

NEW HOPE IN AFRICA. By J. H. Oldham. (Longmans Green and Co.; 7s. 6d.)

Dr Oldham has been an authority on African affairs for more than thirty years, and has found a new hope for the future of this continent in the Capricorn Africa Society, founded in 1949 by David Stirling and a group of people who believe that a policy for Africa must come from within Africa itself. In this book, Dr Oldham describes the aims of the C.A.S., and gives his reasons for believing that the tragedy of race conflict, which otherwise seems inevitable, could be averted, were the ideals of the C.A.S. sufficiently widely adopted.

The policy is defined (p. 17) as one 'of creating in Capricorn Africa an interracial, integrated society in which the different races co-operate without regard to colour, for the common material and spiritual enrichment of all'.

By Capricorn Africa is meant Africa south of the Sahara and down to the Limpopo, excluding Belgian and Portuguese territories. The reason for this limitation is the practical one of keeping the task of C.A.S. within manageable proportions, but the principles apply to the whole of Southern or Bantu Africa.

The crisis in Africa is caused first by the conflict between the technical culture of Western Europe and the agricultural and pastoral culture of the majority of the indigenous peoples, and by the reactions of the latter to the former. The indigenous peoples have partly chosen, partly been forced to adopt the culture of Europe, and at a tremendous speed, which has given them no chance of assimilating the new way of life to their own. The consequent social and psychological upheavals have led in recent years to atavistic movements such as the Mau Mau, and a resurgence of nationalism which can easily lead to race conflict, unless directed into peaceful channels.

It is to meet this situation that C.A.S. proposes the formation of an inter-racial society in which members of all races will have a common loyalty to Africa, and will co-operate to build a new and united society in which equal opportunities will be given to all, in the same society. The civilization (by which Dr Oldham appears to mean the material culture) of Western Europe will be maintained at its highest standard. The concepts of objective law and of humanism, which latter consists largely in appreciating the value and rights of the individual, will form the spiritual basis of this civilization.

It is refreshing, particularly in reading books upon Africa, to meet an idealist like Dr Oldham, who, in spite of long (and inevitably bitter) experience of race prejudice, believes that even this may yet be overcome by a new loyalty and a new ideal. At the same time it is one of the defects of an otherwise excellent book that he does not tell us *why*

men's hearts should change: in other words, he does not tell us the aim and form of civilization as envisaged by C.A.S. Religion, he says (p. 58), is outside the scope of the C.A.S.; and yet it is surely religion which can most fully answer the question: Why should the dignity and worth of man be respected? It is true, as Dr Oldham says (p. 94), that 'man is denying his own full humanity when he refuses any human being the right of personal relations with him', but there have been plenty of men willing to deny their own humanity by that refusal, once the dogmas and sanctions of religion have been removed. Similarly it is hard to see how belief in an objective law can be maintained for any length of time without belief in God.

The history of the breakdown of objective law in modern times seems so clearly to be a consequence of the Liberal rejection in the nineteenth century of a revealing God. The apostasy of Europe has led to the very reversal of that humanism for which the idealistic if muddle-headed Liberals longed. The Gospels bid us be simple, but they also bid us be realist, and to acknowledge Original Sin. To expect a changed heart, and benevolent love of mankind for its own sake, and leaving God out of account appears not simple but simpliste.

Dr Oldham writes a lot about tradition, which is the handing down of a teaching, the consequence of a teaching, but he does not say what that teaching is. A tradition is not worth preserving because it is a tradition, but because it is the handing down of a truth.

The highest standards of civilization, he says, *should* be maintained. Agreed—but how? They will only be accepted if a society agrees as to the purpose of social living, and ultimately as to the purpose of life. 'There can be no tests of civilization as such', writes Dr Oldham (p. 61) '... it moves in a region in which legal tests do not apply.' If this means that law is only the external safeguard of the set of accepted social values, and not the sum total of the civilization, then it is true. But a society must have an aim, and that aim must be capable of definition and capable of being protected by law. In this sense, legal tests certainly do apply.

The activities of C.A.S. stop at the Limpopo, but while one can sympathize with the society's desire to limit its scope, it remains difficult to see how any serious attempt can be made to solve Africa's racial and cultural problems if it leaves the Union of South Africa out of account. It is in the Union that by far the largest number of Europeans in the continent live, and it is in the Union that hundreds of thousands of Africans from 'Capricorn Africa' come into violent contact with European civilization in the gold-mines of the Witwatersrand and the Free State. It is in the Union too that the liberal doctrines of the C.A.S. are most strongly opposed, and where another

solution, that of *Apartheid* or separate development, has been proposed. However legitimate the criticisms of the practical implementation of *Apartheid* up to the present may be, there is a version of it which, in theory at any rate, could lead to justice and peace. C.A.S. proposes one solution, but there is at least one other, and that other might very easily prove acceptable to a majority which would not even give C.A.S. a hearing.

But whether in the end one agrees with Dr Oldham or not, as to the desirability or practicability of the C.A.S. solution, his book is a valuable analysis of the present urgent crisis, and a positive constructive effort to avert the horrors of racial strife. It should be read even by those who fear that he may be another King Canute.

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THE BENT WORLD. By J. V. L. Casserley. (Oxford University Press; 21s.)

Dr Casserley tells us that when invited to lecture on Marxism he has two different kinds of lecture ready: one attacking the Marxist gospel and philosophy 'with all the vigour and theological and intellectual acumen of which I am capable', the other pointing out that 'many of our social institutions in this present phase of our civilization bear an uncomfortable resemblance to much that we denounce and reject'. This book is a judicious blend of these two attitudes, with no punches pulled in denouncing the secularity of both East and West. It would be a mistake to consider it as a profound critique of Marxism, because this occupies less than a quarter of the book, most of which is given over to an analysis of the condition of Western democracy which is menaced far more from defects within than from Communism without. The author shows in convincing detail how both are secular in spirit, both are obsessed by technical progress (and technics), by economic activity and economic doctrine, both are enemies of the basic social institution of the family. In the West secular and sceptical liberalism has created a void which Communism with its religious overtones is only too ready to fill, although there are two elements in the democratic idea which make it worth preserving: the rule of law and the sovereignty of the people. Dr Casserley is too clear-eyed to swallow any ballyhoo about democracy, which makes his defence of it as the least unsatisfactory of political regimes the more valuable. One of the most outspoken and devastating chapters is 'The Divorcing Society', whose theme is that a civilization that plays fast and loose with the stability and security of the 'domestic relationships which lie at the very roots of human happiness' stands condemned. The more is the pity that the argument is disfigured by an unsupported innuendo that the Roman