

Fourth Series

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

E. Halde man-Julius

FOURTH SERIES

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E. Haldeman-Julius

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Questions and Answers

Vaccination means big money for the doctors and the vaccine concerns, and that is why they defend the practice.

Vaccination is compulsory in Russia, a country which now has scientific medicine that compares with the best anywhere. Russian medicine is government-operated from beginning to end, and everywhere in the Soviet Union the authorities insist on vaccinating the people, more so than under the czar, when medicine was a private profession. It stands to reason that Russia isn't making any money when it vaccinates its people. The vaccine is manufactured in state-owned laboratories, so here again there is no profit for anyone. The doctors in Russia get paid by the state, not by the patients, so what does a Russian doctor gain, in a financial way, from vaccination? From start to finish it's an item of expense to the Russian government, and still the authorities stand by scientific medicine's insistence that vaccination be continued.

Another argument against this claim of the anti-vaccinationists is the obvious fact that governments everywhere insist that all men in the army shall be vaccinated. If vaccination were really injurious and killed off more than small-pox ever did, wouldn't the governments abandon the practice? No government would care to deliberately kill off its soldiers, thereby weakening its military strength. It's always to a government's interest to keep its soldiers healthy.

It is necessary to give a little more space to the statement that small-pox increased wherever vaccination was introduced, particularly in the Philippines. The facts below are applicable everywhere, and not to the Philippines alone. What I now quote was taken from the Journal of the American Medical Association, April 8, 1911; Public Health Reports, March 10, 1911, page 277, and forwarded to me by that tireless fighter, Dr. William J. Robinson:

"The effects of vaccination may well be studied in the Philippines. Under Spanish rule, it was necessary during the dry season every year to erect a large temporary hospital at Manila where the many hundred victims of small-pox might be cared for. Over 50 percent of the patients died. The six provinces near Manila have a population of about 1,000,000 people. Dating as far as records and memory run, over 6,000 deaths from small-pox occurred every year until vaccination was systematically applied by the U. S. Government. In 1907, vaccination was completed in these six provinces. Since that time not one person has died at Manila of small-pox who had been successfully vaccinated during the previous five years. Since June, 1909, there has not been a death from small-pox in Manila among any class. Since 1907, in the six provinces, not one person, who had been successfully vaccinated, has died of small-pox and but a few cases have occurred among all classes. Among these few cases not a death took place among those who had ever been vaccinated. This has been the general experience in the vaccinated provinces throughout the islands since the American occupation. The few deaths have been almost entirely among unvaccinated infants and immigrants."

* * *

You've got the goods on all the fakirs but the medical fakirs. It is inferred that medical "science" has proved that germs cause disease when it has proved nothing of the kind.

I get many comments like the above from people who are intelligent radicals in economics, but who are pathetically ignorant on questions of science and medicine. If the writer of the above doesn't believe germs cause disease, just let him make a little experiment. Let him hunt up a gonorrheal prostitute and, after intercourse, see if her germs can infect him. If he has moral scruples, he can do the experiment with a smear, which is to be

applied at the proper place. He'll soon find out what gonococci can do in the way of causing disease.

I forwarded the above comment of my reader to Dr. William J. Robinson, and asked that truly great scientist to express a reply, which he did, as follows:

"It is as difficult to discuss certain things with certain people as it would be difficult to explain to a man who doesn't know addition or subtraction the differential calculus or Einstein's theory of relativity. They simply haven't the slightest scientific background. They do not even know what toxin or anti-toxin means.

"The worst thing about their ignorance is that they do not wish to know the truth. The fact of bacteria being the direct cause of disease is as plain as the fact that I am holding your letter in my hand. And not only are those fellows ignorant but they ignorantly or deliberately pervert the truth and state as facts things which are merely the emanations of their fantastic ignorance. The fellow who wrote you the letter may be well-meaning, but I think he belongs to the worst class of ignorant quacks."

I agree with Dr. Robinson's characterization of ignoramuses who express themselves as unwilling to accept so clearly established a fact as the causation of disease by germs. "I could," says Robinson, "give you hundreds of examples, showing unmistakably that germs, and germs alone, were the cause of certain diseases, and that without germs, and germs alone, those diseases would not exist."

Dr. Robinson gives an illustration from his wide and long practice, which puts the issue in a dramatic and clinching manner, as follows:

"Here is a case of a young man of 26, perfectly healthy, never having had any trouble, never having had any children's diseases except measles. Foolishly, he goes to a disreputable woman, has intercourse without any venereal prophylactics. Ten days later he develops a chancre, a scraping from which shows, under the microscope, the presence of numerous spirocheta, the germ which causes syphilis. Three weeks later, he develops a severe eruption throughout the body, also patches on the lips, tongue and throat. A year later, he develops gummata and the gait of locomotor ataxia—the third stage of syphilis; and two years later, he is a hopeless imbecile—softening of the brain or general paresis of the insane, due to syphilitic poison.

"What has destroyed that young man? Why should a perfectly healthy young man all at once develop syphilis with all its horrible manifestations if he had not been infected by the germ of syphilis from a syphilitically-infected woman?

"It seems to me that a man must be really a low-grade moron, an obstinate imbecile, to deny that in those cases it was the germs that were the cause, and the sole cause, of the disease.

"When I say that those who deny the importance of germs in causing diseases are not only ignoramuses but criminals, I think particularly of diphtheria, formerly the terrible scourge of our children. That terrible scourge is now gradually disappearing. According to the N. Y. State Department of Health, it is becoming one of the rarest of diseases. During the entire year of 1934, only 442 cases of diphtheria were reported. While 10 years before, namely 1924, there were 5,883 cases, or a decrease in 1934 of more than 90 percent. The decrease of diphtheria, according to the Department of Health, is due chiefly to immunization of young children. Two cities, Binghamton and Niagara Falls, each having more than 50,000 population, had no cases at all in 1934, an event which had never before occurred in New York State. And yet there are quacks who utterly deny the effect of antitoxins, sera, etc., as preventing, immunizing or curative agents."

Turning on my correspondent, Dr. Robinson, with commendable bluntness, asks some barbed questions:

"I don't know whether you have ever looked through a serious book on bacteriology, or parasitology. Do you really think that all

those scientists, working in numerous laboratories throughout the world—in this country, in Europe, in Africa, in India, in Japan—are all fooling themselves? Do you think that they study the characteristics of the various bacteria, their culture, their effects on animals with which they are infected, the effect of the remedies by which those bacteria are destroyed, to no avail? Do you really think that they are just ignorant quacks, who don't know what they are doing?

"It is decidedly false that there are thousands and thousands of modern physicians, not quacks, but real physicians with modern scientific background, who deny the influence of germs on disease. There isn't one. This is a bold statement to make, but I make it because I know whereof I speak. You will find that those who deny the connection between germs and disease are old fogies, ignorant quacks, or fellows who never had any scientific training and never went through a real college of medicine."

I feel more than grateful for Dr. Robinson's willingness to discuss these questions that come from tragically uninformed laymen. They may not be influenced by the truth when they are given honest and scientific guidance, but I do know for a certainty that a discussion like this will have a good effect among thousands of my unprejudiced readers who can recognize facts, even though they lack medical training.

* * *

Is Upton Sinclair's Epic plan a maneuver on his part to build Socialism?

Many people have the idea that Upton Sinclair's former Socialism is being held in temporary reserve, and that it will be brought out as his ultimate aim should he gain power either in California, or nationally. I know how easy it is for one to gain such an impression, for I held the same idea when I first wrote about Epic early in 1934. I don't hold such a theory today, because I know better. Upton Sinclair is now definitely an anti-Socialist. Let there be no mistake on that point. We now have his own word for it.

Recently, Sinclair received a letter from the Young People's Epic Club of Pasadena, according to a report published in *National Epic News*, June 17, 1935, in which his young followers criticized their leader for abandoning the Socialist principle of "the social ownership of the means of production and distribution." This club, it is reported, will affiliate itself with the California Socialist party because of Sinclair's rejection of socialized industry as a remedy for our economic problems.

In his reply, Upton Sinclair advised his young followers that "I will appreciate it if the Young People's Epic Club will point out to me a single instance in the entire contribution I made to the Epic literature, or anything that I wrote for the Epic News during the entire campaign, or any speech that I made, in which the

phrase 'social ownership of the means of production and distribution' was employed. . . ."

Sinclair went on to explain that his program is strictly limited to "production for use for the benefit of the unemployed, to take them off the backs of the taxpayers and make them self-supporting. . . ."

We thus see that Sinclair completely repudiates Socialism and rests his movement on the principle of barter among the unemployed. Instead of aiming to do away with the injustice of the present system, and inaugurating the Cooperative Commonwealth, Sinclair would merely gather the unemployed together to eke out a few pennies, like so many coolies, so that the taxpayers might be saved the expense of providing ample relief. His Epic plan, therefore, is nothing more than an attempt to preserve the Capitalist system, with all its horrors of mass exploitation, profiteering, waste and wage slavery. Those who are still nurturing the hope that the Epic plan is Sinclair's scheme to introduce Socialism through the back door should get rid of their illusions. Sinclair is in the Democratic party to stay, and he presents himself as a firm believer in the present system of private ownership of the means of production and distribution. It is a good idea to have this issue set forth so clearly.

* * *

What are the possibilities if Ethiopia were to whip Italy?

That there's a good chance that

Ethiopia will defeat Mussolini in East Africa is admitted in well-informed circles, especially in England. Downing Street certainly knows Africa and trembles at what would happen if the black warriors of "the Lion of Judah" were to give Mussolini the trouncing he has so fully earned. A victory there would set the fires of revolt burning wherever the black men are in bondage to capitalistic imperialism. Not only would the scores of millions of African Negroes rise in an attempt to throw the imperialists out of their continent, but India, not very far away, might also become militant.

Ethiopia—a large country with 350,000 square miles of territory—can't be conquered with the ease that crazy Mussolini thinks possible. Fighting there will be unlike European warfare. There will be little or no trench fighting. The Italian mechanized units won't be able to do anything in the mountains. Mussolini's bombers have 350 miles to travel before they get to Ethiopia's capital, and even there they will find few targets. The tanks won't be of much effectiveness in the mountains, in the jungles, or in the deserts, and when the rainy season returns they will be that much junk. Fighting will consist mainly of quick, strong raids on a thousand fronts. The Ethiopians will fight a few hours, and if things don't go well they'll retreat. They are fearless in hand-to-hand conflicts, and if Mussolini thinks they're just a lot of painted savages with spears and shields he'll find out the truth, to his grief, for these black soldiers are well armed, their leadership is intelligent, they know the arenas of battle, and their supply of manhood is almost limitless, perhaps 2,000,000 in all.

Mussolini's several hundred thousand soldiers, in East Africa against their will, will die like flies when they boil in temperatures of 120 degrees, when they sink into mud during the rainy season. At the start, the chances are the Italians will move far into Ethiopian territory, but this, despite the cheering of the Italian press, will serve to undo Mussolini's army, for the further they enter Ethiopia the more untenable their position will become. They will be far from their base of supplies. The Ethiopians will harass them on all

sides. Raiding parties striking unexpectedly here and there will cut the Italian line and perhaps result in complete victory for the Negroes.

Mussolini says his mechanized army won't be hindered by Ethiopia's lack of roads and other transportation facilities. But this is merely idle chatter. If roads aren't important for Mussolini, then why has he shipped 23,000 Italian laborers to East Africa to build roads in his colony adjoining the country he intends to invade? If he is using 23,000 men in that narrow strip, he'll need 10 times that number when he begins going into a country that intends to fight to the last breath to defeat the robots of Mussolini, as they defeated the Italians in 1896 in a battle that still rankles.

Mussolini is too conceited to admit he may be defeated, but students of international affairs are not at all sure that he can have his way against the Ethiopians. Furthermore, they see the possibility of great mutinies once the Italian army receives a few stinging defeats. The Italian army has always been ready to run away, as it showed during the World War. Mussolini seems to be signing his own death warrant.

* * *

How many hot dogs do we eat?

According to estimates, 4,500,000,000 per year, weighing something like 400,000,000 pounds. This puts the humble hot dog (or frankfurter, if you're a purist in speech) among the nation's big businesses. In case you want to know, a hot dog contains 50-50 of beef and pork, with some spices for flavoring. Before leaving the packing house, the links are smoked and then cooked. Therefore, a hot dog can be eaten "raw" though heating, or preferably grilling, will bring out the rich, tangy flavor relished by our young and old hurry-up Epicures. All hot dogs look alike, but they're as temperamental as movie stars. No two packers make them exactly the same way, all varying their proportions of meat and spices. There being no strict standard of what's to be stuffed into them, their quality stretches from very bad to very good, depending on who made them. Such questions must be left to the government, which does a fair job. You and I can only judge them by their size, the 5-centers being

skinny, and the 10-centers being more corpulent. (Writing this piece has made me hungry, so I'm sending to the corner for two 5-centers, with a generous smear of mustard, though I'd rather have butter.) The hot dog's history is ancient, if we include his ancestor, the substantial, conservative sausage. But his history and popularity have brought him no recognition from the great arts and literature. I'm yet to see him in a painting, a piece of sculpture or a sonnet. Someday, a new Swinburne may rise and sing his praise.

* * *

Would you say that Roosevelt is a radical?

A radical in politics and economics seeks to go to the roots, to produce a social change that touches fundamentals. F. D. R. certainly doesn't fit such a definition. He is merely a "reformer," by which I mean that he seeks to patch up the Capitalist system here and there in order to make it work. That's why Roosevelt's policies have been a failure. He seemed to be radical at times, but that didn't mean much because whenever he was put to the test it was found that he believed in the present system of private ownership of the large-scale industries. Had he been a radical he would have sought to socialize the essential industries and operate them democratically for the common good. Roosevelt will do one thing before he's through, and that is to prove that "reformism" is no substitute for radical transformation from an individualistic to a collectivistic social order.

* * *

Is the I. W. W. still in existence?

The Industrial Workers of the World, which based its policy on the One Big Union in place of craft unionism, is still alive. *The Industrial Worker*, official organ of the union, issued a special edition to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the organization, in June, 1935, and among other things said: "The purpose of the I. W. W. is to make it possible for all people to have all they need and can use of food, clothing, shelter and education. The I. W. W. is thus trying to level people up to abundance rather than, like the capitalists, down to the bare subsistence level of scarcity." This organization, probably the most militant in American history, led

many strikes before the World War, and during the war it took a strong anti-war position. Its policy was to concentrate all efforts on the industrial field, to the neglect of political action. It held that the class struggle is fought out in the industrial field, not the political. But it is interesting to note that when the capitalists decided it was time to crush this organization, early in the war, they used the government—their political arm—to do this. It is well for the workers to be strong in the industrial field, but it is unwise for them to neglect so powerful a weapon as political action.

* * *

How do you explain Bernard Shaw's support of dictatorships?

Shaw has the notion that dictators are efficient. A careful study of economic, social, educational, financial, political and cultural conditions in Germany and Italy will show that a dictatorship, in these modern, complex days, simply doesn't work as well as democratic countries like the U. S., Canada, England, France, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Holland and other lands, even though it will be admitted by the most ardent supporter of democracy that his favored system has numerous faults.

In his recent play, *On the Rocks*, Shaw has one character in a dialogue say the following words to a dictator:

"Law is blind without counsel. The counsel men agree with is vain; it is only the echo of their own voices. A million echoes will not help you to rule righteously. But he who does not fear you and shews you the other side is a pearl of the greatest price."

In these lines Shaw destroys his own argument, for he surely knows that dictators like Hitler and Mussolini are given to imprisoning or beheading those who do not fear them or who would argue for the other side. If a dictator stopped to listen to his opponents and gave consideration to the other side, he would cease being a dictator.

Shaw tells his dictator: "Beware how you kill a thought that is new to you." True, but dictators not only kill the thought but gag the thinker. Shaw couldn't last six months in either Germany or Italy. If he tried to write and publish his ideas in those countries (or any other country ruled by a dictatorship), he'd land either

in a concentration camp or on the gallows, unless he were willing to recant and join in the dishonorable task of propagandizing the dictator's policies.

During the World War, Shaw wrote a book, *Common Sense about the War*, in which he attacked the war policies of Great Britain. Mark you, he not only wrote it; he had it published. The book was read and discussed. Furthermore, his arguments were directed against his own government at a time when that government was at war with the most powerful military organization in history. Such a thing could only happen in a democracy, for if he said his say, during war times, in Fascist Italy or Germany, he would be shot. It was important that Shaw's book on the war should be printed during war times, because it happened that Shaw's position on the issues was right, and there's little doubt that his views bore some fruit, if not then, at least after the close of hostilities. Free discussion never hurt the genuine interests of a country, if that land adopts even a moderate measure of democracy. Of course, democracy isn't always tolerant—as was shown in its treatment of Eugene V. Debs—but here the answer isn't less, but more, democracy.

* * *

I lose my watch or lay it down somewhere. You come along and see the watch where I left it. Now, if you imagine that God Almighty has His eye on you and that you will surely burn in Hell if you touch it, you will be pretty apt to leave it alone, but if you do not believe that and figure that you can take it and get away with it, you will be pretty apt to take it.

Your argument has long been a favorite with priests, preachers and rabbis. The pretty theory has it that God serves as an omnipresent traffic cop, and that there would be an orgy of crime, murder, rape and violence if the hold of religion were to weaken. We are given to understand that people are honest because they fear the wrath of God. As it is my habit always to test theories with facts, let's take a look at this argument.

The best answer is found in the pages of the *Commonweal*, a Catholic magazine. In a 1932 issue you will find an article, written by Father John P. McCaffey, then chaplain at Sing Sing. This Catholic writer made

an analysis of the religious professions of Sing Sing prisoners in 1931-1932, which shows the following:

Catholics	855
Protestants	518
Jews	177
Christian Scientists	20
Buddhists	1
Mohammedans	2
No Religion	8

We thus see that it is the religious people who crowd Sing Sing, not the professors of no religion. What does such a fact mean? Simply this: That religion has nothing to do with respect for law. If anything, a mind befuddled with religious notions is more likely to commit an offense than is a clear-minded Freethinker, especially when the priest stands ready, for a consideration, to wipe the slate clean and send the "penitent" out to continue his anti-social behavior. The strictest Church, as regards orthodox ideas, has the greatest prison population, not only at Sing Sing but everywhere else, whether in this country or in Europe.

The reason there are so few Freethinkers at Sing Sing is because they are usually persons of superior education, and education, when properly administered, is one of society's greatest weapons against criminality. Educate the people in principles of clean, proper living, develop social conscience instead of religious superstitions, and you prepare the way for a crimeless world. Your Freethinkers know that man is a product of heredity and environment. Make both of them as good as science will permit and man's impulses in the direction of anti-social conduct will be quieted. Real morality is a social, economic, educational, environmental question, not a matter of religious hocus-pocus. If this weren't true, the above figures (quoted from a Catholic source) would show an overwhelmingly large number of non-religionists and comparatively few Catholics, Protestants and other adherents of the churches.

* * *

What is your opinion of the magazine *Time*?

I notice that this weekly publication is favored by a peculiarly lazy class of readers. Instead of getting their news from two or three great newspapers that cover the important happenings of the world, they turn

to this well-printed tabloid and, once a week, get their news boiled down to tiny, painless, effortless pills. Zip! A swallow and one is "abreast of the news," which, of course, is the bunk. To give an hour each week to a condensation of the news is to miss the pleasure of seeking out a thorough knowledge of the news of government, international affairs, science, literature, the arts, etc. I notice that it is practically impossible to discuss current events with a reader of *Time*, because such readers have only the most superficial knowledge of the news they would comment on. Of course, it takes more time and effort to read several good newspapers daily, so these *Time* followers kid themselves into the notion that they can do as well by devoting an hour each Friday to what's doing in the world. It's a pretty theory, and it pays the owners handsome dividends, but that doesn't alter the fact that it's loaded with bunk. As for *Time's* editorial policy, it is completely capitalistic—as much so as the *Saturday Evening Post* or *Collier's*. It is written in a smart-alecky style that is supposed to be clever, but which is frequently merely impertinent. Its boast of brevity is a hollow one because it is so labored, making it necessary for the reader to spend extra time unravelling a paragraph's meaning. Curtness is all right when a traffic cop is telling jay-drivers what's what, but it's bad journalism when it is used on subjects of great public importance, where the writer, if he is to be of any help to his readers, mustn't hesitate about taking enough space to tell his story. Brevity is a virtue, but too much of it is a nuisance. That's one of the reasons I've objected to those super-journalists who always tell their new reporters to remember that Genesis gave only 300 words to tell about the creation of the world. But isn't that a perfect case in support of my theme—that brevity should never be carried too far? In the case of Genesis, we find that the author, who was a bum reporter, omitted names, dates and incidents, so that even to this day the best minds of the world can't even agree on what it wants to say. Had the author of Genesis, fresh from his exclusive interview with Jehovah, taken a little more time to do a bet-

ter story, we wouldn't be so upset trying to learn its secrets. The fool had a scoop and spoiled it because of an undue passion for brevity. It may be that the author of Genesis has returned to earth and accepted the editorship of *Time*.

* * *

Has H. L. Mencken ever written any articles "exposing" the "Medical Trust"?

Mencken is a consistent supporter of scientific medicine. When he edited *The American Mercury*, one of his favorite contributors was Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Other important contributors were members of the faculty of Johns Hopkins. He never tires of extolling the scientific efficiency of Johns Hopkins medical department and hospital. It is interesting to note that both the extreme radicals and conservatives in economics support what our faddists quaintly call the "Medical Trust." In the Soviet Union, for example, scientific medicine is a state monopoly and enjoys exclusive recognition.

* * *

Donald E. Menckshaw, North Attleboro, Mass., reminds me that, in all fairness to Arthur Brisbane, I should have added to his pregnant discovery that a gorilla is stronger than a man the even weightier observation that eternity is a long time.

* * *

What has been your experience with subscribers who signed up not knowing they were getting an irreligious periodical?

Some quit at once, varying their notes of cancellation from a polite "Please remove my name," to an explosive outburst that guarantees I'll spend a long time accumulating blisters. Some put me on their prayer list. Some even think the paper is unlawful and try to sick the authorities onto me, in the hope I'll serve a stretch in the hoosegow. But that doesn't tell the whole story. The more intelligent ones read with open minds and end up by sending for a bundle of books. You'd be surprised if you knew how many priests and preachers read this paper—and with approval, too. One Nebraska Catholic priest drove down to have a chat with me, taking off his bib before getting into town. I found him to be a complete skeptic, with nothing but hatred for the Catholic Church, but when his visit was ended he re-

turned to his parish, for there's that ever pressing question of food, clothing and shelter. Freethought is making real progress, and I'm glad to know I'm doing my little share in the work of opening eyes and brains. The fact that my body of readers is growing from month to month (25,000 last month) is proof that I'm holding more than I lose. I feel more than confident that my reading public will become more numerous from now on.

* * *

A growing body of Freeman readers are availing themselves of my offer to answer personal questions, in short letters, at a flat fee of \$1. My answers are limited to one side of a letterhead. Questions intended for this service should be addressed to E. Haldeman-Julius, Box 136, Girard, Kansas, and marked "personal."

* * *

You have no right to give an answer to a question for fact unless you can give proof, and I want proof for the statement that Dr. Abrams claimed Baptists and Methodists could be distinguished by the nature of the vibration given off when their blood was applied to the testing machine, known as "The Electronic Reactions of Abrams." I do not believe Dr. Abrams ever made such a statement.

He certainly did. My authority for this statement is Upton Sinclair, who, shortly before Dr. Abrams' death, wrote reams of stuff about this new miracle man. I recall distinctly Sinclair's naive statement that he begged Dr. Abrams not to release this religious phase of the "discovery" because it would hold his "epoch making" theories up to scorn. The inference, of course, was that Upton Sinclair actually believed Dr. Abrams could do this piece of hocus-pocus but that he feared for the unnecessary criticism and skepticism the San Francisco charlatan would have to stand. But Dr. Abrams laughed at Upton's fears and ordered the "fact" to be publicized.

This same reader, who writes a hot letter, demands proof that Dr. Abrams charged \$1,250. I haven't the literature at hand, but I recall distinctly that Dr. Abrams advertised in his literature that the machine, and a course of instructions in operating it, would cost that much money, and from Sinclair's reports at the time I take it that his San Francisco "school" was jammed with would-be

exploiters of the species that Barnum said was born every minute.

I have received at least 25 letters, in which I was bawled out good and plenty for my temerity in branding the electronic clap-trap of Abrams as charlatanry. I was under the impression that his racket died with him, but the storm my short paragraph provoked leads me to the conclusion that the Abrams fakery is being kept very much alive.

* * *

What is Hitler's physical condition?

The London Times, the *New York Times*, the *Neue Volkszeitung*, German language Socialist paper published in New York City, and the *New Leader*, Socialist organ, all agree that Hitler's physical condition is grave. They say he has cancer of the mouth, but a careful reading of their reports leads me, as a layman, to venture the opinion that Hitler's ailment is not cancer but gonorrheal infection of the mouth. His throat and mouth condition is so serious that his physicians don't permit him to make any more speeches, which accounts for his silence during the past few months. He had Goering read his speech at the funeral services for the explosion victims at Reinsdorf, as he stood by in physical misery. The throat that has poured mountains of poison on a betrayed people is now hoarse. Unless medical science can destroy the gonococci in his throat it is possible that the world may soon be rid of this degenerate and sadist.

* * *

I heard an orator for a patriotic society claim we are in economic distress because we are permitting our country to be flooded with aliens. He said there are 20,000,000 aliens in the U. S., that 250,000 persons enter this country illegally each year by deserting ships at our ports, and that millions of men could be deported for illegal entry if the authorities acted. Please comment.

These wild statements have no basis in fact. The best authority on this subject is Immigration Commissioner D. W. MacCormack, who has facilities for finding the truth. When this official appeared before the House and Senate Committees on Immigration and Naturalization, he presented statistics that should make these patrioteers look sillier than they are when they resort to their base campaigns to provoke prejudice against

our alien population. Instead of having 20,000,000 aliens in this country, we have only 4,922,000 of whom 1,500,000 have taken out their first papers if they are adults or, if minors, will become citizens when their parents become naturalized.

In the matter of illegal entries, the Commissioner reported there are less than 400,000 such cases in this country, of which only about 100,000 are subject to deportation. The terrific inpour of seamen deserting their ships to enter our country illegally, when examined by this authority, shows up as only 1,580 per year during the past four years, with a peak prior to four years ago of an average of 21,481 per year, which is considerably less than 250,000 per year, by a long shot.

It is all too easy for patriotic orators to try to shift the blame for our economic troubles to a small minority of our population. In order to make the "menace" appear real, these patriotic bunk-shooters resort to gross exaggerations. Our aliens are an asset to the country, and when they are finally admitted to citizenship they will be a credit to their adopted country. Let's not tolerate any attempt to stir up the old, discredited, brutal anti-foreign poison propaganda.

* * *

To me, Socialist philosophy and principles are based on democracy. If that is correct, do you think that the so-called left-wingers of the Socialist party are of any benefit in forwarding the U. S. toward a Cooperative Commonwealth?

The left-wing group in the S. P. verges perilously close to Communism, and as such is a source of confusion, disruption and needless, fruitless controversies. This element does not seem to be quite able to formulate its principles and policies with any order or clarity, so that at times one thinks they are Communists, or upholders of dictatorship, or believers in industrial as well as political democracy, in violent revolutions or gradualism. One is soon driven to the conclusion that they are a vocal, noisy, muddleheaded, uninformed and immature faction, and for these reasons are capable of doing serious mischief in the party, perhaps ending in a schism that may shatter the organization.

These left-wingers, who insist on emphasizing a dictatorship of the

proletariat, don't seem to realize that such tactics will, if pressed too far, encourage the growth of Fascism in this country. If those who believe in Socialism come out for a policy of denying freedom of speech and other democratic rights, they give the forces of the extreme right an excuse for applying violent methods to support and maintain Capitalism, which, of course, is Fascism.

These left-wingers don't seem willing to understand the simple fact that the American people are by no means ready to give mass support to any kind of a movement that is headed in the direction of dictatorship of the proletariat, violence and disregard for constitutional methods in achieving one's goal. In the world of political action it is the essence of folly to go so far to the left as to be out of sight of the people. If the Socialist movement is ever to lead the working masses to the Cooperative Commonwealth, it is essential to keep in close contact with them in their day-by-day struggles as unionists, consumers, and citizens. It takes no particular intelligence to work out a program that is so extreme as to put one out of sight and reach. That is nothing more than political eccentricity.

It is saner, more productive, to recognize the simple fact that the American masses are inclined to favor radical policies, provided they are not tinged with violence, suggestions of dictatorship or a zeal to expect too much at one time. The better policy is to appreciate the fact that the change, after all, is not going to be a sudden one. This great country isn't going to abolish Capitalism and inaugurate Socialism overnight, in a violent revolution. The change will be slow, gradual, with many a misstep corrected and many a new advance planned carefully, even cautiously. It is splendidly spectacular to bring utopia with one grand demonstration, but why expect such a piece of pageantry when all the signs seem to imply that the masses are looking to legalistic, constitutional measures to bring them to economic security.

But our left-wing political romanticists want action—now, immediately, with fiery manifestations. Alas, that is seeking the too easy, royal road to victory. It's unlikely to come

that way. The evidence seems to indicate a traditional regard for orderly methods, introduced by scientists instead of revolutionists. American Capitalism will eventually be transformed into industrial democracy (Socialism), it seems to me, but the change will not come by the command of a handful of revolutionists sitting at an emergency convention in some hidden, secret cellar. That being the temperament and desire of the masses—constitutional, orderly social progress—we should adjust ourselves to working within the traditions and wishes of the people we hope to influence in the direction of a classless society. This, of course, doesn't mean that the working class is to be "tolerant" about fascist elements who may wish to override and crush democracy. As I've said many times before, I believe democracy has the right to defend itself and should always be ready to apply its might, discipline and full punitive powers against those elements of the extreme right or left who would establish their ends by means of violence, dictatorship and terror.

We who want to see the large-scale industries socialized must learn to understand questions of mass psychology as well as mass needs. The fact that the masses need Socialism is no reason for its coming into existence. The people must first be brought to understand their economic troubles and to appreciate the remedy—Socialism. Such a policy must take time, for masses can't be educated in a single season. Our left-wingers should realize that without mass support there can be no such thing as Socialism. The Cooperative Commonwealth can't be brought into being against the wishes of the masses, and by majority I don't mean a mere 51 percent; I mean something close to unanimous support from the workers of farm and factory. These masses still favor Capitalism; they support Capitalist political parties and believe in the future of Capitalism as a social order. That being self-evident, isn't it the worst kind of folly to talk in terms of extreme Leftism when the masses are only beginning to grasp moderate social policies.

The change will come step by step, under the leadership of sane radicalism that is close to the working

masses, and not hidden from them, so far from the arena that the people don't even know of their existence. Step by step will new laws be passed, industry by industry will be socialized, and when the job is completed it will rest on a firm foundation of mass approval instead of a romantic adventurism that can be kicked out between days.

* * *

Is it true that Adolf (Fairy) Hitler is a lover of music?

Yes. His favorite instrument is the flute. Occasionally, for the sake of variety, he prefers the piccolo.

* * *

What volume of business does the Pacific Coast enjoy from tourists?

California received 107,845 tourists during June, 1935, of whom 60,982 went to southern parts. This covers only those who arrived in motor cars, which leaves bus, railroad, airplane and steamship travel still to be accounted for. *Pacific Markets* estimates that \$239,000,000 was spent by tourists along the Coast, during 1934, of which the San Francisco area received \$55,000,000, Washington and Oregon received \$60,000,000, and the balance, \$124,000,000, went to southern California. Figures for 1935 are expected to be larger. The 1934 figures show a 28 percent gain over 1933. The total sum spent in 1935 along the Pacific Coast is expected to reach \$317,000,000, though it has been estimated that this total may reach \$350,000,000 because of increased expenditures, amounting to about 10 percent per tourist.

The same reader asks how the tourist spends his dollar. It has been broken down as follows: 25c to hotels and camps; 35c for food; 12c for gas and oil; 28c for miscellaneous.

* * *

The Pelman Institute of America offers a course for the scientific development of the mind. Can you tell me something about the merits of this Institution and whether it is reliable?

Pelmanism has no standing in the science of psychology. The course was written by a non-scientific Englishman about 15 years ago and was exploited profitably as a mail order enterprise. It succeeded in obtaining numerous testimonials from well-known laymen, but no expert in psychology has ever given the inspirational hash the slightest endorsement.

The author of this set of volumes didn't have access to the best scientific opinion of his day, let alone the vast discoveries made since the course was first issued. I don't doubt the concern is thoroughly reliable in a business sense, but this doesn't mean the public can expect the slightest benefit from its conglomeration of pish-posh and unmitigated twaddle. Persons who care to learn about the latest discoveries of psychology have numerous authentic and reliable works to draw on (at prices as low as 5c) without going in for Pelmanism, which nicks one's purse for something like \$25.

* * *

What is the earth's size?

At the Equator, the earth is 24,902 statute miles (21,600 geographical miles); major axis, 7,926.5 statute miles; minor axis, 7,899.5 statute miles. Its gross area (land and water) is 196,140,400 statute square miles. By volume the earth is 259,880,000,000 cubic miles. Quite a hefty little chunk, even though we're given to saying, when we meet a friend in the next county, "ain't it a little world after all!"

* * *

What is the value of tax-exempt securities in the U. S.?

\$53,800,000,000. Of this amount, \$35,410,800,000 is also exempt from Federal income taxes, including surtax.

* * *

Why are a group of Congressmen called "mavericks"?

Congressman Maury Maverick, of Texas, is one of the leaders of perhaps 40 Congressmen who, regardless of their Republican or Democratic affiliations, are really strongly socialist, having declared against Capitalism and proposed nationalization of the large-scale fundamental industries, railroads, communication systems and banking. These "mavericks," according to the correspondents, are "unbranded cattle." The name, appropriating their leader's, is certainly an apt one. It is possible that the "mavericks" will soon make a big splash in national affairs. Most of them are young men, still little known, but they have long futures and opportunities for great achievements in public affairs. A few of the other "mavericks" are: Gerald J. Boileau, of Wis., Ernest

Lundeen, of Minn., Vito Marcantonio, of N. Y., Thomas R. Amlic, of Wis., and Paul John Kvale, of Minn. While it is true that the Socialist party has no members in Congress, it is apparent that the party's policies are influencing some two score members of the House. It is no mean accomplishment to be able to command, indirectly, such a large bloc, one that promises to grow in importance and effectiveness. Keep your eye on the "mavericks."

* * *

What is "hot oil"?

Prof. Charles E. Clark, dean of the Yale Law School, defines it as "oil produced in excess of state proration allocations."

* * *

I am considering enrolling in a certain well-advertised radio and electrical school in Chicago (which I imagine is the one you referred to in your August issue) in order to get the fundamentals of air conditioning. Please advise, for which I am enclosing a dollar for personal reply.

I sent this reader the personal reply he requested, but feel that the subject is of wider interest. I told this subscriber that the school he mentioned could not do him any real good. He'd waste his money, and, what's worse, his time. The subject of air conditioning can best be grasped in a half dozen institutions, the best one being Boston Tech, or in the laboratories of about 25 corporations that are now commercially exploiting air conditioning. A list of such corporations can be obtained free of charge from the Dept. of Commerce.

* * *

Occasionally I have an opinion on who is going to win in a match or race and would like to back that opinion with cash amounting to \$200. I see advertisements of betting commissioners, but since I don't know any of them and none of them have been recommended to me by competent persons, I fear to bet with them. Being in a small Pennsylvania community, I'll have to do my betting by wire. Please give me your advice.

This reader also remitted a dollar for a personal answer which I am printing because I believe my suggestion should reach a larger public. I told this correspondent to take my sincere advice and lay off betting commissioners who accept bets by wire. He stands to lose in the end. For a time, the commissioner plays cat-and-

mouse with his victim, until he finds out just how much money he has. Then he springs the works. He applies the heat in order to get his victim to put up every dollar he can rake together. When the money is placed, it's sure to land in the pocket of the commissioner, because this big, last smash was fixed in order to clean up the whole pile with one gesture. Don't be a sucker. You stand something of a chance when you bet at the tracks in states where such contests are legal but even here you always have the odds against you. Always remember that these gamblers aren't in business to give you something for nothing. The racket is based on getting your money, if not now then eventually. Put your money in a postal savings bank and go about your business. You'll thank me for this advice when you've had a chance to learn what you've been laying yourself open to.

* * *

Mussolini's propagandists are claiming that Italy's wheat crop has grown sufficiently large to take care of the nation's needs. Please comment.

The figures show an increase, but the idea of expanding Italy's wheat crop was unsound because it entailed the use of inferior land, with the result that the cost of the crop is larger than it would have been had the wheat been imported. This is shown beyond question by the fact that the price of spaghetti has gone up. As spaghetti is the food staple of the workers and farmers, we find that the common people have been made to pay for Mussolini's mistaken attempt to make Italy independent of the world's wheat market.

* * *

Is there any way of stopping Japan's imperialistic penetration of China?

England and the U. S. have their hands full at home, without taking on Japan. These two powers, like the Soviet Union, would like to stop the Japanese militarists from enslaving China, but there's only one language Japan can understand—and that's war. War isn't wanted either by the capitalistic or Bo'shevist governments. Russia is nervous about Japan's campaign, but can do nothing about it, so long as Japanese troops are kept out of Siberia, which has been the case thus far. Russia had high hopes about trade with China, but that's all smashed now. The

"open door" is going to be shut with a bang, and Japan will control a vast territory (larger than Texas) and a Chinese population as large as all our states east of the Mississippi. The only possibility is that Japan may overstep itself, spending more money than the imperialistic adventure is worth. If that should happen, Japan's domestic economy would suffer a steep decline, with the added menace of revolution among the Japanese masses. But that is conjecture. For the present, Japan is riding high, wide and handsome. Foreign powers will be kept out of China, as it is keeping competition out of Manchukuo, where only Japanese capitalists are permitted to trade. For the present, Japan has its hands full with China, so Russia is enjoying something of a breathing spell, but there's no telling when the Japanese forces will feel ready to take on Russia by crossing through Inner Mongolia and cutting the trans-Siberian railroad, perhaps at Chita. This would cut off most of eastern Siberia. But it won't be as easy as all that. Russia has about finished double-tracking its great railroad from Moscow to Vladivostok, is keeping a vast military force opposite Manchukuo, has an undisclosed number of submarines at Vladivostok, where they could do untold damage to the Japanese fleet and shipping, and, above all, a great fleet of up-to-the-minute bombers at an air base only 450 miles from Japan, which is now notoriously vulnerable to attack from the air. Russia will keep its peace, making the most of a bad situation, for it well knows that any aggressive act towards Japan would mean an attack by Germany, and perhaps Poland—and then the fat would be in the fire.

* * *

Has Russia improved its gold production?

The Soviet Union has made immense progress in gold mining and refining since I last discussed this subject. It is now ahead of the U. S. and Canada in producing new gold, standing second only to the Transvaal. Last year, Russia produced \$150,000,000 worth of gold. This hike resulted from greater use of old mines and opening new ones at many points in Siberia. It threatens to win first place in gold mining, but will

have to travel a long distance before catching up and passing South Africa, which, at \$35 per ounce, produced \$400,000,000 worth during 1934. Russia has been shipping some of its low-grade ore to American refineries, because its own refineries are able to handle only the medium and high-grade ore. From September, 1934, to May, 1935, Russia recovered \$7,300,000 worth of gold from ore it shipped to the U. S. This gold was used to finance purchases, in America, of raw cotton and machinery. These purchases, from now on, are expected to increase in volume.

* * *

What has happened to Russia's Society of Old Bolsheviks?

Those who took part in the 1917 revolution that made possible the Soviet Union were organized into a society that had the same respect and admiration enjoyed by our Civil War veterans. Nothing was too good for an Old Bolshevik. He was the hero, the founder, the defender of the workers' fatherland. But the society is no more. A brief report says the society requested its own dissolution, but such an explanation should fool only the naive. The society has been suppressed by the Stalinites, because the members of this old order of revolutionists were too energetic in keeping alive the ideals that ended czarism. It was uncomfortable to have them around, what with their talk about real Socialism, Communism, Marxism, Leninism, World Revolution, etc. Many of them even remembered the services Leon Trotsky rendered the country, and that was poison to Stalin's sensitive stomach. So they were disbanded. To understand what this act means in Russia, just picture what would happen if Roosevelt were to issue an order denying the Civil War veterans the right to meet, discuss their glorious record and march in parades. This act of Stalin's is just one more proof of what I have been saying for months—Stalinism is now a real dictatorship, not of the proletariat but of Stalin and his clique. The Communist party was once the important organization in Russia, when Lenin was alive, but that also is of the past. The Communist party is most likely going to suffer the fate handed to the Old Bolsheviks. It may be dissolved, thus leaving Stalin alone and

in control. Such a change could be brought about with ease. Stalin could explain, in that plausible way of his, with a sprinkling of Marxian and Leninist phrases, that Socialism has been achieved in Russia, thus making it unnecessary for the country to maintain a political party. Why have a political organization to do something, when that something has already been done? Why have a party to establish a classless society, when society is already classless? And so on. But those who understand the truth about what motivated the destruction of the Society of Old Bolsheviks will also understand why Stalin would like to do away with the Communist party. When Hitler found his brown shirts standing in his way he disbanded them. When Stalin finds his Communist party gumming up the works, he will give it a dose of morphine and put it quietly to sleep.

