of his inspiration. Famous people such as Bonaventura and Anthony of Padua are his disciples, as well as St Clare of Assisi.

I must not forget St Dominic and the Dominican friars and sisters. Such famous theologians as Albert the Great (a German), St Thomas Aquinas (an Italian), were his disciples, also a mystic such as St Catherine of Siena. St Francis of Assisi and St Catherine of Siena are official patrons of Italy and in Italian literature the Franciscans and Dominicans are two important currents.

After them came St Theresa of Avila and St John of the Cross, who reformed the Carmelite Order and are classic authors in Spanish literature and famous mystic writers known all over the world. Then St Ignatius of Loyola, a nobleman and soldier who, after radically changing himself, founded the Jesuits with such famous men as Petrus Canisius, Francis of Borgia, Edmund Campion, Robert Southwell and Francis Xavier. His influence is still lasting through his famous *Spiritual Exercises*, a handbook for changing lives.

**'Officer drastically changed'**



In the nineteenth century, a poor boy from the north of Italy became a God-led man: Giovanni Bosco, St John Bosco, who made peace between the Piedmontese princes and the Pope; he cared for the education of poor

children and founded the Salesian Fathers and the Sisters of Mary Auxiliatrice. They rapidly spread across all continents and are working, for instance, in Latin America. An illiterate woman from Brittany, Jeanne Jugan, founded the Little Sisters of the Poor. They live from alms and have a great number of hospices for the aged poor.

And then there was Charles de Foucauld, a French army officer who had led a dissolute life, who was drastically changed and founded the Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus. They can be found working in factories, in ports, in the deserts of Africa, amongst the poorest of the poor.



Other radically changed and God-led men and women such as Françoise de Chantal, Monsieur Vincent, Philip Neri, Cardinal Vaughan, Alfonso de Liguori and Francesca Cabrini brought with their orders and congregations real peace and freedom.

**'Life had to be contagious'**



I have only mentioned saints of the Roman Catholic Church because these are familiar to me. But I know that there are countless other dedicated people in the Protestant Church. They all have the following traits in common — and these are of capital importance:

- 1 They experienced that they were sinners;
- 2 That God — not withstanding all their selfishness, impurity, dishonesty and hatred — loved them beyond any limits and asked them to follow Christ in His way of life, honest, pure, unselfish, loving;
- 3 They all obeyed totally;
- 4 They experienced that by the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ, God gave them unexpected strength to go the way of Christ, often confirmed by miracles;
- 5 They discovered the real freedom of being the children of God;
- 6 They all saw that this gift of God was not meant for themselves alone, that their life had to be contagious. They helped other people to become God-led, really free, as full of peace and joy as themselves, and therefore they gathered disciples around them to bring

'You must die'



the message of the new life everywhere.

I would like to conclude with one example that has the flavour of a mediaeval legend,



Father Bot

but it really happened in the life of a man who died 900 years ago.

It is the story of Giovanni Gualberti. (John Walbert), son of a noble family of Florence, who was born about 995. He was a military man and lived in a very worldly-minded manner. His only brother had been murdered by one of his servants, who stole his horse and money, and fled. Seeking revenge John had sworn that he would not rest until he had killed the murderer of his brother. You know how strong the Italian sense of 'vendetta', of revenge, has been all through history. In vain he had sought this man, and then on a Good Friday, on the way to the Benedictine convent of San Miniato near Florence, he encountered him in a sunken road. The murderer could not escape. He fell on his knees and begged John to have pity on him. John answered, 'No, I have murdered my only brother. Therefore you must die, but I do not want to soil my hands and my sword with your blood. Therefore I will turn you over to the judge, and he will sentence you to death as a murderer.'

The servant implored him in the name of Christ, who died on the Cross, to come with him to the church of the convent and to ask Christ Crucified if it was His will that he should be sentenced to death. After some sarcastic remarks and hesitations John agreed to this proposition. Together they went to the church of the convent, knelt down before a painting on wood of Christ Crucified.

John asked, 'Jesus, my Lord, if I have to forgive this man, give me a sign, and I will do what you are asking me.' And Jesus did give him a sign, so that John, entirely convinced, embraced the murderer of his brother and said to him, 'The peace of Christ be with you, my brother.' The people who were present could not believe their eyes. Both John and the servant asked to be admitted immedi-

ately as brothers into the convent. The Abbot, who knew the worldly life of John, tested severely the sincerity and authenticity of his conversion, but John persevered. Then came his father to take him — his only heir — away by force. John fled to the church, cast off the clothes of a nobleman, took on the habit of a Benedictine friar and cut his hair as a token of his unflinching resolution. Then his father was convinced and gave him his blessing.

