INDEX TO RUSSELL’S
THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY

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The very first edition of the book (New York: Columbia U. P., 1951) contained two paragraphs comparing Catholicism and Communism that were overlooked for the British and all subsequent editions. Russell regarded them as important, and Sir Stanley Unwin wrote him that they would be incorporated in the next printing. The next printing was not until 1959, and the paragraphs were again overlooked. They belong just before the paragraph on page 109 beginning “Every fanatical creed” in Chapter vi, “Science and Values”. These paragraphs are not indexed.—Ed.

I meet many people who think that the evils of Communism can be combated by Catholicism. This seems to me a dangerous error. What are the evils of Communism as it has developed? First, adherence to a rigid and static system of doctrine, of which part is doubtful and part demonstrably false. Second, persecution as a means of enforcing orthodoxy. Third, a belief that salvation is only to be found within the Church and that the True Faith must be spread throughout the world, by force if necessary. (These are the beliefs of Communists.) Fourth, that the priesthood, which alone has the right to interpret the Scriptures, has enormous power, physical east of the Iron Curtain and spiritual over the faithful in partibus. Fifth, that this power is used to secure an undue share of wealth for the priesthood at the expense of the rest of the population. Sixth, that bigotry, and the hostility that it engenders, is a potent source of war.

Every one of these evils was exhibited by the Catholic Church when it had power and would probably be exhibited again if it recovered the position it had in the Middle Ages. It is therefore irrational to suppose that much would be gained if, in the defeat of Communism, Catholicism were enthroned in its place. (Pp. 56–7)
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