* * *

What is the basic theory of British foreign policy for Europe?

For about 400 years, Great Britain has followed a diplomatic line that is something of a variation on the old Roman maxim of "divide and rule." In Europe, England's foreign ministers take the position that it is to the little island's best interest to always oppose the strongest and give support to second-line powers. In 1914, Germany was the strongest power in Europe. Today, England wavers between Germany and Italy, now opposing one, now the other. At this writing, England is playing up to Germany, permitting Hitler to build a navy equal in strength to 35 percent of Britain's present navy, perhaps as a reaction to the Franco-Soviet military pact, which looks a little too powerful for English eyes. At the same time, England is frowning on Mussolini because he is making too much noise about Ethiopia and imperialism in general. In other words, keep weak and Downing street will smile on you—if you're in Europe. Be weak anywhere else and England will gobble you up, if no one else gets there first.

* * *

What kind of books have you been reading lately?

I've been reading at Pareto's *The Mind and Society*, which I found hard going, especially where this author goes on for pages at a stretch

with mathematical equations that surely meant nothing to the author and less than nothing to me. Between such exhibitions of "scientific" mysticism one meets up with shrewd observations and interesting, even valuable, facts, but when I come to his conclusions I'm convinced that he let utopianism kick out what he fancied was the logico-experimental method. For, when he gets through, he would have us put industry, society, government and learning in the hands of absolutely "superior" persons, capable of grabbing and holding power. One sees such grabbers in action in Central Europe, and the more I study them the happier I am to "suffer" under the "slavery of democracy." Better a democracy shot through with faults than the regimentation of a Hitler-Mussolini authoritarian state, which is Pareto's dream republic translated into action. Pareto will help Fascism in America, now that a lot of pee-wee Mussolinis who can afford the price will get pictures of the "great ruler" (themselves, of course, after they assert their supermannishness) leading the "dumb masses" to the glory of slaving to make the country safe for tyranny and repression.

I've just finished Dr. Isaac Goldberg's *Dictatorship Over the Intellect*, which carries this sub-head: "An Affirmation of the Right to Free Thought and to Free Imaginative Experience," and here I got value for my time and effort. This book, which I read in manuscript, presents Goldberg as a creative critic, with a world viewpoint, at the climax of his powers of discussion, interpretation, analysis and synthesis. America, in Goldberg, has at last supplied a critic capable of occupying the place left vacant by Georg Brandes. Those who would understand the currents of 1935 thought—in politics, international affairs, Hitlerism, Fascism, anti-Semitism, Stalinism, and numerous other important subjects—will follow Goldberg's guidance, to their permanent profit. Goldberg has written a big book, crammed with sound criticism, wit, humor, learning, and plain, good sense. This Ms., of over 200 pages, shows that Goldberg has at last arrived at the point where he is ready for his works of masterly art, for creative criticism is as great an art as anything the critic ever

chose for his attentions. I read this book with a continuous thrill of excitement, for it is more tumultuous than a Wild West movie, except that it deals with the tumultuous problems of the mind instead of the brawls of booted hoodlums. I'm proud that I was able to be the first person to read this work since it left the hands of its gifted author.

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In his magazine, *The Revealer*, Rev. Winrod claims the N. R. A. was "hatched out" by "Jewocracy." Please comment.

This Winrod, as I've said before, is one of the worst clerical liars outside of Nazi Germany, which is saying a whole lot when one considers the intellectual cavortings of his hate-mongering colleagues. In the case of the New Deal's N.R.A., Rev. Winrod should consider the fact that the case which killed it was brought before the Supreme Court by a few Jewish boys by the name of Schechter, and that two Jews (Brandeis and Cardozo) helped make the Supreme Court's decision against the N. R. A. unanimous.

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Rev. Gerald B. Winrod, in one of his publications, says he doesn't mind seeing evolution taught to mature minds in the universities, but he does object to having the immature young taught such doctrines. Please comment.

This typical argument of the Fundamentalists and anti-evolutionists falls when we reflect that it is the mature minds in the great institutions of learning that invariably accept the discoveries of biological sciences. If evolution is a commonplace of truth among the highly educated, then doesn't it seem reasonable that the uneducated, of tender years, would stand a chance of achieving mental development if they were to be "exposed" to the myth-destroying facts of evolution? The real social immorality consists in teaching children notions of religious obscurantism, which they will have to unlearn if they are to advance to higher studies. The Winrods who would poison the minds of the young (knowing that most of them will never reach a great university) are the enemies of truth, civilization and culture.

* * *

The other day I saw a small group of seminary graduates prepare to leave for India, and the thought came to me that they will serve that strife-torn country

with some of the lessons of our civilization, and as such should be encouraged. Please comment.

The missionaries are paid to go to India in order to make religious converts. Strife-torn India, as you describe it, would have less strife if there were fewer religions in that densely populated land. With dissensions already multiplied because of religious differences, the missionary will only make confusion worse confounded by adding another religion to a country already over-supplied, thus doing great harm and no good. They'd serve civilization better by staying home.

* * *

What does Italy's king think about Mussolini's Ethiopian affair?

Since May, 1935, it has been known through all Europe that the king is strongly opposed to Mussolini's extravagant and dangerous adventure in East Africa. The Ethiopian incident, which was used as a pretext for imperialistic action by Mussolini, could have been settled for \$10,000. Instead, Mussolini has already spent about \$100,000,000 in shipping more than 200,000 soldiers to the Ethiopian border. This was done at a time when prices in Italy went higher and the financial situation of the dictatorship was grave. The whole Ethiopian move has caused unmeasured resentment in Italy, making it difficult to mobilize the men Mussolini must ship to Eritrea (the Italian colony near Ethiopia) if his threat (or bluff) is to be made good. As I've written many times during the past few months, Mussolini's downfall may well result from his egotistical behavior, his sword rattling and his endless threats against peace-seeking governments. It is interesting to note that Mussolini's press and propaganda bureau, headed by the Duce's son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano, won't permit correspondents from the foreign press to even visit Eritrea. Can it be that the world would then learn that the 200,000 Italian soldiers there are getting ready to rebel against the dictator's wild project? It seems that way. If things were going well down there Mussolini would be glad to permit correspondents to tell the world how anxious the troops are to make East Africa safe for Mussolini's imperialism. Mutiny may well be expected there at any time, especially when the rainy

season ends and Mussolini, in October, must keep his promise to move the army onto Ethiopian soil, where almost a million black warriors, armed with the latest rifles and machine guns, and well munitioned, are waiting to give the Italians the same beating they administered in 1896. Italy is seething with discontent. Eritrea may well be the powder magazine to set off the rebellion that will throw Mussolini out on his ear. The Italian Fascist may imagine that he is all-powerful because he has about 800,000 Italians under arms, but if he were the realist he likes to imagine himself to be, he'd perhaps realize that these 800,000 men are now better equipped to end Mussolini and his rotten regime. Putting arms in their hands may mark his finish.

* * *

Being a hater of violence, I object to Socialism because of its insistence on the Class Struggle.

My correspondent seems to have the idea that the Socialists created the Class Struggle, or that they approve of it. The fact is, Capitalism is the instigator of the Class Struggle, through its system of private ownership of the large-scale means of wealth production, distribution and exchange. By owning the means whereby the masses must live, there is a constant, tireless struggle between Capitalists and the Working Class—a struggle for more profits or for more wages, depending on which side a person may be. The Socialist merely recognizes this simple, obvious fact. He no more approves of the Class Struggle than he approves of an earthquake. Both are unpleasant facts but they must be accepted. The Socialist's purpose, however, is not to maintain the Class Struggle but to end it for all time, and that can be done only by socializing the industries, doing away with the right of an owning class to take profits from the toil of the workers and establishing a social order in which the producers of wealth will receive the full social value of their labor. Such a Cooperative Commonwealth would, of necessity, be classless and therefore devoid of all aspects of class warfare. If you are a true hater of violence then you should be for the Socialist system, because that will do away with the violence that breeds imperialistic wars, strikes, unemployment and social misery. If you hate

the Class Struggle then you should be for the Socialist system, because that order will do away with the causes of class conflict.

* * *

Is it not true that governmental policies of social insurance, public ownership of the railroads, etc., are forms of Socialism?

I've always been very careful to refer to such public movements as socialistic, rather than Socialist. By this I mean that they are steps in the direction of Socialism, if they are taken with the consciousness that the emergence of real Socialism means a classless society, operated in the industrial and financial fields for the purpose of public use rather than profit to Capitalists. To have the railroads become the property of the government would certainly not be Socialism if it were done to reimburse the railroad Capitalists and with no intention whatever of making such a social enterprise the foundation upon which to build a cooperative commonwealth in which the people will own all large-scale industries, etc. A government that merely takes over the railroads to save them from bankruptcy, or for military ends, etc., isn't acting with Socialist ends in mind. Such a program would be merely a form of State Capitalism. Germany has nationalized its railroad system, but that certainly isn't Socialism. It's Fascism, because the nation's rulers believe in, and enforce, a system of labor exploitation, capitalistic ownership of other socially-necessary facilities, and deny the principle that the working class should be the dominant class, instead of being, as it is, the subject class. There are many Capitalists who believe in government ownership of the railroads and coal mines in the U. S. A., because these two great industries are, in the main, not being run profitably. Nationalization would enable them to get out from under and retire from the field with valuable government bonds as compensation for their property, instead of holding on to worthless stock certificates or corporation bonds that produce neither dividends nor interest payments. A Capitalist is always "socialistic" when his business is running at a loss, and a strict

individualist when his business is out of the red.

* * *

I consider Democracy as nothing more than a capitalistic front to fool the working class. Democracy is a Wall Street fraud, instituted to make capital's rule more secure.

If you really believed what you wrote, you should have added a sentence to your letter in order to carry your argument to its logical conclusion. You should have written, after the above: "I welcome Fascism because it kills Democracy and gives Capitalism an honest face." For that's what your argument really leads to. If Democracy is a capitalistic fake, then Fascism should be cried for by you extreme Leftists. But you daren't do that, after seeing what happened in Italy, Austria, Germany and Spain. You don't want Fascism, because you know its clear historical lessons. But that doesn't stop you from tearing down the supports of Democracy, thereby clearing the way for the horrors, persecutions and injustice of Fascism. It is a common error, among extreme Leftists, to assume that Democracy is a part of Capitalism's set-up. If they knew a little more history they'd know that Democracy, Liberalism and Political Enlightenment came on the scene long before Capitalism became a powerful social order. Capitalism is versatile, being able to adjust itself to various political forms—Democracy, Autocracy, Monarchy, Constitutional Monarchy, and, finally, Fascism. But this does not mean that Democracy is a tool of Capitalism. Democracy has merely permitted Capitalism to function, but it has the power, and sane radicals hope to see it use that power, to end Capitalism and extend political democracy to embrace that greater objective—industrial democracy, which is Socialism.

* * *

What is the meaning of "due process of law" in the U. S. Constitution?

Ever since the Constitution was agreed to in 1789, "due process of law" has been without benefit of exact definition. One authority on the Constitution, Powell, has written:

"Due process, then, is what the Supreme Court says it is. Most of the rest of the Constitution is not far different. What Marshall said of the minor ingredients applies in

many instances to major ingredients as well. . . . In deducing these ingredients the Supreme Court seldom finds its judgment restricted by the language of the instrument which is our fundamental law."

Another authority, Corwin, put the case in blunter language:

"Due process of law . . . is a roving commission to the judges to sink whatever legislative craft may appear to be, from the standpoint of vested interests, of a piratical tendency."

A member of the Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Harlan, once wrote:

"It would seem that the protection of private property is of more consequence than the protection of the life and liberty of the citizen."

Since we have a written Constitution, it would seem of first importance to have that document precise and beyond misunderstanding or twisted interpretation. "Due process of law" has served for too many generations as a damper on social legislation intended to serve human beings rather than powerful economic and financial interests.

* * *

What do diplomats mean by "rebus sic stantibus"?

It refers to a condition that changes the status of an existing treaty making its application impossible or inexpedient. It is resorted to frequently when a foreign minister wants to be relieved of an inconvenient pact.

* * *

What is the difference between a defensive and an aggressive war?

No one seems to know, though there have been a thousand attempts at strict definition. It is recognized that a country can commit an act of aggression without so much as firing a shot. For example, if Germany were to mobilize its army this would constitute an act of aggression even though the troops were nowhere near the border. At least France and Russia would so construe the act. On the other hand, a country could claim that its army was marching into a foreign country for reasons of defense. And yet, there's a difference between aggressive and defensive warfare. In the case of Japan in China today, its conduct is plainly aggressive. On the other hand, Russia's military line-up along its southern Siberian frontier is unquestionably a defensive act, even

though its forces are gigantic and its equipment menacing. To decide the difference asked about, one must consider each case separately and impartially, if such a thing is possible.

* * *

What is the standing of Richard Strauss in the Nazi regime?

This great composer—who stands with such masters as Bach, Beethoven, Wagner and Brahms—is thoroughly "in bad" with the Hitler maniacs. Himself a non-Jew, Strauss, creator of such immortal masterpieces as "The Life of a Hero," "Death and Transfiguration," "Salome," incidental music to Moliere's "The Bourgeois Gentleman," "Thus Spake Zarathustra," all of which I have heard many times on my Victrola, has committed a *faux pas* that sends him to perdition. His latest opera, recently produced for the first time in Dresden, was based on a libretto written by Stefan Zweig, Austrian Jewish author. The fact that it was a good libretto meant nothing to club-footed Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, Nazi chief propagandist (head liar to you), so by the time this appears in print the great Strauss may find himself kicked out of his post as president of the nation's Music Chamber. Dr. Goebbels recalled that Strauss showed similar "sins" in the past, for he used texts by Hofmannsthal (another Jew) for such Strauss masterpieces as "Elektra," "Der Rosenkavalier," "Ariadne auf Naxos," "Woman Without Shadow," and "Arabella." In addition to such lapses from nordic "purity" Strauss has been known to have committed the shameless error of stopping with Jewish musical friends while visiting Dresden and Berlin. Such incidents, as the one against Strauss, happen frequently in Nazidom, the nesting place of insanities, obscenities, brutalities, banalities and other eccentricities. When a nation's rulers go stark, raving mad one has to accustom oneself to such exhibitions of hysteria and nitwittedness. How long is this terrible tragedy going to continue? When will the world be brightened with a new light from the real Germany—the country of culture, science, philosophy, intellectualism, music, art, literature, poetry and the other things that go to make a modern, civilized community? The whole world will cheer when the

friends of social progress and decency assert themselves and drive from power the homosexuals, degenerates, dope addicts, sadists, masochists, lunatics and mental cripples who are holding a splendid people in bondage.

* * *

Have the Japanese workers enjoyed any real benefits from Japan's occupation of Manchukuo?

One of the favorite arguments of the Japanese militarists and imperialists is that their expansion into Chinese territory is necessary in order to improve the conditions of the Japanese masses. A direct contradiction comes from Kanju Kato, chairman of the central executive committee of the National Council of Japanese Trade Unions, now on a visit to this country. Discussing this point, Mr. Kato, who knows his facts from first hand study, said:

"Generally speaking, since the Manchurian invasion, the gulf between prices and wages has been considerably increased, and as a result the workers have suffered. The only ones who have benefited are those in the munitions factories. For others conditions have been very bad. The legal working day is 9 to 10 hours. Actually most Japanese workers have a 13 to 14 hour day."

Japan's workers are unfriendly to their government's policies with regard to China, as are the Japanese peasants, according to this authority. Mr. Kato adds that his union's policy is to organize the workers with a view to overthrowing Capitalism by class struggle, but the organization is still weak. The Japanese Capitalists have been able to keep their workers down to conditions verging on serfdom, but there are signs of an awakening, and when they finally become organized and ready for action, one may expect them to put an end to Japan's ruthless imperialistic adventures in a neighboring country which has every right to be left to its own devices.

* * *

Do you think the U. S. Supreme Court should have the power to pass on the constitutionality of laws passed by the States?

It is imperative that there be a body empowered with authority to pass on the laws enacted by the legislatures of the 48 States. It is generally agreed that the Supreme

Court should not be deprived of its right to pass on such questions. If the Supreme Court didn't have that power it would be possible for the different states to run wild and pass any kind of laws, regardless of what the U. S. Constitution defines as the nation's fundamental law. What the radicals, progressives and liberals object to is the right of the Supreme Court to pass on laws passed by the U. S. Congress, because Congress is directly answerable to the people and should not be dictated to by a body that isn't elected by the people and can't be recalled. The people should be supreme in all questions of national policy.

* * *

Hitler Germany reports an increase in birth rate. Please comment.

In 1933 the birth rate was 14.7 per 1,000. In 1934 it was 17.9 per 1,000. There are two facts to consider. First, Hitler's policy is to pay out hundreds of millions of marks as bonuses to the newly married and to the parents of the newly born. Hitler does this because he wants plenty of raw material (cannon fodder) for the new war he is rigging up. His personal interest in such matters is just about zero, because he is a confirmed bachelor and has never been known to have a love affair with a woman, despite the fact that he is past 45 years of age. This is accounted for by the unfortunate biological fact that Hitler is a homosexual and therefore "not interested" in the opposite sex. The second fact about this increase in the birth rate is the following: the hike took place near the borders of Germany, not in the heart of the country. At the frontiers lives the non-German population, or "non-Aryan," as the Nazis prefer to call it. For example, Upper Silesia contains Germany's Polish minority, and it was this element that reported a birth rate of 23 per 1,000. The Saxons, at the core of the country, who are the "purest" breed of Germans, are reproducing at the rate of only 14 per 1,000. Hitler's great to-do about more babies has worked in reverse, the "wrong" kind piling up a high increase and the "right" kind registering a big drop.

* * *

What is inflation?

There are various kinds of inflation—money, credit, liquidity of bank

assets, rising prices, etc. But, for popular purposes it is fairly sufficient to say that inflation is that condition which the government creates by issuing more money than is needed for the legitimate purposes of business. The opposite of inflation—deflation—prevails when the government issues less than a sufficient amount of money.

* * *

Is there any difference between Stalinism and Leninism?

Leninism was the policy which aimed at the establishment of Socialism through a world revolution. Everything Lenin did in world statesmanship, was predicated on an uprising of the world proletariat. Stalin, when he took power after Lenin's death, outlined a policy of nationalistic Socialism—that is, the erection of a Socialist society in a single country, Russia. Thus it is plain that there is a marked difference between Leninism and Stalinism.

* * *

How many laws have been passed by Congress and of these how many have been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court?

Since 1789, or in 146 years, Congress passed 24,016 public laws, of which 59 have been declared unconstitutional. Of these 59 laws, 29 were declared unconstitutional during the past 15 years. Prior to 1920 we find 26 laws declared unconstitutional from 1880 to 1919. From 1789 to 1859 only two laws were decided against by the Supreme Court. From this record it is plain that the practice started slowly, gaining momentum during the past few decades.

* * *

Was primitive man a heavy eater?

He was both a light and a heavy eater, depending on his food supply. There being no sure surplus of vegetable and animal foods until primitive man evolved into a crude state of civilization, it was a case of chicken one day and feathers the next, as the saying has it. When hunting was bad, primitive man went hungry. When the hunt brought plenty, the day was given to a feast. A savage would eat as much as 40 pounds of meat in a single day.

* * *

Please give Cavour's comment on dictatorships.

The famous statesman of modern Italy, Camillo Benso di Cavour (1810-

61) remarked once that "anybody can rule under martial law." By this he meant that it is no particular feat for a dictator to rule, and temporarily give the semblance of order and stability, when he crushes all opposition, outlaws dissenting opinions, denies a free press and in other ways gives the people no voice or choice of policies. It was for calling attention to Cavour's truism that the *New York Times* was barred from Italy. Mussolini is getting more than sensitive about foreign opinion. Things aren't going very well at home. The economic situation is worse than ever and the masses are not wildly enthusiastic about his militaristic junkets in East Africa. The editorial that offended Mussolini's censors closed with this significant sentence: "Any day a great public catastrophe or a vast shaking-off of Italian fetters in order to be free might leave him helpless on the ground, a shorn Samson."

* * *

What is Jacobinism?

Jacobinism, in more senses than one, describes the Bolshevism of the U. S. S. R. It means the establishment of a terrorist dictatorship of a minority. Stalinites do not like to be described as Jacobins, but the facts speak for themselves. Stalin and his cohorts prefer to speak of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," but, as I have frequently shown, the Russian state is not a dictatorship of the proletariat in the sense that Marx and the other scientific Socialists conceived it. In Russia, there is no democracy, so the working class can't rule, being left without machinery for executing its will. We therefore find a dictatorship of a small minority in control of a political party (Communist), which fits perfectly the definition of Jacobinism.

The Russian Social Democratic party, at its London congress in 1903, passed a declaration, written by Plekhanov, which explained clearly what was meant by a "dictatorship of the proletariat," as opposed to mere Jacobinism. Theodor Dan, in his article, "Socialists and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in the March, 1935, *American Socialist Quarterly*, quotes the following affirmation from this declaration:

"The social revolution of the proletariat will abolish the division of society into classes and thereby lib-

erate all oppressed humanity, in that it will prepare the way for the end of all types of exploitation of one part of society by another...."

This was followed by:

"The 'dictatorship of the proletariat'—that is, the establishment of a political power of the proletariat adequate to overcome all possible resistance of the exploiting class—will be the necessary step in this social revolution."

Elsewhere we find (in Martov's essay, "Marx and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat") a definition of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as conceived by Karl Marx himself, as follows:

"The concentration in the state of a force capable of imposing, despite the resistance of an economically powerful minority, the conscious will of the majority."

If such a conception of proletarian dictatorship were to prevail in Russia today, we would find, now that the Soviet state has broken the economic power of the capitalists, a readiness to make the government respond to the "conscious will of the majority," which could only be done through democratic means, with the majority permitted to express itself through press, radio and meetings, so that various policies might be studied and the right one finally adopted. But lacking such social machinery, we can properly say that the Russia of Stalin is not a dictatorship of the proletariat but a form of Jacobinism.

* * *

What is "hegemony"?

This word is found frequently in works of history, politics, government, and related subjects. It describes a policy that aims at, or achieves, dominance. Thus, Japan is establishing hegemony in parts of China. Hitler is looking towards Nazi hegemony in Central Europe. For some years after the Russian Revolution, Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev, through the Third International, attempted to bring about Bolshevik hegemony in Central and Western Europe, through proletarian revolution. Mussolini longs for Fascist hegemony in Ethiopia. However, the word is used frequently without the slightest historical authority, as in the literature of the anti-Semites, who would make it appear that the Jews seek world hegemony, though there isn't any real evidence to sup-

port such an assumption. (The word is pronounced he-jem-o-nee, with the accent on "jem.")

* * *

What's your opinion of pinball games?

I've played these contraptions several times, and found a little mild amusement while unable to make more sensible use of my time and money. The games usually bore signs to the effect that they were "tests of skill" instead of gambling devices, but I'm positive the "skill" feature is the bunk. They are clever tricks to get around the laws against slot machines. You get a little fun playing pinball—sometimes for four or five minutes—but in slot machines you drop in your nickle and plunk, it's gone! Pinball has become a big, \$10,000,000 industry. About 95 percent of these games are made in the Chicago territory, by small concerns formerly engaged in making radio cabinets, display racks, furniture, and the like. There's big money in the racket—it's hardly more than that—and the fad is growing. One sees them everywhere—in hotel lobbies, restaurants, drugstores, saloons—and they always seem to attract a crowd. The nickels pour in in a steady stream. The games are made to pay off rarely, but at least the players get a little run for their coins. The worst of these devices is known as the "grab it" game, which consists of a glass case filled with candy beads. Articles of merchandise are imbedded in the candy and the "game" is to steer a digger machine to pick up one of these articles, but the average person is lucky to get a few pieces of candy worth perhaps a tenth of a cent. This machine has been outlawed in many communities. The best defense I ever heard for this "game" was that the candy was guaranteed to be pure!

* * *

Does Bernarr Macfadden actually write those terribly reactionary editorials which appear over his signature in Liberty Magazine?

The Macfadden articles which are found in all of his numerous publications are ghost-written by a pen-prostitute. The material is trite, uninformed, undocumented and in other ways trivial and superficial. They have no value to persons interested in learning the truth about politics, economics, health, ethics and

related subjects. They don't carry an idea in a carload.

♦ ♦ ♦

I was interested in your remarks about the apparent desire of Russia's bosses to perpetuate themselves. Yet is it not a fact that Stalin and many high officials of the Soviet government are still living very simply, showing no signs of a desire to live ostentatiously, nor any intention to deviate from their original plan to improve the standard of living of the great mass of the Russian people?

People who live under a capitalist civilization find it difficult to understand the ethical motives that move Russia's statesmen. Communist morality (and I use that word in its scientific, not its merely sexual, connotation) is definitely against conspicuous, ostentatious living, whether among its officials or its ordinary citizens. Men like Stalin live simply, economically and inconspicuously, because they have no desire to emulate the leaders of capitalistic countries, who live wastefully and conspicuously because that puts them in the so-called upper classes. Russia's officials have nothing but scorn for such methods of living. Under their code, they judge themselves successful and important, not by the amount of money they spend, or waste, but by the amount of authority they have in the political, economic and financial spheres of the government. An "aristocrat" in Russia is not a type that marries a Barbara Hutton and her Wollworth millions, but one who is building, or running, vast industrial enterprises. Such authority is the measure of one's importance in the Soviet Union, and not the size of income or salary. Stalin, for example, draws only \$1,500 per year, and he doesn't seem to be hankering for a strike against his modest scale of living. His satisfaction is derived from a different, and far more important, source—the amount of influence he has in national and international affairs. That attitude is found right down the line.

But this doesn't mean the government is stingy. When the Soviet ambassador to the U. S. throws a party to official Washington, he knows how to "put on the dog." Caviar is shoveled up by the bushel and champagne is poured by the barrel, opera singers are hired from the staff of the Metropolitan (at perhaps \$2,000 for a single recital)—all, however, in

the name of the Soviet government, which is never going to let a capitalistic government beat it at entertaining. This is the government's party, not the ambassador's as an individual.

When the ambassador's wife, Mrs. A. A. Troyanovsky, wanted a new evening gown recently (according to a report sent out by the Associated Press), she went into a department store and bought a pattern for 25 cents, chose a cut of fabric and went home to make the dress herself. That's typical. She was being economical, because here she was acting as an individual.

It will sound strange, I know, but it's the truth, nevertheless, that the richest individuals in the Soviet Union are not government officials of high rank but the nation's dramatists. A play that is produced in Russia must, under the law, provide 6 percent of all box office receipts for the playwright. There's one author over there, hardly known outside his own country, who has written several tremendously popular comedies, and his royalties amount to something like a million rubles per year. There is nothing to prevent his accepting such an income, but he is expected to live unostentatiously, putting his savings either in state savings banks or investing them in government bonds. It's hard for capitalistic-minded individuals to appreciate a country which pours its greatest rewards into the lap of "mere" playwrights, instead of providing gigantic incomes for parasites of the Barbara Hutton type. We, in the U. S., would be shocked if we were to find a man of the type of Bernard Shaw actually making a better income than Andrew W. Mellon, but a little reflection should show us that such an order of things is more than desirable.

* * *

What do you think of Shirley Temple and her acting?

When I first became acquainted with this little charmer I was more than pleased, especially by her easy, unspoiled manner and her snappy dancing. But the child, with all her talent for acting, is being institutionalized, after the manner of a Will Rogers. She is doing the same things picture after picture, so that if you've seen one or two you've seen them all. Her latest vehicle, "Our Little Girl,"

was the worst piece of trash I've been punished with in many months. Poor, little Shirley wasn't to blame. The fault lies with the story writer and the directors, both of whom turned out a stereotyped, hackneyed, boresome, sentimental package of goo.

* * *

Which language is spoken by the least number of people?

Ginikhi is a language spoken by only 120 persons living in Daghestan, on the Caspian Sea, U. S. S. R. But whether or not this is the smallest group speaking a language I'm unable to say. It'd have to go some to beat Ginikhi.

* * *

Didn't de Valera use the tactics of Hitler and Mussolini?

The comparison is not apt. The Irish used insurrectionary methods to force British imperialism to recognize Ireland's demands, but once this was accomplished a democratic constitution and parliamentary methods were established. Had the insurrection been followed by an authoritarian state, then could his movement have been called Fascist, but the facts don't permit such a characterization.

* * *

Please explain plan for "postalization" of railroads.

What information I have on this subject is of a sketchy nature. Those who would make a more thorough study of this plan are advised to write to Jos. B. Eastman, Federal Transportation Co-ordinator, or Senator Burton K. Wheeler, chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, both of whom have been entrusted with the new scheme to spur passenger travel and freight traffic. Both of these public men have expressed deep interest in the scheme. The "postalization" plan, as I understand it, calls for a complete change in our method of charging for railway service, the purpose being to make possible a vast increase in business for the carriers. If adopted, a passenger will pay a flat rate of \$1 and a flat express-train fare of \$3, which will permit the passenger to ride as far as he pleases on a single railroad. Thus, a trip from New York to San Francisco would cost but \$6, exclusive of dining car and sleepers. This \$6 is arrived at by the fact that it is possible to stay on the trains of only two roads in

order to make the trans-continental trip. The idea is to make the nation's rail system operate like the postoffice, which makes a flat charge of 3c for carry one ounce of first class mail to any address in the country. The same plan is used by the New York subway, which charges 5c, regardless of how far the passenger would ride, whether it is for only one station or from Yonkers to the far end of Brooklyn. While the company may lose on such a journey, it more than makes up this loss, if any, through its numerous short hauls. The same would apply on the railroads. The plan includes a provision that would have the federal government pay the difference between the receipts from flat rates and present rates, during the period of experimentation, should the new plan bring in smaller instead of increased receipts.

* * *

Please follow your discussion of the Communist party's policy regarding Negroes with an outline of the Socialist party's position on this same question?

As I've already explained, the Communists offer the thoroughly unrealistic "solution" of the Negro problem in the U. S. by proposing "self-determination in the Black Belt." This means secession from the Union and the creation of a series of Black Republics in what was formerly part of the U. S. Thus, if this policy were applied, the Negroes of Harlem could secede from New York State and organize their own republic. Such a proposal is so ridiculous as to hardly warrant serious discussion. The Socialist party, on the other hand, approaches the Negro question with sane, workable, intelligent proposals, as follows:

1. The Negroes are to be guaranteed complete industrial, political, economic and educational rights.
2. The 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution are to be strictly and literally enforced.
3. Lynching is to be outlawed, preferably through federal legislation.

In an article on "The Negro's Stake in Socialism," Margaret I. Lamont, writing in the March, 1935, *American Socialist Quarterly*, summarized Eugene V. Debs' position, as follows:

"When Debs was asked whether the Socialist party would make a

special appeal to the Negro and would have a special program for him, the great leader replied that the Socialist party would act in the interests of all workers, white and black alike, and that a particularized appeal to Negroes would not, therefore, be in keeping with party principles."

The above statement means that while there can be no compromise with regard to the three fundamentals listed a few paragraphs before (which were included in the party's official platform), it would be unwise and confusing for the Socialist party to segregate its efforts on a part of the working class, even though that part happens to be black and is made to endure worse conditions than prevail among white workers.

* * *

Carveth Wells, who delivers many anti-Russian lectures, says he saw cartoons in Russia in 1932 showing Roosevelt's picture accompanied by the title "The Next Communist President of the United States." Please comment.

The letter you refer to appeared in the May, 1935, issue of the Rev. G. B. Winrod's vicious sheet, *The Defender*, a mess of lies given over to anti-Semitism and hysterical outbursts like Carveth Wells' silly letter. If he saw such a poster, why didn't he buy one for reproduction in the American press? The Soviet Union derives quite a little revenue from its sale of posters and cartoons. The Hoover campaign committee certainly could have made good use of such a document, if it ever existed. And besides, how could the Communists hail F. D. R. as their own candidate when they were running Foster on the Communist ticket, in opposition to the Democratic and other tickets? The thing is too inane for serious treatment, except that it is used by a hate-monger's widely-circulated magazine.

* * *

What's your dope on O. O. McIntyre?

The endless reams of chit-chat by such columnists as Walter Winchell and O. O. McIntyre will usually attract my eye for a quick reading, but I can't recall ever having received a single worthwhile idea for all the hours I've wasted on them. I don't get the least bit of kick out of knowing about three or four new "blessed events" each day, or what Odd saw while rambling up Fifth Avenue, or why Ben Bernie is dumber than the average jazz leader (if that's possi-

ble), or that Winchell is able to prove by affidavit and proclamation that he was ahead of everybody else on the last Astorbilt divorce. F. P. A. is made of better stuff, but even he gets tiresome with his daily avoidance of essentials and topics of substantial significance. Heywood Broun usually devotes himself to subjects that mean something, with a style of writing that gets things told. But to return to McIntyre, it is interesting to see that Christopher Morley has shown, by deadly comparisons, that O. O. is a plagiarist. Morley claimed, and proved, that McIntyre stole generously from a book he published in 1931. He presents something like 30 parallel passages to demonstrate that McIntyre stole whenever he felt the need of Morley's pearls of wisdom in order to fill out a column. Here are a few of the selections, arranged side by side, to prove literary theft:

MORLEY

"After a wine has been barrelled it is still en rapport with the vineyard. When next year's flowering comes on the vines, the liquid stirs in the cask and fumes and acintillates by some chemical heredity."—From Page 440 of "John Mistletoe," 1931

"A sweet and dangerous opiate is memory... the bliss of anxious thought."—From "Mistletoe," Page 39.

"A green escapade from town"—"Mistletoe," Page 404.

"There was a star danced and under that was he born" (about Shakespeare).—"Mistletoe," Page 358.

McINTYRE

"There is a specious legend that wine, no matter how long casked, remains always en rapport with its native vineyard. When the vineyard flowers each year, the barrelled vintage fumes and bubbles. A chemical heredity."—From Page 25 of "The Big Town," 1935.

"No opiate is so deadening as memory... the despair of anxious thought."—From "The Big Town," Page 59.

"Off in the car for a green escapade."—"The Big Town," Page 79.

"A star danced and under it Betzi Beaton was born."—"The Big Town," Page 139.

* * *

After reading the article on Canada's censorship in the August Freeman, the question came to my mind: "How does this liberal anti-Catholic magazine manage to pass postal inspectors in Canada?" Living in Detroit, I am familiar with the medievalism of Canada and the resentment of many of my Canadian

acquaintances because of these regulations.

It's a little difficult to understand the workings of a censor's mind, granting there is such a thing as "mind" connected with censorship—"prejudice" would be a more accurate word. While the old *Debunker* was thrown out of Canada, and, at one time, a large number of titles in the list of Little Blue Books, it is true that today the complete Little Blue Book library and *The Freeman* are admitted. Why? In the case of the Little Blue Books I met the problem by accepting all Canadian orders and shipping the books via parcel post even though I knew they were banned. For months, the censors insisted on opening all packages and removing "objectionable" titles, which were returned. There were days when we received as many as 200 parcels from the Canadian censors. But we went right on taking orders from Canadian customers, which meant that complaints soon piled up. We then sent credit coupons to these customers, with a circular explaining why their books were not delivered. It is reported that the office of the Canadian postal censors was crowded with complaints, which, after a time, became tiresome. Then a member of Parliament, Mr. J. S. Woodsworth, made formal inquiries about the scandal during a session. Soon after, the packages went through unmolested. In this instance, the censor simply got fed up. In the case of *The Freeman*, the censor may figure that the paper's Canadian circulation is too small to deserve drastic action, there being only about 1,000 *Freeman* readers in all Canada. But this doesn't mean *The Freeman* is safe. It's possible, any day, to see the censor decide to "save" Canadian minds from the corrupting influences of blatant Haldeman-Julius and his mendacious press.

* * *

What's your dope on "The Scoundrel"?

Hecht and MacArthur wrote and directed this movie triumph of hogwash, mysticism, tripe, piffle and Philadelphia scrapple. Someone has shrewdly indicated that it is merely a screen version of Marv Pickford's immortal classic of bunk and hokum, "Why Not Try God?" In this story we find a bad, clever villain busy chasing woman after woman, until he

meets one (a poetess) who is still in undisputed possession of what one often hears half-humorously referred to as a "cherry," and he gets busy. After he has done many other sinful acts, to the tune of moth-eaten, wordy, Wildean epigrams, and tedious dashes of Schopenhauer, Proust and Nietzsche, we find him dead in an airplane crash, but coming back to find at least one person to weep for him, for otherwise, according to the voice of God, he will spend an eternity (a very long time) without the solace of rest. So he hunts around for 30 days (God's strict time limit) until he catches up with the poetess, who weeps for him, and he goes back to Jehovah's habitat smiling like an ecstatic saint. Ben Hecht and his collaborator certainly know better than to dish up such rotten garbage. The Hecht who wrote those short stories for the *Chicago Daily News* 15 years ago and the exciting, workmanlike "Front Page" for the New York stage a decade ago, has finally succumbed. He, like his villain-hero, should rest in peace, for his literary death has provoked tears of anguish among many who thought they had a right to expect something better.

* * *

I heard over KNX, June 9, 1935, a speech by Martin Luther Thomas, of Los Angeles. He said in Russia they are selling human flesh for human food and there are prostitutes by the hundreds. Please comment.

It is difficult to retain one's poise when dealing with such liars. Thomas hasn't a single fact to support such a statement. Such lies serve rabble-rousers who want to throw their hearers into hysterics, knowing that the listeners won't, or don't know how, to check up on their wild statements. This lie about cannibalism is used whenever the older one about Russia's nationalized women wears itself too thin to bear repetition. When the one about cannibalism spends itself, Thomas will let it rest a few years while he brings out the one about the nationalized women. As for prostitutes, I don't doubt they can be found in Russia, though I've studied statistics and reports which prove that real progress has been made in handling this ancient problem. Of course, there are no prostitutes in moral America! Our rich girls never have affairs and our poor girls never sell their bodies in

order to keep alive. All of our females reach 90 without the slightest taint on their characters, and only those who are legally married ever indulge in sexual experiences. Anybody who knows anything about Christian America surely knows that much. As for cannibalism in the U. S., we have it in its indirect form, by which I mean that we tolerate a form of economic cannibalism which enables one class to live off the sweat of another class. But that is called Capitalism, and Capitalism has been sanctified by the church, the press and the radio. We don't say: "Please pass me a slice of cheek," nor do we complain: "John Snicklewurst's hams are much tougher than I expected, though the butcher assured me they were prime A No. 1 tender pieces." Nor do we tell our guests: "You'll pardon me for only buying a dried up old man today, but if you'll let me know when you're coming again I'll be prepared with a nice cut of yearling roast." We don't do that, but we certainly do permit corporations to control social necessities, which exploit and rob the masses. We permit the means of wealth production to remain idle, in the mysterious name of a depression, while millions of unemployed go hungry, are driven insane, destroy themselves or perish by avoidable diseases. And when we learn that there's a country in which some real efforts are being made to bring prosperity to the workers through production for use, we muddy up the picture with cries about nationalization of women and cannibalism.

* * *

If, as you say, Russia sincerely wants peace, then why doesn't its government disarm and set the world a real example?

That is a counsel of perfection, which would be perfectly lovely in an economic and political Garden of Eden, but would be the essence of folly in this matter-of-fact world. When we realize that Japan to the East and Germany and Poland to the West are waiting for the hour to strike when they can gang up on the Soviet Union, with a view to dismembering that vast country, we see what a monumental act of folly it would be for Russia alone to disarm. Such naive disarmament would not advance peace but would merely make it easi-

er for imperialistic Japan and its allies to grab what they want without so much as a struggle. Russia has, again and again, offered honest, sincere disarmament, and that's all we can expect of it. If the others reject the offer, that ends it.

* * *

M. B., Bronx, N. Y., writes: "I enjoy your paper for its radicalism, free speech, championship of the underdog, and general intellectual alertness. Let me also add, for its scorn of bunk."

Another reader sent back the August issue with this note: "I suggest you cut the attached into pieces five inches square and hang in an outhouse."

You pays your money and takes your choice.

* * *

What does human meat taste like?

There is a difference of opinion among authorities. Pierre Loti quotes a native of Tahiti as saying: "The white man tastes like a ripe banana, when well roasted." Other cannibals have complained that white meat is too salty. Others that it is too tough. Some people are awfully hard to please.