This happened in 1013. Afterwards John moved to the hermitage of Vallombrosa with two companions in order to live a much more severe life. Soon many disciples joined them. He founded 12 convents, reformed many abbeys and battled doggedly with the abuse of simony\*, one of the plagues of the church at that time. His mighty enemies — one of them the Archbishop of Florence — several times made attempts on his life.

He was much beloved by his monks and by ordinary men. His whole life he judged himself not worthy to become a priest. He died on 12 July, 1073, and was highly appreciated as a man wholly given to God.

In all these lives and stories of these foundations you find the same joy of the Spirit that you meet in the Acts of the Apostles. They are breathing the same good news the Apostles brought to an astonished world: God loves you though you are a sinner. He invites you to change. You can change, if you will listen to Him and if you will be honest and obey, if you do what you heard you have to do. Then you will enjoy real freedom.

'The world is waiting'



Only such men and women can overcome deep-seated abuses in personal, ecclesiastical, social and political life. Only such men and women can work the miracles God wants to have wrought. This is what He expects of His disciples, as we can see in the Gospel of St Mark in the sixteenth chapter, verses 15-17, where, after the Resurrection, Christ is sending them into the world.

They are all an illustration of the words of Frank Buchman: 'The world is anxiously waiting to see what Jesus Christ can do in, by, for, and through one man wholly given to Him, God-led. You can be that man.'

\*selling ecclesiastical offices

The above article is based on a speech made at the MRA World Assembly in Caux, Switzerland.

ILLUSTRATED BY EINAR ENGBRETSSEN



## BRIDGE-BUILDERS IN SWEDEN

THE SPEAKER of the Swedish Parliament, Henry Allard, together with two deputy speakers, received a group from *Song of Asia* in the Parliament House. 'You have given us a good beginning for the day,' said Mr Allard after hearing the song 'Water for a thirsty land' and a Laotian girl saying, 'My country has been at war for 30 years. The fighting with weapons is over but still in our hearts we are battling with thoughts of revenge, hatred and bitterness. My country lost its freedom because of the way people like me have lived and exploited freedom in the wrong way. I hope people from the West will learn a lesson from our experience and also show us the right way.'

In Parliament, at the same time, five of the Asians were invited to conduct the morning prayers of the Christian group of MPs of whom 30 were present.

The following day the Social Democratic MP, Frida Berglund, gave a luncheon for 10 members of the *Song of Asia* force. Around the table they discussed Sweden's role in the world and how to achieve it. Another Social Democratic MP present at the lunch said: 'We want to help people who are unjustly treated, first in our country and then in other parts of the world. I don't believe in violence to achieve this but in dialogue.'

Nine members of parliament from four different parties were among the 235 people who invited *Song of Asia* to Sweden. In the invitation, signed also by Lapplanders and lumberjacks from the north of Sweden, trade unionists, teachers and students, they stated that *Song of Asia* had 'given to many Europeans a new view of Asia', and added that the visit to Sweden 'would be of great value to our country and its task in the world today'.

The whole of the first day in Sweden was spent with the first Vice-Speaker, Torsten Bengtson, and other politicians from Sweden and Finland discussing the problems facing Sweden and the other Nordic countries.

In the first days the Asian force spoke to 1,845 pupils and students including some medical students of the Karolinska Medical Institute. Some had the chance to meet and confer with Bertil Zachrisson, the Education Minister.

*Dagens Nyheter* carried a photo and article on *Song of Asia*. The main Swedish speaking daily in Finland, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, carried a photo and article under the headline 'Song of Asia — the young bridgebuilders have now reached Sweden'. One Swedish journalist, assessing the importance of the visit of the Asian force said, 'We need the help of people from other countries to see the real picture of our country. Your coming is a challenge to us to think what Sweden can give to the world.'



