

Editorial: *es ist Finito*

In the Sunderland Public Library, at least until the time of the war, a sparsely populated shelf was labelled 'Philosophy, Journalism etc.' Two shelves further down a caption read 'Greek Literature, Latin Literature and Other Minor Literatures.' A young mind must also be a tough mind if it is to resist the bending with which it is threatened.

In the dying days of the Greek Civil War in 1949 some of us spoke to the corporal in charge of a small group on a hill top, asking whether it was still necessary for foreigners to have permits for admission to military sites. The corporal, determined, as he told us, to become a polyglot, proudly answered '*es ist finito*'.

A family group of holiday-makers asked the cleaner at the church door whether the services were in Welsh or English. 'Oh', she said, 'it's usually in Welsh, but if he sees English people there he *shandies* it a bit.'

A BBC producer reported that lawyers had been consulted about my script for possible legal troubles. 'But all is well, since you accused your fellow-contributor of ignorance but not of incompetence.' My reply had to be: 'I must have failed to make myself clear'.

One evening in the Cambridge Moral Sciences Club—memory suggests the mid-fifties—J. F. Thomson read a paper in which he quoted Russell's remark that Weierstrass had banished time and space from the world. Much of the discussion was about whether Weierstrass was using his words in their ordinary senses. Richard Braithwaite asked Thomson whether he would say that *Freud* was using the word 'sex' in the ordinary sense when he propounded his paradoxes about the unconscious. Braithwaite himself maintained that Freud used the word in a special way of his own. Thomson denied this, and Braithwaite sought an explanation of what he regarded as eccentricities in the usage of Freud and Thomson. Suddenly Braithwaite exclaimed with characteristically excited emphasis, 'Oh, Thomson, look here, *I* see what is happening. The difference between us is that *you* learned about sex *from* Freud, whereas *I* learned about sex, [here some of the audience were nervous about what revelation might ensue] whereas I learned about sex not from Freud but from HAVELOCK ELLIS!'

'The devil may quote Scripture for her purpose.' (A lapse into political correctness.)

Professor Peter Geach was the author of the first paper pub-

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lished under my editorship in 1973. His title was 'Omnipotence'. When it came to the editor with its last small corrections it was found to be inscribed with a caption in large capitals: 'Omnipotence for R. Bambrough'.