* * *

In the July issue I quoted the U. S. Weather Bureau as saying that twice as cold as zero Fahrenheit is 32 degrees below this zero. The problem, as printed in a large number of exchanges, is worded this way: "If it is zero degrees Fahrenheit today and twice as cold tomorrow, how many degrees Fahrenheit will it be tomorrow?" I accepted without question the report printed in a number of periodicals that quoted the U. S. Weather Bureau as placing the answer at 32 degrees below zero, but as the whole thing looked illogical, and being no authority on the subject, I decided it would be best to send a letter to Mr. W. R. Gregg, Chief of Bureau, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Weather Bureau, at Washington, and find out if there was any truth to this oft-quoted report of his answer to the problem. Mr. Gregg's reply shows that the Weather Bureau does not make any such assertion, and never did. The problem is silly. Mr. Gregg's letter follows:

"The question: 'what is the temperature of the air when it is twice as cold as it is at 0 degrees?' is sensible enough if we are asking it from the physiological standpoint, meaning: At what temperature will one be twice as uncomfortable as he is when the temperature of the air is 0 degrees—assuming that one is outdoors in each case? But though this is a sensible

question, it cannot be answered in definite figures. We have no standard of comfort nor measure of degrees of comfort. Furthermore one's discomfort in cold air varies with the humidity, wind velocity, exposure (sunshine or shade), kind and amount of clothing, state of health, and various other factors. In short the question in this form, though rational, has no definite answer.

"Physically speaking the question has no meaning. Cold has no measure and no starting point, and no reality in the sense that heat has. There is an absolute zero of temperature, namely, the temperature at which there is no motion of the particles of a substance towards and from each other. As the particles increase in motion, the temperature of the body becomes correspondingly higher.

"We, therefore, can ask at what temperature an object would be if twice as warm as it is at some given temperature, 100 degrees F. say, but not what temperature (speaking physically) it would have if twice as cold. An object to be twice as warm as it is at 100 degrees F. would need to be heated up to 1120 degrees F. This is because the absolute zero is about 460 degrees below 0 degree F."

* * *

What's the status of Uncle Sam's cash drawer?

According to the Treasury report for the end of June, 1935, the government owned gold to the value of \$9,115,380,809, the largest stock of gold in the history of the U. S. A. The value of all monetary stock in the federal treasury in \$15,113,869,773. Uncle Sam's gold supply would make a tower five feet in width and two feet in thickness to the height of 1,224 feet, which is almost as high as the Empire State Building.

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In a speech, the comedian, Eddie Cantor, attacked Father Coughlin, warning his audience about the dangers of carrying free speech over the radio too far. He said: "Free speech is a beautiful thing, but through the radio we are permitting many like him to address millions." Please comment

Mr. Cantor, who is much concerned over the denial of civil and cultural rights to Jews in Germany and other Fascist countries, would gag critics like Father Coughlin. In this, he is following a mistaken policy. The constitutional right of free speech isn't very important when it is exercised

only in expressing ideas with which we are in agreement. The real test, the full meaning of free speech, comes when we are faced with expressions that are in violent disagreement with our own.

Mr. Cantor should remember that he is speaking for the rights of a minority, and when he would reject free speech in order to suppress his critics he certainly can have little cause for complaint when his own side is persecuted and suppressed. I agree with Mr. Cantor's observation that Father Coughlin is without a trace of sincerity. To me, he is America's No. 1 mountebank, a source of intolerance, but I certainly would defend him in his right to express his bunkistic notions.

The answer to Coughlinism is free discussion, not suppression. Jews should be the last persons in the world to seek to answer an enemy with the threat of censorship. Jews, who represent a small minority, should, as in the past, firmly insist on democratic liberalism in behavior, culture, education, politics, business and other elements of civilized existence. It is better to answer and refute incipient Fascism than to suppress it. This, however, doesn't mean that I deny democracy the right to defend itself. It certainly has every right to preserve its identity, form and rights. But it must, in all consistency, defend its enemies in their right to free criticism, so long as these enemies do not resort to overt acts.

If Coughlinism meant the creation of para-military forces, then democracy would have every reason to suppress it, but so long as it functions in the arena of public discussion, all lovers of the constitutional rights of free speech, free press and assembly should lend their support to those who would voice their opinions, however one might disagree in fundamentals. This is a public policy that has been tried and tested in democratic, civilized countries like England, France, Scandinavia, Switzerland, and the U. S. A., with ample evidence that freedom is always better than repression, tolerance is better than persecution, and democracy is better than dictatorship.

* * *

At the cafe where I am a waiter, we

had an argument the other day as to which is the better way to carry a tray—on the palm or with the thumb—but as we could not agree we decided to let you give us a general historical viewpoint.

This question of "on the palm" versus "with the thumb" has troubled expert tray-carriers for generations, the schools being about evenly divided. The world's champion tray-carrier, Fred Sheibeck, of New York, won his race against 20 waiters with the "on the palm" style. He should run against the Paris champion, who is said to use the "with the thumb" method. I therefore prefer to reserve judgment until these two experts go through their bout. However, the "on the palm" style has a slight edge with me, perhaps for esthetic reasons, because it always looks so much more artistic to see a waiter go sailing by with a tray carried "on the palm."

* * *

Could any foreign power stop Italy from attacking Ethiopia, short of declaring war?

Only Great Britain could put a quietus on Mussolini's ruthless plan to crush Ethiopia and make that large country a slave-state of Fascism. The British seem to be sincere in their desire to win Mussolini away from his proposed war, but thus far the English haven't even hinted at the use of their one sure counter-stroke—the closing of the Suez Canal to Italian ships carrying troops or munitions. Such a move would make Mussolini's position in East Africa untenable. The Italians make quite a point of the agreement Great Britain signed with France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, Turkey, Russia and the Netherlands, in 1888, stipulating that the Suez Canal shall "always be free and open in time of war as in time of peace to every vessel of commerce or war without distinction of flag." However, the British have two replies to this position. First, during the Spanish-American war, in 1898, the canal was closed to Spanish naval ships. (In 1904, during the Russo-Japanese war, the ships of Russia were permitted to use the canal.) Second, Great Britain could justly argue that Italy has little cause for bringing up the validity of this agreement regarding the use of the canal when Mussolini has already violated his League agreement and his treaty

with Ethiopia which guaranteed the integrity of Ethiopian soil. Ethiopia is a full member of the League of Nations, and as such is justified in claiming that Mussolini is getting ready to break an international agreement. Were England to close the canal to Italy, Mussolini would be compelled to abandon his campaign instantly. But will England do this plain, simple decent thing?

* * *

After reading a history of American labor disputes I am compelled to conclude that violence is unavoidable. There has hardly ever been a major strike that didn't result in a number of deaths. Please comment.

American strikers usually lose some of their members in each industrial conflict, because the employers are permitted to employ private deputies, detectives, gangsters, hoodlums and scab-herders to break the strike. But it is a mistake to conclude that strikes must, of necessity, result in deaths. It is a most interesting fact that England, which has known many great strikes in its history, hasn't had a single death from strike violence in the last 75 years. The strike is a legitimate weapon of the workers, and its use would be peaceful in this country, as it is in England, if the officials would do their duty and restrain employers from arming private gangsters. Enforcement of order should always be a public duty. As it is, employers, when threatened with a stoppage, put in great supplies of gas-bombs, shot-guns and machine-guns in order to break the morale of their strikers. This could be outlawed with the greatest ease. When labor goes on strike as a protest against unjust conditions, it doesn't rest its case on violence and destruction but on its solidarity, refusing to create wealth until its conditions are met.

* * *

Should rat traps be boiled in hot water, smoked or fired after being used?

The Department of Agriculture, in a bulletin, advises against any of these practices. The common notion has it that applying fire, hot water, or some deodorizer will make the trap acceptable to Mr. Rat, who is supposed to be able to "smell death" in the used trap. The government experts say it is better to let the odors of the previous occupants re-

main, as they serve to attract, rather than repel, new victims.

* * *

Is not Hitler ruling by the consent of the people, who have a chance yearly to vote Yes or No if they want Hitler?

The so-called "elections" in Germany are tragic jests. The people are terrorized, free speech is forbidden, the press is gagged, meetings are outlawed, opposition parties are forbidden, anti-Nazis are beheaded or tortured in concentration camps, militarism is in the saddle, trade unionism is a crime, criticism is treason, all sides but Hitler's are illegal, and yet some have the impertinence to even hint that Hitler is in power because the German people want him. Hitler represented a declining minority group when he stole power, and his real following is a still smaller minority. But that minority, composed as it is of hoodlums, gangsters, criminals, murderers, perverts, homosexuals, addicts, sadists, masochists, lunatics and barbarians, has a death grip on Germany's throat and nothing but violence and revolution can break its hold. Hitler wouldn't dare permit free discussion and civilized exchange of opinion. If American or British methods of election campaigning were permitted, along with our principles of free press and assembly, Hitlerism would be thrown into the garbage can where it belongs.

* * *

The Christian Science Monitor says that the "flamboyant spending" of one American helress "has probably helped" during the depression. Please comment.

It has long been suggested, by analogists for social parasitism, that the right to unearned consumption helps give people work. These defenders of wasteful spending never suggest that it would be more just for the creators of wealth to do the spending. Let me bust into a fable:

A dog went running after a particularly energetic flea. After hours of scratching, Mr. Bow-wow finally landed the flea. Before he could bring his paw down on the little parasite, the flea, who was smart, yelled:

"Wait a minute, Rover. Let's talk this thing over."

"There's nothing to talk about. You've dug into me for the last time."

"You'd better stop and consider before doing anything drastic. I'm really your best friend."

"My friend! Like hell! You've

been living off me for as long as I can remember, keeping me scratching."

"But that's good for you, Mr. Rover. I keep you busy, active, energetic. Without me life would be dull and listless. I am your incentive to industry. Without me you'd become just a lazy, good-for-nothing mongrel. With me you are an up-and-coming canine."

"But I work for my keep. I watch the farmhouse at night. I help bring in the cows. I amuse the children and play with the boys. I chase away prowlers who want to steal our chickens and keep the rat population down. But what do you do? Just nestle in my hair and drink my blood a drop at a time."

"That's getting vulgar, Mr. Dog. Let's not resort to obscene references to blood-sucking and all that socialistic tommy-rot. If I weren't always with you to prod you into action, you'd fall down on the job and your master would fire you for a livelier dog."

So the canine, who always voted Republican one election and Democratic the next, tenderly picked up the flea and put him back in his hair, where he's been ever since. The dog scratches more than ever, but now he's convinced that it's for his own good.

* * *

Do you think the pamphlet is a more effective weapon than the daily or weekly press or the radio in stirring up hatreds which may lead to war, or, on the other hand, in building up a sentiment for peace?

Hatreds that are intended to set the war machine in motion are more easily aroused through the press and radio than through pamphlets. War hysteria usually comes as a result of quick, concentrated, hysterical drives, and here the speedy press and the instantaneous radio lend themselves as effective weapons in the hands of the war-mongers. Pamphlets are more useful for the long pull, rather than the immediate response. When Wilson drove us into the World War, his best tool was the capitalistic, militaristic daily press, which kept up a ceaseless campaign of terror, threats, scares, misrepresentation, distortion and all the other tried-and-tested ballhoo of the munitions racket. In such a campaign pamphlets take a subordinate place, because they are

slower in getting their messages across.

On the other hand, considering that the big press and powerful radio already belong to Wall Street and the patrioteers, the work for peace must, of necessity, rest a great deal of its case on the effectiveness of pamphlets. Small, well written, clear, concise booklets have always been mighty engines of public enlightenment, if given enough time to put their ideas over. Pamphlets are read—never have any doubts on that point. When pamphlets are thrown away unread, be certain this is done because of prejudice or impatience with the piece of printed matter's viewpoint, rather than ignorance of what the pamphlet is about.

One of the greatest mind-awakening pamphlets in all history is Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*. This great booklet, which is still a "best seller" throughout the civilized world, slowly and steadily did the gigantic job of undermining the theological notions of the Fundamentalists. Literal believers in the Bible are still with us, but it is interesting to note that the audience has changed—where it included intelligent elements in Paine's time, we now find that only the mentally submerged accept theological orthodoxy. The credit belongs, in the main, to Paine's pamphlet, which has, for about a century and a half, driven its blows stubbornly and relentlessly, at the fortress of Biblical superstition. In the world of public questions, Paine's genius as a pamphleteer asserted itself in *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*, two booklets which helped keep the wavering revolutionists from deserting their cause, and ended with a morale that forced victory in the war for political liberation.

There are numerous other instances. Voltaire's most powerful weapons in the war on the Catholic Church's intolerance were simple, little pamphlets. They kept battering and hammering with the consequence that the Voltairean idea of civilized tolerance and freethought won numerous victories against the combined powers of entrenched exploiting classes and power-greedy priests.

Pamphlets are used for good or ill. We have numerous instances of pamphlets serving to open eyes and awaken minds to the beauties of sci-

ence, philosophy, Freethought, tolerance, freedom and the other ways of peace and progress. On the other hand, we can see endless uses made of pamphlets to befuddle and deceive the gullible, who, of course, are still in the majority. An example of reactionary, despicable use of the pamphlet will be found in the mendacious activities of that Fundamentalist preacher, Gerald B. Winrod, editor of *The Defender* and *The Revealer*, two publications devoted to disseminating ideas of prejudice, hatred and anti-Semitism.

This Winrod has circulated many copies of a pamphlet containing the frequently-exposed Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion. Intelligent people everywhere know that these Protocols are fakes, but Winrod keeps on circulating them with the unhappy result that millions of uneducated, uninformed people become obsessed with the hysterical fear that the Jews of the world are organized in an "international conspiracy" to destroy civilization and establish Communism! The arguments offered in support of the Protocols are pathetically inadequate, but the Winrods keep their pamphlets circulating, and the poison spreads.

Such misuse of pamphleteering can easily result in serious injustices to an innocent people, perhaps with thousands, yes scores of thousands, of deaths. Should such a catastrophe climax these efforts it would be simply one more demonstration of the enormous power of pamphlets, even when misused for purposes of racial hatred and persecution. However, the answer to such misuse of the pamphlet is not suppression or censorship but a counter-attack, with pamphlets, by those who have regard for truth, honor, decency and humanity. When justice is attacked by pamphlets, the answer should never be the injustice of counter-persecution, but a vigorous, hearty, thorough counter attack of pamphlets on the side of justice.

* * *

What are Joseph McCabe's political views?

McCabe's position is best described as that of an independent and critical Socialist. He has been described by one of the Labor or Socialist leaders in England as "a sympathetic outsider," but he supports them at the

polls and has never been associated with any other political party. In other words, he recognizes, and has repeatedly said for 20 years (expressly and at length in his *Tyranny of Shams*, 1916) that national ownership and organization of all means of production, distribution, and exchange is essential, but he greatly distrusts the ability of the present leaders in England to handle the task and resents the extent to which they rely on rhetoric and verbiage. He contemptuously rejects the fetish of private enterprise and individualism and the idea that Socialism means tyranny, but he feels that in view of the immense development of the middle and distributing and clerical classes, a new orientation is desirable. He would have it shown that a combination of national ownership with graduated (and even high) earned incomes would be to the advantage of nine-tenths of the community. He follows the Russian experiment closely and sympathetically, but does not see that they have yet solved the crucial problem of adjusting purchasing power automatically to production.

* * *

What's your opinion of: 1. Janet Gaynor. 2. George Raft. 3. Al Jolson. 4. Pat O'Brien. 5. Jack Oakie. 6. Gene Raymond. 7. Joan Crawford. 8. Kay Johnson.

You've picked out the ones I don't like. 1. Sentimental slop-jar. 2. Slicked-up rat. 3. An unmusical singer whose jokes remind me of wet firecrackers. 4. A loud-mouthed boor. 5. A happy moron. 6. A new, shiny clothing-store dummy. 7. Ordinary ham dressed up to look like caviar. 8. Audiences are sure she's a great actress because she's so homely.

* * *

Is Soviet Russia building the highest skyscraper in the world?

Plans are now being drawn, and work will begin soon, on what is to be known as the Palace of the Soviets, in Moscow. This vast structure will be 120 feet taller than the Empire State Building, which is 1,248 feet high. This proposed building will contain an amphitheater as large as the Yale Bowl, numerous theaters, meeting halls and a vast number of offices for the government's executives. The structure will be topped by a 200-foot statue of Lenin. The palace, when finished, will cover, at its base, six by four blocks of the

size that prevails in New York City.

The plans call for a construction principle along the lines of the Eiffel Tower instead of the straight up-and-down columns of New York's skyscrapers. By using the Eiffel principle, the weight of the building will be thrown around its sides instead of its center. The work of drawing the plans has been divided among Russian and American architects and engineers, the Americans, headed by Carlton Springer Proctor, drawing the foundations, and the Russians doing the superstructure. Mr. Proctor, who has done the amphitheater, reports that its diameter will be 480 feet, its dome occupying 28 stories of the building, without a single column to support the vast creation. Said Mr. Proctor, in a press interview:

"There the Russians have us. We could not charge enough to make such an investment pay. The same holds true for the revolving stages and breath-taking scenic effects of their theaters. We could not afford such production. To them there is economic justification for this building. They must overcome the inferiority complex of the Russian peasant. And they are doing it."

Mr. Proctor, who spent two months in Russia working on the Palace plans, returned recently to New York, where he told about Moscow's new subway, which he described as the most beautiful in the world. Each station is finished in the finest marble, indirectly lighted, with no two stations alike. He also reported that Moscow will have ready, late in 1935, 72 new school buildings, all of them architectural gems, none of them drawn to the same design. He said they compare with the finest to be found in the U. S. Many of them are air-conditioned. He added that 200 more such school buildings will be ready in 1936.

Mr. Proctor, who worked in Russia five years ago, commented on the general improvement in public morale. The Soviet Union's engineers, he said, were showing the greatest efficiency and discipline, which is in contrast with the deplorable conditions that prevailed among Russian engineers only five years ago.

* * *

Did Lenin ever comment on America's War for Independence and Civil War?

I've read quite a lot of Lenin's

writings, but only a portion of the bulk, for he was a voluminous writer of revolutionary journalism, letters, articles, editorials, pamphlets, leaflets and books. I can find only two references to the subjects you mention, both written in 1918. At the time when world imperialism was attacking the Soviet Union, Lenin wrote his well-known *Letter to American Workers*, in which he referred to our Revolutionary War, as follows:

"The history of modern civilized America opens with one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few among the large number of wars of conquest that were caused, like the present imperialist war, by squabbles among kings, landowners and capitalists over the division of seized lands and stolen profits. It was a war of the American people against English robbers who subjected America and held it in colonial slavery as these 'civilized' bloodsuckers are even now subjecting and holding in colonial slavery hundreds of millions of people in India, Egypt and in all corners of the world."

Later, Lenin referred to our Civil War, in a paragraph, which I quote:

"The American people has a revolutionary tradition adopted by the representatives of the American proletariat, who gave repeated expression to their full solidarity with us, the Bolsheviks. This tradition is the war of liberation against the English in the 18th and the Civil War in the 19th Century. If we are to take only into consideration the 'destruction' of some branches of industry and national economy, America in 1870 was in some respects behind 1860. But what a pedant, what an idiot is he who denies on such grounds the greatest, world-historic, progressive and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War of 1861-1865!"

In speaking admirably of our Revolutionary and Civil wars, Lenin was careful to add that the American working class had before it an even greater revolutionary task—the destruction of the system of capitalist wage slavery. He described this situation in the following words:

"America has become one of the foremost countries as regards the depth of the abyss which divides a handful of brazen billionaires who are wallowing in dirt and in luxury on the one hand, and millions of toilers who are always

on the verge of starvation. The American people, who gave the world an example of a revolutionary war against feudal subjection, now appears as a new, capitalist wage slave of a handful of billionaires."

It doesn't seem reasonable to assume that these Americans, with their traditions of revolutionary action against Britain and stern suppression of chattel slavery, will bow down for long and endure a system that permits a small minority to hold and exploit, the large-scale industries on which the masses depend for their living. There is every reason for optimistic assurance regarding America's future.

One has a right, after studying America's glorious history, to look to the day when the workers and farmers will come into their own, the masters of their economic, social, financial and industrial destiny. But, so long as the capitalists do not resort to violence and Fascism to maintain themselves in power, it is fairly safe to predict that the American people will bring about the great change, from Capitalism to the Cooperative Commonwealth, by remaining true to the traditions of democracy and constitutionalism, relying, as long as possible, on the power to bring about a system of socialized society through political and educational means, rather than by violence and direct action.

* * *

The Rev. Gerald B. Winrod, in his "Defender," writes that the court wasn't fair in the Berne, Switzerland, trial of the defendants tried for distributing the so-called Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion, because the anti-Semitic defense had 30 witnesses, of whom only one was permitted to testify. Please comment.

The most prominent and able witness for the supporters of the Protocol forgeries was Colonel Ulrich Fleischhauer, of Erfurt, Germany. He was on the stand for 23 hours. Surely that's enough time for one to use in presenting one's case. He was permitted every latitude, and he left the stand only when he had advised the court that he had nothing further to say. After a fair, impartial trial, the judge found against the distributors of the Protocol forgeries and fined them. Hate-mongers like the Rev. Winrod, who grow rich from disseminating hysterical outbursts against the Jews, have to say some-

thing about their defeat in court, so they pick on this point, but any fair-minded person will say that 23 steady, unbroken hours of "testimony" is certainly giving the defeated defense a fair break. This Rev. Winrod is one of the most contemptible, lying, hypocritical, hysterical hate-mongers in the land and is a disgrace to decent preachers, of whom there are some, judging by the way in which even Fundamentalist editors have protested against Winrod's shameless, lying anti-Jewish tactics.

* * *

Is the ant the strongest member of the insect family?

The palm goes to the beetle, though the ant isn't a slouch, by any means. There are authentic cases of a beetle carrying 850 times its own weight. If a 150-pound man did the same thing, he'd be carrying a load weighing 127,500 pounds. Ants have been seen to carry 60 times their own weight.

* * *

A lecturer, Clarence P. Oakes, is going the rounds of Kansas and nearby Rotary clubs delivering speeches which present a dark picture of Soviet life. Please comment.

The gentleman is the owner of an Independence, Kansas, print shop, who spent some time in the Soviet Union and now is burning up the Bible Belt with his sensational pictures of Russian "savagery," "cruelty," and the other highlights of the Hearst type of propaganda. I heard this intellectual prostitute's "lecture" in the main assembly hall of Pittsburg Teachers College, where he was given a large audience at which to squirt his distortions, lies and malicious misrepresentations. It was physically painful to have to sit through his talk, and how I did it, on that hot night of July 16, is a puzzle to this patient martyr.

The scene was typical of American intolerance and false propaganda at its worst. The whole obscene spectacle was pulled off with the dignity of a gangster's funeral. On the surface one got the impression that here was an educational institution opening its doors to the truth on a controversial question, but a peek below the surface betrayed a disgusting picture of dishonesty and viciousness.

The fat-headed president of the college, Mr. Brandenburg, was there, and he acted as though he were do-

ing culture and free inquiry a personal and direct service. This typical lick-spittle of cheap politicians and Rotarian babbitts was there to beam on the second lecture on Russia, the first one having been delivered by that equally corrupt liar, Carveth Wells, another rogue who is cashing in on the fear that the victims of American Capitalism might look to Russia for a few ideas on handling the depression. This Brandenburg holds his job because he knows how to toady to the political shysters, the economic powers and the orthodox, conventional elements of the community. Academic freedom is foreign to his nature, and the standing of his large educational rolling mill is about on a par with a high school in the wilds of Alabama. Nothing could embarrass this pompous ass more than meeting a genuine scholar, and if this pious ignoramus did he'd fire him on sight as an enemy of virtue and righteousness.

The meeting was opened by Mr. G. A. Winters, president of the local Rotary Club and manager of the local daily newspapers. Mr. Winters was careful to explain that the speaker would describe what he saw, which would most likely disagree with what others had seen. What he really should have said was that his club had invited this quack because it was known in advance that he would tell of things no decent, honorable student would think of presenting to a presumably intelligent audience. After the awful speech, I asked Mr. Winters, whom I have known for many years, if he would arrange the facilities of the press, Rotary club and college auditorium for a capable speaker who would give the Kansas public an honest, accurate picture of what the Russians are achieving, to which the gentleman haughtily replied: "I'm not in the business of arranging lectures." This brilliant retort caused my complete collapse, after which I retired in confusion.

For more than an hour, Mr. Oakes went through the disgusting motions of depicting the Soviet Union as a land inhabited by brutes and murderers; from 4,000,000 to 6,000,000 had starved to death in one year; from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 had died the same way another year; there were no cats or dogs to be seen, because

the people had eaten them; even rats were eaten; marriages are performed without religious ceremonies; divorces are obtained easily; there is mixed nude bathing down at the Black Sea; toilet paper is forbidden because the wood pulp is needed for Communist propaganda; booted men and snoring women sleep on open shelves in railway cars without privacy; butter costs \$36 per pound; eggs cost 65c each; prostitution has been solved by making all women sexually available to every male; and so on, in a dull, monotonous voice, with halting, nervous gestures. The only thing he omitted was cannibalism.

He was particularly outraged because, he said, these 166,000,000 people didn't use toilet paper. That was one of the great moments of his masterly address. Just how he got behind the scenes for a check-up on so intimate a ritual he didn't explain, but he urged this lack of toilet paper as so general and acute as to lead this tortured listener to conclude that Russians must use their sleeves.

After he finished, the chairman hurriedly closed the meeting, as though he feared a pause might give some persons the opportunity they sought to ask some questions on these controversial issues. I later walked up to the platform to greet the speaker, having met him several times during the past few years. I then did a very foolish thing, something I usually avoid like poison. I let myself get into a verbal argument with this lying swine. I greeted him with: "Allow me to congratulate you on having delivered the worst speech I've ever had to listen to." I should not have done this thing, because it was a waste of emotion. I always try to keep away from personal arguments, preferring to make my comments in print. But once het up I simply can't be polite to skunky people.

It wasn't that the speaker had attacked Russia. I have, during many years of journalism, written numerous pieces in criticism of Soviet policies, particularly in the political field, democracy, international affairs and the like, but I have always been careful to base my criticism on facts and verifiable evidence. No, it wasn't his critical attitude that enraged me; it

was his obvious lying, dishonesty and smirking self-righteousness. I then proceeded to give this intellectual louse a tongue-lashing that sent the temperature up another 20 degrees. What was said was unimportant. I was too mad to plan an orderly discussion of his filthy lies. And that's the end of that.

It's good business for this type of mental pimp to go into the sticks and tickle the stomachs of Rotarians with reports of starvation in Russia. Fresh from a big meal, it cheers them up to hear that in another country "from 4,000,000 to 6,000,000 people starved to death in a single year." I mentioned to Oakes that it was mighty strange that people could starve by the millions and still the birth rate goes steadily upward, with a large increase in population each year. His reply was the population was increasing because the Russians were all free-lovers—as though free-lovers didn't need to eat in order to reproduce and raise families! Such tripe goes over big in a cultural center that is headed by a "prexy" who is just one step from illiteracy.

* * *

Is there any evidence that the Russian Communists are realizing their tremendous mistake in warring against the ideal of democracy?

For perhaps a year, there have been vague hints that the leaders of the Soviet Union were beginning to learn that opposition to democracy helps establish Fascism, but now there is real proof that the old thesis is being junked and that the Communists are at last aware of the great harm they have done to the international working class. According to an editorial in *Pravda*, official organ of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, the position was taken (July 25, 1935) that a reversal of doctrine was necessary in the face of what happened in Germany, where the Communists prepared the way for Fascism by their persistent, stupid fights on the principles of democracy as fixed in the German republic's constitution. The Communists seem at last to understand that it was wrong for their extreme Left followers to attack the Social Democrats (Socialists) because of their adherence to democratic political ideas and theories, for history shows

that this opposition made it impossible for the democratic government to function, with the result that Hitler's Fascists rushed in, stole power, destroyed the constitution, the Republic and all the rights granted by a liberal, democratic administration of affairs. Instead of helping the working class, by this war on democracy, the Communists set back the clock of progress by at least a century.

This change of heart is a little belated. It comes after years of unprecedented attacks on Socialists, because they persisted in the position that it was to labor's advantage to help preserve democratic institutions, free speech, free press, and the other rights that are guaranteed under a constitutional democracy. Instead of helping preserve free institutions, the Communists in all countries, including Germany and the United States, conducted a vicious campaign of slander against the Socialists, calling them "Social Fascists." The whole business was unintelligent, unhistorical and unrealistic, but at least they are admitting their errors, so little is to be gained by rejecting such support, however late it may be.

But the Socialists are by no means stunned into silence by this over-due conversion to democracy on the part of the Communists. They are going to ask some very embarrassing questions, which will most assuredly enrage the Communists, who will reply that the Socialists are worse than "Social Fascists"—they are counter-revolutionists, etc., but the argument will persist month after month until the Communists begin to realize that abusing Socialists is no great achievement if that abuse results in dissension and the weakening of labor through the loss of democratic, liberal rights. Here's what the Socialists are going to keep pounding at: *Why, Mr. Stalin and Co., don't you follow your recent conversion to democracy by introducing some of it into Russia, restoring the rights of free criticism, free speech, free press, free assembly, and the legal right to opposition?* Yes, that also will be greeted with cries of counter-revolution, but the Socialists will remember how the support of democracy brought scorn and abuse from the Communists, who were so sure they could eliminate

democracy and still further the cause of labor.

The Russian Communists are now, despite *Pravda's* conversion to democracy, straddling with the dexterity of the daring young man-on-the-flying trapeze. At home they support the idea of dictatorship; abroad they support the idea of democracy. The thing still smells bad.

* * *

The commander of the Prussian police, in a statement (July 20, 1935) justifying the Berlin anti-Jewish riots, said that the Jews are criminals in greater proportion than other people. Please comment.

I have already shown that Germany's Jewish population, which is only one percent of the total, is more law-abiding than is generally found in that country, Jewish prisoners numbering only about one-fifth of one percent of the total prison population. To bring the argument closer home, and with facts from authentic sources, let us see what the situation is in New York State, where the greatest concentration of Jews will be found. New York State, in 1927, had 1,903,890 Jews, or 16.67 percent of the total. At the same time, Sing Sing had a convict population of 1,581, of whom only 177 were Jews, or a little more than 11 percent. The facts, both in Germany and the United States, prove definitely that while there are Jewish criminals they constitute a smaller percentage, in proportion to population, than is found in other racial groups.

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In newspapers and magazines everywhere, even in our own American *Free-man*, I have read articles and news items about the two "young and beautiful" women who were beheaded at Hitler's command. In all fairness and justice, I ask you, would the crime have been any less had the women been ugly and old, or middle-aged and plain?

One must be something of an expert in abnormal psychology to even begin to understand the incident of the beheading of two "young and beautiful" women for being alleged spies (in peace times), a degree of punishment unheard of in any civilized country. Hitler, who hates women, who has destroyed the human rights women won after more than a century of struggle, and who has never been known to have any sexual

experience with women, asserted his savage, sadist, homosexual nature when he found these two "young and beautiful" women in his power. It would take a Freud, Havelock Ellis and Bertrand Russell to explain the subnormal nature that drove the mad homosexual, thirsting for human blood, to behead them. They could also show why his nature, or rather his twisted, perverted nature, might have led him to refrain from giving the same terrible treatment to ugly, old, or plain women. The peculiar thing about this incident was that they were savagely murdered BECAUSE they were young and beautiful. I know this sounds strange to my readers of normal impulses, and many of them will never be able to grasp the bewilderingly confused array of unfamiliar forms of unnatural behavior.

* * *

What is the meaning of Mussolini's decision to withdraw his gold from its support of the lira?

Mussolini had gold holdings amounting to about \$500,000,000, which were used to cover his paper money. It was claimed that his gold served to cover this money to the extent of 40 percent, but Wall Street bankers, known to be severe, critical realists in all matters relating to money, have long quietly pooh-poohed such a claim, though they admitted it was almost impossible to know what the coverage actually was, and that even Mussolini himself most likely didn't know. However, the gold was there.

Step by step, Mussolini went about the anti-social work of gutting Italy's finances, business, industry, agriculture, education, political structure, culture, etc. He steadily confiscated every ounce of wealth he could put his hands on. Cash balances of insurance companies were stolen, and in their place Mussolini put internal bonds of no known intrinsic value. All foreign holdings in Italy were ordered surrendered, which meant that an Italian citizen who owned, let us say, 100 shares of United States Steel was compelled to sell that block in the foreign markets and turn the proceeds over to Mussolini, for which he received practically worthless lira or debentures. Meanwhile, the gold was there.

All these measures were taken—including a hike in the cost of living, cuts in wages, abnormal and outrageous taxes—because Mussolini's economy, like Hitler's, couldn't be made to work. The great Fascist superman could strut before the newsreel cameras and look like a new edition of Julius Caesar, but meanwhile the quiet, relentless laws of economics went on, grinding his grandiose schemes to dust. Seeing the collapse of Italy's economic life and the certain bankruptcy of his government, Mussolini decided, many months ago, on a grand, glorious, military display—this time against poor Ethiopia, in distant East Africa.

It looked easy on paper, and the new Caesar thought he would merely have to rattle his saber to get the Emperor Haile Selassie to surrender his large country, with a territory one and a half times the size of Texas. Such an adventure would serve to take the minds of Italians off the problems of high living costs, unemployment, and governmental bankruptcy.

But, the new Caesar had failed to appreciate the fact that the Ethiopians were a proud, ancient people with a long history and tradition of independence, and that they would never surrender without a last-ditch struggle. So, the new Caesar had to back up his threats with action, and then began the moving of troops and supplies to his colonies abutting Ethiopia. Something like 30 ships were kept, ferry style, going to and from East Africa, so that he could eventually deposit from 250,000 to 300,000 men in that section, plus vast stores of munitions and supplies that soon cost more than \$100,000,000.

And still the Emperor refused to budge. Finally, in mid-July, the Emperor delivered a dramatic speech to the Ethiopians, telling them he would lead his own men to battle, and, if necessary, die with them in resisting the invaders. That was bad news for Mussolini. He had expected to see his gigantic maneuvers result in abject surrender.

So, on July 22, 1935, Mussolini reached for his last stack of chips. His store of \$500,000,000 in gold was removed from support of the lira. The

gold was now free to ship to foreign countries, where it could be used to buy war supplies for the proposed Ethiopian campaign, because he knew that without actual gold he couldn't get a dollar's worth of goods. His credit isn't good for a single shipload of munitions, let alone enough to finance what will prove to be a costly, ruinous war.

When that gold is gone (and it will be, before long) Mussolini will be down to bottom of the abyss. He will be through. And even if he were to defeat Ethiopia (a gigantic assumption) he could never even hope to regain from the conquered country what his adventure cost him. Thus, the situation stands like this: a defeat in Ethiopia will mean mutiny at the front and revolution at home; a victory in Ethiopia will mean much flag-waving and shouting, but the cost will be so great that the Italian government will collapse in bankruptcy.

Even as he waits, Mussolini is already tasting the bitter fruits of folly. Even before a single battle has been fought, Mussolini is burying from 10 to 20 men each day, because they can't stand the terrific heat of 120 in the shade. About 5,000 Italians, stricken with tropical diseases, have already been shipped back to Italy. More will follow, for conditions facing his poor slaves are inhuman. There is no adequate water supply, so that his great army is rationed only two pints of water each day (per man) for drinking and all other purposes. Imagine what will happen when they march into the Ethiopian furnace! But Mussolini, the new Caesar, doesn't know what to do. The Ethiopians refuse to prostrate themselves before his august presence. They are preparing to resist. And Mussolini, desperate, leaves his paper money high and dry (its effect will be grave) and throws his gold supply into the Fascist rat-hole. Before this thing ends, Mussolini himself will scurry down some convenient rat-hole.

P. S. As further proof of Mussolini's desperate financial and economic position, serious reports have broken through the Italian censorship to the effect that on July 22, 1935, the Istituto Italiano di Credito Marittimo, the fourth largest bank in Italy, had gone

bankrupt. This great institution had 105 branch banks, all of which closed their doors, precipitating a major crisis. Others are expected to follow. Mussolini's censors (in charge of his son-in-law) vainly tried to give the impression that this bank's assets are intact, having been taken over by the three larger institutions, but this is dismissed by the well-informed as the shakiest kind of propaganda. It would be an easy matter for the bosses in Fascist finance to take over the Credito Marittimo's assets, put them in other hands at inflated valuations and then calmly claim that all is well. But international financiers are not fooled by such tactics. A mere balancing by marking up the assets would make it possible for the grand total of all the banks to remain the same. The poor depositors find themselves holding the sack, for the other banks in Italy have not agreed to assume the failed bank's obligations to its depositors.

* * *

When Pirandello landed in New York City, on July 20, 1935, he issued a statement defending Mussolini's proposed conquest of Ethiopia on the score that Italy is overcrowded and must have an African outlet for its excess population. Please comment.

Luigi Pirandello has written good plays and stories, but in international affairs he is quite naive. He ought to be able to use his genius for fanciful concoctions superior to that hoary lie about Mussolini needing Ethiopia for his excess Italian population. The facts, and I always prefer to deal in facts when I get into an argument, will show how weak this position is, and in answering Pirandello I am answering Mussolini and his whole propaganda office, for the Italian dramatist is only repeating the official version of Mussolini's projected adventure in East Africa.

Before dealing with the question of Italian need of colonial expansion, which I will prove to be without basis, let me insert at this time the additional fact that Italians haven't even taken advantage to the full of their right, under Washington's quota law, to send at least some of their surplus sons to this land of ours.

Italy, with 42,000,000 population, certainly is crowded, but let's see what it has in Africa, now being held by the military might of the great Fascist gangster. A review of such holdings will prove to the hilt

that Mussolini has far more land than he can develop now, that Italians simply refuse to go to these vast colonies, and that they possess natural resources that are still untapped. In other words, the Ethiopian situation is nothing more than a military game for the great madman in Rome, who has built an enormous army and now finds it necessary to give them something to fight about, in order to add to his own "heroism" and international "importance."

There are four large Italian holdings in Africa today, as follows:

1. Eritrea, with an area of 45,435 square miles, and a population of 621,776, of whom only a mere 3,650 are Italian and other European nationals. This country is almost half the size of Italy. Where Italy has a population of 344 to the square mile, Eritrea has only a little over 13 persons per square mile. This colony, which has a splendid outlet to the sea, has gold mines, only a few of which are mined, and petroleum, with no development. The country is favorable to cotton, about which hardly anything has been done. Here are three immediate articles Mussolini can use—gold, cotton and oil, with exploitation at just about zero.

2. Italian Somaliland, with an area of 190,000 square miles, and a population of only 1,010,815, of which merely 1,658 are from Europe. Here we find less than six persons to the square mile, as against 344 in Italy. Here's plenty of room for Mussolini's heavy breeders, but nothing is being done. The money he is wasting on the Ethiopian campaign (far more than \$100,000,000 to date, without actual hostilities having begun) could have done a great deal to develop Somaliland's agriculture and animal husbandry. Incidentally, this Italian colony is the source of half the world's supply of incense, 1,000 metric tons having been exported in 1928-29, the last year for which there is a report available. Somaliland has a magnificent coast line, 1,100 miles long, facing the Indian Ocean. Surely here's enough room and opportunity for expansion, either in population or industrial production, to satisfy both Mussolini and Pirandello.

3. Tripolitania, with an area of

350,000 square miles (just about the same size as Ethiopia) and a population of only 552,663, of which only 29,749 are Europeans. This means, believe it or not, that there are less than two persons per square mile. The country, barren in spots, is nevertheless rich in palm orchards, olive groves, lemon, almond and fig trees, and vineyards. Small grains can be raised successfully. Pasture land is plentiful. Here is a colony that could take care of Pirandello and Mussolini and all the other patriotic Italians who say they must have more elbow-room. So why don't they go down there and put in some work developing that vast territory? The answer is: There's no glory there. Mussolini finds it necessary to put on a big military parade, and it's better for his purpose to pick on the Ethiopians, who are certainly going to fight back, and, if one layman's opinion is worth anything, may whip Mussolini and throw his armies into the Red Sea.

4. Cyrenaica, with an area of 290,000 square miles (not much smaller than Ethiopia), with an estimated population of only 165,000, of which only 19,000 are Europeans. This means less than one person per square mile, as against Italy's 344. This colony enjoys about the same conditions that I outlined above for Tripolitania.

The above review of four great African colonies proves that Mussolini has hardly moved a finger to "civilize" what he already has. The facts seem to indicate that Pirandello, parroting the Italian professional propagandists, hasn't a good case to support the claim that Italy must have more room for its surplus population and more land to develop along lines of agriculture, husbandry, mining, oil drilling, and the like. Such a factual review of the situation makes one wonder just how sane Mussolini really is. I often feel convinced that the man is crazy, and the facts just reported help to substantiate such an impression.