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# The government I want

by Dr Elliott Gabellah

**Dr Elliott Gabellah, Acting President of the Muzorewa African National Council (ANC), spoke last week to 600 people in Harare Methodist Church. It was the second of a series of occasions, initiated by the Rev Arthur Kanodereka, to which people of all races were welcomed.**

**'We meet to pray for a vision for this land,' said the Rev Henry Kachidza, Treasurer of the ANC, in introducing Dr Gabellah. 'Sometimes we are scared. Sometimes it is difficult to talk to our friends. We are here to ask God to guide us at this difficult time.'**

**We print below Dr Gabellah's words.**

WHEN I WAS SITTING in the hotel I was thinking of what Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor 5: 17-20). 'If anyone is in Christ he is a new creature.' Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

Why are we doing what we are doing — fighting? Because we have gone apart. We are living a life of self-determination.

We Zulus say: 'When you are walking in the dark and missing the road, you come back where you started from. Then you find the right road.' Now the children of men in Zimbabwe have got to come back and appeal to that Power which they were finding, the road of their destination.

It is God's will that all men be free. The man who is changed can open the way to God and to the freedom we are fighting about. At the moment we are using the Christian culture to oppress.

We Zulus say, 'The man who does the action soon forgets, but the one who experiences the action never forgets.' We have come to a point where we can't reconcile with one another. The only Power we can appeal to is God.

## Liberated by a man

In the Egyptian bondage the Israelites were not liberated until they cried to God who heard their cry. The Egyptians oppressed them. When this God heard the children of Israel cry, He sent a man who went and liberated them. How did he do it? Did he hate everyone? No, he went there because he was not just a man. When a man is in God, he becomes a new creature. This new creature went and liberated his people — they were old people because they had separated

themselves from God. It is only God who will come and liberate us.

Then, must we go to sleep and wait for God? No! We must return and start on the new road. When we move on it, we will get to our destination.

We find in this country Christians, but one man becomes superior to another. Could we say it is between black and white only? No, it is between Mashonas and Ndebeles, between Manicas and Makarangas. It is not a problem of colour. It is a problem of man.

I have seen countries where you substitute one crooked man for another, regardless of colour. We are not fighting a particular colour, but a system.

## A new polish

The good leader is one who can be led. If we want to rule this country, the first and fundamental principle is that we — who were given this country by birthright by God and didn't cross any river — learn to rule ourselves in our house first. Otherwise we will take power and continue the same system.

**We want to see a Zimbabwe where all men are free, a Zimbabwe where your colour becomes colourless. Have you seen this new colourless polish? You use it for brown, white and black and it all comes up shiny. That is the Zimbabwe we want to see.**

At the moment, it is the separation which causes the trouble. As long as we have this trouble, we will not live in peace. At the moment we have what some people call terrorists and we have what some people call security forces. There would be no job for them if there was no separation. But they have a job because men have separated themselves from each other and God. There

must be a reconciliation of man to man and man to God and that needs you and me. All of us are needed.

This struggle for freedom is not a struggle of blacks only. It is a struggle for all colours because the problem is not a colour problem. It is a problem of man. You find it in Ireland and everywhere.

When a man separates himself from God, he is powerless. You cannot get the BBC sometimes because you have got a faulty set. You don't say the BBC has stopped. It is us who must now be reconciled man to man and man to God. Then God will use us.

It is only when man becomes a new creature that he is able to communicate with another man and God. Then he becomes a man. Without that he is only half a man.

We have our country. We want to live in peace and be free. How? Some say, we must hit each other, as has been happening in the townships. Is that the way? (Audience: No!) That is not the way. You reconcile yourselves, man to man and man to God. God then starts His work.

## 'In civilised hands'

I am not condoning an oppressor. He is doing what God does not want him to do. Some are superior to others, not because of the virtue of their deeds, but because they are whiter. Some people talk about a government 'in civilised hands'. Does colour imply civilisation? (Audience: No!) In London you get as good devils as here. A government remaining in civilised hands which implies white hands is not right. It is a government by the people, perhaps governed by God, that is the government I would like. It is not a white government. It is not a black government. We have black governments in Africa and in some countries you can't say what I say here. That is not what we want. 'The truth shall make you free.'

I am here to condemn with all I have at my disposal the system that is running our country today. It is not a system run by man united with God.

When God wants something to happen, will happen. I have seen many children born. Some women are cowards at giving birth. But when the time comes the child will be born. But don't forget that there are labour pains before a child is born. Some women cry. But when it is born everyone rejoices. At this stage we have labour pains. It may take hours — or it may go on for a long time. It takes energy: but the child will be born.

## Ready for birth

The most important thing is to get ready because the child will be born. It is not very far off. Get ready with dish, towel and soap. The child will be born. The freedom of Zimbabwe is ready and set. Let us be ready for the birth!