* * *

I have seen a newspaper report which claims the Soviet-U. S. trade pact, which will bring us \$30,000,000 worth of business during the next year, will mean only the purchase of individual ma-

chines, rather than quantities of machinery, which will be used as models for purposes of reproduction. Is this true?

The report you refer to, which was written by Harold Denny and was printed in *The New York Times*, on July 15, 1935, gives the impression that the Soviet Union is a patent stealer, which is unfair and untrue. While the Soviet Union has no patent treaty with the U. S. A., the Russians follow their own Patent Law of 1931, which provides for payment of royalties or purchase of licenses from foreign patent holders. Patent piracy is not practiced. If the holder of an American patent will register his machine or device with the Soviet patent office within a year after the U. S. Patent Office issues its patent, the U. S. S. R. will respect the owner's equity and pay for its use, should the machine be needed. Hundreds of American patents are on file in Moscow and the Russians have paid millions of dollars to American patent holders in royalties and licenses. The Soviet Union has strict regard for the property rights of foreign patent owners.

* * *

Your comment on Upton Sinclair and Socialism surprised me. After thinking it over, I can see there is some ground for it, but don't think you are justified in calling him an anti-Socialist.

I think it is correct, on the basis of Sinclair's own words, to call him an anti-Socialist. His program, as now outlined, would put the unemployed to work producing "for use," which amounts to nothing more than a glorified barter movement. As for the great industries, utilities and other machines of production, they are to remain the private property of the capitalists. This means he believes in the perpetuation of Capitalism. Anyone who supports Capitalism is an anti-Socialist.

* * *

You speak of Birkhead simply as L. M. What has happened to the Reverend that used to be prefixed to the name? Has his church movement collapsed? Or has it changed its name to the Liberal Forum?

Birkhead is still connected with the Unitarian Church, so technically he is a preacher and should be called "The Rev. L. M. Birkhead," or is it "His Holiness"? His Kansas City

organization is called The Liberal Forum, but is still located in All Soul's Unitarian Church, where L. M. delivers weekly "sermons" that shake the orthodox down to their petrified roots. Birkhead is a complete Rationalist, from top to bottom. Calling him The Reverend L. M. Birkhead always makes me feel screwy; it just doesn't seem to go down the old wind-pipe. Birkhead is now in Europe, where he is gathering material for a book which we should all look forward to, for there's no doubt that he's going to give us a new insight into conditions in Fascist Germany, the Soviet Union and Social Democratic Sweden. He certainly landed in Germany at exactly the right time to gather his material. He had hardly settled down for his month's stay in Germany when the anti-Jewish pogroms and other forms of persecution broke out. As he is on the scene, we will, before long, get the truth about these terrible happenings, as seen through the eyes of an intellectual, liberal-minded, democratic Socialist. His book, which he will write as he goes around Europe, instead of waiting until he returns to Kansas City, will be known under the title of "A First-Hand Report on Democracy, Fascism and Communism," and sub-titled, "1935 Conditions, as Seen by a Liberal, in Germany, Russia and Sweden." Birkhead is carrying credentials as one of my editorial representatives, which leads me to wonder what'll happen to him should he bump into Herr Hitler and show that "male" floozy the pieces I've written describing the big Nazi as a tra-la-la. Poor Birkhead's liable to land in a concentration camp, or at any rate get kicked out of the country. I'm just hoping that Hitler's henchmen won't catch up with him—at least until he gets the editorial material he's digging up.

* * *

In an interview, published in *The Jewish Transcript*, Seattle, Wash., the famous radio comedian, Ben Bernie (the Old Maestro), advises his fellow Jews to "be planissimo." Please comment.

Yowsah, that's what the Jews of Germany did to perfection, and look what happened to them. All during the preliminary years of Hitler's anti-Semitic propaganda of hate and mal-

ice, the German Jews took a position of calm, dignified silence. They refused to believe that Hitler's gangsters were worth answering. Again I say: look what it got them.

Instead of acting like shrinking violets, the Jews should counter their crass and brazen enemies with all honest methods at their command. The way to meet this tremendous problem of racial chauvinism is not by taking it on the chin but by throwing their collective hats into the ring and squaring themselves for intelligent, orderly action. They should fight with every conceivable weapon—the boycott, the press, letters, speeches, pamphlets, circulars, true propaganda.

This struggle for humanitarianism should not be confined only to the defense of Jews but to the protection of all persecuted minorities. They shouldn't rant or yell hysterically, of course, but they should talk, in clear, unmistakable accents, whether the fight be for the victims of lynch law in the deep South or the proposed rape of Ethiopia, the beheading of Communists in Germany or the beating up of strike pickets in an American mill town.

Wherever liberty and decency are outraged, there the Jews should assert themselves. It is their only hope in the face of the outrageous hate-propaganda of contemptible sewer-rats like the Rev. Winrod, of *The Revealer* and *The Defender*, two publications that are striving to do for America what Julius Streicher has done for poor, unhappy Germany. Meet a Winrod's lies, malice, distortion and libels with silence and you practically tell him he's right. He takes the cue and makes his attacks even more vicious, his slanders even more corrupt.

This doesn't mean that Jews should present themselves as "superior persons," as the "chosen people." That nonsense is as bad as the worst forms of anti-Semitism. There are bad Jews and good Jews; Einsteins and Babbitts; philosophers and fools; musicians and scoundrels; artists and swindlers; geniuses and crooks. They have no monopoly on virtue.

To try to give the impression that one is "better" than the run of hu-

manity because he happens to be a Jew means to invite scorn and criticism. It is much more intelligent to take a sane, quiet position of modesty. But this should never be taken to mean that unfair attacks will not be resented, that enemies will not be rebuked, and that attempts at discrimination will not be fought to the last ditch. Yes, by all means "pianissimo" in the matter of the bunk about the "chosen people," but "fortissimo" regarding the human rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

* * *

What do you think of the increasing effort on the part of the Russian government to provide what seems like rather trivial amusements for its large urban populations? Is this an effort to forestall a growing discontent with a national policy which precludes an extension of democratic privileges?

You probably refer to the great carnival recently held in Moscow, at which tens of thousands were encouraged to come masked, in bright costumes, for a spell of fun and nonsense. Not a solemn thought was permitted, and a committee was in charge at the entrances to see that all who were soberly dressed were denied admittance. One man came in a black-and-white costume that suggested a skeleton, but he was sent home to get something a little brighter and more in fitting with the festive occasion. Such expressions of the carnival spirit are good tonics for any community and should be encouraged. It is bad for a people's mental health to be denied an opportunity to express itself in happy, care-free nonsense. I remember as a boy, in Philadelphia, how I'd look forward to each New Year's Day parade of the famous Mummers Clubs that marched up Broad Street to that amazingly eccentric City Hall building, where prizes were given to the handsomest, the most ridiculous and the most comical outfits. There were gorgeous "capas" that were a block long, carried by as many as 200 men—a thrilling, eye-smacking thing of color, tinsel and intricate design that struck little me as a direct visitor from fairyland. Many of the floats expressed political satire that seemed to get a laugh and make a point—at least it did that for one small boy.

And always, at the tail of the parade, came a famous local character—a round, middle-aged Dr. Somebody, whom everybody seemed to know—carrying his omnipresent sign: “Repeal the Blue Laws!” The thing was a joy, and I’m sure it helped Philadelphians to survive the blue Sundays and the other lugubrious holidays that suppressed happiness and encouraged piety. A community that neglects exciting nonsense and recreational foolishness invites trouble and the Russians, like the rest of the world, realize this simple fact in mass psychology. Five-year plans are all right, if they’re broken up with a sufficient number of five-hour sprees.

* * *

Do Russian soldiers take an oath of allegiance? If so, how is it worded?

The Red Oath of allegiance follows:

“I, the son of the toiling people, citizen of the Soviet Union, take upon me the calling of a fighter of the Workmen’s and Peasants’ Red Army. Before the working classes of the Soviet Union and of the whole world, I pledge myself honorably to fulfill this calling, conscientiously to learn the art of war. I pledge myself, at the first call of the Workmen’s and Peasants’ Government, to come to the defense of the Soviet Union against all attacks from its enemies and, in the struggle for the Soviet Union, the cause of Socialism and the brotherhood of peoples, to spare no effort nor even my own life.”

Every man in Russia’s standing army of 950,000 men must take the above pledge. And taking that pledge is no empty gesture with those men. They mean every word of it. Should they be called on to defend their soil against either Germany or Japan, or both, they will fight to the last man, if necessary. While its standing army is almost 1,000,000 men, its war strength, even now, is estimated at 8,000,000 men. Its army budget for the present year (1935) is, in our money, about \$6,000,000,000. Such figures show that Russia means business when it sets about the gigantic task of defending its border on two fronts that are recognized everywhere as being possible scenes of warfare at any hour in the near future.

The Soviet Union, with its 166-

000,000 population, has a tremendous man-power to draw on. Each year, 1,200,000 men enter their majority. As Russia has compulsory and universal military service, it selects what is needed from these 1,200,000 men, omitting those who come from unreliable, non-proletarian sources. It is estimated that something like 450,000 men are accepted from this man-supply yearly, which indicates clearly that the Russian military power will grow stronger from year to year. Given another few years of peace, the Soviet Union will be strong enough to resist the combined assaults of all its imperialistic enemies, particularly Germany and Japan.

* * *

L. M. Birkhead, of the Liberal Forum, Kansas City, Mo., who is in Germany gathering material for a book, gave the Associated Press, on July 27, 1935, a signed statement in which he charged that the Rev. Gerald B. Winrod, editor of *The Revealer* and *The Defender*, is an anti-Semitic agent of Adolf Hitler and Julius Streicher, the notorious Jew-hater and editor of *The Stormer*. Birkhead obtained this information from Streicher’s headquarters, where he also learned that the Rev. Winrod gets most of his editorial “material” from this bigoted, sadistic, untrustworthy source. Birkhead added:

“The terror which has been practiced against German Jews should be carried throughout the world, Streicher insists. Moreover, evidence indicates Streicher is providing the anti-Semites of other countries with German anti-Jewish technique.”

The myth of the internationalism of Jewish finance, business and politics has been exposed frequently, but here is indisputable evidence that the internationalism of anti-Semitism is a menacing reality.

* * *

William Plampin, secretary of the Socialist Party of Texas, writes to correct my statement that he attacked medical science because he was a defender of the patent medicine practices of the great “Dr.” Fred D. Warren, promoter of an eczema and psoriasis “cure” that has been exposed in a special bulletin of the Federal Trade Commission. He states that he heartily agrees with my opinion of “Dr.” Warren and that he turns his barrages on him as much

as I do. My defense is that my statement was a generalization, not a report of any particular individual's opinion. If Mr. Plampin is an exception, I'm more than glad to give publicity to the fact.

* * *

Your remark that Britain could stop Mussolini's adventuring in East Africa by closing the Suez Canal to his troop and supply ships leads me to ask how such a thing is possible in view of the fact that the Suez belongs to a French company?

I didn't go into the historical facts of the Suez, because the nature of the question in the September, 1935, issue didn't require such treatment, but your question does, so I'll endeavor to go into a few of the important facts dealing with the canal.

Of course, the canal was built by De Lesseps, with French and Egyptian capital, under the charter of a French company, which owned the canal when it was finished and opened for traffic in 1869 at a cost of 432,-807,882 francs, after 10 years of labor. The canal is 90 miles long, of which about one-third consists of lakes put there by nature. The canal connects the Mediterranean and Red Sea, thus shortening the trip from Europe to India by something like 4,000 miles. Before, it was necessary to make the trip clear around Africa.

To give one an idea of the growing importance of the Suez Canal, let's consider the tonnage that passes through it yearly. In 1870, a mere 435,911 tons of shipping went through the canal; in 1912, no less than 20,-275,120 tons; in 1929, the all-time high of 33,466,014 tons. These tonnage figures are net.

As for the financial side, the canal, though in financial distress during the first few years, has been an enormously successful business enterprise, missing few dividends in its history. During 1927, receipts amounted to 204,000,000 francs, as against 117,000,000 francs in 1914, and 16,000,000 francs in 1872. The company was capitalized for 400,000 shares when the canal was finished, but in 1924 the number of shares was increased to 800,000, without any change in the company's capitalization. The shares have enjoyed these remarkable prices: 500 francs in 1858; 208 francs in 1871 (an all-

time low); 6,107 francs in 1912. Figures show that the opening of the Panama Canal has had no marked effect on the business enjoyed by the Suez.

We now come to the political phase of the Suez question. The French company that built the canal was known as the Universal Company of the Maritime Suez Canal. Today it is called the Suez Canal Company. It carried to reality a dream that goes back as far as Rameses II, namely, the connection of the Red Sea with the Nile delta. In 1798, the Frenchman Lepere, under the direction of Napoleon, made a survey and reported, erroneously, that the canal was an engineering impossibility because the Mediterranean's level was 30 feet below that of the Red Sea. It was De Lesseps, in the 19th Century, who discovered the error and thereby was able to impart new life to the old dream of giving man the shortest possible and most convenient journey from Europe to India.

England fought the plan from the very start. Britain was satisfied with the longer journey around the Cape to its eastern empire, and feared that the canal might endanger its position in southern Asia. It did everything possible to put obstacles in De Lesseps' way, from "proving" that the canal was an engineering impossibility, that it would take so much money to solve mechanical problems that the canal could never pay its way, that the French would enslave Egypt, and, finally, that De Lesseps was a dishonest person whose aim was to grow rich through what we, in a less polite age, call graft.

But the money was raised—in France and Egypt—and the canal was built, after almost inconceivable difficulties and discouragements, ranging from international complications to shortage of money. Thus do we see that the undertaking was entirely French, except for the large minority interest taken by the Khedive of Egypt.

It was not until Disraeli became Britain's prime minister that something was done in London about the Suez question. The spendthrift Khedive Ismail, Disraeli learned, was in sore need of money, so he turned

to his friend, the banker Baron Rothschild (the movie version here is correct), and prevailed on him to make a loan of 3,976,580 pounds, for which sum the Khedive was willing to sell Britain his holdings of 176,602 shares out of a total of 400,000. To shouts of approval at home, and the muttering of the French who had been outsmarted by the wily Disraeli, England was in the canal with both feet. It made no difference then, nor now, where the company had its headquarters, whether in France or Timbuctoo. Britain was in, and that was the important thing. The company is still French, but it is impossible to learn today whether the actual majority of stock is English. The assumption is, of course, that London has a controlling interest, but this is mere conjecture, there being no official figures on the subject.

After buying the shares, England went ahead to consolidate its position in Egypt, in view of the fact that where the canal had been Franco-Egyptian it now was Franco-British. An uprising in Egypt gave Downing Street the pretext it was looking for, the results being a large troop movement of the British to Egypt, the defeat of the elements in rebellion, and the establishment of a protectorate over Egypt, which meant that British soldiers, and they alone, would be stationed at or near the canal. From then on, French company or no French company, the British have been the real bosses of the canal, and that's why I said that it would be possible for Britain to forbid Mussolini the use of the canal, should it wish to take that stand, as it did against Spain during the Spanish-American War. It certainly would make Mussolini mad, but such a step would not, of necessity, mean war. On the other hand, it is claimed that Mussolini could retaliate by closing the Red Sea at its opening, where it comes almost to a point at Eritrea, in East Africa, something like a thousand miles from the canal. But to cut off British shipping at that point, which undoubtedly could be done because Mussolini has the men, munitions and rations to be able to fight at that place, would undoubtedly result in war between England

and Italy and that would be suicidal on Mussolini's part, considering what the British navy could do to the unprotected Italian coast on the Mediterranean.

Yes, France has the headquarters of the Suez company; but it's England that has a garrison of British troops at the canal, and that's what counts among imperialists. Willy, old Disraeli pulled another fast one there.

* * *

I've just finished reading fascinating reports about the Soviet-U. S. trade agreement which guarantees purchases in this country amounting to \$30,000,000. How does a country like the Soviet Union go about buying goods, when it has no private corporations or Capitalists?

The average person, living in a capitalistic country, knows that when General Motors, or U. S. Steel or Ford would buy or sell in a foreign country, they send their agents to hunt up the business. But he is puzzled over the manner in which a country that has a state monopoly of business, manufacture, exports, and imports, can go about the task of doing business with the big industrialists of foreign lands. The method is comparatively simple, efficient and sensible, as the facts will show.

The Soviet Union's main industries are organized into what are known as "trusts," all of them, of course, belonging to the state. There's a textile trust, gold mining trust, shipping trust, telegraph trust, motor car trust, chain store trust, steel production trust, oil trust, and so on down the line. Each trust buys or sells for cash, in Russian money, of course, when doing business in the home market. By this method each department of production and distribution can be checked for gains or losses.

Let us say, by way of example, that the textile trust is in need of a million bales of raw cotton, in order to meet the demands of domestic consumers. But it has only 500,000 bales in sight. So it applies to the Commissar for Foreign Trade for a license to import 500,000 bales, from the U. S., let's say. If the license is granted, the order is forwarded to New York City, where, at 261 Fifth

Avenue, are the numerous offices, occupying three floors, of the Amtorg Trading Corporation. Amtorg is a combination word, "Am" meaning America, and "torg" meaning trade.

This corporation was chartered by the state of New York, like any capitalistic organization, but the stock belongs entirely to the Soviet government. Its job is to buy or sell anything from a pound of caviar to a thousand locomotives.

Returning to the textile trust's order, Amtorg issues a statement to the prospective sellers of the needed article, requesting bids, terms, etc. In the case of the 500,000 bales of raw cotton, the best sources in the country, from New York City to New Orleans, are contacted. When the deal is closed, Amtorg pays the bill, in cash, if that's the agreement with the sellers, drawing a check on one of the largest banks in New York. For doing this, Amtorg receives a commission from the textile trust in Russia, not from the sellers.

Meanwhile, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, who gave the textile trust its license to buy 500,000 bales of raw cotton, accepts a sufficient number of Russian roubles from the trust's treasury, which he places into that of his own department. Then he does one of a number of things. He can turn those roubles into gold, by drawing on the supplies of the gold mining trust, paying that department in paper roubles. The gold is then shipped to Amtorg. Or, the state bank may have a sufficient amount of foreign currency on hand, which, of course, can be shipped to the New York bank to pay for the shipments of raw cotton. There are other possibilities.

If the textile trust wants to sell 500,000 yards of linen instead of buying, it goes through the formality of getting a license to export, which, if granted, means that Amtorg in the United States, and all or part of the trading offices of the Soviets in other foreign countries, are given this consignment to sell, for the credit of the account of the textile trust. Amtorg, let us say, can handle the shipment, so it pays the textile trust in cash, and then proceeds to dispose of the goods through the regular capital-

istic channels, taking all the risks and receiving a commission from only one source—the textile trust at home. The same methods are used in other purchases or sales—copper, lead, scrap iron, trucks, airplanes or parts, railroad equipment, etc.

Amtorg, during the past decade, has done business with 3,000 American concerns, moving \$650,000,000 worth of goods out of this country to the Soviet Union, for which every dollar has been paid on the dot when due, and at commissions that have enabled this Russian-owned American corporation to operate at a profit. Some of the Russian trusts are permitted to continue the agencies they opened in this country before the organization of Amtorg, but it is safe to say that the volume of business they do is small compared to Amtorg.

The offices of Amtorg are serviced by about 200 employees at this writing, though there were 500 employees when Soviet trade in this country reached a peak of \$150,000,000 in 1931. The new trade pact is expected to bring Amtorg back to its old volume, and perhaps even exceed it, which will be all to the good for both parties. The United States, in order to help Amtorg buy from us, is agreeing to reduce tariffs on Russian goods intended for our market, which means that before long we will have greater opportunities than ever before to buy paper, matches, furs, caviar, liquors, wines, linen, lace and the like. America has learned the simple lesson that we can't expect the world to buy from us if we erect a high wall and tell foreigners to keep their goods out. International trade must always be a matter of give and take. If you try to do all the taking, you soon find that your customers are out of money because they're unable to turn their own commodities and services into cash. The arrangement now looks sensible and ought to bring better times for both countries.

In addition to the three floors occupied by Amtorg in the skyscraper mentioned above, the corporation maintains a fourth floor for its employees, where they gather for social life and entertainment, lessons in

English and Russian (there are both Americans and Russians among the employes), pool, billiards, ping-pong, insurance group meetings, health services from doctors employed by Amtorg, dentistry, and what not. The employes also have the use of a summer camp, which is free. In addition, there is a store that is run for the benefit of the employes, doing a gross business of \$9,000 per month from the sale of imported Russian goods and American articles, at less than retail prices.

In addition to Amtorg, the Russian government conducts the following agencies in this country: Intourist, for the sale of services to tourists from this country to the Soviet Union; Amkino, which distributes Soviet cinema films in the U. S. and buys American films for use in the Soviet Union; the Platinum Metals Corporation, which sells Russian platinum in the American market. All do a large volume of business.

The Soviet Union is now organized to do business with the United States on an unprecedented scale. The Russians are good customers, and are always good pay. America has a right to look for happier days.

* * *

What is the attitude of the Communists to the Ethiopian situation?

As I've already explained, the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, M. M. Litvinoff, preferred to ignore a cable from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People protesting against the Soviet Union's refusal to lodge objections to Mussolini's warlike moves against Ethiopia. This, I said, was because the Soviet government doesn't care a dime about anything or anyone but itself. In the matter of the intended rape of Ethiopia, Russia could certainly give that country its moral support. Britain and the U. S. have registered what seem to be sincere protests against Italian plans of aggression, but then they are merely capitalistic countries!

The Communist press, in its treatment of the Ethiopian question, is even more crass. Writing in *The Daily Worker*, July 13, 1935, Harry Gannes, the Communist organ's expert on foreign affairs, scolds and berates poor, little Denmark for its

failure to come to Ethiopia's assistance. It should, says the *Worker's* great authority, have moved heaven and earth to ship munitions to East Africa.

For the sake of those who are unfamiliar with the facts, let me mention that the Communist press picks on Denmark because that country is ruled by Socialists. Communists hate Socialists far more than they do capitalists. Imagine the brazenness of these fearless revolutionists in even hinting that Denmark, a country of only 16,570 square miles and a population of only 3,550,651, should give direct, material aid to the East Africans!

Notice, of course, that the *Worker* has nothing to say about the failure of the Soviet Union to ship arms and ammunition to the Ethiopians, who are willing and ready to pay cash for war supplies. The Soviet Union, with its 166,000,000 population and a land area that covers one-sixth of the land surface of the world, with its vast army of 950,000 soldiers and a reserve army of 7,000,000, with its vast munition plants, thousands of bombing planes, thousands of tanks, and other military equipment, could, but won't, help an independent Negro nation. But Denmark is abused! That is only one more sample of Communist impudence.

These Communist newspapers know full well that one false move on tiny Denmark's part could easily result in that splendid little government being wiped off the map, but this doesn't hinder the brave followers of Stalin from asking the Danes to do what vast, mighty Russia itself doesn't care to manage. Russia, let's not forget, contains 8,144,228 square miles, which makes that country a little more than 491 times as large as Denmark. It is two and a half times as large as continental United States of America.

Denmark wouldn't last 30 days if it started butting into imperialistic fights. Russia, on the other hand, despite the fact that it prates about world revolution, lives up to a trade agreement with Italy, which means Mussolini's imperialistic designs are being furthered by Russian war supplies, including manganese ore, so

essential in the manufacture of steel for guns and cannon. If anything, the least the *Worker's* authority could propose is that the worker's fatherland shall cease strengthening the forces of imperialism.

* * *

How'd you like "Becky Sharp"?

The color photography was stunning, and just about marked a revolution in the evolution of the movies. (Now don't tell me "revolution" and "evolution" contradict each other, for they don't. The development of the egg is evolution; but when the chick busts its way out of the shell, that's revolution.)

I never saw more beautiful settings, costumes and uniforms than were thrown before us lavishly by the able director who bossed the job of translating Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" to the screen. Color photography is an established achievement, like the talkies, and it is reasonable to assume that in a few years all pictures will reflect the actual colors of the things or persons reproduced. It's a triumph for art, but accuracy should compel me to add that the real credit for this seeming miracle goes to the science of physics.

Led to expect a poor story, I was surprised to find that the scenario held my attention from start to finish. It moved along at a good pace, and drew pictures of life and characterizations that held a certain degree of drama, especially the rise and fall of Becky Sharp, as portrayed by that brilliant, witty, talented beauty, Miriam Hopkins. The fat-headed fool, played by Nigel Bruce, was second only to Miss Hopkin's fine work. That English actor, Bruce, who has been doing good work when given a chance in Hollywood, showed himself to the full as a master of high comedy. The rest of the cast was invariably effective, which is still more praise for the directing of Mr. Rouben Mamoulian.

The stilted speech of the characters, who spoke something akin to literary language, with rounded sentences, parenthetical clauses, and long halts to mark the punctuation, wasn't out of character when one remembers that these stilted people, with their gaudy uniforms and exaggerated costumes would most likely resort to Johnsonian sentences. Their very

artificiality of speech helped carry the mood of the story. The ball room scene, showing scores of couples dressed in gorgeous uniforms and marvelous evening gowns, dancing heartily to light, charming music, is an unforgettable, stirring spectacle that I hope to look at again. "Becky Sharp" is a big job, well done.

* * *

What is the national flower of Hitler's Germany?

The pansy.

* * *

How many jobless men are there in the world?

The best authority on this subject is the International Labor Office, at Geneva, Switzerland, which reports that the 29 main industrial countries of the world show there were 20,461,000 men without jobs at mid-1935, as against 20,385,000 for the same time in 1934, which is an increase of 76,000. The same report shows that Germany's alleged decrease in unemployment is attributable to its tremendous activity in the war industries.

Germany's claim of only 2,000,000 unemployed should not be accepted as reflecting the approach of prosperity in Hitlerland. Something like 2,000,000 who were given jobs, in most cases, at 10 cents per day plus food and lodging, on public works, are to be considered properly as "working unemployed." Besides, between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000 women were compelled to quit their jobs because of Hitler's prejudice against women working for wages. These women are out of their jobs, but they are not counted among the unemployed. Between 13,000,000 and 14,000,000 Germans are still on relief, getting meager quantities of food and other supplies—hardly enough to keep them from slow starvation.

To give one an idea of how Germany is building up its war machine, without regard to cost or effect, consider the output of but one firm—Junkers—which turns out 14 bombing planes daily. In its Dessau plant, the same company delivers to Hitler's government six super-tanks per day. The great Krupp plant, working three shifts daily, made 14,000,000 Mauser-rifles during 1934, and 1,000,000 of the most efficient machine

guns. Over 200 underground air-dromes have been made ready, with more to follow. Great, strategic auto-roads are being built, as a part of the war plans of the Hitler government against Russia and France. Heavy artillery arrives daily on the Luneburger Heath, for testing purposes, proving that great munitions plants are working full force turning them out. Submarines have already been launched, with more to follow; and battleships are either in process or being planned.

When one considers such gigantic war plans, it isn't to be wondered that many German men have found employment, though it is insisted that even these increases in employment have not altered the fact that the country at large is in a deplorable condition, its finances at a low ebb, its foreign trade rapidly approaching the zero mark, and its supplies of raw materials drying up. Hundreds of thousands of Jews who were thrown out of their jobs and professions were not included in the unemployment lists. The great number of men—Communists, Socialists, pacifists, etc.—in Hitler's concentration camps are not counted among the unemployed.

The war machine is humming, and there's no denying the fact that several millions of men are working—at greatly reduced wages under a great increase in the cost of living—but such work is merely preparatory to a reign of destruction and terror that may reduce Germany to ruins. Such activity in support of the war machine is based on paper money and forced loans from business, savings banks, insurance companies, etc., the last "loan" ("confiscation" would be a more accurate word) amounting to almost \$800,000,000, with more to come.

When Hitler guts his banks and the cash reserves of the insurance companies in order to prepare Germany for war on France and Russia, mainly the latter, it is apparent that the country is sacrificing everything in order to satisfy Hitler's savage lust for blood and destruction. Hitler gives lip service to peace, but in his actions he shows himself to be an insane militarist who wants but

one thing, and a thing that he will most assuredly get—war.

* * *

Is Ethiopia a Christian or Mohammedan country?

Ethiopia (the word means "burned by the sun") is the oldest Christian country in the world. Its ancient denomination is known as the Abyssinian Coptic Church. Mussolini, who is a Catholic, is now using silver to bribe the Mohammedan chieftains in East Africa to join him in the rape of Ethiopia. What a great spectacle! If it were put in a Freethinker's farce, it would be dismissed as impossible levity and crass blasphemy, but here the thing is actually being done. His Catholic Majesty is using Moslems to rip the guts out of Christians with the oldest traditions among the followers of Jesus. Oh, Christianity, what crimes are committed in thy name!

* * *

Your report regarding the increasing cost of living in Italy and Germany leads me to ask if the same condition prevails in the Soviet Union?

Living costs have been declining steadily in the Soviet Union during the past two years. According to a report of the People's Commissariat for the Food Industries (July 27, 1935) average prices for food have declined 53 percent since 1933. These declines have been made possible because of the Soviet's increased efficiency. During the first five months of 1935, production increased as follows, according to official figures:

Flour, 37.6 percent; cereals, 41.9 percent; meat, 5.3 percent; fish, 47.4 percent; sugar, 66.7 percent; butter, 24.9 percent; candy, 12.4 percent.

Even more substantial increases of supplies are expected in the near future, with commensurate declines in prices. Much progress will have to be made before even the above advantages reach all the small communities and rural sections, for the improvements, until now, have been most prevalent in the chief cities and large industrial centers. But there is little doubt that the entire population will eventually receive the benefits of lower living costs, while every authentic report that comes out of Italy or Germany shows that Fascism has cut wages, hiked prices and

put the population in a state verging on terror because of the dark future facing these unfortunate victims of Hitler and Mussolini.

* * *

How much money is Hitler actually spending on his program of militarization?

It amounts to the gigantic total of \$240,000,000 per month. This vast monthly expenditure on armaments was hidden in a secret debt that now (July, 1935) amounts to 17,000,000,000 marks. It is estimated that from 50 to 60 percent of all German industries are being used exclusively for the needs of the war machine, by which Hitler plans to destroy Russia and France, particularly the former. Just how Hitler has been getting the money to finance this gigantic project was explained in several articles I have written, the main one being a system of forced loans from banks, insurance companies, and big business in general, which are compelled to part with their cash and take in exchange certificates of doubtful value and which may never be paid back. Hitler's crazy idea is to "beat the depression" by turning the entire country's energies to the construction of fighting forces. Even if no war were to result from such anti-social and wasteful ventures, the country must, in time, expose to the world its obvious bankruptcy. Should a war result, which is more than likely, the war machine will quickly use up every dollar of wealth that can be expropriated from the German public, and when that is gone the militarists will be in control of a tremendous machine that won't be able to function because of absence of necessary supplies. There is hardly any money available for purchases from abroad, and as time passes this situation will become even more critical. It is these amazing economic facts that disturb Hitler and his fellow madmen, and explain why the Nazis have burst forth with renewed mob attacks on Jews and other persecuted minorities. Such diversions enable the authorities to conceal from the people the true nature of Germany's economic distress. But the day will come (and soon) when even pogroms against helpless Jews won't keep the people from learning that

Fascism is just another word for social, economic, political and industrial suicide. The poor Jews are Hitler's defenseless goats. If he didn't have his hoodlums mob the Jews, the news might reach the German masses that Hitler is spending \$240,000,000 per month in preparation for another world war.

* * *

I've met a reference to Italy's "annuity system" in the matter of its financial manueverings. What does it mean?

One has to be something of a Sherlock Holmes to keep up with the budgetary tricks of the Fascist dictators. Faced with a calamitous financial situation, Mussolini resorts to every conceivable scheme to buttress his wobbly financial structure. Unwilling to let his helpless subjects know the state of Italian finance, he has hit on the annuity system in order to conceal a portion of his unfortunate situation. By this system, he refrains from paying cash or issuing bonds when ordering, let us say, a million pairs of boots for his soldiers. He gives the industrialist the order for the goods but specifies that the account is to remain open until he gets ready to pay it. The industrialist doesn't like this, but what can he do when he's dealing with a blackmailer and hoodlum? He has to do as he's told, or else it'll be just too bad. The industrialist delivers the million boots and waits for his money, but meanwhile this indebtedness doesn't show because there has been no element of cash or bonds in the deal. That's known as the "annuity system," and a pretty piece of financial stupidity it most certainly is. It's on a par with a businessman's short-lived system of "kiting checks." There's always a day of reckoning. Under this "annuity system" Mussolini has been amassing a great store of supplies and armaments—just how much no one can say, including Mussolini himself—and the contractors who delivered the goods have a perfectly nice "account receivable" item on their books, but when it comes to collecting they have to whistle—and Mussolini's hard of hearing. Even Shirley Temple would know there's a limit to such methods, for it's obvious that no business enterprise can continue holding such ac-

counts on its books and escape bankruptcy. The Black Shirt has ruined his state treasury, and now he's bankrupting private business, which means that the final collapse will be all the greater when this house of cards falls down. So goes the merry game of Fascist finance.

* * *

Has Russia done anything to execute its trade accord with Germany?

When the Soviet Union, some months ago, accepted an \$80,000,000 credit from Nazi Germany, the report was received with a burst of criticism throughout the civilized world. It was considered inconceivable that a country dedicated to Socialism would give aid and comfort to Germany's mad Hitler. It appears now that this vigorous protest (from all shades of liberals and radicals) has had a most healthy effect, for the news comes to *Business Week*, in its issue of July 27, 1935, that:

"It is more evident in Moscow this week that Kremlin authorities are going to use as little of the German credit of \$80,000,000—offered early this year for Russia's use in purchasing German goods—as is possible. It is claimed that Germany is attempting to charge abnormal prices for the goods, thinking that the huge credit in itself will be enough to assure them the business. Moscow, not friendly with Hitler anyway, is showing an absolute lack of interest now that France is more friendly, Britain is showing a keener appreciation of the possibilities of Russian trade, and the United States has come to terms on a 1-year agreement which has a good chance of being extended and enlarged."

If Russia really refuses to use its vast credit in Germany, the effect will be serious for Hitler, because Germany's war industries are in serious need of the raw materials which Russia has in abundance. It has been reported, though not officially, that Hitler offered the Soviet Union a credit of 1,000,000,000 marks, if it will take German manufactured goods, and agreed to balance this trade with purchases of Russian raw materials, but the Soviet authorities refused to consider the offer, which certainly is good news. I'm glad I did my tiny share in criticizing Russia because of its trade accord with Fascist Germany. Russia earned the criticism it

received, but since it appears true that steps have been taken to undo this fearful blunder, friends of social progress can't do other than forget about it and hope nothing like it ever happens again.

* * *

Would you agree that the movies, with all their faults, give us pictures of life? If they do this, isn't that justification enough?

I don't agree that the movies give "pictures of life." Now and then, we get a glimpse at reality, but the usual thing is to ignore real life or distort it. The notion that the camera never lies is just another one of those hoary lies.

The best way to judge the movies as reflectors of life is to ask what they are doing. A Dillinger at war with a group of G-men gets to the screen just about as fast as the cameramen can grind out the yarn, but how is such a situation approached? We merely see a bunch of gangsters aiming automatics and machine guns at G-men whenever the chance presents itself, with the G-men a little braver, just a little handsomer, and just a little quicker on the trigger. The problem of crime is a dramatic, serious issue, but in the mind of a movie magnate it means only a city locale for a wild west thriller, with the hero finally winning and the satanic villains biting the dust.

A real picture of criminal life would probe the roots of the social cancer, bringing up the hidden truths about environment and heredity, the latter, of course, being nothing more than past environment. But it wouldn't do for Hollywood—a thoroughly capitalistic, commercial institution—to dig down too far. It might set too many people to thinking about slums, sweat shops, hunger, frustration, unemployment, low wages, preventable sickness, miseducation, poverty, capitalistic ideals of winning wealth through parasitism, and the other contributing causes of our crime bill. A movie director would dismiss a script that discusses the social aspects of crime as "mere propaganda," and return to the old situation of a bad, bad man meeting up with a good, good man and getting whipped because, after all, he's only

a bad, bad man and deserves what he gets.

If the movies really pictured life, we would see the dramatic stories that are shaking the world today. But such stories are ignored.

What does Hollywood know about Russia?

What does Hollywood say about Hitlerism, anti-Semitism and Nazism?

What does the movie world know about Mussolini and his black-shirted Fascists, his Ethiopian policy?

What does Hollywood see happening in Ethiopia, where Negroes, always independent and brave—real heroes—are getting ready to defend their country against the imperialistic legions of Italy's No. 1 madman?

What does Hollywood care about the uprising of the Austrian Socialists against the Fascism of the Catholic Church and Dollfuss, in which they fought like heroes to protect their apartment homes, with 1,500 of them dying for their ideals?

What does Hollywood know about the heroism of a Dimitroff, the Bulgarian Communist, falsely accused by Hitler of having fired the Reichstag, defying Hitler's headsmen and singlehandedly winning one of the greatest moral victories in the history of man?

What does Hollywood know about Japanese imperialism in China, or the efforts of the Chinese workers and farmers in the far interior of China to destroy the influence of both Japanese and Chinese Capitalism?

What does Hollywood know about the youth of America, fresh from school or college, ready, willing and able to render useful social services, but denied the right to a job because of our insane social order which walls off the industries and leaves them idle because the necessary profits are not in sight?

What does Hollywood know about the thousands of German Jewish intellectuals, professionals and scientists who have been torn from their work by a mad homosexual and exiled or imprisoned?

What does Hollywood care about the Fascism of the Roman Catholic Church in Central Europe?

The important things that are happening in the world never reach the

screen. The pictures we get are not reproductions, but evasions, of life. Hollywood's task is not to give us a close-up of the truth, but to suppress the truth. Hollywood is not only a source of mediocrity but a citadel of reaction.

* * *

What is the attitude of the great money powers to Mussolini's Ethiopian adventure?

Without exception they consider Mussolini's insane moves against Ethiopia as presenting grave issues not only for Italy but for the entire capitalistic world. To a man, they look on Mussolini as stark, raving mad, believe he will not only end in bankruptcy but that he may spread the hysteria of war throughout Europe.

International financiers, when interviewed at a meeting of the board of the Bank of International Settlements, in Basle, Switzerland, July 9, 1935, stated:

1. Mussolini's move will help deepen the depression throughout the world.

2. Mussolini can't finance his Ethiopian foolishness, because it was known, months before he began shipping hundreds of thousands of men to East Africa, that his financial structure was weak and ready to topple over.

3. Mussolini's notion that he will pay the bills of this drive against Ethiopia, by cashing in on what he grabs, is basically unsound, because even if he were to win, which isn't at all a certainty, he couldn't possibly turn his gains in territory to account fast enough to meet the bills of the war machine as they fall due.

4. Mussolini thinks he will whip Ethiopia in a hurry, but he will find that it will take years to achieve his end, and even then he may be compelled to admit that the Negroes in that independent country simply can't be enslaved by the chief Fascist.

5. Hitler will wait until Mussolini gets deeply committed in East Africa, and while Il Duce is busy down there the Nazis will break out with new demands, probably beginning with a demand for annexing Austria and the return of the German colonies lost during the World War, in which case Hitler's position would be strong.

6. Italy's credit is now standing at

about zero, for the bankers are convinced that the Italian treasury is empty. Mussolini has already wasted far more than \$100,000,000 in East Africa and will have to spend billions more if he intends to carry through his threats. Bankers outside Italy are already demanding cash on the barrel head for all Italian purchases outside Italy.

7. Mussolini is being driven into irrevocable actions in East Africa because he finds it necessary to present dissatisfied and discontented Italy with something of a diversion to take its mind off domestic troubles.

8. Revolution may break out in East Africa soon after the Italians meet severe difficulties, which could easily spread to the homeland and end Mussolini's brand of Fascism, which, in itself, would be a blessing, though it would have to come at a fearful price.

The above impressions and opinions come from conservative, plutocratic sources, except for a few phrases of my own comment. These hard-headed financiers know that Mussolini is riding for a fall, and when he drops there will be a thud that'll be felt by the whole world. But if it results in the annihilation of his regime, the price may not be too great, at that.

* * *

Have you any readers in Germany and Italy? If so, how do they get your paper?

The Freeman has two subscribers in Germany and one in Italy. The papers, mailed monthly, are never returned, so I safely conclude that they are delivered, perhaps to officials who specialize in studying foreign opinion. I have 14 readers in the Soviet Union, and never have had any trouble getting the paper delivered. Several of these papers go to universities, such as the Library of the Communist Academy, in Moscow. My foreign circulation is growing, with almost every country represented. I have readers in distant places, like the interior of India, write me that they need The Freeman in order to get a resume of the more important aspects of world affairs.

* * *

What did you think of Marlene Dietrich in her last picture?

I'm afraid "The Devil's a Woman"

is lovely Marlene's finish, if she does not do what she should have got around to years ago—tie a can to that pretentious, mysterious, goofy ass of a Von Sternberg. And to think that the rotten scenario was written by a Communist, Dos Passos, who stands so high in the Soviet Union! Trotskyites and other deviators from the party line have been shot for less. With a stinking, lousy story, with stupidly over-stressed, eccentric directing, poor Marlene, with all her breath-taking beauty, stood around and posed like a cigarette ad beauty, helpless, dismayed, futile, and pathetically dumb. At that, the picture wasn't quite as bad as that Sternberg-Dietrich fiasco of last year, based on the "life" of Catherine the Great. That picture will probably rate an all-time low in empty artiness and esthetic tripe.

* * *

Please comment on the movie, *Les Miserables*.

Victor Hugo's famous specimen of writing in the grand manner, filled with wild gestures, impossible characters, incredible happenings, stilted mannerisms and all the other faults that go to make a Hugo spectacle, has been screened more than any other story, so far as I know. By this I mean that it has been done under the same name, for Hollywood has always continued grinding out the same stories year after year, only they're given different titles each time. But Hugo's name is so big, and "Less Miserable" is still so widely read, that it continues to look like box-office, but I say that the last version, with Frederic March and Charles Laughton, is hardly any better than the silent version that was released some 20 years ago, though it goes through the motions of being solemnly high-brow in a tedious, uninspired way.

The present picture—story, characters, acting, directing and general effect—is a perfect instrument for inflicting fierce boredom. If there's one thing in literature, the stage or the screen that makes me sick it is that famous scene of the saintly bishop rewarding the ex-convict, who stole his silver plates, by telling him he forgot the two silver candle-sticks. This is supposed to be an impression

of Christianity in practice. Yes? Well, just try it once, you believers, and I'll bet you my favorite 5-cent cigar that after you test out the first 10,000 bishops you'll be ready to quit and grant me the right to say that the thing is moonshine mixed with glue.

What these Hollywood directors don't know is that *Les Miserables*, with all its reputation, is still nothing more than an exciting boys' book. I read it when I was a kid, and enjoyed it, but when I tried to look into it later the very touch of it made me feel groggy.

* * *

You have written several times that Ethiopia has a chance of defeating Italy. By what strategy?

Such a conclusion, I agree, requires something more than the mere repetition of the historical fact that the Ethiopians whipped Italy in 1896, though this fact should receive a certain amount of consideration. On this point, Mussolini defends his side with the claim that the great defeat resulted because Italy had only 14,000 troops against 100,000 Ethiopians. Taking Mussolini's figures as true (and I don't, because I believe he has over-stated the Ethiopian forces), the defeat was a mighty one because the Italian army was equipped with the most efficient arms available, while the Negroes fought mainly with knives and spears, with only a sprinkling of antiquated firearms.

But, what would be the situation today? Mussolini's legions are thoroughly mechanized, but they will not be met this time by enemies armed merely with spears. True, Ethiopia has only a few airplanes, perhaps a half dozen tanks and armored cars, but it has a plentiful supply of the best, modern rifles and machine guns, with a tremendous supply of manpower available for swift, unexpected raids. The Negroes will resort to guerrilla warfare, and will make themselves felt after Mussolini over-extends himself by going too far into Ethiopia, as he most certainly will do. As I've stated before, Mussolini will have little trouble penetrating the enemy country, perhaps capturing the capital, Addis Ababa, which is far from Eritrea, Mussolini's African colony and his source of supplies.

Should Mussolini take the capital, the Ethiopians, if properly led, should then begin to make themselves felt. Unless the Italians can then maintain contact with Eritrea they will be in danger of starvation. It's here that great bands of guerrilla fighters (the kind of fighting the Ethiopians know so well) can, and probably will, attack the Italians at a hundred points between their spearhead and base. By such maneuvers, the Ethiopians will be able to repeat the victory of 1896, cutting off masses of Italians and decimating them. Each time they cut off a portion of this line, the whole Italian structure will tremble, and eventually collapse, should the tactics be carried to their logical conclusions.

After the taking of Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian forces, in the main, will be centered in the mountains, where Mussolini's mechanized units will be of absolutely no value. Up there, the Italians can do the Ethiopians little damage, but at the same time they will be laying themselves open to endless punishment. It is extremely doubtful that Mussolini could defeat those highlanders after even so much as 15 years of fighting. This mountain country covers a great deal of territory, larger even than all of Morocco, where the French learned, to their regret, what it takes to defeat fighters in mountain positions.

It is claimed that the Italian airplanes will be used to bring up supplies when they are not engaged in bombing Ethiopian towns. Such a possibility is ridiculous. A large force will require supplies, food, munitions, etc., in such vast quantities that only a railroad system (which isn't available) or a network of motor roads (also not there at present) can keep the men facing the Ethiopians properly served, which is out of the question. What it amounts to is simply this: the Italians will be stationed on a line of communications that is too long, thus laying itself open to quick encirclements, and under such conditions the Ethiopians will be able to cut the Italians to small bits.

The average commentator on the Italian-Ethiopian situation innocently imagines that the Negroes will mass themselves into a tight organization

and make a concerted attack on Italy's mechanized forces. That would mean suicide, and it is not reasonable to assume that the men under Emperor Haile Selassie would be so dumb. Such forces can best be handled by avoiding them, meanwhile concentrating on their lines of communication, which, of course, can be dealt with by roving bands. In other words, the foot soldiers of Mussolini, and they are in the majority, can be fought hand-to-hand by the Negroes, with a better than 50-50 chance in favor of the blacks, who by defeating numerous sectors will bring about a situation in which the mechanized portion finds itself in danger of starvation. Then, facing the difficulty of getting supplies, food and water (and water won't be had easily in that terrain), they will either surrender or die.

As for the bombers that Mussolini has sent down there, they won't have much to do, because the Ethiopians will scatter once they come into their range. By being careful not to mass, when in danger of airplane attack, the Ethiopians can keep that menace down to a minimum. The Ethiopians know all the safe hiding places, they are earnest about the fight to save their independent country from the invaders, they are brave, they are dangerous, and they know every mile of the 350,000 square miles of territory they are to defend.

Such a war, with the Ethiopians, will be a sacred cause. The Italian troops, who are there against their will, will most certainly be unable to put the same fervor into their campaign. As the Emperor Haile Selassie put it, in a dramatic statement: "When the times comes to fight, I'll be out there leading my men. I'm sure I won't meet Mussolini."

* * *

Please comment on Mussolini's statement that his first purpose in invading Ethiopia is to civilize that country.

It mightn't be a bad idea if Mussolini himself were to take a few lessons in the beauties of civilization. After turning Italy into a slave-pen, it causes some skepticism when he tells his robots they are to carry the culture of Fascist gangsterism to the benighted Negroes of East Africa. It is interesting to note that a

few days after Mussolini told his dupes that their duty was to spread civilization into black Africa, Il Duce's chemists gave a demonstration, before newsreel photographers, of a new powdered poison which will be scattered on the ground where bare-footed "savages" march, with the result that their uncivilized feet will be burned to the bone, leaving them crippled for life. A cameraman who inadvertently stepped on some of this poison soon found that holes had been burned through his leather shoes. Ethiopia has great things to look forward to, now that Mussolini has set out to teach it the glories of his idea of civilization. These black "savages" will fight back, not with gas and poison but with man-to-man conflicts, thereby proving themselves to be unworthy of anything better than a dose of flesh-consuming powder fresh from Mussolini's chemical laboratories. In many imperialistic enterprises the would-be exploiters of "backward" countries resort to missionaries and the Bible, before giving them a taste of gas bombs and tanks, but such benevolence would be a little out of place in Ethiopia because it happens that that ancient country embraced Christianity long before Rome even heard about the "gospel." This makes it necessary to omit the missionaries and the Bibles, but this omission can be remedied by throwing in an extra supply of foot-burning concoctions.

* * *

I have learned from an Italian source that the Ethiopians are an uncivilized people who acquired a veneer of Christianity through the long labors of missionaries. Please comment.

I haven't seen the report you refer to, but I can say definitely that it is false from beginning to end. Instead of having become Christianized through missionary workers, the Ethiopians belong to the Coptic sect, which is the oldest form of Christianity in the world. As Emperor Haile Selassie said, Ethiopians were Christians when all of Europe was steeped in paganism.

The Mussolini propaganda office has made a great deal of the fact that Ethiopia still has slavery, as I've mentioned before. It is well to remember that its slavery is not of the

agricultural kind that we tolerated less than a century ago, or of an industrial nature, but merely of household servants; and they are, or will soon be, freed. The emperor has already issued a decree abolishing this ancient institution and has set death as punishment for those who persist in practicing slavery. I fail to see how anyone can ask for more.

As for their being uncivilized, the charge is pure slander, for this ancient independent country—with a history of 5,000 years without bowing to would-be conquerors—has a naturally intelligent population though backward in many ways. One reason they are so poor economically and industrially is because the imperialistic powers have long conspired to keep this large country hemmed in, without an outlet to the Red Sea. Lacking such a necessary door to the world, the Ethiopians have been compelled to tolerate isolation, which is always bad for any people, regardless of race. Were the Ethiopians to gain a seaport, they might soon take their place with the advanced countries of the world.

Anyone who has followed the career, the utterances and policies of Emperor Selassie must admit that here is a leader who is as civilized as any man in the world today. Instead of being a chieftain of a lot of savages, Selassie is a student of international affairs, a simple, lucid speaker, a writer of editorials in his own newspaper that prove him to be informed and the possessor of a mind of power and force.

Compare, for a moment, the behavior of Emperor Selassie and Mussolini during the past six months and it becomes apparent that the Negro leader is a man of simple dignity, sane reasonableness, deep humanitarian impulses, and withal modest and unassuming. Mussolini, on the other hand, stands forth as a braggart and a bully, an egotist and a maniac, a neurotic and a vain cad, without regard for truth, honor, justice or decency. And yet, it is this gangster who has the unmitigated gall to attack and brand as uncivilized so fine, sensitive and free-spirited a man as Haile Selassie.

Every move that Mussolini has

made thus far in the Ethiopian situation has shown him to be a villain and a designing thief, ready to drown a proud, independent, peace-loving people in their own blood and sacrifice the lives of hundreds of thousands of his own slaves. I use the word slaves advisedly, because if there is one real slave-herder in this world today who stands out as an international Simon Legree, that beast is Mussolini, who is, without a doubt, one of the vilest, most contemptible, disgusting specimens of humanity ever spewed from the womb of malice.

Where Mussolini has never opened his mouth without hurling forth threats of death and destruction, the Ethiopian emperor has conducted himself with amazing reserve, perfect dignity, and civilized intelligence. He has never failed to suggest, in his every speech and statement, that an amicable and peaceful solution be found for the issues Mussolini has trumped up. He has been firm, quiet, unassuming, and the entire world has learned to respect him as a man of sterling character. Physically, he stands forth as a perfect work of art. His head should be the delight of any great artist. His face is a thing of beauty. I have studied his portrait many times and have always been impressed with his apparent charm, manly beauty and proud dignity. But when we look at Mussolini's face we see a raving maniac, wild-eyed, neurotic, and consuming himself with the ambition to rule by the sword.

Selassie comes before the world with the plea that his country and its independent people shall be left alone, so that they may work out their problems in peace and harmony. But aroused, he will fight, as he said in a recent speech that attracted the attention and admiration of the entire civilized world. To the last man, he announced. And, he added, he himself would be there leading his men into battle, ready to die, like a soldier, that his beloved land might be saved from the ravages of Mussolini's blood-thirsty, gangster horde. As he said, some months ago, he (Selassie) will be there with the fighters, but he was sure he wouldn't meet Mussolini.

Mussolini, as a gesture, may travel down to his own colony, but it is safe to say he will avoid the scenes of battle, for he is a craven coward, however much he loves to give the impression that he is a modern version of Julius Caesar. He lives in constant dread of assassination. Fear always clutches his heart. No, Selassie will never meet Mussolini, for the Fascist bully would be too frightened to dare face this noble-minded Negro leader who will not only order the manhood of his country to go forth to die, but will be there to die with them, if that becomes necessary.

The decent people of the world are of one mind about the Ethiopians. Everywhere, one hears the expression that it would be a great thing for civilization if the Ethiopians were to defeat Mussolini's invaders, which is quite likely to happen. If that does occur, there's no telling what will follow. The people of Tripoli, now held in bondage by Mussolini, may rebel and throw Mussolini's bandits out of the continent.

Furthermore, the moral influence of Ethiopia's victory could easily arouse the sleeping giant of Africa—150,000,000 people enslaved by the forces of capitalistic imperialism. Ethiopian victory might easily sound the rallying call to the victims of imperialism everywhere—including India—with the possibility of a world-wide movement in the direction of freedom and self-rule.

Mussolini stamps his foot, and the whole world trembles. But if Ethiopia strikes back and destroys Mussolini's armies, the world of exploited, enslaved peoples might possibly erupt, and, like a flaming volcano, engulf their thievish, mercenary overlords and establish, for all time, the precious principle of self-determination.

Ethiopia might be the force able to bring a new era to vast Africa. Mussolini, who would emulate Caesar, may end on the scrap-heap, while the Emperor Selassie emerges as the Abraham Lincoln of the dark continent.

* * *

The Rev. John Haynes Holmes, famous liberal preacher, returned from Germany recently with a glowing report about

that country's reestablishment of order in the treatment of Jews. He said the pogrom days of 1933 were definitely over. Please comment.

Yes, I saw that silly interview in the New York newspapers. Dr. Holmes got his answer two days later, when newspapers throughout the world printed dispatches from Germany that described mob violence against innocent and helpless Jews. The streets of a part of Berlin ran with blood of the victims of Nazi rowdies. Crowds of young ruffians went the round of the cafes, singled out all persons likely to be Jews and assaulted them with the brutal fury of homicidal maniacs. Motor cars were stopped, and all passengers who looked non-Aryan were dragged to the street and beaten unmercifully. The women who accompanied these helpless individuals were also slug-ged, many into insensibility.

These pogroms went on in the presence of Berlin policemen, who did nothing to prevent the outrages. And all this, remember, happened in mid-July, 1935, not in March, 1933. That these attacks were not sporadic outbursts was established by the fact that they continued for several days, with the Nazi press claiming one day that the rowdies were really anti-Nazis in disguise and on the next day that the mob assaults were provoked by the Jews themselves, who had arrogantly invited these beatings.

Dr. Holmes, as a commentator, needs simple lessons in straight, accurate reporting. His attempt to give comfort to the Hitleristic sadists fell down lamentably this time. And this is the Dr. Holmes who believes in liberalism, who supports the American Civil Liberties Union, and who poses as a friend of the oppressed!

* * *

How can you venture, without positive proof, an opinion as to Hitler's health, which, it appears to me, is dangerously likely to land you in an international libel suit in the event you are mistaken? Indeed, even if you are right, it seems to me such a fellow as Hitler, with his power to suppress and twist facts, might give you lots of trouble and embarrassment.

The opinion I expressed was purely personal, strictly that of a layman, as I explained in my answer, after I gave the opinion of four well

known organs of news or opinion, including the *New York Times*. As I plainly labeled it a layman's opinion, the thing stands or falls for just what it's worth. Had I had other information, I would have made the assertion positive. I still think I'm right about Hitler's ailment being gonorrhea of the throat and mouth instead of cancer.

His silence during the past few months, after speeches that were delivered week after week, indicates something, and, in addition, the great disturbances throughout Germany around July 20, with newly encouraged pogroms against the Jews, the call to the Storm Troopers to return to their uniforms, the attacks on the Steel Helmets, would seem to indicate that there is a great battle going on behind the scenes for the taking of power, should Hitler be removed from the scene of action, which is likely to happen as I write this on July 21, 1935.

It seems great powers, below Hitler, are getting ready for a struggle to capture the government, with the Steel Helmets veering towards the return of the Hohenzollerns and Goering in favor of the *status quo*. In such cases, as was shown during the great purge of June 30, 1934, Hitler is not given to remaining in the shadows. The fact that he has been quiet so long would seem to show that the reports regarding his condition are not mere idle rumor.

As for anything Hitler might do to me for my impolite remarks in this organ of plain, candid speech, I can only say: Would that I had the luck to have him strike at me! It would be the best thing that could happen. But don't worry, there'll be no such break. I'll have to go on, as in the past, saying my say and being listened to only by my family of devout, pious, God-fearing subscribers.

* * *

In a lecture, Clarence P. Oakes said that it is a penitentiary offense for anyone to smuggle a fashion magazine into the Soviet Union. Please comment.

I heard this brazen liar make the same statement in his Pittsburg, Kansas, tirade. To show how false this charge is, let me call attention to the fact that the Soviet Union itself publishes a fashion magazine (a copy

of which is on my desk as I write this article), and recently conducted a well-attended fashion show, in Moscow, under the direction of the famous courturiere, Elizabeth Hawes, a leading women's dress designer in New York City, who was invited by the Russian authorities to make a special trip to their country for the purpose of staging the show.

Miss Hawes reports that the show was well attended, Russian women showing as much interest as the women of any other country in the matter of artistic dress. Instead of wearing shawls over their heads, as we are so frequently told, 80 percent of Moscow women, according to Miss Hawes, wear berets, and she predicts that before long they will work out hat designs that will show more variety and individuality, thereby getting away from the deadly monotony of endless processions of berets, however sensible such headwear may be.

Miss Hawes also called attention to the fact that she not only saw many smartly dressed women in the Soviet Union, but was surprised at the great number who had permanent waves and tinted finger nails. Miss Hawes, while showing their women 25 of her own ensembles, warned the Soviet Union against aping the dress styles of western countries. She explained that such styles wouldn't bring out the best features of Russian beauty, because these women are usually much larger than the women in western countries and present peculiar problems that must be solved before smart dress can be achieved. She predicted that the Russians will work out distinctive, beautiful styles of dress, but that it would "probably be a compromise between the peasant dress and the dress of the modern Western woman."

Meanwhile, it is amusing to note that American styles are moving in the direction of the Russia of bygone days, with full skirts, high waists and more extreme hip lines.

* * *

Please comment on Dr. Butler's signed statement to the press that Japan, Germany and Italy must have more territory in order to solve the problem of finding sufficient room for their inhabitants to live in.

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, presi-

dent of Columbia University, who pretends to a great devotion to peace, is ready to excuse the rulers of these three countries in their efforts to steal land from neighboring or distant countries for purposes of expansion. His naive suggestion that the neighbors should quietly surrender to the demands of these militarists and thereby avoid war shows utopianism run wild. Instead of avoiding war, the policies of Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado are hurrying their people into violence and bloodshed.

While it is true that the three countries mentioned by Dr. Butler are crowded, the remedy isn't for them to rob their neighbors but to institute legalized, scientific birth control. And yet, by a peculiar irony, it is these three countries that have definitely outlawed birth control and given every possible encouragement to an increased birth rate. That being their policy, it is clear that they are using the population problem as an excuse for still greater militarism.

Hitler would rob Russia of much of its land; the Mikado is now in China stealing everything he can put his hands on; and Mussolini is shipping 250,000 troops to East Africa—all, according to Dr. Butler, because these governments haven't enough room for their people. Let these militaristic dictators have their way long enough and they will "solve" their population problem, not by sane, civilized birth control, but by mass murder through the instrumentalities of war.

These dictators keep demanding more babies because they want more soldiers. And whenever a government concentrates everything on a larger fighting force, it is inevitable that war will result.

* * *

As a young man opposed to war, what do you think we should do in case this country becomes involved in a war that is not one of defense?

With capitalistic imperialism growing more determined each day to seek a solution for its depression problems in a war of aggression for the purpose of securing markets as outlets for its stricken industries, a serious situation is facing the young men who will be the ones expected to do the

fighting. Militarism certainly is growing stronger, especially in Europe, where a great war is now considered almost inevitable.

We see the armaments race, and when the dictators and imperialists believe they are ready the powder-barrel will explode. Such a war will be more horrible than anything in the past. This war will not only be a struggle between opposing armies of young men but it will be an attempt, through airplane bombers and chemicals, to destroy or terrorize the helpless civilians in all belligerent countries. Even our own country, far from the scenes of European diplomatic intrigue, has ventured on a program of naval building and militarism that is costing more money than we ever spent before in peace times in our entire history.

Imperialistic war is an offshoot of capitalistic conditions. It is an expression of the system, resulting from the economic interests of the various elements in conflicting national groups, each out to get markets, sources of raw materials, colonies for mining, agriculture and other purposes, or expanding its immediate borders for greater power and profit. So long as we endure the system of private ownership of large-scale industries, banks and other socially necessary institutions, so long will we be compelled to face the threat of war. Capitalism and imperialistic wars are branches of the same tree. They feed on the exploitation of the people at home and abroad.

I am by no means a pacifist, but I am strongly opposed to imperialistic wars, as I am opposed to Capitalism itself. I believe it is necessary to face the fact that if one isn't ready to defend civilization, democratic institutions, liberty of expression, freedom of thought, and other social, cultural, civil and political rights, one's pacifism can result in the worst kind of reaction. Republicanism, in Germany, was crushed by the Hitleristic militarists, because it failed to take into consideration the serious need for self-defense against the encroachments of the Fascists and other enemies of peace, order and social justice.

To be a pacifist in the face of such

a situation is to close one's eyes to stark realities. But one can be ready to fight for justice—as our noble Abraham Lincoln fought for civilization and justice in our great Civil War—without surrendering to the pressure of capitalistic imperialism. In other words, one must always reserve the right to pick out the kind of fight he is willing to engage in. I don't mind fighting my own battles, but I don't want to put down my life fighting to help make the world safe for some profiteers and munitions racketeers out to get rich at the expense of the country's youth.

Many of our young men, like my questioner above, are opposed to war. The sentiment for peace is growing in this country, though I wish it were possible to say the same thing for central Europe or Japan, where the war lords are getting stronger each day. The anti-war sentiments of our young men are promising phenomena, and I hope to see them nurtured and grow stronger.

The important time to fight for peace is not after the war drums beat the call to arms; the right time is now, before war is declared. Our young men must find a thousand ways of letting the world's rulers know today that they do not intend to let themselves be used as cannon-fodder.

Mussolini shouts to his Black Shirts that he wants Italian youth to seek to be heroes, and the young men send back their hurrahs for the murderer who intends to ship them to death and destruction on the battlefields of East Africa. If these young men would only stop to consider that the world didn't know any shortage of heroes in 1914-18—10,000,000 of them died—they would silence these Mussolinis and Hitlers and tell them there are better things than becoming "heroes" for a cause that rests its case on suppression, persecution, torture, gangsterism, and the end of all the priceless things that came to civilization after millions of real heroes down the centuries had died to wrest these rights from the bloody hands of tyrants.

Our young men should, by all means, make clear that they see no heroism in dying for the greater gain

of Wall Street. They should always be ready to fight for a just cause, especially if they were to see their traditional rights endangered, but they know that an imperialistic war isn't concerned with fine points of decency, justice and cooperation, but with markets, profits and large-scale theft.

I can only hope that if the United States joins with imperialistic powers to crush weaker peoples that our young men will make plain that they won't die in such a senseless butchery. This is not because they are cowardly; rather is it because they are made of the stuff of real heroes—soldiers in the liberation war of humanity, instead of pawns of imperialistic racketeers and capitalists hungry for new markets or the theft of old ones.

Such a mass refusal on the part of our youth, expressed before we get into trouble, will mean something. Such known opposition to war might even serve to deter the war-makers from entering on their exhibitions of savagery. This is an issue that rests with the young men themselves. The old people aren't the ones to decide. Usually it's the old who declare war, but it's the young who do the fighting, and if they were to declare in plain words that they won't bear arms or die in order to pile up new profits for great capitalistic interests, the old war-makers might listen, for history has shown them that when young men fight unwillingly there is always the possibility of revolution.

If there's one thing imperialists don't like, it's revolution. Russia gave them something to think about. They don't want to see the seed spread and take root. Another war, on the same scale or larger than the last, will most certainly result in world revolution. It couldn't be otherwise.

Dictatorships inevitably lead to militarism, and militarism invariably leads to hostilities. When men get tired of fighting, they turn to thoughts of revolution. Beware, you masters, or you may bring the fire down on your own heads! The young men are asking you not to throw them into the trenches. If you don't heed them, you may see these same young men

hurl you into the discard, where you belong.

* * *

[I'm seriously considering taking up the profession of prophecy, after my quick success with the Richard Strauss prediction, which I achieved without numerology, astrology or crystal gazing. In the last issue I reported that the great composer, Strauss, might be forced to resign as president of Germany's music chamber because he had committed the great crime of putting to music the libretto of Stefan Zweig, Jewish author. Sure enough, on July 13, an Associated Press dispatch from Berlin announced his resignation because of "advanced age." Strauss' age had nothing to do with it; the real reason was Hitlerism. I figured Strauss' days were numbered when I read, in mid-June, that neither Hitler, Goering or Goebbels had attended the opening performance of the composer's newest opera, "The Silent Woman." The reason, of course, was Zweig's contribution to the musical event. His name had been omitted from the program, as a sop to Nazi sensibilities. I wrote the piece shortly after the opening of the opera, and put it into the issue which went to press on July 10. Three days later, while the paper was still being wrapped for mailing, my crack prophecy got its verification, but here I must confess I slipped up a little. I should have arranged Strauss' ousting for a little later, or at least I should have foretold the happening a little earlier, giving my readers time to get the paper and write me several letters warning me against indulging in wishful-thinking. As it is, the thing "broke" while my story was in type, but still undelivered, which leaves me much to learn as a practicing prophet. But I'll try to do better next time.]

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The Daily Record, Yonkers, N. Y., July 24, 1935, says: "The first issue of *The American Rationalist Annual* proves again that its publisher, E. Haldeman-Julius, is sponsoring some of the most vigorous writing being done in America today."

* * *

Do you care for the acting of Peter Lorre?

I didn't see his picture, "M," which I understand is very good, nor his "The Man Who Knew Too Much," but I did have the luck to happen on his "Mad Love." This story belongs to the kind I don't care for—the macaber, horrors, sadism, with hints of Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff at their most fiendish, spine-chilling hysterics—but the scenario couldn't quite bury the star's genius. I'm not

quite sure he has the stature of a Charles Laughton, but that doesn't put him far below that truly great actor. Given a few good stories and Peter Lorre could take his place at the very top of the profession.

I understand he's at work on that great Russian classic, "Crime and Punishment," which should give him something of a chance to express his dramatic talents. The only bad omen is the announcement that the picture is being directed by Von Sternberg, the "arty" maestro who did so much to ruin the beautiful Marlene Dietrich's career. Maybe, when he's free of the bewitching charm of the great Marlene, and he's given an actor with next to no "sex appeal," he may throw off his queer gestures and buckle down to real work.

What made "Mad Love" well worth my time was Lorre's perfect simulation of insanity. I never saw horrible malevolence expressed with greater conviction. He could take a trite, ham-ridden line like "I, a peasant, have conquered science; why can't I conquer love?" and make the words ring with fresh reality, which in itself is a real feat.

If the Hollywood "master-minds" will only give Peter Lorre half a chance to express himself, these glorified bookkeepers will have done something to undo their endless series of crimes against artistic integrity. Is that asking too much?

* * *

Is Goering, like Hitler, a homosexual?

No. Goering is quite normal in his sexual life. However, he is by no means a normal person otherwise, for he has spent many months in an insane asylum and is now a confirmed morphinomaniac.

* * *

How long are you going to continue your present policy of questions and answers? The August, 1935, issue completed 18 months. Going at the rate you are now covering, and not answering one question more than once, do you suppose there would come a time when you would run out of questions to answer? If so, when do you suppose it would be?

I have it all figured out perfectly. Continuing at the present rate, and answering questions dealing only with present knowledge, it'll take exactly 456,754,899,762,555,000,123,456 centuries, at which time new knowledge

will put before me a set of questions that would require the above number of centuries multiplied by 111,222,333,444,555,666 centuries. This should reassure all readers who are hesitating about sending in their renewals for fear I'll run out of soap.

* * *

Do you frequently hear from the same readers?

Some readers send in only one or two questions, while some come in almost monthly and even oftener, with letters containing numerous questions. I consider my very best letter-writer, or question-asker, a reader in Richardson Park, Del., named J. Matthews. This Mr. Matthews hardly fails to miss a month with at least two letters, and I always read them with profit and interest. Letter writers like Mr. Matthews make this job fascinating. I hope to hear from him regularly.

* * *

It is true, as you state, that nowhere in the Epic pamphlets has Upton Sinclair used the phrase "social ownership of the means of production and distribution." That phrase is not used because the Epic movement, for tactical reasons, prefers to work for that ideal [Socialism] by IMPLICATION.

The above comes from a former Socialist, Al Sessions, now secretary of the Bakersfield, Calif., Democratic Club. Other ex-Socialists, such as William Henry, John Packard, Kate Richards O'Hare, and J. Stitt Wilson, seem to take the same position.

These former Socialists, who certainly ought to know better, are committing two blunders.

First, they believe it's possible to stand for a complete change in the social order *BY IMPLICATION. Such a thing hasn't happened in the history of the world. The French revolutionists didn't destroy Feudalism and clerical tyranny by implication. The Founding Fathers didn't kick out the "divine right" notion of King George III by implication. The North didn't end chattel slavery in the South by implication. The Russian Bolsheviks didn't destroy Capitalism and Czarism by implication. And so on, down through history.

Either you are for Capitalism or you are for socialized industry, Socialism. Either you are for private ownership or you are against it. You

can't play both sides of the fence. And you most assuredly can never inaugurate a social transformation by implication, bringing it in through the back door while no one is looking. The theory that one can establish Socialism by preserving private Capitalism, and working for something entirely different from Socialism, is to indulge in utopianism.

Second, you can't establish two separate forms of society. Sinclair offers to do this. He would take the unemployed and put them to work creating wealth for use. He would have a minority of the working class function under a "socialistic" system, but insists that the Capitalist system, which keeps the employed workers from participating in the ownership and operation of the industries, shall continue as of old. He might as well try to establish chattel slavery for one group of workers; Feudalism for another group of farmers; Capitalism for the workers who happen to have jobs; and "Socialism" for those who are unemployed. The whole set-up is fantastic and one wonders what has happened to the intelligence of these former Socialists who kid themselves and their followers with the notion of "Socialism by implication." If the thing didn't have tragic consequences, one could have a good laugh at this spectacle of "economists" drawing inferences from history and social organizations that are without validity, never had any force in logic, and never will.

If the unemployed are to be rescued from economic misery, they will have to be given places alongside the employed workers, all of them uniting to do away with the profit motive in the large-scale industries. That is the tactical approach of the Socialists, and it is in sound harmony with the lessons of history. An unemployed worker isn't something essentially different from a worker with a job. The fellow with a job may be out in the street tomorrow; the fellow without a job today may have a place next morning. How in sanity's name can you approach such a one-track problem with a suggestion of two social orders—social ownership for the unemployed and private ownership for the employed?

Sinclair can't get over the fact

that he polled almost 900,000 votes in the last California election. Tempted by that juicy bait, he has filled himself with untenable rationalizations, trying to blow cold with the employed and hot with the workless.

The unemployed must, of necessity, combine with the employed, demanding ample social insurance while they are without jobs, at the expense of the capitalists and taxpayers, of course. Then they will finally learn the lessons of economics, using their political and industrial might to establish a social order in which unemployment will disappear for all time because the avenues of production will be opened to all who are willing to labor, regardless of what the private owners may think of such a proposed social reorganization.

The change won't come by implication. It will become a reality because of a clear-cut platform and a mass basis for a movement that outlines a logical, orderly program of socialization. They certainly won't get anywhere by agreeing among themselves to sneak up on the citadel of Capitalism. Capitalism isn't going to be ended that way.

The Epic plan is just one more will-o'-the-wisp, a rush for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. It's led by a man who gets more muddled as he draws more followers, and who promises to concoct an intellectual hash that will send his followers into spasms of dyspepsia, with the great Epicist himself ending in a whirl of contradictions and rushing off on horseback in two directions at one time.

This nonsense will go on, because there are millions of followers waiting for such "sure-fire" tripe. The Huey Longs, Father Coughlins, Dr. Townsends and Upton Sinclairs serve up a line of economic patent medicines, the masses swallow the sweetened pills, Upton holds their pulse, and the patient dies. Then the great Epicist steps aside and a still greater utopian moves forward with a new stock of miracle goods. Meanwhile, Capitalism laughs. The system of private ownership of the large-scale, socially necessary industries continues to thrive—and that's all any shrewd Capitalist or Wall Street manipulator could expect. It's a merry game of lining up the blind,

who are led by a one-eyed man whose one good eye has just gone bad, but who hasn't found out about it yet.

The whole business looks screwy.

* * *

Upton Sinclair's got the dope, the tactic, and a program that people can grasp and follow, and a program that in the long run will accomplish more along the lines of Socialism than a thousand years of agitation and dogmatism by the Socialist party.

I agree that Sinclair has the dope—the dope of day-dreaming and ignoring realities. As for his "tactic"—a nice word lifted from the vocabulary of the Communists—it is everything but a method to establish a system "along the lines of Socialism." His "tactic" has been to capture the Democratic party, but his wobbling shows that instead of capturing the party, it has swallowed Upton—including Al Sessions, the writer of the above.

And now to the great and glorious "program"—another spanking word. Sinclair's plan is to establish a different social order for perhaps 10 or 15 percent of the population. The "idle" factories, machines, mills, etc., will be taken over and operated by the unemployed, for their own upkeep, without resorting to the profit motive.

Let's take a look. First of all, I doubt there are many "idle" factories in the country. I've been around a little, and I like to keep my eyes open. I run something of a factory myself (a print shop, of course) and I meet many men who are engaged in business. I'm yet to meet one who has even seen an idle factory, though there may be a few. Let me explain what I mean.

Here's a big printing plant run by an acquaintance of mine, some 50 miles from Girard. He has 14 presses, four linotypes, a bindery full of machinery, and a stereotyping outfit. That plant was idle a few weeks last summer, and a few weeks in the previous summer, but all the rest of the time it has been running. Instead of running 14 presses, he had only four in operation. Instead of working four linotypes three shifts, as he did before, he ran only two linotypes eight hours each day. There was idle equipment, but no idle plant.

What would the great Epicist do with that man's plant? Would he ap-

appropriate a part of the plant to a capitalistic economy and throw the rest of it open to the unemployed? You'd have two systems of society under one roof. How long could such a factory operate? The same goes for flour mills, motor car factories, steel mills, and what not.

If Upton Sinclair started to find "idle" factories to put into operation for the benefit of the unemployed, he'd be lucky if he found enough to put 100,000 men to work and I doubt he could place even that many. The program is low grade because it ignores actual conditions in the industrial world.

Upton Sinclair is a literary man who knows as much about factory life as I do about the science of vulcanizing casings for hot dogs. He once peeped into a packing house long enough to write a book about the workers there, but outside of that he is an innocent wandering among the big, bad wolves. Because he had some of his works privately printed, and sold them to Socialists via the mail order-route, he thinks he's an expert on business and can run the system that creates and distributes wealth. If he knew what was really going on he'd stop his talk about "idle" factories and learn that most industrial establishments are only partly idle. That's a whale of a difference. It leaves his immortal, inspired Epic plan hanging out on a limb, because, as I've already said, he couldn't possibly use two social "programs"—private Capitalism and Epic production for use—in the same shoe factory, or whatever it is that Sinclair is to operate.

Here are several thousand railroad workers looking for jobs. And here's a big railroad with 20,000 of its 80,000 freight cars idle and lined up on the sidings. Would Sinclair let Capitalism operate 60,000 freight cars, and Epicize the balance? Of course he couldn't, unless he wanted to qualify for a place in a booby-hatch.

The fact is, as I've argued several times, his Epic plan is just a pipe-dream that is guaranteed to turn no industrial wheels, but which is sure to turn wheels in the heads of his followers. Socialism has no patience with such foolishness. Either you socialize the large-scale industries or you leave them as they are. The fact that the Socialist party hasn't cap-

tured a national election in this country is no argument against Socialism; it's a commentary on the intelligence, or lack of intelligence, among the voters. In countries like Sweden, the Socialist party gets real action, and we see what it can do after only a few short years in power, with the assurance that Capitalism will be entirely replaced by Socialism once the economic foundations are constructed, by which I mean the building of a solid, united, informed, intelligent mass basis for Socialism. If Socialist "dogmatism" were to make no impression during the next thousand years, it still wouldn't follow that the remedy for the evils of Capitalism is to split a factory into two systems, using the active portion for the employed, and the idle portion for the jobless. Just because the American workers are too stupid to understand scientific Socialism is no reason for proposing a program that is unrealistic and unscientific.

* * *

A LETTER FROM UPTON SINCLAIR

As I finished the above two articles, a letter arrived from Upton Sinclair, written at Pasadena, Calif., on August 1, 1935. I print Sinclair's letter in full, and add a few notes of my own. The letter:

My dear Haldeman-Julius:

I have just returned from a month's tour of the United States, in the course of which I motored some 8,000 miles, speaking in behalf of our National EPIC movement. I find the issue of your paper for September, in which you answer the question, "Is Upton Sinclair's EPIC Plan a maneuver on his part to build Socialism?" Your comment is, "Upton Sinclair is now definitely an anti-Socialist. Let there be no mistake on that point." And after quoting some words of mine, you add: "We thus see that Sinclair completely repudiates Socialism and rests his movement on the principle of barter among the unemployed."

I am sorry indeed that I have been so unsuccessful in making my point of view clear. I know that you mean to be fair, and I am going to try to state my point of view precisely, and ask you to study my statements carefully and revise your misconception of me and the EPIC Plan.

As you know, I tried for thirty years to get Socialism through the Socialist party. And I thought we had another

30 years in which to explain Socialism to the American people. But then came Hitler, and I saw the Socialist party and the labor movement in Germany wiped out overnight. I sat myself down to think over again the political ideas of my whole lifetime.

I said: "There is no use building a movement which can be wiped out in that manner. There is no use trying to get Socialism by the method of working-class action proposed by the Marxians, for if you try it you will get not Socialism but Fascism, and after Fascism you will not get Socialism but Bolshevism. Particularly is this true in a country so thoroughly middle-class as America. If you want to get anywhere in America you have to have a program which will convince the middle classes. Your first step, whatever it may be, must be a step which the middle classes will consent to."

As a Socialist I had advocated public ownership, socialization of credit, taxes on incomes and inheritances, taxes on land values—so on through a long list. I put all these things into the melting pot and thought the problem out again from the point of view: "What is the one measure which will most appeal to the masses in America—working class and middle class, laborers, farmers, clerks, professional men?" The answer, as I saw it, was: "Jobs for the unemployed; the right of all unemployed men and women to have work of the kind which they had learned to do, and to enjoy the proceeds of their labor."

Out of that grew the EPIC Plan. It is a proposal that the credit of the Government shall be used to give the unemployed access to the land and machinery and enable them to produce what they are going to consume, and thus make them self-supporting and take them off the backs of the taxpayers.

What this amounts to under present conditions is not full Socialism, but one-sixth of Socialism: That is to say, it is Socialism applied to one-sixth of the population. It is, if you choose to use the old phrase, a cooperative commonwealth in which 20 or 25 million people will live and produce and enjoy the benefits of their labor.

You ask the question whether this is "a maneuver"? I should say that it depends on what you mean by the word. If you mean that it is a subterfuge to get something without letting anybody know that you are trying to get it, my answer is, first, that I am not very good at subterfuge, and second, that a subterfuge becomes an absurdity when you

have to explain it to many millions of people. The only way this job can be done is by taking the people into your confidence and telling them the exact truth about what you mean. Of course what ever you say to your friends is at once repeated by your enemies.

The EPIC Plan is and has been entirely above-board and open. Desiring to bring about this change without social conflict, we have proposed to the businessmen of America a compromise. We have said, in substance: "The unemployed of America are no longer of any use to you, because you have got all their money; therefore turn them over to us EPICs; permit us to use Government credit to purchase the necessary land and machinery to put the unemployed at work under a system of Production for Use. We will try out the system and see how it works. If it fails, of course nobody will want to extend it. If, on the other hand, it succeeds, a great many people will insist upon extending it, and it will be extended to those who can get more under the new system than they are getting under the old."

Such was the proposition, and it was made in entire good faith. It is interesting to note, in passing, that in my debate with Congressman Fish at Chautauqua, New York, on July 20, 1935, this leading Republican statesman based his opposition upon the belief that the plan would succeed. He said in substance that public business would of course out-compete private business and would destroy it if it got a chance. There was no doubt in Congressman Fish's mind that EPIC was Socialism. The "maneuver" had not deceived him!

Talking privately with Congressman Fish after the debate, I assured him of my good faith in making the proposition. I repeat this assurance under all circumstances—even though it may displease my Socialist friends. I agree with Congressman Fish that the EPIC system will out-compete private business. Because of that certainty I am willing and able to say to the businessmen of America, "Give us a chance to apply the EPIC system to the unemployed, and to the unemployed only, and we will agree to try the system and abide by the issue."

In your statement about EPIC, you say: "Instead of aiming to do away with the injustice of the present system, and inaugurating the Cooperative Commonwealth, Sinclair would merely gather the unemployed together to eke out a few pennies, like so many coolies, so that the taxpayers might be saved the

expense of providing ample relief. His EPIC Plan, therefore, is nothing more than an attempt to preserve the Capitalist system, with all its horrors of mass exploitation, profiteering, waste and wage slavery."

Of course the above is quite shocking to me, and no more complete misrepresentation of the EPIC Plan has ever appeared in any capitalist newspaper. Instead of wanting the unemployed "to eke out a few pennies like so many coolies," I have everywhere explicitly stated as the EPIC demand that the unemployed should have access to the best land and the best machinery and an opportunity to produce on a modern mass-production scale. In my new book which outlines the National EPIC program, "We, People of America, And How We Ended Poverty," I have written as follows:

"We understand perfectly that you cannot make a nation-wide change like this in a day; but you can make a beginning and you can know where you are going, and say so. That is the basis of our demand. Twenty-five million people refuse to starve to death, and accordingly we demand that the government shall provide them, not with a dole, not with charity, but with the right to work, and the chance to work. By work we mean, not useless work, not fake work, but real work, the work that produces. Go and ask the people what they want to do—ask them if they want to manure roads, and dig with picks and shovels while great trench-digging machines stand rusting in the rain. You will hear from millions of throats a roaring answer, No.

"They want to do real work, they want to do the best work possible; they want to use modern machinery, and really turn out goods wholesale, and when they have produced goods they want the right to consume them. They want to have a system of exchange, publicly owned and controlled. This will require a nation-wide system of production whereby 10,000,000 unemployed workers can produce for themselves and their loved ones everything which is needed for a decent and secure life, and then make these goods available on fair and equal terms to all who are willing to help produce them. That is what the unemployed of America are asking, and rest assured it is

what they are going to get."

Sincerely,

UPTON SINCLAIR

NOTES ON UPTON SINCLAIR'S LETTER

1. The point regarding the advent of Hitlerism is not quite well taken. The lesson one is to learn from the rise of Nazi tyranny is that Socialism, Unionism and Democracy must learn to defend themselves, not emasculate themselves. Fascism, as Sinclair has said in the past, is "Capitalism plus murder." The answer to Capitalism's murder regime should not be EPIC, which is "Barter plus suicide." Sinclair would postpone efforts in the direction of real Socialism, while he promoted his EPIC colonies among the unemployed, thus leaving the employed at the mercy of the Capitalist system. Such a maneuver would make Hitlerism unnecessary, for Capitalism would feel assured of a long period of "peace" in the industrial field. Hitlerism will be crushed when Socialism, Unionism and Democracy rise in their might and overthrow this obscene rule of "Capitalism plus murder," and not by effacing themselves. It is interesting to note that there is a great fundamental similarity between Sinclair's EPIC labor colonies and Hitler's forced labor camps operated on the principle of board and keep plus a few pennies a day.

2. There is nothing about Sinclair's theory of the need of middle class support that runs counter to Marxism. Karl Marx frequently wrote about the necessity of winning over the middle classes, professionals and intellectuals to the side of the workers in the struggle for socialized industry. However, with regard to the middle class, he was realistic enough to know that such support could be hoped for only when that class saw itself threatened by the great capitalists. Such is the case in this country, and other capitalistic lands, today—the middle classes see their economic position growing more insecure each day. In Germany, this middle class element, faced by bankruptcy, turned to Fascism. Marxists would have them come over to Socialism before they find themselves crushed. Marxism would make use of the expert help and efficient guidance that could be rendered by the middle class in bringing about a system in which the large-scale industries become the property of society and are operated democratically for the good of all the people, instead of for the private profit of a small but powerful economic group. EPICISM would use the middle class to concentrate on a barter colony scheme that would keep

down the tax bills of the rich and leave the capitalists in undisputed control of their monopolistic facilities of wealth production.

3. Sinclair will find that it is impossible to use "mass production" for a small group, compared to the population in general. Mass production, to be economically sound, must draw on a vast market. An industrial and agricultural economy that is organized for a minority, along the lines of mass production, would be similar to telling Tiffany's executives to put their business on a mass basis, when, as a matter of fact, it is organized to deal only with the Fifth Avenue and Park Avenue customers. A full line of industries for a small minority would have to be primitive—the coolie principle—or wastefully over-capitalized for the purpose of mass production, because there would be a complete absence of a mass market, so essential to such an economy.

4. Sinclair will not be able to "out-compete" private business, because the EPIC workers, under his plan, will labor only for themselves. The plan will reduce the capitalist's prime markets, but in no manner compete him out of business.

5. Sinclair's use of the word "dole" isn't quite fair. Instead he should speak of scientific, dignified, accurate "social insurance."

6. Sinclair's "compromise" is meaningless, from the viewpoint of the entire working class. It is predicated on the theory that an employed worker has nothing to complain about. Even if there were no unemployed, Socialism would still be necessary to remove the injustices, inequalities and contradictions of Capitalism. His "compromise" means that the real fight—socialization of the large-scale industries—is to be resolved into something of an armistice, a cessation of social pressure to establish industrial democracy for all workers, whether employed or not.

7. A "dole" can't be escaped even under the EPIC system, for many of the workers will be unproductive, inefficient, or without opportunity to do the work they are able to perform—and they will have to be supported by government funds or by the employed EPICISTS who are actually producing real wealth. Wouldn't an honest system of social insurance be better? As it is, if the government doesn't give Sinclair's misfits a "dole," they will live off the efficient, employed workers in the EPIC industries.

8. A system of barter inevitably tends to a lowering of living standards, keeping consumption of commodities to a minimum. In this sense my use of the

word "coolies" and the phrase "eke out a few pennies" was accurate.

* * *

What, in its political sense, is the meaning of "monolithism"?

This word is taken from "monolith," which is used by artists to describe a pillar, statue or monument sculptured from a solid rock. In its political sense, it means an organization that is solidly organized and disciplined to a single set of ideas, permitting no deviations from the party line. Thus, the Stalin organization in Communist Russia is monolithic, because it doesn't tolerate differences of opinion within its ranks. On the other hand, the Socialist party of the United States is non-monolithic, because it permits its membership a wide latitude on a variety of subjects.

* * *

Is there any truth to J. B. Priestley's charge that he knows Sinclair Lewis is not read because he found Lewis' books on library tables, with pages uncut?

This British novelist and lecturer made the absurd statement without stopping to think that none of Sinclair Lewis' novels were ever issued with uncut pages. The publishers set Mr. Priestley right, and he has been quiet ever since.

* * *

What, in Social Science, is the meaning of a functional economy?

"Functional economy" describes a condition in which the various industries—agriculture, construction, mining, manufacturing, transportation and communication—operate in close harmony for the ultimate purpose of serving the best interests of the public. Genuine "functional economy" is impossible under a capitalistic system, motivated only by the profit incentive, because of its innate individualism. A classless society, with complete socialization of the large-scale industries, and with production conducted for the purpose of serving humanity instead of profiting from the needs of the people, would result in "functional economy."

* * *

A Massachusetts clergyman, writing a letter to the June, 1935, Atlantic Monthly, deplors the way the riff-raff "go on propagating." Please comment.

It is somewhat inconsistent for a clergyman to bewail the fact that the riff-raff go right on breeding. Who, after all, are the people most influential in keeping the government

from legalizing the dissemination of birth control information? Our dear pastors, of course. Of late, many preachers and rabbis have come out for birth control, after generations of abuse and slander against the Freethinkers who were the first to propose this humanitarian method for the control of population. The more orthodox churches, led by the Catholic Church, still fight the birth control movement, though the latter has endorsed what is called the Rhythm Method. This method has many faults, as shown by Joseph McCabe in his essay that I published some months ago. But scientific birth control is still under the ban. So why criticize the riff-raff? The fault rests with the piffle-mongering clergy.

* * *

Which belligerent in the World War lost the greatest percentage of its men?

It may be that Australia won this "honor," for it moved 329,883 soldiers overseas and lost, in casualties, 314,078, or about 95 percent. It looks to me as though that were the record.

* * *

What books have you been reading?

During the past few days I've been having a pleasant time with two famous books—one very old, the other just beginning to age. The first was Rene Descartes' "Discourse on Method"—the full title is the mouth-filling "Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences." All of which sounds like an immense tome, weighing perhaps five pounds. The fact is, it's a tiny book, less than 75 pages.

This is a book I've been intending to read for years. I know its position and have debated about it, but always depending on second-hand sources. This time, having the inclination for sound, solid reading (it was blazing July, the temperature was up around 108, so I was, as is my wont, ready for heavy reading), and the time was well spent.

I can understand why Joseph McCabe included Descartes in his "100 Men Who Moved the World." Descartes helped build the intellectual foundation of the modern world, by undermining the methods of the so-called thinkers of the Middle Ages. Descartes threw out of the window

all reasoning that is irrational, taking the position that the mind must devote itself to rational thought, if it is to achieve anything like the truth.

Descartes was a believer, so one would imagine that the Catholic Church would have welcomed his works when they were issued in the first half of the 16th Century, but the Church's opposition came with a rush when it was learned that Descartes refused to believe in a God because the Bible or the Church said there was one. He threw such methods into the discard. He was considered dangerous because he went about all problems of philosophy through the use of reason, instead of accepting mere authority.

I was, as I said before, surprised at the book's brevity. It took me only about two hours to finish it, and when I put it down the thought came to me how it was possible for a book that's hardly more than a pamphlet to have such tremendous, epoch-making influence. It goes to show that size means nothing in the world of thought. Einstein issues an 8-page pamphlet that shakes the scientific world; Descartes issued a slightly larger booklet, and the world of philosophy still feels his influence, after about 300 years.

I feel it would be a nice thing if I were to share the pleasure and benefit I derived from Descartes' "Discourse on Method." Such a masterpiece of logical thinking, written in a simple, lucid style, should be made available to the general reading public. The volume, which was published in Edinburgh, in 1887, is on a bookshelf only a few feet from me as I write these lines. If I thought my readers were interested, I'd be more than happy to reach over and schedule it for an early rebirth.

The other volume I've been reading is by the famous literary artist, Richard Jefferies, and the book is entitled "The Story of My Heart." This also is a small volume of about 75 pages, which I read much more rapidly than was the case with the Descartes item. This was because of the style the author used—the most graceful, beautiful, poetical prose I've ever come across. This book is

already an immortal masterpiece of literature among a small, discriminating group of readers, but after reading it, and enjoying every sentence, I couldn't for the life of me figure out why it was being kept a "secret" so long. It's the kind of literature any literate person can enjoy, regardless of the amount of formal education. Your first impression is the book's perfect style. After you get into the book just a little you find new doors opened to philosophy, Freethought, Rationalism, nature, and Man. The book stands at the top in the great, brave library of mind-liberating literature, and I insist that it has vast "popular" appeal, which may strike some of our esoteric high-brows as eccentric, but I know what I'm talking about. I've always noticed that a good book will inevitably find its public, if its publisher will go about the simple, necessary job of letting the people know about it. I'd be glad to hear from my readers, and if I get only 25 expressions favoring the idea, I'll get it down and reissue it. It's standing right alongside Descartes' "Discourse on Method"—two silent friends who are just waiting for the chance to hop into the world and make a few thousand more people saner, wiser, happier and more understanding.

I'm so constituted that I hate to keep a good thing, in printed matter, to myself. If I'm pleased, I like to get up and yell.

* * *

If the Soviet Union continues its present rate of increase in population, how long will it take to reach 200,000,000?

Nine years.

* * *

Do your readers consider it legitimate to advertise rubber goods?

The above question, which was No. 16 in the Information Exchange of the September, 1935, issue, was spotted by a gentleman named Mr. Carl L. Kaplan, who is an honored practitioner in the esoteric profession of supplying a fastidious public with prophylactic rubber goods. He opens his letter with the announcement that he is shipping me complete samples of every item his company handles, which impressed me as an experience enjoyed by few men since the discovery of rubber. I've heard of lit-

erary people buying rubber goods in drug stores or dropping a quarter into a slot machine set up in many a men's public toilet, but here, I claim in all sincerity, is the first time an editor has received what he can properly refer to as "review copies" of assorted rubber goods. I am over-come.

My benefactor then turns on the above question and ventures the seemingly sound opinion that his business is as legitimate as selling Kotex to the ladies. "Both," he generalizes, "are a daily necessity." On the practical side, my correspondent marshals the argument that sanitary goods have saved many people much grief, and here we men of the world must admit the validity of his argument. And anything that saves grief is a friend to man—and woman.

Becoming something of a moralist, my correspondent continues: "Anyone who does not believe in Safety First is foolish and ignorant. As for encouraging people to 'run around' by making this product easy to purchase, the percentage of these 'weaklings' is very small."

I think my sincere humanitarian's position is getting a little wobbly in this last thought. He seems to stand on less certain ground. From my observation, it seems safe to say that the 'weaklings' would 'run around', rubber or no rubber, so there's not even a small percentage to worry about. Before there were rubber articles available, there were fish-skins for the timid, the others not giving a damn, and before the days of fish-skins, nobody gave a damn. And those were the days when people lived shorter lives—not because they were immoral but, to revert to my friend's argument, because they hadn't learned to draw on science for the glories of the realistic philosophy of "Safety First."

I remember meeting a British novelist some years ago who mentioned, half humorously, that he had used these articles once, but had decided to pass them up for good because he received the impression that he was indulging in mutual masturbation. I wonder how Mr. Kaplan would answer this critic. Or, should I, in all fairness, wait until I have availed

myself of his gift of "review copies"? If he had warned me, I should have wanted to request that the "review copies" be autographed, and that I be assured they were "first editions."

* * *

What's your opinion of the "Message to Garcia"?

That Hubbardian masterpiece has always impressed me as one of the finest pieces of tripe issued since the invention of printing. The chap who was given a message to deliver to Garcia didn't stop to ask any questions; he didn't ask where the fellow might be; he merely ducked out of the office and went on his errand. That strikes me as dumb. A sensible person would stop and ask for Garcia's full name, for there are many Garcias in the world. He would ask just which Garcia is wanted. He would then ask for directions so that he could get a line on his goal and save himself a lot of false motions. The whole series of questions needn't have taken more than two minutes, after which he could carry that message intelligently and with the minimum of wasted time and effort. I think the fellow who carried that famous message was a fool and that the fellow who wrote about him, Elbert Hubbard, was an ass.

* * *

Frequently, when workmen go on strike, the employers issue a statement that is played up in the press, and which usually blames the strike on "outside agitators." Please comment.

Most skilled trades are organized into national unions, and, of late, many unskilled workers have joined the same kind of labor organizations. All of which is a sane, logical, efficient plan of combining the resources of the employes. When new contracts are to be written, or employers are to be approached with a view to bringing about recognition of a union, the workers' spokesman is usually a trade union representative who is experienced in such circumstances. In addition, there is the element of timidity on the part of employes, who are reluctant to speak up to the management lest they be picked out for special punishment later.

The cry of "outside agitators" is merely a ruse for the purpose of arousing prejudice. These same em-

ployers are organized nationally, as, for example, in the Chamber of Commerce, with headquarters in Washington, D. C., where the A. F. of L. also maintains headquarters. If it's wrong for the workers to have headquarters and a secretariat outside the neighborhood of some particular industrial plant, then, by the same logic, it should be reprehensible for the employers to follow the same practice.

When there is a strike, the employers do not hesitate to go far beyond the city limits in a search for scabs, bringing them from the slums of cities perhaps hundreds or even thousands of miles away. It's all right to import "outside scabs," but it's bolshevism and treason for the workers to bring in an experienced spokesman from the union's national headquarters because he's an "outside agitator." The whole argument reeks with insincerity and should cause no sensitive person to get his bowels in an uproar.

* * *

What is a trade-mark?

A trade-mark is defined by the U. S. Patent Office, as follows:

"A trade-mark is a distinctive word, emblem, symbol or device, or a combination of these, used on goods actually sold in commerce to indicate or identify the manufacturer or seller of the goods."

The Patent Office, up to August 14, 1934, had registered 316,178 trade-marks. About 12,000 trade-marks are registered each year. The year 1924 was the peak, with 15,749; 1933 was the lowest in 13 years, with only 9,613 registrations.

* * *

Didn't Karl Marx teach that Socialism couldn't be established in a single country?

When Karl Marx wrote his great works on economics, more than a half century ago, he held that because Capitalism is international, it would be impossible to establish a Socialist "island." This dictum was accepted by most Socialists until the Communist party took over Russia. Lenin, of course, believed in, and waited for, the world revolution before settling down to the gigantic task of inaugurating the Cooperative Commonwealth. But he soon got tired of waiting. When he died, Stalin and

Trotsky went into their famous duel, the main issue being the program of Socialism in a single country versus a world revolution, Trotsky insisting on the latter position. When Stalin defeated his doctrinal and personal enemy, he settled down to building Socialism, through a series of five year plans that were to produce the industrial foundation for such an order of society. The Marxian theory on this point was dismissed on the score that the father of scientific Socialism had in mind a series of small countries such as are to be found in western Europe. Russia, said Stalin, in effect, is entirely different, covering as it does so much territory in Europe and Asia, an enormous empire in itself. The point seems to be well taken. At any rate, events prove industrialization can be stimulated.

* * *

I have an unquenchable passion for betting on horse racing, and while it is true that I pick the right horse once in a while, I never leave the track without suffering a loss, and yet I continue going back for more punishment. What would you advise me to do?

My first suggestion is to stay away. Don't bet. But as you can't follow that advice, let me propose that you never take more than \$5 or \$10 with you when you go to the track. As all betting is on a cash basis, you will be able to limit your losses and at the same time satisfy your strong impulse to gamble. Perhaps a loss of less than \$10 might be compensated by the thrills you'd be getting for your money. You could bet \$2 on five separate chances, and then call it a day. You undoubtedly realize that it's the moneyed insiders who know how to play this game profitably. They are usually able to control each important race by a system of doping the horses which they want to run as losers and stimulating the ones they have fixed to win. It is common knowledge that cocaine, kola nut, strychnine, heroin, digitalis, alcohol and other drugs are poured down the horses' throats. If all races were square, your percentage figurings might mean something, but what can a set of comparisons do against the hidden fact that horse No. 1 has been dosed with one dope, No. 2 with

another, and so on down the line? It's the smart racketeers, who are in on the chemical end of the swindle, who walk away with the money. So, if at all possible, stay away.

* * *

Is there any scientific test by which I could find out if I speak with a nasal twang?

Talking through one's nose is an annoying, offensive, unesthetic practice and should be watched. Constant care for a while should enable one to break the nasty habit, which is probably the worst elocutional defect. Most persons who talk through their noses are totally unaware of this flaw, and those who have sensitive ears rarely tell even their best friends how terrible their speech sounds. If I had the time I'd be more than willing to lead a world-wide crusade against the obnoxious evil of talking through the nose. However, occupied as I am with Fascism, Communism, Democracy, anti-Semitism, imperialism and other social, political, economic and international questions, I am compelled to neglect this crucial issue.

Dr. Guy S. Greene, head of the speech clinic of Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, has given a great deal of study to the problem of speech nasality, and a little test he has worked out ought to be studied and tried out by all persons who are anxious to use the language in a pleasing, agreeable manner. It is known that once a person learns that he speaks with a nasal twang it is comparatively easy to correct the evil. Dr. Greene has constructed a sentence which does not include letters that require the help of the nose. It is possible to close the nose and still speak this particular sentence without a nasal noise, if one's habits of speech are correct. The sentence is as follows:

"There's a good show at the theater today."

The test is very simple. Speak it the first time in your natural tone; then repeat it with your nostrils held closed by your fingers. You do not speak through your nose if both readings sound the same. If, during the second reading, you feel "breath pressure" or the words sound muffled, then it is obvious that you are a vic-

tim of nasality, or rather, to be more accurate, your friends and hearers are the victims of your unpleasant habit of speech. Now go ahead and make the test. Be honest with yourself. And if you're at fault, try to remedy matters.

* * *

What's your opinion of Joseph McCabe?

I consider him one of the most important, significant, vital, debunking, informative, educational writers in the world today. For almost a half century this prodigious worker has applied his urbane, philosophical, scientific, and at times fiery, pen in the great social service of ridding victims of clericalism and theology of their superstitions, has helped give sound scientific knowledge to the educated and to those who lack formal education but had the faculty of self-development and self-improvement, has rewritten a great mass of historical data in an effort to erase the lies and distortions of self-interested parties who prefer to consider history as a medium on which to exercise their imaginations and give more power to their prejudices.

McCabe, who started as a Catholic priest, and served that Church for 12 years, reaching the high position of professor of scholastic philosophy at the Church's most famous educational institution, Louvain University, in Belgium, when he was still well under 30 years of age, finally, because of his intellectual honesty, compelled himself to review candidly the nature of the beliefs and dogmas he was helping to propagate. After much inner controversy and struggle, he decided to break away from that dangerous world-wide force for obscurantism and help rid humanity of the unsound, illogical premises that make possible such a powerful machine for the inculcation of religious stupidities, false ideals and anti-social behavior. Naturally, such a purpose has brought down on his head the abuse of the beneficiaries of priestcraft. In a recent work, McCabe has been described as being a man "with the mind of a peasant!" McCabe was good enough to be their professor of scholastic philosophy many decades ago, but today, after years of study and research, he presents himself only as a peasant-minded lout!

They'll have to try again for something better than that precious piece of nonsense.

This fighter and scholar has a passion for truth and justice. So much so, that he has always been more than willing to make financial sacrifices for his ideal and endure the ordeals of abuse and ostracism. But such obstacles only added to his fervor and made him more determined to carry forward the torch of knowledge, wisdom and understanding to the millions who are groping for a bit of real, intellectual comprehension. He was already a famous and respected figure when I came in contact with him in 1925, so I can't take the credit for having "discovered" him, but I don't hesitate to say that I made possible, financially and otherwise, during 10 long years, his complete application to the writing of books and pamphlets that are intended to free minds from the chains of false intellectualism. I feel more than proud of my little part in this great cultural enterprise, and it is my earnest hope that this work will continue for another decade, or even another 20 years. The world needs the fruits of McCabe's great, humanistic, sound, sane, accurate, truth-seeking world-scholarship. I consider myself more than fortunate in having been able to collaborate, as his impresario, these many years, and I can claim, in all candor, that the results have been more than happy for the output has been extremely large, universal in scope, and productive of constructive responses from a vast public in acute need of what his genius had to offer.

McCabe shines brilliantly in the fields of philosophy, science, history and Freethought. He not only tears down the reactionary prejudices of the superstition-mongers, he not only ridicules and exposes the parasites of Clericalism, but he is always presenting a constructive, educational side that purposes, at all times, to give the mind that has thrown off religion the broad picture of useful, authentic, humanitarian, character-building, ideal-serving, factual, properly interpreted, verifiable knowledge. Belonging, as he does, to the traditions of Diderot and Voltaire, he

fighters the enemies of culture, then turns around and makes useful contributions to humanity by showing the road to true culture and education. He is a teacher, a guide and a castigator; an instructor of the masses who whispers words of wisdom one minute and thunders protest at the miseducators the next moment.

As a literary craftsman, McCabe stands high. He writes beautiful English—simple, lucid, unpretentious, direct, witty, satirical, humorous and enlightening. He has learned how, after writing something like 200 large books, to present the most difficult problems of science, history and philosophy in words that are understood by the man in the street. He carries his learning lightly, even though the load of learning is vast. It takes genius to do that. Never is he tedious, pedantic or an egotistical show-off. His mind is rich with learning, but his bearing is that of a plain, ordinary person.

McCabe has a passion for learning. He can write a book on any phase of culture, because he is a world-scholar who knows just where to go for the best that the mind of man has passed on for the good of civilization. He is that rare combination—a popularizer and an original thinker. He has made many original contributions to science (especially in psychology through his world-famous book, "The Evolution of Mind," the first book written on this subject and still considered a classic in many universities throughout the world); in history, where he has done much to clear away the rubbish brought forward by the religious interpreters of historical developments; and in philosophy, where he has been exceptionally effective in controversies with those who would misuse philosophy in order to perpetuate notions of mysticism and falsehood.

The whole world is McCabe's canvas, on which he paints the picture of what man did in the past, what he is doing today, and the direction in which he should travel in the future, if the ideals of truth are to be advanced. Nothing that is human is foreign to McCabe's interests. He is a quiet, modest, self-effacing student of all that is good and true in the

human mind and character. He is also a warrior, who fearlessly buckles on his armor and goes forth to slay the forces of cultural reaction and deception. He is a true servant of the people—a scholar who uses his erudition not to enslave but to assist the mind. When he finally puts down his pen, the world will say:

"Thanks, McCabe, for a job well done. You have lived a long, constructive life. Your monument is the great increase in knowledge that you have helped bring into being. Your pen has been a beacon, and it will shine long after you are gone. Well done, Joseph McCabe, well and nobly done!"

* * *

Please give us a review of "Redder than the Rose."

Robert Forsythe, author of the above mentioned book, is the reviewer of *The New Masses*, a communist magazine. This writer (I understand Forsythe is a pen-name) has a quick, snappy way about him, and is always readable. His articles and reviews, gathered from the pages of *The New Masses*, are short, pointed, and salted with a stinging satire that goes over. He lands his blows above the belt, and they carry enough punch to draw an "ouch" from the human targets he likes to have fun with. He is that rarity among Red Intellectuals—a Communist with a rollicking, live sense of humor. The Leftists could use a few more Forsythes.

His book plays a piccolo solo of shrill abuse against his pet hates—H. L. Mencken, Alexander Wollcott, Trotsky, William Randolph Hearst, Noel Coward, Ernest Hemingway, the New Deal, Hollywood, British hypocrisy, and all shades of liberals. He sets about to slaughter them, and while I couldn't find many corpses I did meet up with arms and legs, a couple of eyes gouged out, some two dozen busted ribs, and pecks of teeth scattered all over the lot.

He also has his admirations—the Soviet Union, Mike Gold, Russian movies, Louis Adamic, Vincent Sheean, the Communist party, Stalin, the Five Year plan, Proletarian art and the other men, things and institutions that work the revolutionary side of the street. One doesn't have

to agree with one-tenth that he says to be entertained. He puts across his viewpoint with a happy gusto that is infectious.

His writing reminds one of Mencken in the days of his best work (this will make Forsythe hit the ceiling), though his angle and approach are entirely unmenckonian. At that, he's right oftener than Mencken was even in his palmiest days. Mencken is through, kaput, out, reduced to windy cackling. Forsythe has taken his place, and he has a bracing freshness about him that makes one want to follow his work as he goes stalking through the aisles of civilization, knocking down a God here, pulling a wind-bag's whiskers there, patting a good worker on the shoulder, and whooping it up for the revolution which he's sure is around the corner.

I hope the revolution is delayed long enough for young Forsythe to write a few more pleasant books like this one. It'll be worth the wait.

* * *

How much money does the U. S. spend on its leisure-time pursuits?

About \$4,000,000,000, according to an estimate of the Leisure League of America. Some of the important items, figured on the basis of wholesale values, follow:

About \$250,000,000 for photography; about \$75,000,000 for toys, \$60,000,000 of which is for games intended for grown-ups; about \$107,000,000 for seeds, flowers and flowering plants; about \$23,000,000 for musical instruments, of which about \$12,000,000 is for pianos; about \$12,000,000 for music; about \$146,000,000 for books; about \$9,000,000 for bird cages and supplies.

* * *

How far into the earth has man drilled and what temperatures were found?

So far as I know, the deepest hole is a dry well drilled by the Gulf Production Company, in Upton County, Texas, reaching a depth of 12,786 feet, where a temperature of 182 degrees Fahrenheit was found. It is estimated that if the drillers had gone another 2,000 feet the temperature would be high enough to boil water. A temperature of 149 degrees was found at a depth of 10,630 feet, which means there was an increase of 33 degrees in the last 2,000 feet that were drilled. This shows that

terrific heat will be encountered when man drills only a moderate distance into the earth's surface. The question then arises as to whether engineers could apply this unlimited supply of heat to practical ends. The problem here is to draw off the heat at a rapid enough rate, which, for the present, can't be done. But the experiments present interesting and practical possibilities which may, in time, be solved. Once man begins tapping the earth's heat, his store of energy will be ample for all his needs for millions of years.

* * *

I'm interested in the writings of Isaac Goldberg. Where can I find out something about him?

A valuable book on Goldberg's life, personality and works may be ordered from Allen Crandall, Sterling, Colo., at only a dollar. I recommend the book. It is an intelligent, well-written discussion of one of America's most important literary and critical figures. In fact, I'd put Goldberg at the top—the best critic in the American field. Crandall's book—which is a neat job of printing—should be in your library. I wouldn't think of parting with mine. A few years ago Crandall did a monograph on Clarence Darrow that was a peach of a job. I don't know whether or not that book's still in print. Those who are interested should communicate with Crandall, at the address just given.

* * *

As I frequently hear and read that the U. S. is the richest country in the world, will you please let me know what the wealth amounts to?

In 1932, according to *The Annalist*, our gross private wealth amounted to \$253,343,000,000. This was distributed as follows: general property, \$145,498,000,000; capital stock, \$44,656,000,000; savings deposits, \$32,026,000,000; life insurance equities, \$14,033,000,000; tax-exempt bonds, \$7,531,000,000; other bonds, notes, mortgages, \$7,111,000,000; partially tax-exempt bonds, \$2,488,000,000.

* * *

Is it true that the U. S. government made a profit on its money issues?

The report of the Secretary of the Treasury holds that Uncle Sam made more than \$3,000,000,000 on his money-issuing powers during all of

1934 and the first half of 1935. This, of course, included the government's profit from its revaluation of the gold dollar, which in itself amounted to \$2,800,000,000. Printing silver certificates brought a profit of \$150,000,000, which resulted from the difference between the actual cost of the silver and its \$1.29 monetary value. An additional \$70,000,000 was made from other seigniorage incomes.

* * *

This is the third time I have sent in questions and have never seen any of them answered, but will try again. My father has fallen for the Townsend Plan. He thinks a lot of your opinion, so please let's have it.

The writer of the above has been asking questions already covered, and, as previously stated, I don't intend to repeat myself, especially when my readers know that all of my material, including a number of articles on the Townsend Plan, will be found in three volumes of questions and answers.

* * *

In his book, "Redder than the Rose," Robert Forsythe writes that "Capitalism is dead," and that Communism "is inevitable." Please discuss.

This Communist critic is a pretty good commentator on current figures, particularly of the Mencken type, but in the field of economics he seems to follow a line of wish-thinking. It's very easy to say "Capitalism is dead," and when one hears this repeated in every shade of radical and liberal periodical it is no cause for puzzlement why so many people should believe it.

The main reason why we are to conclude that "Capitalism is dead," according to Mr. Forsythe and many others, is the fact that millions of men are unemployed and in want. There's no denying the facts here. There are more unemployed today than at any time in the history of Capitalism. But does this mean that Capitalism is dead? To answer this question one must ask: What is Capitalism?

Capitalism is the present social order, in which the Capitalists own the large-scale means of production. Have the Capitalists ceased owning these enterprises? Of course not. So Capitalism endures in its outward form.

We now come to another phase of the

question. What motivates those who own the machinery, factories, mills, mines, railroads, banks, and so forth? To make a profit, of course. Is profit-making dead? Not according to Mr. Forsythe's own words, for he makes quite a point of the fact that during the past few years corporation profits have made tremendous increases.

So we find that Capitalists still own the industries and that their corporations are making great profits. These two facts being self-evident, it seems plain that Capitalism is very much alive.

We now come to a third point. Capitalism, in the long run, needs a mass base for its ideology. Now don't let that frighten you. Put in plain English, it means merely that the capitalistic principles of private ownership of socially necessary property and the making of profits must be supported by the public at large. Here we find, of course, that perhaps 90 percent of our population believes in Capitalism, believes in the profit motive, believes in the policies of either the Republican or Democratic parties.

Wall Street, it is true, controls the bulk of our large-scale industrial facilities, but the millions of little fellows who run groceries, filling stations, hot dog stands, pants pressing establishments, lime and cement emporiums, one-man printing shops, 6 percent beer joints, condom foundries, combination Coca-Cola and Kotex fountains, bathroom laboratories for the production of guaranteed hair straighteners, Hamburger and sody pop institutions, and all the other manifestations of current humanity trying to make an extra dime, all believe in private ownership and profit.

That leaves but one point in Mr. Forsythe's argument—the sufferings of the unemployed. The answer here is equally simple. It isn't Capitalism's prime purpose to create employment. Capitalism is better off, from the viewpoint of a low wage scale, when there are many workers available for each job. Capitalism, through its government, is willing to throw a bone and a sack of spuds to the unemployed, so long as these

doles don't threaten the volume of profit, and Mr. Forsythe readily grants that profits are huge.

So, it seems obvious that Capitalism, instead of being dead, is very much alive. Should it decline, would it follow, of necessity, that the world would embrace Communism? That's a mere assumption on Mr. Forsythe's part. He's hot for Communism and would like to see that system inaugurated in this country, and, like the true zealot, he thinks that what he wants passionately will come inevitably. But must it work out that way? Can't we get Fascism instead of Communism? Can't we just stay at Capitalism, as the civilizations of China and India remained at one station century after century?

Comrade Forsythe's notion about inevitability is nothing more than a shallow form of optimistic fatalism, an intellectual concept that has no standing among scientific thinkers. To say that the "perfections" of Communism are inevitable because of the "imperfections" of Capitalism, is to resort to shoddy logic.

When one is dealing with mass movements, historical developments, social evolution and public groupings, one who knows history, and the capabilities of man in the mass, never seeks for perfection. There never was a perfect society, and I doubt that there ever will be one.

One seeks for perfection in a play, a movie, a symphony, a poem, a piece of sculpture, a novel, a mathematical equation, a structure of logical thinking, because perfection can be achieved in such artistic or intellectual fields. But one doesn't expect mass man to be perfect in his social formations; an approximation of peace, prosperity and progress are quite satisfactory to those who are given to realistic, practical thinking about man and his social institutions.

When dealing with man in the mass, we can never have perfect justice, but only an approximation of justice; we can never have perfect prosperity, but an approximation of material plenty; we can never have perfect order, but an approximation of crimelessness. It's easy for any critic to look for perfection, and offer a line of verbiage that guarantees a

flawless social set-up, but such a writer is merely offering counsels of perfection which look good in print but don't work out in life. The wise man prefers to work for a better world, not a perfect world.

* * *

Do you think the Christian Scientists are progressive?

Because Christian Scientists have rejected orthodox notions like Hell and Eternal Damnation, it doesn't follow that they are progressive. The various Christian superstitions that they have thrown overboard are also being abandoned by religionists in the older churches, and as time passes more illusions will be chucked onto the garbage pile. So in this I can't grow enthusiastic about our Christian Scientists, who may, so far as I know, be Christians, but who certainly aren't scientists. They are entirely unprogressive and reactionary in their attitude towards medical science, leaving their followers to die unnecessary deaths because of their refusal to accept and apply the findings of the world's greatest scientists. Such a position is unscientific in the extreme, and as such they qualify as enemies of progress.

* * *

What's your opinion of H. L. Mencken?

In the early years of his book reviewing for *The Smart Set*, Mencken did invaluable work in pouring deodorants on the puritanical literary nitwits who too long held American literature in the straitjacket of Christian purity and innocence. The old poohbahs, led by the late Hamilton Wright Mabie, and assisted by Dr. Henry Van Dyke, saw to it that praise was accorded only such works as held up the ideal of chastity, considered sex a sin and Gawd's greatest error of judgment, and granted that sexual intercourse might be tolerated in their lily-white, pious, sanctimonious habitat if only it were restricted to married persons, and then only for purposes of procreation.

Literature was in a sad state when Mencken, after absorbing the writings of the greatest figures of European literature, busted loose, and, using his pen as a shovel, threw the fragrant manure out the back door of the stable, where it belonged. Mencken's howling, hooting, mimick-

ing, nose thumbing and Bronx cheering finally sent the holy, sacred caboodle scampering to oblivion.

A great deal of the credit for the honest, sincere, liberated freshness of today's literature goes to this Baltimore Brandes, this Mencken of the first 20 years of his voluminous outpourings. He brought up the weapons of rough wit, bawdy humor, ridicule, abuse, burlesque and noises with the mouth that sounded much like the breaking of wind. He was everything the Mabies hated—coarse, vulgar, loud, profane and plain sassy—weapons that the pious crew could not understand, let alone use. They thought such a method would defeat itself among America's refined elements, but time soon showed that Mencken's tactics were sound because they worked, with the result that the good souls of literature ducked, and haven't been heard from since. Comstockery is dead, perhaps for good, which in itself deserves a day of fasting and prayer.

Mencken was always a good friend of freedom of speech and press, even though he has always been a conservative in politics and economics. He has helped many an unpopular viewpoint get its hearing. He fought Prohibition, from the very beginning, but in this political battle he shut his eyes to far greater social evils—evils he was more inclined to defend than oppose. Mencken, always anti-puritanical, has always been pro-capitalistic.

In FreeThought, Mencken has done good work. He has helped make Rationalism popular in this country, teaching thousands of intelligent readers to beware of religious superstition and other forms of pious bunk.

But Mencken's work is done. He has been only an echo the last six or eight years. He has said his say, and it seems he is out of ideas for all times. His articles for *Liberty*, during the past few years, have been about the poorest, rottenest, silliest examples of pretentious hooey it's been my misfortune to read in many years of journeying amidst the masterpieces of the super-bunkshooters. What a decline! What inane chatter! His articles on politics and government show the profundity of a

combination of Billy Sunday, Eddie Guest, Will Rogers and Dizzy Dean. His comments on international affairs and questions of government are about as intelligent as Bryan's assault on science during the Tennessee evolution trial.

But all good citizens in the Republic of Letters shouldn't forget the services Mencken rendered honest literature when he was in his prime. We may smile at his puerilities of 1935, but let's remember to say a good word for his ribald blasts of 1910, when he was doing pioneer work for free expression. I doubt he knows how far he has fallen. Financially he is better off than ever. Where, in the old days, he lived off his newspaper salary and wrote his reviews for practically nothing, today he can sit down to two hours' work any rainy afternoon and knock down a thousand bucks. There's nothing else for Mencken to do. It'd be folly to keep repeating what he gave the world in his bright and peppy days. So he does the only thing at hand—writing slop for a moronic magazine that specializes in showing what a low opinion it has of American intelligence.

Mencken, who helped put the finger on our "tin-pot popes," has himself become a penitent and has taken his place in the Amen corner. All he need do now, to round out his career, is to become a Dry, a Chiropractor, a Methobaptist hell-fire evangelist, write a laudatory biography of Dr. Frank Crane, and end up in Congress.

I hope there's a young person somewhere in this country—perhaps under 20 years of age—who is preparing to take up criticism where Mencken left off.

[Immediately after finishing the above estimate, I turned to the front page of a daily newspaper and found the report of an interview in which Mencken spoke against a dictator for the U. S., but suggested that we throw away our republicanism and install a king in the White House. This is Mencken's answer to America's political and economic problems. He puts F. D. R. at the head of his acceptable list of prospective kings, because "Roosevelt comes from a sort of royalty and is married to a Roosevelt." Falling

here, he names Al Smith, Albert Ritchie, Jim Reed and John Smith, the last being "any man that might come along." Of course, there is a certain amount of spoofing here (just imagine Al Smith throwing away his brown derby for a crown!) but the whole thing is typical of Mencken's mental decay. A reading of this interview convinces me that I'm right in my evaluation of this once-potent writer.]

* * *

Why does the daily press kow-tow and toady to the Catholic Church?

The newspaper editors are watched carefully by Catholic authorities, and the first hint of criticism is met with every weapon at the Church's call, ranging from polite letters from the Catholic Laymen's Association to threats of reader boycotts, advertising cancellations, suits, and bribery. Newspaper publishers are capitalists, out to make a profit from their large investments, and they don't care to offend large minorities, especially when those minorities are firm supporters of the capitalistic theory of society. It's all right to libel Socialists, pacifists, Freethinkers and other radicals and liberals, for such minorities oppose the fundamental policies of Wall Street and lack means to impress the kept press. Instead of threatening editors, radicals prefer to build their own press, which is a slower solution, but basically sound.

To show how Catholic authorities bulldoze opposition, I refer my readers to an article, entitled "Blue-Penciling the Editors," by Richard Reid, in the July 12, 1935, issue of *The Commonweal*, the most famous Catholic periodical in the U. S. A. In this article Mr. Reid tells how the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia went about the systematic task of "blue-penciling" the editors, and that the work was well done is attested by the fact that criticism of Catholicism in the Georgia press has entirely disappeared, despite the fact that Catholics are but a small minority of the Georgia population, there being only one Catholic to 175 inhabitants.

One particularly effective trick, which is described in the first column of page 281 of the issue of *The Commonweal* referred to above, was to answer a woman who had written

a letter of criticism to an Atlanta newspaper. The catch was a neat one. The Catholic Laymen's Association didn't merely write a letter to the editor for publication in the letter column. That would leave the subject open to further debate on the part of the woman correspondent. No. The Catholic letter was printed in the Atlanta newspaper as a paid advertisement, paid for by the Catholic organization. Then, when the woman correspondent submitted a letter in reply, the editor referred her to the advertising department, his claim being that it wouldn't be fair to the Catholics, who paid for their space, if a critic were to be permitted free space! As a result, the woman's letter was kept out, for she couldn't afford to buy space. This, remember, is quoted from *Commonweal*, a Catholic organ, as proof of the efficiency of the Catholic guardians of "truth."

The *Commonweal* article closes with the statement that the daily press is now generally satisfactory, which means, of course, that criticism is taboo, but it bemoans the fact that anti-Catholic views still appear in what it calls the "quality" magazines, the organs of the "literati." It further suggests that action should be taken to "blue-pencil" these magazine editors in the same manner that they have gone about the thought-suppressing work of setting the Georgia editors "right." Such well-organized campaigns against a free press can be met only by the support of periodicals that can be depended on not to curry favor from religious obscurantists. Readers who have respect for our constitutional right to a free press have a solemn duty to perform. They must, by all means, give their fullest moral and material support to editors able and willing to resist the lying propaganda and the anti-social practices of the beneficiaries of a favored priestcraft intent on distorting the truth, suppressing criticism and in other ways "blue-penciling" what they deem unworthy of seeing the light of print. This is a fight that can't be fought by radical and liberal editors alone. Their readers are important figures in the battle. If the readers will give their truth-seeking editors the full support

they deserve, much will be done to make possible intelligent counter-action against the machinations of the suppressionists.

* * *

Abbe Dimnet claims that life in the Middle Ages was happy and beautiful. Please comment.

If life was happier in the days of perfect faith, when the Catholic Church was supreme in most of Europe, the inhabitants had to enjoy it in a hurry, because the life expectancy of that time was only 21 years. Today, with faith declining and the activities of man more and more secularized, we consider a person of 21 a mere kid. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, edited by Dr. Morris Fishbein, says it is reasonable to expect man to increase his life expectancy to 105 years, but this will be done by science, not by the ideas of the superstitious, filthy, miserable, priest-ridden people of the 13th or 14th Century. Dr. Fishbein claims a life span of 105 years is within the realm of the possible, because of the discovery of comparative anatomists "that the natural life expectancy of an animal is usually five times the period needed for full skeletal development." Since 20 years is required for full skeletal growth in man, the age of 105 might be set as the approximate normal human limit. Considering that only 33 persons out of 100,000 in the U. S. A. today may expect to reach an age of 100 years, science certainly has a tremendous job before it, but it is reasonable to look forward to a great victory in this field of research. Given his choice, even Abbe Dimnet would rather suffer along in this age of skepticism and materialism (with its companion advantages of better economic conditions and a longer life expectancy) than to bring the world back to the "glories" of the Middle Ages, which belong, in the main, to the Dark Ages, with faith supreme but the average life expectancy held down to a mere 21 years.

* * *

Being on federal relief, I went to the relief office recently and requested a larger food allowance because my wife is now in the fifth month of pregnancy and also requested an order for medical attention, which were granted, but I was given a sound scolding for get-

ting my wife that way. Please comment.

The simple, intelligent thing for the government to do would be to make available the latest scientific knowledge on birth control, but here the relief administration is helpless, because it would be highly inconsistent for the government to teach birth control in one department and jail publishers for mailing birth control literature through another department. The whole show is pretty dumb.

With too many people on relief now, and with unemployment threatening to settle down as a permanent condition in capitalistic society, the unemployed are breeding as fast as before, faster, in many cases, because they have more time for such diversions, and the federal officials have to stand by and see the relief load grow heavier through increases in population, when, under present conditions, we already have too many people. To tell you not to get your wife "that way" is to indulge in silly talk, because you are so constituted that you will assert your biological nature, regardless.

But we'll learn some day, taking lessons in intelligent management from progressive European countries like the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and the Soviet Union. Where puritanical morals and ecclesiastical control are still strong, we have to tolerate a policy of withholding valuable birth control information from those who need it most, while those who are economically independent have access to such knowledge.

We probably won't come around to a sane view because of the justice and common sense of the case for birth control, but what will bring us to our senses will be the pressure of financial stringency. After taking care of a few more million pregnancies among the persons on federal relief, Congress may get hep to itself and repeal its monstrous law against the teaching of scientific information on a subject that will remain a live issue as long as there are men and women in the world.

* * *

You will, I am sure, be the first to admit that the Rationalist philosophy, based on science, is always shifting its position, and as such is uncertain and

often unreliable, while those who accept religious ideas have the firm foundation of permanent beliefs and a philosophy that can be relied upon.

Rationalism, which briefly is the philosophy that insists on applying to all beliefs, theories and conclusions the severest tests of reason, logic and verifiable data, shifts its position whenever it has new information, because that is the proper scientific method. Having as its aim the search for truth, Rationalism is always ready to re-examine its most cherished ideas in the most critical spirit. That is a sign of strength, not weakness. New information may show the errors in previous beliefs, and as such will always be welcomed by the scientific Rationalist. That explains why Rationalism is a growing, living philosophy and not a bundle of cut-and-dried dogmas.

On the other hand, theological beliefs rest their case on faith, which is only another way of saying that theological-minded people do not reason but merely react to their emotions. They believe a set of doctrines because certain theological authorities in the past said they belonged in the category of divine, revealed truth, and as such must be accepted. That is unscientific and completely out of harmony with the methods of the world's best thinkers. It is interesting to note that even in this field of emotion welded to theology, we do meet up with constant shiftings, only we find the changes weak, instead of strengthen, the structure of religious thinking.

Few intelligent religionists today accept Genesis as sound, accurate knowledge on the nature of the universe. The discoveries of astronomy, geology, biology, anthropology and a dozen other sciences have resulted in the abandonment of many religious ideas that once were accepted as part and parcel of Absolute Truth. A shift here and there with such thinkers results in confusion and lessening of certainty, so that theology grows more and more to present its true side—a set of notions that are accepted by illogical minds and believed because some prophet or inspired book said they were so, regard-

less of what free inquiry might discover.

Thus, science grows stronger day by day, while theology grows weaker. The facts being of that nature, it would be more logical for my correspondent to revise his statement, with the result that the changes in science prove progress while the retreats of theology show compromise and defeat.

* * *

I have followed with great interest the numerous flattering things you have written about Alaskans, whom you describe as superior intellectuals, good readers, etc. Have you any knowledge regarding their attitude towards religion?

Judging Alaskans by the kind of literature they buy, I'd say, from this far distance, that they are thoroughly debunked in all matters regarding religion. Of course, there are religious people up there, and they probably constitute a fair proportion of the population, but whatever information I've been able to get, aside from my personal experience in supplying them with liberating, unorthodox literature, indicates both the whites and Eskimos of Alaska are vigorous-minded, rationalistic Free-thinkers.

On this point, I'm glad to be able to quote from a book by an American, Robert Marshall, entitled *Arctic Village*, in which we are given a careful, authentic, complete picture of the social and intellectual lives of some 200 persons who inhabit a remote village that is far from any large-sized community. The author discusses their religious reactions in an illuminating paragraph, which I'm delighted to pass on to Freeman readers:

"The religion of the white people of the Koyukuk varies from the strictest Fundamentalism to the most blasphemous Atheism. The preponderance of opinion, however, is away from either of these extremes, in a zone of tolerant Agnosticism. Only eleven of the 77 white people hold any belief whatsoever in a formal religion. . . . The remaining 66 whites completely disregard church affairs, supplication, worship of God, and all the other matters customarily associated with religion. Even among the eleven believers, only one Catholic, one Lutheran, one Meth-

odist, and the member of the Apostolic Faith take their religion seriously enough to read the Bible and recite prayers regularly. The remaining seven have no living religion at all, but merely surviving habits from the training of early childhood."

So much for the whites. As for the Eskimos, they also are Freethinkers, having abandoned the legends of their fathers and rejected the equally absurd religious superstitions of the missionaries. The two races live together with hardly any religion, and they are, according to this author, honest, orderly, kindly and fair in all their relations. Crime is practically unknown. Mutual aid is accepted as a common practice. The ethical code is high, as regards truthfulness, justice, tolerance and fair play, though there is hardly any support for the conventional notions of morality that will be found in hide-bound, puritanical communities in the States.

Yes, I insist that those far-away Alaskans are splendid people worthy of the highest admiration. One wonders what effect there will be from the movement of several hundred colonists under the auspices of our federal relief authorities. Will they poison the whites and Eskimos there with their false codes and Fundamentalist fanaticism, or will they react to their new environment with an intellectual awakening? In short, will they spread the poison of their insipid beliefs, or will they shed them as they come under the influence of these simple, honest, intelligent alert-minded, Freethinking, libertarians?

* * *

How many people are born and how many die daily throughout the world?

One hundred and fifty thousand are born and 100,000 die every day, according to the estimate of Prof. E. M. East, Harvard University. In all, there are about 2,000,000,000 people in the world, and if the present rate of increase continues, the world's population will be about 4,000,000,000 in another 65 years.

The most populous continent is Asia, with 950,000,000 people; the least populous is Australia, with 7,000,000. Africa, which is much in the news today because of Mussolini's designs on 350,000 square miles of its territory, has 150,000,000 inhabit-

ants. Europe has 550,000,000, and North and South America, 230,000,000.

The earth hasn't begun to hold the population it could support, if its men and women would learn to use science for their material welfare and work out a social order that will make wars unnecessary.

Science, properly applied to our day-by-day problems, could easily solve the question of a food supply, and as for health, most diseases being preventable, according to medical science, it follows that not only could the world hold many times more than 2,000,000,000 people, but each individual could properly expect to live much longer.

We humans have just about mastered the world, but we still must learn to master ourselves. After taming nature, man is finding it much more difficult to tame himself. Unnecessary cruelty, savagery, exploitation, persecution, destruction, decay and misery torture humanity everywhere, but these evils could be conquered if the people were to subject themselves to the scientific forces that are waiting to serve the race.

With science establishing a firm, sound, economic basis, we could then, through education and culture, turn the entire globe into a civilized community.

* * *

"I think that civil, social, economic and political matters are more ably and intellectually discussed in *The Freeman* than anywhere else.

"Each mail doubtless brings scores of eulogies. Permit me to swell the general chorus with another paean. The note I mean to strike is of somewhat different tenor. It is intended to compliment you on the scope and character of your literary publication, *The Freeman*. To one not long quit college halls and at present absorbed in the maelstrom of the work-a-day world, it affords a peaceful, philosophic haven. Seriously, the diversity of your interests, the sane handling of current events, the splendid opinions on literature are a real stimulus to culture—to the Da Vincian ideal of universality. Not only are you popularizing education, but you are providing a forum for public discussion. Assuredly it must gratify you to know that your work is receiving warm appreciation; likewise that in conversation you and your efforts are an excellent substitute for the trite subjects that usually fill up the big gaps in conversa-

tion."—S. Marshall Kempner, N. Y. C.
 "Your prophecy as to what would happen to Richard Strauss, in view of what has happened, was a revealing and very creditable bit of perspicacity."

* * *

What's your opinion of the famous poem, "Flanders Field"?

It's typical poetic nonsense. The thought expressed, in classy lingo, has it that poppies are growing in Flanders Field, where many soldiers, killed in the World War, lie buried. But, we are warned, if we discontinue their quarrel, thereby failing to keep faith with those who died, the dead soldiers will refuse to sleep, even though poppies continue to grow in Flanders Field. Put in simple prose, one sees the absurdity of this famous poem. The World War ended in a peace that was as bad as the war itself, and now the militarists are preparing another, and even greater war, but there's no evidence that the dead in Flanders Field have decided to wake up. They are sleeping just the same, and will continue that way for a long time. Like "Trees," it's silly.

* * *

Please give your estimate of Abbe Dimnet.

Intellectually, Dimnet stands about on a par with the late Dr. Frank Crane, who was one of the most platitudinous writers in a vast conglomeration of litterateurs devoted to the exposition of the prosaic, commonplace, trite and conventional. This Frenchman, Dimnet, writes in English and has something of a following in this country, usually among those who prefer inspirationalism to realism, orthodoxy dressed in the tinsel of sophistication, and shrewd propaganda for clericalism as against honest Freethought. Dimnet's philosophy comes out of St. Augustine, his science smacks of the Vatican, his history is distorted, his logic is feeble and his conclusions, while always plausible, are invariably unsound and untenable.

Take, for example, Dimnet on art. He hasn't quite the courage to utter the nonsense himself, so he quotes M. Jacques Blanche, who said he "knows only one living artist, Picasso, whose draughtsmanship equals that exhibited in the painted caves of southern France and Spain."

These scrawls, drawn by primitive men perhaps 25,000 years ago, have received equally extravagant praise from numerous other "critics," but as one who has seen reproductions of them I don't hesitate saying that they are about equal to the work done by bright six-year-olds in any well-run kindergarten. But such feeble pieces of "art" serve the Dimnets, who take a partisan delight in presenting this modern, materialistic, non-religious age as inferior to medieval and prehistoric man. He didn't quite have the courage to say that the sculpture of the ancient Greeks was superior to anything done today, which undoubtedly would be the expression of a true opinion, because those ancients, instead of being good Catholics, were outrageous, benighted pagans. So he leaves out the classical artists and fetches in the "works" of primitive men.

When he treats of life in the 13th Century, the century of "perfect faith," we are told (and here Dimnet manages to keep a straight face, which in itself is no mean feat) that that was a happy period in human history, with art rampant and the creative impulses of man receiving full expression. After almost a thousand years of Catholic savagery and rotten corruption, with intellectualism dead, literature unheard of, poetry a dead art, drama, music and dancing ignored, the economic and political life in decay, human behavior at one of the lowest stages in all history, disease and misery everywhere, poverty the accepted condition of most of humanity—in such a society, controlled completely by the Church, we find that a few cathedrals did manage to rise out of the dirt and the plague-ridden stench. That is supposed to compensate man's willingness to endure the tyranny of the Church, which alone, growing rich at the expense of the suffering poor, had the funds with which to buy the talent to erect monuments to its own perfidy. The 13th Century will always be looked on as a period of degradation, regardless of the clever maneuvering of a thousand Abbe Dimnets.

Another favorite device of Dimnet is to "prove" that primitive man's

reasoning was not "essentially different from the most abstruse scientific reasoning. . . . Can we be sure that . . . his virgin brain did not work in a more original way than ours? If so, where is progress?"

Indeed, where is progress? Primitive man had a biological equipment that enabled him to survive under most difficult conditions and in the face of pressing enemies from the world of nature, and he not only survived but handed on to civilization great discoveries like fire and the wheel. But to draw from these meager facts the inference that the primitive savages resorted to the same kind of abstruse reasoning that served or serves an Einstein, Edison, Steinmetz, Copernicus, Wassermann, Kepler, Darwin, Huxley, Goethe, Bertrand Russell, Freud, Poincare, Kant, Nietzsche, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, and a thousand other creative contributors to the scientific, mathematical and intellectual stores of humanity—to place such master thinkers on a par with the primitive man who, after thousands of years, learned to make fire by rubbing two sticks together, is to indulge in obscene and indecent disrespect in the presence of profound genius and constructive humanism.

These, and other great cultural figures, would be the first to admit that in the biological scale the men of primitive times laid foundations that made possible the erection of civilized mediums, such as language, industry, logic, abstract reasoning, the calendar, scientific inquiry, engineering, useful arts, masterpieces of beauty, architectural gems and the other qualities and things that go to make civilization what it is. That is an undeniable fact. The most cultured man can't avoid, or escape, his biological heritage. His brain today is the result of evolution, in which primitive man made his contributions. But to say there has been no progress between primitive man and the men who have made civilization what it is is to indulge in nothing less than a desire to hold to scorn what is beautiful and useful merely because one's own historical contributions have been without genuine social merit. Here I am referring, of course, to the anti-

social, culture-hating, anti-scientific, anti-truthseeking history of the Roman Catholic Church, of which Dimnet is a soft-spoken, polite but malicious, spokesman.

Realizing the truth of the above, Dimnet defends his Church with the stupid remark that "I have often been struck by the fact that in monasteries . . . the latest technical improvements are visible everywhere, from library to kitchen." By this he merely means, of course, that the Catholic Church, after centuries of opposition to real science and free inquiry, has at last capitulated and taken to its bosom the products of materialistic science, including scientific medicine. This is nothing to the credit of the Church, when one knows its black, disgraceful history of persecution and torture, particularly in the days of the Inquisition, and even today in the form of Fascism and censorship in countries where it is able to assert its will. It is merely using what it once hated and despised, as it once hired a handful of artists, masons and erectors to build cathedrals in social settings of filth and disease, as symbols of its power. It didn't create beauty; it merely used it. In later days, it didn't create science, but is today willing to patronize it, as one finds, for example, a radio broadcasting station in the Vatican, or a pump engine in the cellar of an obscure monastery.

Dimnet always speaks for that organization which said that plagues were visitations from an angry God, and not the result of ignorance regarding sanitation; that science was evil because it contradicted the Bible; that medicine was the weapon of the devil, because God meant to use the sufferings that come from disease to demonstrate his displeasure with the behavior forbidden the dupes of the priests; that gagged and tortured the great men who helped build modern civilization; that hated education, because it led the masses away from the influence of the priesthood; that distorted history because it couldn't stand the shame of its own record; that enslaved women, degrading them in the social scale during the long centuries when the Church was in power; that now, after the intell-

igence of the world has learned to know it for what it really is, comes forward and attempts to justify itself with lies, evasions and misrepresentations. Dimnet speaks for that element. He is dangerous because there are numerous signs, especially in middle Europe, of the return to power of this great power of reaction and superstition, through the adroit use of the tremendously effective weapon of clerical Fascism.

* * *

In a sensational edict, which was broadcast in the press, Archbishop John Gregory Murray, of St. Paul, warned Roman Catholics to beware of birth control organizations, likening them to the "Dillinger mob," both of which were "organized for murder." Please comment.

Archbishop Murray is either ignorant or dishonest when he confuses birth control with abortion. Birth control is one of the most effective means of discouraging abortions. Something like 30,000 women die yearly in the United States as the result of abortions, most of which could be prevented by the dissemination of scientific birth control information.

Mrs. Margaret Sanger, America's most distinguished and able advocate of birth control, answered Archbishop Murray's tirade in the following sane and intelligent way:

"The crux of the matter is that abortion is one thing and birth control is something totally different. Abortion destroys life. It kills the unborn child. It is a terrible and tragic thwarting of nature and one which takes its toll in ill health, in sterility and in women's lives. Birth control, as the medical term contraception implies, prevents conception. You cannot destroy what does not exist. You cannot use birth control and abortion as interchangeable terms. To do so is to misrepresent the facts."

* * *

Does Stalin read The Freeman?

I know definitely that he does. An official connected with the library of the Communist Academy, in Moscow, wrote me, when the institution's subscription expired, that it would be renewed because a number of officials, including Stalin himself, wanted to know the position of this paper on international affairs, a subject which the editor tries to cover. Russians

are keenly interested in foreign opinion and try to get a line on what the representatives of various viewpoints—conservative, liberal, democratic and radical—have to say. Whether or not The Freeman has any influence with such readers I have no way of finding out. But that doesn't bother me. As a man of words, who never tries to pose as a man of action, I ask only the right to have my say, and expect my readers only to give me a hearing, who, I hope, take for granted that my approach is not a biased one on any conceivable topic, but an honest, candid, forthright quest for the truth, regardless of where such a search leads. I would write as I do whether I had an audience of only 100 readers or a million. I couldn't very well do otherwise.

* * *

I am considering taking C. W. Mixer's treatment for cancer. Please advise.

Charles W. Mixer, of Hastings, Mich., won't be able to treat your cancer, because the gentleman himself died of cancer recently. It is reported that this notorious cancer quack sold his fake "cures" right through his own fatal illness. I believe there's no lower form of animal life than the purveyors of patent medicines and "sure cures." Can you wonder that I have given so much space to "Dr." Fred D. Warren's psoriasis and eczema "cure"? What griped me was the fact that this patent medicine impresario was a Socialist leader and journalist in addition to promoting this despicable business through the mails. I'll never forget his cynical reply to my statement, some years ago, that psoriasis could be treated only by quartz lights or X-ray. His answer, given with the most disarming smile and tendered voice, was that his customers lived mostly in villages and rural sections, and therefore rarely came in contact with the medical scientists who use these modern methods. The inference was that since they couldn't be reached by science it was "legitimate" for them to be exploited by a patent "cure-all" sold via direct mail and advertising in publications of low ethical standards. The thought came to me that if the great Socialist "doctor" were to become afflicted with psoriasis he would naturally walk across the street to a competent med-

ical doctor's office where the various lights and X-ray are available. It would seem to any decent person that a Socialist educator and journalist would use his influence among the uninformed to advise them to avail themselves of the same kind of service, there being good roads everywhere in this country and facilities for bringing victims from the most remote sections to communities where scientific treatment is available.

* * *

I want to box your ears for slamming my favorite, George Raft. No, I don't like Raft because he's sleek and handsome—I admire him because, in the jargon of the theater, he never "chews scenery"—he is, at times, the most "controlled" actor and one of the most sincere the screen has produced.

The above comes from a gifted, charming red-headed daughter of the stage. As for having her box my ears, that would be a pleasure; it'd give me the opportunity to meet her, which would make the assault and battery nothing less than a glorious adventure. But, seriously, I don't accept this woman's estimate of Mr. Raft. To her, he seems to be an artist who is "controlled," who doesn't "chew scenery" (what an effective description!) but to me his "control" means nothing more than a "dead pan," which I understand is good stage jargon. That "dead pan" never expresses an emotion because the mug is frozen and what's behind it is all vacuum.

* * *

Why doesn't the Jew just forget he is a Jew? Wouldn't that solve the problem overnight?

If ever there was a Jewish group ready to forget questions of race and religion it was the German Jew. But Hitler and the other anti-Semites refused to let the Jew forget. He insisted on searching family trees back to a single grandparent who was Jewish, and once found, the full weight of Nazi wrath fell on the helpless victim of racial intolerance. Your anti-Semite's first business is to prevent the Jew from forgetting his Jewishness.

This same correspondent refers to the Jew's "hawk-like nose," apparently ignorant of the fact that competent ethnologists found only 14 percent of Jews having such noses. Most Jewish noses are straight, but the effect

of years of caricature and exaggeration has given the Jew a physical characteristic that is by no means general, in the same way that vaudevilleans have succeeded in giving all Irishmen red hair, and, until recently, green whiskers. When I was a boy I was sure, after learning my ethnology at burlesque houses, that all Irishmen had green whiskers, so you can imagine my surprise when I met a real, live Irishman and found him to have no whiskers at all.

Intermarriage is a good thing for the race because such sexual behavior results in the fusing of various strains. Jews have for centuries mixed their blood with non-Jews, as the records will show in Germany and elsewhere, with the result that there are only 600,000 Jews, after living in Hitlerland more than a thousand years, and perhaps 5,000,000 part Jews. So the Jew gets it in the neck either way—whether he remains strictly a Jew or reaches out and shares his physical heritage with others.

To demand that the Jews surrender to assimilation is to ask for a general condition that is impossible of attainment. Such arrangements must always be matters of individual choice and decision. But the facts clearly show they have, for many centuries, quietly practiced assimilation. When fanatical anti-Semitism comes into power, as in Germany, we find a strong movement in favor of forbidding such intermarriages. So again the Jew gets it in the neck, either way.

However, I don't believe for a moment that the Jew is going to be crushed by his enemies, however powerful they may be and however favorable their propaganda may seem at the moment. The Jew is carrying a hard load today, but he has been through much worse persecution—and survived. He will, undoubtedly, survive the present wave, for he knows he is history's eternal goat—whenever anything goes wrong, the Jew is made to take the blame. In Germany, Hitler's agents would make it appear that a mere one percent of the population are responsible for that country's deplorable economic position, but informed people incline to the opinion that the 99 percent may have had something to do with

Germany's decline. Instead of having been enemies of Germany, the German Jews were always loyal to the finest ideals of traditional German culture and civilization. If Germany continues to ostracize its Jews, the sufferer will not only be the Jewish people, but Germany itself. History has had a way of proving that. Look at Spain.

* * *

Please tell me a little about Commonwealth College.

Located near Mena, in the beautiful hills of western Arkansas, Commonwealth College, with students and faculty numbering 92, is devoted to valuable courses of study in labor organization, strike management, farm and cooperative organizations, theoretical training in Marxism, labor journalism, public speaking, current events, dramatics, creative authorship and history, the latter dealing particularly with the evolution of society from its primitive economy to Capitalism as the gateway to the next social order, Socialism.

This labor college has recently gone through a period of persecution at the hands of the state's shyster and reactionary politicians, who attempted to hamstring the institution, but found they had aroused so much sympathy for the small group of radicals that the repressive move was abandoned, though it may be revived in the future. The college has numerous enemies among the state's propertied interests, who bring up the usual clap-trap of free love, anarchy, violence, Atheism and revolutionary conspiracy.

Instead of injuring the institution, Commonwealth grew under the attempted suppressive persecution. Last year, the peak was 60 in the student body and faculty; in 1935, there are, as stated, 92.

Commonwealth College occupies 320 acres, and has, with student and faculty labor, erected 24 buildings, including a well-equipped library containing thousands of volumes and periodicals. The school raises its own food, cuts firewood, runs a small printing department which issues a fortnightly publication, operates a cannery, a small electric light plant, water system, laundry and general store. All students and faculty mem-

bers must put in four hours each day at useful labor.

Tuition costs very little—\$50 per quarter, which includes board, laundry, recreation and lodging.

* * *

If one should have his money invested in a good stock, such as A. T. & T., instead of a home, wouldn't it be as well invested, should there be inflation?

A stock certificate represents ownership of the physical assets, as well as the intangibles, of a corporation, and as such will certainly enjoy the "benefits" of currency inflation. This, of course, would not apply to corporation bonds or preferred stock, because their face provides for a stated amount at a set rate of interest, all of which would become of insignificant value should there be an orgy of uncontrolled inflation.

But, if you are a workingman, or one of very moderate means, I'd still insist on putting my savings in a home, or in improvements, a farm, or some other form of real property. Only the great speculators know how to handle the stock racket. It is usually the little fellow, with small holdings, who gets bumped off at the first burst of manipulation.

If your cash is available, don't keep it in a private bank; instead, put it up with Uncle Sam at the postal savings window, where your money will be absolutely safe until you need it. A period of inflation may ruin the banks, for they have most of their money in long-term bonds, which, during inflation, will lose their value overnight.

Try to get along without a bank account, keeping your funds with the postoffice, in small certificates if necessary, which may be cashed without doing damage to the bulk of your savings. Thus, if you want to put in \$100, ask for 20 \$5 certificates. Then, when you need a few dollars, you can cash one without disturbing the balance.

If you have any bills to pay, buy postoffice money orders. Pay all local bills in cash. In that manner you will be free of the unsound banking system, which most certainly is heading for another crash, perhaps far worse than the bank "holiday" in 1933. By steering clear of the banks, you not only protect your money, but you make it impossible for the pirati-

cal bankers to dip into your account each month for a series of robber service charges.

Today, you have to pay the bankers for the right to do business with them. You can't leave money at the bank's counter without paying 3c for the "right" to fill out a deposit slip. You have to pay exchange for each check you deposit. The bank also makes a flat monthly bookkeeping charge, usually about 40c. And so on down the line, with the banker holding you up, and you being the perfect sucker. All this could be avoided by using the postal savings system and carrying out the other suggestions I've offered above. And once you get it into Uncle Sam's safe till, try to forget about A. T. & T. stock and the other corporations, which are all run for the greater profit of the insiders, though they will, when it's to their advantage, hand out a portion of the profits to the little fellow, in the hope of hooking him for all his savings when the proper time arrives.

* * *

Recently I made out a questionnaire for naturalization papers in federal court. One of the questions asked if I was willing to take an oath, which I answered in the affirmative but added that I reserve the right to affirm. Do I have such a right? What stand shall I take when I appear before the federal judge? Or if the judge should swear in a group at the time, should I make my wish known, or just let it pass? Can the court refuse my citizenship papers on account of that?

There is absolutely no prejudice in our federal courts against any applicant for citizenship requesting the right to affirm instead of taking a religious oath. The mere request is enough. Our federal courts recognize the right to affirm, as do most of our state courts. Only in a few sections, where religious traditions rule, do the local and state courts insist on religious oaths.

As the whole thing is a formality, it might be better to accept the oath if the entire group is sworn at one time, making a mental reservation when the oath reads "So help me God," substituting in your own mind the word "Good" for "God." But if you don't mind being a little conspicuous, just ask the court to permit

you to affirm. It won't prejudice your standing in the slightest.

I know a good Freethinker who has to sing with his fellow Kiwanians when the luncheon is opened with "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and when he comes to the last line, which contains the word "God," he lustily sings "Good" and no one, except the singer, knows the difference. He has the satisfaction of having refused to mix religion with a song that is supposed to symbolize the libertarian traditions of a secular government.

* * *

What's your notion about Cecil De Mille's "The Crusades"?

I haven't seen this super-gigantic Hollywood masterpiece, but expect to come on it soon. It's safe to predict that it'll be the usual De Mille hash of history. One can depend on De Mille's support of clerical hokey. However, as I am no expert on the crusades, I believe it would be better to turn this job over to Joseph McCabe, who has written some authoritative books on this most interesting, bloody, terrible period in Christian history. Recently I wrote McCabe to be sure to see the picture when it's released in London and to write a 7,500-word essay on it for an early issue of the *Appeal to Reason*, for the entertainment and edification of that publication's family of pious readers.

* * *

Do you consider Heine still worth reading?

Heinrich Heine's prose and poetry are as alive today as they were when he wrote his deathless contributions to world literature. Not only would I say this gifted, witty, wise, scholarly German is worth reading, but I insist that no one can claim to be cultured and informed without absorbing his brilliant and fascinating works. The fact that Hitler could stoop to such stupidity and brutality as to destroy his statue in Hamburg and burn his books, because he was a Jew, condemns that insane Nazi to the contempt of civilized people.

I have done a little in bringing Heine's works to the attention of the reading public, having published some of his shorter studies, but I regret to admit that thus far I have left untouched the longer, and far greater, masterpieces of irony, poetry, comment, observation, criticism and phi-

losophy. I have long been an enthusiastic student of his works, with memories of the pleasure I derived from Heine that I'm sure will never leave me. A few winters ago I put before me the collected works of Heine and made it my delightful job to retire to my library early each evening for several hours of an intellectual feast that still haunts me like the theme of a great symphony. Even now, several years after that perambulation among great works of beauty, I recall vividly what I took from those silent pages—pages that sprang to life, with love, laughter and wisdom.

Talk about H. L. Mencken's criticisms of literature! The Sage of Baltimore couldn't hold a penny candle to this great German. He wrote in an exciting, thrilling style that Mencken could never capture if he tried for a thousand years. As for abuse of the "booboisie," you'll have to turn to Heine for the real stuff in this line of literary endeavor, for smiling Heine could stab the thickest Babbitts with a pen that drew blood at each thrust.

I went through his "Letters on Art, Music, Popular Life, and Politics," (The Salon) as though they had been released yesterday, when, as a matter of fact, they were first published in a German newspaper in 1831. Heine loved every form of art, and could discuss the creative spirit, whether it dealt with literature or philosophy, music, the stage, dancing, or painting.

Next I read "Life in France," which consisted of letters from Paris, on French affairs. Here he showed himself as a reporter and commentator, dealing with topics as they sprang from life, between 1840 and 1843. Great things were happening in Europe in those times, as are happening today—the masses, the submerged people, were striving to break the chains of tyranny in government, and Heine watched their struggles with a deep sympathy that showed where he stood in "the liberation war of humanity," as he himself expressed the matter. Heine, the great literary artist and poet, was never above and beyond the day-by-day struggles of suffering humanity. He knew what was going on—in the worlds of labor, finance, politics, in-

ternational affairs, statesmanship and business—and he wrote about them with simplicity, learning, intelligence and charm.

Or take his "Pictures of Travel," which also told of the war of freedom for mankind, plus sketches of places and people that are as real as the characters in a great play. He tells of the great and the small, of the cook who did a good job in an obscure inn in Italy, or the pretty maiden who waited on him and seemed to welcome his suggestion of further and more intimate attentions, of Philistines and philosophers, of great pictures and thrilling moments that are commonplace to the prosy but which become great adventures when experienced by a Heine.

Then take his "The Baths of Lucca," which I'd prefer to call "Ladies of Mad and Easy Joy." Our poet philosopher could appreciate a pretty face and a neat ankle, and when such sweet morsels were about, Heine liked to stop by the wayside and munch his share.

Follows "The City of Lucca," which sounds better to me as "The Enemies of the People," for here our poet-thinker turns again on collective man and lambastes, cajoles and throws spitballs, all in the mood of an inspiring passion for libertarianism and a deathless hatred for philistinism.

Then I came to Heine's "English Fragments," which takes us to England, and which would sound better to me under the title of "The Laughing Philosopher and the Beef Eaters." Bernard Shaw has written much about the English, and a right amusing time he's had, but Heine beat him to it in this short study of London life and manners.

Then I turned to more letters, this time under the title of "Letters from Paris on French Affairs," and written in 1832. Here, along with numerous reports on republicanism and revolution, monarchy and aristocracy, Heine wrote a description of the cholera in Paris, with a dramatic intensity that holds its readers in a grip that hurts.

And then came a charming, short study, entitled "Shakespeare's Maidens and Women," a gallery of women that is served, as the translator says,

like "apples of gold on plates of silver."

And so on. There were others. And every page was worth reading. I wouldn't have deprived myself of that pleasure for anything I can think of. That winter was a season of joy and delight—all because I had at my elbow a rather hefty shelf of books from the pen of Heinrich Heine—the German "non-Aryan." Oh, if only Heine were alive today to tell the story of Hitler, Goering, Streicher and Goebbels! How the world would shake from his thunder and laugh as he caught these sadistic clowns on the point of his pen and dipped them in the hot pitch in his ink-well!

Worth reading? Yes, and if ever I can see the chance—and by that I mean enough loose change in my pantaloons—I'll see to it that the works that made a winter so joyous and rollicking will be spread out on thousands of new pages in thousands of new books so that others may have their share of the pleasures I took to myself. I'm not selfish in matters that concern the mind. I'm always glad to share to the limit. And what greater sport could there be for me than to share Heine's glorious prose and poetry with a world that needs to know what he thought, felt, said and sang.

* * *

About a year ago I signed up for a course in "Traffic Management" with the International Correspondence Schools, Inc., agreeing to pay \$5 a month until the total sum of \$150 is paid. After I had paid for four months of this bunk I got wise to myself. I haven't paid anything now for about eight months. They are now sending me letters saying that they will start legal action. I have been telling them I am out of work and have a lot of necessary debts to pay. I was of age when I signed. I have a wife and baby, so you see how things are. Can they really make me pay?

These expensive correspondence courses are covered by a cast-iron contract, and there's no doubt that the school you mention can sue and probably get judgment. But, as you are out of work and broke, I fail to see what good that will do the company that is threatening you. The school, in order to sue you, will have to employ lawyers, pay filing fees, etc., all of which would mean an actual loss if you were to lose in court. If you would lay all the essential

facts before the concern I believe you will be relieved of your legal obligation, for this company is out to make a profit and not waste funds on fruitless court actions. My hunch is the party won't sue you, even though you have no real way of avoiding your contract except by their consent. Most of these correspondence schools, which sell courses at high prices; get signatures to contracts that are unbreakable, if brought to a test in court. But, as I said before, there's nothing in sight for the school by suing you, so I believe you are safe. Just sit tight and don't worry.

* * *

How is the American Rationalist Annual being received?

The readers responded immediately with a ringing welcome, expressing enthusiastic satisfaction with the list of articles from the pens of world-famous figures in the fields of thought, science, literature, criticism and related subjects. Many said they were surprised to see so many "big names" in the table of contents. Yes, the names were big, and the job cost plenty, but the money was well spent. I plan to issue the second number during the summer of 1936.

* * *

Will you kindly comment on the work of Gertrude Stein?

I have no time to waste on eccentric, wordy, windy, mystical, queer, arty "poets" who pour out reams of trash that no sane, intelligent person can understand. If there's an idea in any of this "modern" literary hogwash, I'm just too dumb to find it. I've made numerous attempts. I've come to the conclusion that I haven't missed anything important. These artistic decadents are the effects of a sick civilization. The great artists, in their work, have always been strong, powerful, clear, virile and comprehensible, and by such creative geniuses I mean Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Moliere, Ibsen, Shaw, Rodin, Gorky, Tolstoy, Voltaire, Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner, Shelley, Dickens, Hardy, Whitman, Twain and scores of other masters who wrote, or painted, or sculptured in mediums that weren't beyond the understanding of normal, intelligent men and women. But when I come to a Gertrude Stein, I find

the disease of obscurity is infectious, breaking out with this rash:

I would not, would not, could not, should not, all around the lot and next week behind last month and into the future with all that that means say anything anyhow anyway that could or would or should however be clear because also and and etcetra It I and my all wrapped up in my ego and self and inner being happened now or tomorrow or elsewhere to say utter sing and yell what I and my greater and mightier ego have to say and that say was understood it would perhaps, and really show and show and show again many times over that what I and I and I, including you, know that it was not and never will be worth to say uttering and speaking.

Nerts!

* * *

I am mystified by an Associated Press dispatch from Germany which tells about the arrest and punishment of a student because he publicly mocked "Hitler's way of eating asparagus." What can that mean?

Such a report must be read carefully between the lines. Connecting the student's gestures with the common knowledge of Hitler's homosexuality, you get a fair idea of what it's all about.

* * *

In the July, 1935, Scribner's, John Cournos writes: "Let those who worship God be allowed to worship; no one has anything to fear from God-fearing men." Please comment.

No Freethinker or Skeptic would think of disagreeing with the first half of Cournos' sentence. The anti-religionists prefer to approach the problems of religious obscurantism with the instruments of discussion, education and scientific research. They wouldn't dream of trying to impose the ideas of Freethought through repression, persecution, or censorship. They leave such methods to the religionists themselves, who have always been masters of the black art of persecuting those who reject Theism and those believers who happen to hold different notions about the God-idea and the other trappings of religion.

In Mexico today the Church is not being persecuted; worship is permitted freely. What the Mexican authorities object to (and with good cause) is the political maneuverings and intrigues of the priests who have been

stripped of their power to hold the masses in economic and intellectual bondage.

The same goes for the Soviet Union, where the government permits religious worship, but being Atheists themselves the authorities use the medium of education to show their citizens that the assumptions of religion are without validity. They also refuse to permit the Church to be an arm of the government, and withhold financial support from such elements. In this, the Russians are carrying out literally what we have written into the First Amendment of our Constitution, which provides against the establishment of any religion.

Our government is supposed to be strictly secular (as the Soviet Union really is) but we forget our traditional secularism and toady to sectarianism through governmental favors to the churches, tax exemptions, financial and moral support for chaplains in government departments, including the Congress, legislatures, courts, schools, prisons, the army and navy, etc.

If the Constitution really meant what it said, the United States would follow the Russians and make the job of secularization complete. This is desirable, because history shows that religion is not a unifying force, as commonly supposed. Instead, it makes for dissension, confusion, disunity, ostracisms, intolerance, racial and religious persecution, hatred of science, miseducation, distortion, organized propagandization of sacred falsehoods, torture and religious warfare.

In the face of religion's record of terror and hysteria, the bland statement that "no one has anything to fear from God-fearing men" shows a peculiarly inadequate knowledge of the plain lessons of history.

When most men were God-fearing (during the Dark and Middle Ages) we found humanity living like animals in a malaria-infected swamp.

Life, when God-fearing forces were in almost complete control, was insecure. Science was tabooed. Freedom of thought was punished. Heretics were burned. Jews were massacred. Books which told the truth were destroyed. The life span was miserably short (only 21 years). Religious

wars were provoked for the greater glory of God. Crusaders were sent scurrying across the country to rape, destroy and loot. The masses existed in economic slavery, near starvation and intellectual backwardness, with 95 percent of the people illiterate. The clergy was a part of the machinery of the feudal system that served to hold the serfs bound to the soil in a system that was only one degree above chattel slavery.

It was only when men became less God-fearing that conditions began to improve. Education became more general. Culture was made available to the millions instead of a mere handful. Humanitarianism worked towards the social ends of health, security, social service, tolerance, and protection for unpopular, minority opinions.

As men become less God-fearing they grow in the capacity for mutual aid, peaceful pursuits, intellectual and cultural achievements, kindness, social ethics and the other splendid expressions of humanity at its finest.

You report that Germany has 600,000 full Jews. As half and quarter Jews are persecuted with equal ferocity, it would be interesting to know how many of them are to be found in Hitlerland.

It is estimated that there are 1,500,000 half and quarter Jews in Germany.

For a number of years I have wondered how a mind so free from religious and political bunk could be held so firmly in bondage by the greatest delusion—the bunk of “disease” and “cure.”

I have received many intelligent and orderly discussions on my position with regard to scientific medicine, and I respect my opponents, even though we don't see eye to eye. Medicine, one of the newest of the sciences, makes many mistakes, but its methods indicate that it's moving in the right direction. I certainly don't consider that scientific medicine belongs in the same class with religious obscurantism. I know that many doctors of scientific medicine make mistakes, but such errors result from too little science, not too much, and that time will enable this science to develop and serve humanity better. I don't care to join my radical and rationalistic friends in attacking a science which promises to add to life

and happiness. Many of my readers disagree firmly with my conclusions, but here I merely insist that this editor shall have the right to freedom of expression. I ask my readers to weigh and consider, not to accept slavishly what I write. I have always been very careful to say that in this sphere I speak only as a layman.

* * *

What's your opinion of “The Informer”?

In many ways this is one of the best pictures I've seen in a year. Victor McLaglen's acting as the bewildered, moronic informer is a masterpiece. His every step to the betrayal of his revolutionary friend for 20 British pounds, is convincing and thoroughly motivated. The story is constructed with skill, and moves inevitably to a stirring, sincere climax. My only objection to the picture is its religious emotionalism. To judge the Irish revolutionists by “The Informer,” one would imagine them to be the most pious Catholics who ever lived. There's no denying the strength of the Roman Church in the Irish situation, but it is false to give the impression that the spirit of Freethought was, or is, unknown to the Irish rebels. It happens that, many years ago, I knew intimately Irish revolutionists—including the martyred James Connelly—and they were thoroughgoing Freethinkers. They didn't object to accepting the help of Catholics in the war on the British, but this didn't imply they were soaked in medievalism. I never saw so much praying and calling on the saints as I met up with in “The Informer.” The atmosphere is not representative. The splendid intellectuals who helped give Ireland a measure of independence were not all slaves of the priest. Many of them were anti-clerical, and still are. But, why expect Hollywood to go completely honest on any question, especially one dealing with religion? I have shown many times that when it comes to religion, Hollywood acts as though it were producing something for the public mood that prevailed two or three centuries ago. But, despite all this, “The Informer” is a fine movie and deserves unlimited praise.

* * *

Do you consider Mamoulian a fine director?

I've already praised Ronben Ma-

moulian's direction of "Becky Sharp," which probably marks a new era in the movies. I've watched his career since I saw his stage production of "Porgy," that fine drama of Charleston's Negroes. "Porgy," I'm glad to learn, has been put to music by George Gershwin, and if his skill as a composer ranked with the story's dramatic material, we should expect a first-rate opera. Mamoulian's handling of scores of Negroes in the first act was a masterpiece of mass movements. Here, as elsewhere, Mamoulian shows a patient regard for details, patterns of human beings alone and in groups, the noises that humans make—from shouting across alleys to kibitzing a crap game—tempo, and, above all, a sure talent for putting order and meaning into a disorderly and meaningless universe. Mamoulian is one of the artists of the stage and screen.

Mamoulian learned his craft in the Moscow Art Theater, an institution which has done a great deal to advance the modern theater. To what he learned in Russia, the land of his birth, he has added the color of his own creative genius. I doubt that Mamoulian could ever produce a picture that was entirely bad.

His first talkie—"Applause," a story of life among burlesque artists (and here's an expression of life that's held me enthralled since the days in my early 'teens when I haunted the 10-cent gallery of a cheap burlesque theater in Philadelphia's roughest and crumiest tenderloin), "Applause," I say, was too good for the ordinary movie public, accustomed as it is to trashy insincerity.

His successful work with "Applause" led to other movies, among the more recent ones being "Queen Christina," which brought out the best in the magnificent Greta Garbo. (I saw this well-done picture in a cheap, ugly theater—the Colonial—in Pittsburg, Kansas, where I paid 15 round pennies for the realm for spending two hours in a loud, badly run "palace," with numerous fans creating miniature cyclones and windy noises almost sufficient to drown out the music and talk. All this went to the accompaniment of one or two pop-corn and sody-pop boys strutting up and down the aisles annoying the customers who wanted

to see the picture, and adding to the confusion by provoking perhaps a third of the audience to rustling paper sacks filled with smelly pop-corn and gurgling from bottles, that later were sent rolling down the aisles, after which each pop-corn fiend would blow up his empty paper sack and break it with a bang that sent shudders down to my toes.)

* * *

Please comment on Mary Pickford's article, "Why Die?" in the August 17, 1935, "Liberty."

This article, together with her "Why Not Try God?" qualifies Miss Pickford as America's No. 1 mystic. Obscurantism, by capturing this Hollywood seeress, has enjoyed the "break" of the decade. A Hollywood star—even though she may be a little frayed at the edges—is worth 20 Bertrand Russells in philosophy and 10 Einsteins in science. Where other Hollywood sirens go in for numerology, graphology and astrology, the deep, probing, profound Mary Pickford regales a mentally sick world with a combination of Christian Science, Swedenborgianism, Emersonian mysticism, Gandhi supernaturalism and a brand of Theism that has been rejected by competent thinkers during the last two centuries.

Mary Pickford knows she will meet her dead mother and brother, because she's positive they're not dead. It is only a materialistic superstition to assume that a person is dead merely because he happens to have died. Mama was a tender, lovable person, and God wouldn't think of destroying such a personality after he had gone to all the trouble of making it. All this is predicated on "intuition." She knows these notions are true because her intuition tells her so. Sound philosophy has long given attention to intuitionist thinking, describing its votaries as mystics. A mystic reaches a conclusion by delving into his or her "inner self," without regard to reason or logic. This, in brief, is Mary's "method," which was exploded three centuries ago.

An idea has value only to the extent that it has support in experience, observation, logic and the facts. If Mary Pickford says death is only a prelude to a greater and finer life, her position must be established by verifiable evidence or by resorting to

that moth-eaten, fly-specked, sun-bleached "method" of intuition—it must be true because I feel it's so, etc. Mary Pickford prefers the latter, and the whole "structure" of thought that she erects on this "intuitionism" is worth, in logic, exactly zero. Another person, by this logic, could say that her absolute faith in immortality is without validity because his "intuition" tells him so—it must be untrue because he feels it's so. It is by such methods that movie stars qualify as mystics and inspirational philosophers. A Bertrand Russell or a Joseph McCabe would be ashamed to resort to such nonsensical, infantile thinking, but they're terrible Atheists, without stores of intuitional knowledge, and therefore to be met with frigid silence, while Mary Pickford's childish palaver can be exploited in a nationally circulated magazine because she was able to put aside the problems of make-up and render a dissertation on God's will, its nature, purpose and aim. I'm sure the chief racketeers in the Christian Science Church would rather have one Mary Pickford in their ranks than a thousand sound philosophers, because the former can be relied on to remain true to her nonsense, while the latter, possessed of brains, may be expected momentarily to suffer a relapse and return to the ranks of logic and reason.

It would be a waste of time to take apart her article. Her piece of intellectual liverwurst is unworthy of serious consideration. But, there's no denying that it's this sort of belly-wash that goes over among millions of blind, ignorant seekers after mysticism and supernaturalism.

Miss Pickford presents her "arguments" with all the airs of an original thinker, herself perhaps unaware that her "points" are merely the exploded rag-tags of abandoned philosophy. Take, for example, her conviction that immortality must be a reality because God "wouldn't make each of us a unique personality . . . just to wipe us out in a few brief years." This, of course, is derived from Immanuel Kant's "The Critique of Pure Reason," in which that theistic philosopher presented the "moral argument" for God's existence. The thought runs like this: If there is

unhappiness and injustice in this life, it is necessary for God to balance things, and he can best do this by providing another life based on happiness and justice, beauty and harmony. Bertrand Russell, with his sly humor, punctured this argument by supposing he had received a crate of oranges, the top layer of which he found to be rotten. By this "moral law" argument, Bertrand Russell laughed, one would suppose that because the top layer of oranges was rotten it should follow that the balance of the crate should contain good fruit, but a sensible person would conclude that because a part of it was bad perhaps all of it was in the same condition. A Theist like Mary Pickford, were she even a half logician, should see that her argument strikes back at her, for if God made an imperfect world here for us humans, why shouldn't we assume that any other world he might make for us would be equally bad?

God used to try to put over his angle on things through philosophers and theologians, but the results have been confusing. God, like the rest of us, learns with time. He knows he made a big mistake in resting his cause with men who at least made a stab at logic. So God decided to put aside his heavy thinkers. In their place he has put the one and only Mary Pickford, the cinema's contribution to mysticism and Theism. The world's Rationalists are properly confounded. Their case is truly hopeless. God has shown himself to be the better strategist. After centuries of floundering in musty university halls and philosopher's dismal studies, he has drawn on the movie studios for his new defender, and see the result! Her first piece becomes a "best seller," and her second masterpiece gets the place of honor in that organ of sound, clear thinking—God's own "Liberty."

* * *

How do the oceans compare in size?

The largest is the Pacific, with 67,699,630 square miles. The smallest is the Antarctic Ocean, with 5,731,350 square miles. The others: Arctic Ocean (including Hudson Bay), 5,785,000 square miles; Atlantic, 34,301,400 square miles; Indian, 28,615,600 square miles. The oceans cover 72 percent of the earth's surface, or

141,132,980 square miles, as against a land surface of 54,807,420 square miles. The land figure just given is not exact, because it assumes there are 250,000 square miles still to be found in the Arctic, and, furthermore, that 2,500,000 square miles of land will be discovered in "Antarctica," or the supposed Antarctic Continent. For every square mile of land there are 2.59 square miles of ocean.

* * *

Does the use of chemical contraceptives favor development of an abnormal foetus?

There appears to be some evidence to support the claim that chemical contraceptives can "eventually lead to the development of defective offspring," according to a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Says the article: "The greatest danger of chemical contraceptives lies in the possibility that the spermatozoa may be damaged, although still remaining able to fertilize the ovum..." Furthermore, "if the chemicals are rather concentrated, there is danger that they will injure the mucous membrane of the vagina and uterus, particularly if used for long periods. Severe leucorrhea may develop, or erosions of the cervix and of the vagina." Undoubtedly, these warnings result from an extremely limited number of cases. It is likely that, as a general thing, the use of chemical contraceptives does little or no damage, while the mechanical devices are able to give a higher percentage of successful results.

* * *

In a discussion with one of my friends we came upon this question, which we could not answer by ourselves: Is the power of a man to accumulate knowledge limited? Please comment.

The record of history would seem to indicate that there is no limit to man's capacity for learning. In the ancient world, Aristotle was what we would call a world scholar. He was familiar with the learning of every branch of science and knowledge, and on his own part discovered two or more sciences. Voltaire and Goethe were world scholars, who made all learning their province and even though the sciences had multiplied and knowledge had expanded, they were abreast of the spirit of their times. There are several world schol-

ars today, but I would, without a moment's hesitation, put Joseph McCabe at the top of the list. Here is a world scholar who knows every branch of knowledge, who can write authoritatively on 40 important sciences, is familiar with man's history and the evolution of thought. And yet, I wouldn't think of saying that McCabe has about reached the limit of his powers of mental comprehension and absorption. The curb isn't his brain's capacity but the time-limit—the length of time it took him to mature, and the certainty of decline once his physical powers begin to lose their strength, which, after all, is just a matter of the calendar. Beginning with Aristotle and coming down through Diderot, Voltaire, Goethe, Herbert Spencer to Joseph McCabe, we find each new world scholar knew perhaps 10 times as much as the world scholars who preceded him. On the basis of what has happened, it would seem that there's every reason to expect someone to come along later to take Joseph McCabe's place, and do it with such thoroughness that he might easily make McCabe look like a high school sophomore. If that position is reasonable, and it seems to be just that to this layman, I'd say that as a practical proposition there is no limit to man's capacity for knowledge and learning.

What is knowledge? It's nothing more than a fund of information gained from life, experience, environment, and the records of previous possessors of knowledge. What knowledge means—the interpretation of learning—belongs to wisdom and philosophy.

We now come to the question: Is there a limit to knowledge itself? The arena of man's knowledge—the world—is a finite thing, with fixed limits—so much water, air, ground, elements, etc. If this arena has fixed boundaries, it is logical to assume that the knowledge resulting from the study of such an environment is fixed—finite, not infinite. Thus, it would seem that, in the case of highly exceptional, gifted individuals—perhaps a dozen in the entire history of the race—while there is evidence to show that there is no limit to the capacity for learning, there is a fixed limit to the amount of learning man can ac-

cumulate, because of the limitations of man's universe.

Then comes another interesting question: Is it possible for man ever to achieve complete knowledge of the universe? Judging by what man has done in the past few thousand years (and especially what he has achieved in the past two centuries), it seems reasonable to infer that if man were to continue his present pace in the race for knowledge it will be only a matter of time before scholars succeed in learning everything that is to be known about life, nature and the universe. Such a struggle for complete mastery of the secrets of existence might occupy scholars for perhaps 10 centuries, or 10,000 years—it would be foolish to set a time limit—but eventually, judging man by the progress he has already made, the time should come when scholars can truthfully say that the age-long battle to erect a complete structure of learning and knowledge had been won to the last set of facts. That such a thing could happen is entirely within reason, and, furthermore, that man's brain has the capacity for such a gigantic task, seems to be a possibility, though limited, of course, to a numerically insignificant portion of the race.

We are still marching into the world of knowledge. The road isn't covered in pitch-like darkness, as was the case only yesterday. As knowledge grows, the world becomes illumined—each torch-bearer makes the journey with the help of more light. The old darkneses—superstition, bigotry, intolerance, vested interests in support of organized ignorance—all are losing their old powers, though there still remain too many proofs of their malignant influence. The struggle has its set-backs, but on the whole the progress is steadily, firmly, surely forward, onward and upward. Each world scholar who carries a torch in the search for knowledge makes easier the journey of those who are to follow.

* * *

I am 22. have had a high school education. have been a great reader, and am an Atheist. Because of my Atheism. I see no use in living—in anyone's living. When I had a religion I at least had a significance; now I am a potential suicide. Life has no meaning—seems to be just a lot of trouble. I especially

don't see why Atheists go on living. But I am an amateur at living—at the art of being an Atheist. Tell me: What keeps you going? You are absorbed in your work; but is it so significant? You are busy with many things; but are you sure they are worth doing? Haven't you been one of those "who are perplexed by the consequences of their own irreligion?" Didn't Lucretius answer my question when he wrote: "What is the curse that blights your lives alike? Not that you hate to live but fear to die"?

An Atheist doesn't say "Life in itself has no meaning," without adding: "We can put meaning into life." It's that added thought which helps make Atheism more than a mere negative attack on Theism—it becomes a positive, and genuinely optimistic philosophy, because it adds to man's social consciousness; it helps give a new dignity to the race.

An Atheist looks at nature and sees a blind, chance array of forces and counter-forces, accidents and disorders, waste, and coincidence, combined with a vast, tediously regular response of atoms or planets to environmental conditions. Naturally, it all strikes him as much ado about nothing. But when he sees the flower of the race devoting itself to creative enterprises, seeking for truth, putting order in a disordered world, making wealth, toiling to leave the world better than they found it, dreaming of a better social system, furthering education, promoting research, building magnificent structures, wresting nature's secrets, fighting disease, dispelling ignorance, attacking superstition and bigotry, struggling to live fuller and longer lives—when he sees man at his best, he concludes that life is worth living, if only men strive to put real meaning into life.

Because he, the Atheist, can't see the finger of God in this all-too-natural life, because he can't see that any sort of a God is interested in what he is or becomes, it doesn't follow that life itself loses interest—it becomes even more precious—one of the great, mystifying accidents of nature that can be nurtured, broadened, deepened, strengthened and made truly noble in significance.

An Atheist would do, through reason and labor, what the Gods once pretended to do. Knowing there isn't

any kind of being superior to nature who is concerned over his welfare, the Atheist assumes new ideals and powers—impulses to promote truth, justice, beauty, art, useful efforts, mutual aid, cooperation, humanitarianism, realizable idealism, health, a longer life span, happiness, and the other constructive forces which are within man's powers to advance.

You, as an Atheist, can help put meaning into a life that of itself is without meaning. That is a great victory over blind nature. In this sense, you, as an Atheist, have more to live for than the unseeing religionist who is crammed with the superstitions of a God who provided eternal life, replete with endless bliss, in an undescribed hereafter. If your religionist really believed such nonsense he would be glad to depart this life for the everlasting joys of paradise—but you know, from observation, that your most pious friends are essential materialists who prefer to cling to this frail thread called life.

Your Atheist doesn't labor to serve humanity because he looks for a reward in heaven, but because he knows the best monument he can erect to his life is a record of usefulness, the kind that will outlive him and be carried forward by willing workers yet to come.

* * *

How many men are under arms today throughout the world?

The best estimate puts the total at 40,000,000.

* * *

In a syndicated article, the famous author, Ben Hecht, says that the Jews are being persecuted in Germany not merely because of Hitler's insanity but because of the sadism and inferiority complex of the German people. Please comment.

To blame the splendid German people for the crimes of the Nazis is to resort to unsupported slander and senseless abuse. The fact that Germany's 600,000 Jews developed such a large minority of professionals, scientists, inventors, authors, musicians, business executives, public officials, actors, poets, dramatists, publishers, editors and the like, should serve as obvious evidence that prior to the advent of Hitlerism Germany was friendly to the Jewish people. This is true despite the fact that for

more than a half century there has been a vocal minority of Germans that lets its fanaticism find outlets.

Anti-Semitism in Germany is the result of Nazi propaganda, carefully organized and encouraged. The blame for this rests with Hitler and his gangsters, and not with the German people, who, of course, are given no legal, legitimate means for expressing their opinions on Hitleristic policies of intolerance and persecution.

Recently, I came upon an item from the Saar, which illustrates my point. This news report, from German sources, bewailed the fact that this recently annexed section contains hardly any anti-Semitism, though perhaps 95 percent of the people are Germans. The report urged that the government begin giving fuller attention to the need for anti-Semitism in the Saar, and demanded that the people in that section be "educated" in the same manner as the rest of Germany has been "taught" to hate the Jews. If the Saar were left to its own devices, there's every reason to assume that anti-Semitism would not appear there, but as they won't be left alone, as the government plans to use every media of hate and prejudice, one has the right to expect to see the people of the Saar become as bitterly anti-Jewish as the worst elements of Berlin and Munich.

The Germans are the victims of a cleverly directed campaign of anti-social miseducation and propaganda. If Hitlerism were to pass out of the picture, anti-Semitism, in time, would follow these degenerates into oblivion.

Anti-Semitism is a poison that must be carefully prepared and nurtured. The Czar, in the dark days before the revolution, did the same thing. In order to keep the people's minds off their own miseries, Czarism encouraged, financed and directed an elaborate program of anti-Semitism, which resulted in persecutions and pogroms even worse than those prevailing in Germany under Hitler. But when Czarism was overthrown and the Bolsheviks took charge, anti-Semitism was outlawed, with penitentiary sentences meted out to those guilty of overt acts against Jews, and now we find that Russia, once the pest-ridden center of anti-Semitism, is no longer cursed with that

foul expression of medievalism and bigotry. The lesson, it seems to me, is plain. Racial hatreds do not come "naturally." They must be planned and organized.

* * *

You speak about the good job the U. S. government does in inspecting meats. Isn't the cost prohibitive?

The expense of government inspection of meats is surprisingly low—only 1c for each 26 pounds of meat. A somewhat similar job of inspection is done by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration, which costs only 1c per person per year. This latter work is under the Wiley Act which regulates the interstate trade in food and drugs.

* * *

In reporting the beautiful lunar eclipse of July 15, 1935, the Associated Press said that the sun is closest to the earth during the Summer. Is that so?

It is a common error. The sun is farthest from the earth in late June and early July; nearest in December. In all, the variation is something like 3,000,000 miles. The common notion has it that summer's heat results from the nearness of the sun; and winter's cold results from the farness of the sun. Astronomers have attempted to correct this illusion since the appearance of accurate knowledge on this subject, but with meager results.

* * *

What's your opinion of Will Durant's "Story of Civilization"?

This big volume—it weighs about five pounds and contains more than a thousand closely printed pages—deals with the beginnings of civilization and the history of India, China and other oriental peoples. Before I'd read even a hundred pages I decided here was a work that should be reviewed by an expert in history and anthropology, and not by a layman like myself, so I immediately communicated with Joseph McCabe, in London, and invited him to write a comprehensive analysis of Durant's hefty opus. Recently, McCabe's manuscript arrived. It contains 7,500 words, probably the longest review given Durant's tome. I suggested this great wordage because I've learned from long editorial experience that short reviews of gigantic works are waste of time. I like the old Macaulay idea of writing something akin to a

short book when describing a long one. So I ask you to wait for McCabe's brilliant, informative, scientifically accurate, breezy, witty study of this new contribution to historical literature. It will be given an important place in the first possible issue of the *Appeal to Reason*, where McCabe has been holding forth so effectively in the spheres of world affairs and popular science. McCabe's critical discussion will be the last word on Durant's position as a scholar. So far, I've given no hint of McCabe's viewpoint, and I don't intend to. It's only fair to our author to let his essay speak for itself. Suffice it to say that a long review by McCabe on Durant is a thrilling event in literary history.

* * *

Samuel Untermyer, famous lawyer, recently departed for Europe, and his parting speech to the press was that Atheism was responsible for all the trouble in Germany. Please comment.

Dear old Atheism and the Jews—the two eternal scapegoats! Whenever anything goes wrong, look for a Jew, and if none is handy roll in Atheism.

During the World War, the favorite explanation for how Germany got that way was to bring out the awful charge of Atheism. The "huns" were godless, and so they were destroyers of civilization. That was a sure-fire argument with every patriot. And it was the essence of treason to even hint that the Kaiser was the most orthodox Fundamentalist in all Germany. Of course, Germany had its philosophers and scientists who were skeptics in matters of religion, but who, in moments of sanity, could seriously bring in the name of a Kant or a Nietzsche when bewailing Germany's behavior?

Today, Lawyer Untermyer continues the old rigmarole, and it seems to work. Hitler blames the Jews for all of Germany's troubles—and persecutes them. Untermyer—one of the most famous Jews in America—retaliates by crying "Atheism"! The answer should be familiar to a school boy. Hitler is no Atheist—he is a Catholic. Recently he said that his administration would succeed because it had divine sanction. That's strange language for an Atheist!

Before the advent of Hitlerism,

Freethought was strong in Germany, but by no means representative of the entire community. The Social Democrats (Socialists), Communists and other radicals were Freethinkers. Freethought societies conducted intelligent educational works in all large cities and in many of the small places. But when Hitler stole power he crushed the radicals in politics, economics and religion, disbanded the Freethought societies and settled down to a concordat with the Pope and persecution of the Jews. Later, Hitler and his gangsters decided it would be better to double-cross the Pope, so the concordat was scrapped. But it wasn't because Hitler and his henchmen are Atheists; it was because the Nazis felt that a concordat would interfere with some of the plans the chief pansy had in mind.

Hitlerism then organized its own state church, and financed it with state funds. An examination of its creed will show at a glance that it isn't any crazier than Catholicism, and as for the great spirit of Gaud—he rules in Hitler's state church with the same authority as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. So, where's all the Atheism?

If Untermeyer wanted to speak intelligently, instead of stupidly, he would explain that Atheism, which grew splendidly during the better days of the Weimar Republic, died a violent death under the lashings of Adolf's sadists. The Atheists' meeting halls were closed, their newspapers and magazines suppressed, their books burned, and the set of philosophical doctrines devoted to a critical examination of Theism were placed on the Nazi index expurgatorius, along with the other forbidden ideas of Socialism, Democracy, Communism, Marxism, Materialism, etc.

Karl Marx was the greatest Atheist produced in the history of Germany, perhaps with the single exception of Nietzsche. How long could he last if he were to return to Germany today? And the same goes for Nietzsche.

No, it's thoroughly unrealistic to blame Germany's troubles on Atheism. A child should know the real answer—it's Fascism. And Fascism has nothing to do with Atheism. Surely I shouldn't have to waste time

making such obvious distinctions, but when men of the reputation of an Untermeyer speak to millions of readers of the press one must forget to be touchy about the obvious and settle down to discussing matters that should be accepted as commonplaces.

* * *

What does it cost Mussolini to get his troopships through Suez Canal?

About \$3.25 per man, on the basis of 10 pre-war gold francs. In addition, he must pay \$2 per net ton on each ship that passes through the canal on the way to East Africa. Some estimates have it that he has already paid \$10,000,000 in canal tolls, though this figure seems too high. However, there's no doubt that up to August, 1935, he paid at least \$5,000,000 on the men and ships going both ways between Italy and his colonies near Ethiopia. These expenses will grow larger should he move sufficient men and supplies to Ethiopia. The Italian dictator is spending without the slightest regard where the money is to come from for the final settlement. He's in so far that he can hardly turn back empty-handed, for fear of revolution, and if he carries out his threats against Ethiopia the situation will be even worse, though somewhat postponed. Being a dictator, Mussolini must always win. Whipped dictators don't remain in power very long.

* * *

Recently thousands of pro-Nazi members of "Friends of New Germany" conducted a mass demonstration at Yaphank, not far from New York City, where they marched in Hitler's brown uniforms, drilled and saluted each other with "Heil Hitler!" Please comment.

The first thought that comes to mind is what would happen to these victims or tools of bigotry if they were to form an organization in Germany or Italy and call themselves "Friends of New America," wear uniforms, go through military formations, and greet one another with "Hurrah, Roosevelt!" They'd be set on by the police or militia, and either get shot up or shipped off to concentration camps.

That's one difference one notices between the "New Germany" and the "Old America." The "Old America"—with all its "evils" of democracy, free speech, free assembly, etc.—still looks good, even when it is misused by a lot

of hoodlums bent on giving international force to a political and social philosophy that means intolerance, persecution, misery, savagery, murder and degeneration. Maybe even some of these Nazis, as they marched around Yaphank, thought for a fleeting moment what yaps they were to lend themselves to a movement that would crush everything that is fine and decent in America, deny its glorious traditions and tear up our Constitution as just another "rotten liberal" scrap of paper.

But, in all seriousness, those Americans who still believe in freedom and democracy must watch these organizations as they go about their obscene work of propagandizing anti-libertarianism. Americans will have no complaint so long as they devote themselves to mere expressions of opinion, for the forces of honor and decency are still able to counter such corrupt propaganda with truth and sanity. But it must be made clear that such movements are never to step beyond the clear mark of opinion. Once they step over the mark and make the slightest move in the direction of an overt act—and that means direct action against our democratic institutions—the full powers of democracy must answer them not only with rebukes but with far sterner measures. As I've said a thousand times, democracy must always maintain the right to preserve itself.

* * *

Do you consider the English movie stars superior to our own?

My No. 1 favorite is Charles Laughton, who, of course, is an Englishman. He is, without a doubt, the best actor in Hollywood. Charlie Chaplin is my No. 2 favorite, and he's another Englishman, though he got all his training and experience in this country. I know of no other English movie stars that mean much.

Most English movies are extremely bad. But there are rare exceptions, like the Laughton Henry VIII. And that comment applies with equal force to our own cinema industry. Most of it is unendurably mediocre, but one continues going, because the exceptional film makes amends for the time wasted on the 90 and 9.

The other day, while in Springfield, Mo., I dropped in on William Powell's "Escapade," which amused me be-

cause of the fine work done by a new Viennese actress, Miss Luise Rainer, who struck me as remarkably beautiful and an artist worthy of better roles. Maybe Hollywood will do something about this actress who could take a stale, dungsteamy scenario and make it worth while because of her gift for light comedy. She was a joy, and I hope to meet her shadow at least three times a year from now on.

* * *

I have a son who is seriously thinking of taking up the study of the diesel engine with a school that has branches in a number of cities. The fee is \$300. They claim that if a diesel engine breaks down they have to send a repair man from the manufacturer. The demand for diesel engines is great, and the school has been started to train men for this sure and lucrative work. Please comment.

I'm always suspicious of educational institutions, run for commercial ends, that imply that their graduates can get employment, usually at good wages. The old motor car schools did this, and we all remember the disappointments they caused. Tens of thousands of young men paid out millions of dollars and ended up with nothing to show for their time or money. The above writer lives in Philadelphia, a city well supplied with fine institutions, some of them free and others charging reasonable fees. He should go to the excellent Franklin Institute, or the secretary of the engineering department of the University of Pennsylvania, and ask for free, disinterested advice. I'm sure he will find exactly what he wants for his boy, and he will save a lot of money, at the same time giving the young man the education he seeks. In closing, let me mention that I answered the above question in a personal letter, for which the usual fee of one dollar was paid, but I felt the matter was of more general interest, so I repeated the discussion here for the benefit of others who might be tempted to fall for these fly-by-night commercial outfits that promise to throw in a house and lot with each registration.

* * *

Who were the intellectual fathers of the French Revolution?

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), Voltaire (1694-1778), Diderot,

D'Alembert, Montesquieu and Baron d'Holbach. Those who would read a short history of this great period are directed to E. Belfort Bax's *The Story of the French Revolution*.

* * *

Recently a judge fined the Western Union \$500 for delivering messages from radicals protesting against a trial in his court. Isn't this an attack on the constitutional right to free speech?

When a case is pending before a judge and the friends of the defendant flood the court with demands for acquittal, I believe the conduct is entirely in contempt and should be prohibited. The question of free speech doesn't enter at all. The judge, like the jury, is an official of the court and as such should not be intimidated by threats or demands while a case is being tried. If it's right for friends of radicals to flood a judge with telegrams demanding action favorable to the defense, then it would be equally right for the reactionary bodies—such as the chambers of commerce, manufacturers' associations, fascist groups, etc.—to send wires demanding that the defendant be convicted. Either line of action would be reprehensible. I have long felt that radicals were following a mistaken policy in using this method of protest. Of course, telegrams could be sent to the prosecuting attorney or the clerk of the court and still be in order, but it's an entirely different matter when such messages are sent to either the judge or the jury. Real friends of radical defendants will be careful not to jeopardize their case through campaigns of protest through the medium of the wires. The same attitude should prevail when the Supreme Court is studying a case. In such a situation a telegram to the clerk of the Supreme Court would be all right, but one to a Justice of the Supreme Court would be in contempt.

* * *

What do you think of Prof. Elmer Gates and his rhodopsin experiment?

This man, who poses as a "noted scientific psychologist," is one of the crassest fakes I ever met up with. He's all bunk and screwy hokum, which, of course, gives him something of a following among the more ignorant morons. I say "more ignorant" advisedly, because it's my notion that even a high-grade moron could hard-

ly be duped by this "scientific" charlatan. Of course, I haven't wasted much time on this brazen quack—life's too short to give more than 10 minutes to such a bunk-shooter—but I've read enough about his "great discoveries" to know that he isn't worth more than a warning.

Prof. Gates claims to have made experiments showing the shadow of the soul in the act of rising. To give this nonsense a scientific twist he claims to have "experimented with some rays about five octaves above the violet." That sounds impressive and prepares the way for his "miracles."

Prof. Gates (Professor of what? how? and when?) claims to have projected the soul's shadow (!) on a wall coated with a substance—rhodopsin—which he "extracted" from the eyes of freshly slaughtered animals. To put aside pages of tripe that make me think of dungsteam, Prof. Gates took a live rat and placed him in a glass tube held in the path of these rays and before the sensitized wall. There was a shadow on the wall as long as the rat was alive. But when the great Prof. Gates killed the animal the shadow disappeared! From then on the dead rat was transparent. But before it became transparent, Prof. Gates claims, on a stack of Bibles, that he saw a shadow of the same shape as the rat pass out through the tube and sail up on the sensitized wall. Thus we are led to infer that the rat's "soul" slipped up into the ether and floated off to the rat heaven, or, if he was a bad fellow, to the rat hell. It's such disgraceful idiocies that set the yokels to chattering. The whole business makes me sick.

Again I shout: Dungsteam!

* * *

How much money have we in the Postal Savings System? Does the government lose by handling these savings?

At the end of the fiscal year 1934, the Postal Savings Banks held \$1,200,000,000 of the people's money. Instead of suffering a loss, the federal government, after paying all expenses, made a net profit of \$3,985,834 during the same fiscal year.

There is a powerful, underground war being conducted against this system by the private bankers. They insist that the government shall close

these postal banks, thus forcing more than a billion dollars into the commercial and savings institutions of private banking corporations. Such a step backwards would cause a great volume of protest from the people who remember what American banking amounted to in March, 1933. While our banking system is not anywhere near such a crisis today, the rotten racket that brought about the last collapse is still functioning and it's only a matter of time before we have to go through a worse crisis.

Not only should the public continue to keep its savings in the postal system, but they should insist on Congress passing legislation permitting a larger cash limit—\$5,000 instead of \$2,500 per person, and eventually lifting the limit entirely when once the people compel the government to do what should have been established long ago—make the 8,000 Postal Savings Banks give the public full commercial facilities, including the clearing of checks.

The banks have embarked on a policy that is causing great financial distress among individuals and business concerns. I refer, of course, to the outrageous service charges, all of which I described in earlier discussions. Depositors now actually have to pay the banks for the privilege of leaving their money with these private institutions. You have to pay every time you make out a deposit slip, every time you write a check, and every time you deposit a check you have received from some other bank depositor. These hold-ups mount into millions of dollars yearly, and should not be tolerated.

Most people are well able to escape this legalized robbery by leaving their money with the Postal Savings Banks, and remitting by postal money orders, or by cash. Try to write just as few checks as possible. It's simple, convenient and economical to do business through the post-office department, and, besides, you never stand a chance of losing a penny. Uncle Sam will always honor every dime deposited in his Postal Savings Banks.

* * *

I have heard more than one ignorant and varyingly enthusiastic potential Jew-baiter say in answer to references

to facts which you cite: "Ah, yes, but Haldeman-Julius is probably a Jew himself and therefore he is prejudiced in the Jew's favor" Please comment.

I'd be the last person in the world to deny that I have prejudices. I have strong, positive prejudices against any expression of racial persecution, whether against Negroes, Jews, Chinese, or other objects of organized hatred. This prejudice against prejudice, this intolerance against intolerance has always been in my deep, inner being, and I haven't the slightest notion how it got there, or how I got that way. However, notice that these are constructive, humanitarian prejudices.

Trying to be just a little bit intelligent as I go through life, I always make serious attempts to seek out logical, factual, evidential reasons for holding what originally amounted to hardly more than an unsupported prejudice in favor of all races and against all forms of bigotry and racial persecution.

My old-time readers don't have to be reminded that I've written hundreds of columns in support of the Negroes and in opposition to those who would keep them in political, economic and cultural inferiority. In attacking anti-Semitism I'm entirely consistent with my record as a protestant against race-baiters.

In arguing for justice for the Negroes I made use of many facts and arguments advanced by prominent Negro leaders, including Walter White, Du Bois, George S. Schuyler, James Weldon Johnson and a few others equally authoritative. I examined their viewpoints in a critical spirit, and when I found they held water I used them. The fact they were Negroes didn't have any effect on the logic of their arguments. Naturally, these Negro arguers were "prejudiced" in favor of their fellow-Negroes, and "prejudiced" against racial discriminations against their people. They would be dull, lifeless clods if they were otherwise. But their "prejudices" were supported by verifiable information, by reason, sanity, logic, intelligence, justice and fairness. So I gladly shared their "prejudices."

When a Jew defends his people we should consider his arguments in the same light. Is he telling the truth?

Are his facts straight? Has he justice and decency on his side? Does he make his case stand up? Is he fighting honestly or merely putting up strawmen in order to knock them down? The correct answers to these questions will establish the fact whether or not he, as a Jew, is entitled to intelligent consideration as he goes about the useful, necessary work of defending a hopelessly small minority that is being made the international goat wherever ignorant, brutal bigots gain any measure of power.

When I write critically of the anti-Semites I base my case firmly on truth and data that can be checked. At the same time, I defy anyone to find a single sentence, in the millions of words I've written in the last quarter of a century, in which I have spoken prejudicially against any race or nation.

I have fought kaiserism and Prussian militarism, but I have always defended the German people, as I do in these dark days when Hitlerism is in the saddle.

I have attacked Japanese imperialism in China, but I have never said a word against the Japanese people.

I have criticized hotly the record and policies of Mussolini, but you can't find a single word in which I abuse the Italian people.

And so on. I will attack individuals, institutions, blocs and governments, but never a race or a nation. I believe it is socially necessary to expose the individuals and gangs that prosper by sowing the seeds of war, persecution and racial discrimination. Such efforts are always to the good, and never imply that I would extend this criticism to attacks on any race, whether white, black, yellow or red.

My record is clean here, and I'm just a little proud of it. I consider racial prejudice one of the great social evils of our time, along with economic exploitation, superstition, militarism and imperialism. I want always to do my tiny bit in the war for the liberation of humanity from the chains of economic exploitation, racial prejudice and war-mongering. And when I go forth to find material to make such a fight, I don't intend to reject material defending Jews because the writer happens to be a Jew,

or facts defending Negroes because the writer happens to be a Negro, and so on down the line. That seems to me to be the sane and reasonable position to take.

* * *

When and where was the Income Tax first established?

The credit goes to the French Revolution, during which the Convention passed a progressive tax on incomes, with graduated increases for incomes in the higher brackets. The tax was a success.

* * *

What were the "sansculottes"?

During the French Revolution, a number of working people conducted a demonstration in Paris to prove they were devoid of the simple necessities of life. On one of their banners they carried a pair of black pants, to let the country know they were without breeches. Thereupon, the working masses were called "sansculottes," meaning, of course, "without breeches." The word was applied to the extreme republicans—Jacobins—who were the sworn foes of the aristocrats, wearers of short pantaloons.

* * *

Wherever I go I see auto trailers. Have you any information about them?

It is estimated that 1,000,000 people in this country live in trailers. The same estimate has 250,000 trailers on the road—homes for wheeled hoboes. Makers of trailers—who are engaged in a big, growing business—claim there will be a great increase in the trailer population during the next decade, if the depression continues.

Trailer-camps, which are found everywhere, have developed a new social life. The people using them keep moving as long as they have money for gas supplies. When broke, they settle down for a sufficient time to make a little money at odd jobs—barbering, carpentry, basket-making, painting, etc., while some are beggars. A house on wheels means freedom from the landlord, easy and cheap living, and plenty of exciting, interesting, profitable experiences.

Many trailers draw up in front of my office. They usually contain men, women and children who are scrupulously clean. The trailers I've peeked into were as neat as pins. Some are "boughten," but many are

home-made. Some of the latter were masterpieces of inventiveness and common-sense. The women have told me it takes something like an hour to do the day's actual "housework." Cooking doesn't take much longer. When the weather is bad, they sleep inside; when good, outside. If it gets too cold in the North, they head South; if too hot down there, they head towards the North again. All seem to consider Florida or California official "headquarters." Many of these trailer-hoboes are good readers, and they often stock up with a supply of my smaller volumes, but the purchases are usually modest, rarely more than a dollar, which gives one a hint regarding their finances. Most of them are Radicals and Freethinkers—at least those who stop off here for their printed matter. What impresses me about them is their independence, simplicity, courtesy, good health, and complete freedom from worry.

One fellow—about six feet four, accompanied by a seven-year-old daughter—drops off here about once a year. He picks up rip-saws—usually junky ones—and turns them into simple, effective butcher knives, which he sells to businessmen, and that's all he does to get by. His wardrobe consists of two pairs of overalls. His little girl—who probably will never see the inside of a school—is smart and peppy, a perfect example of natural and easy self-development. Her father tries to teach her the alphabet, but so far with meager success. His one horror is that the law might get on to him some day and take his child away from him. He avoids John Law like poison, and the least sign of undue interest in his tiny passenger causes him to load up his flivver and beat it for less curious parts.

Wondering about the financial side of trailing, I asked discreet questions here and there and concluded it takes just about a dollar a day to take care of a husband, wife and one or two kids. And that includes gas and oil!

These trailer hoboes do very little begging. Most of them have a simple trade which can be worked at five minutes after landing in a town, or they move from strawberry picking in Arkansas to stacking wheat in Kansas, then they head for potato

digging in Idaho and scoot down to California for the canning season, and so on, ever on the move, always a few dollars from being clean busted, but never the least hint of belly-aching. The trailer's home is on wheels—and it can stay put for weeks in one spot, or move on when things get boring or unfriendly. They are independent and prefer to carry on the traditions of those older pioneers who went their way by covered wagon, drawn by oxen, only these newer "trail-breakers" prefer trailers on rubber tires and gasoline instead of oxen.

* * *

A Los Angeles firm advertises a massaging device to cure poor eye-sight and claims glasses are unnecessary and aggravate the weakness. Is this on the level?

The promoter is absolutely unscientific and you should beware of trusting his contraption. I question its sweeping claims. To say that all weaknesses of the eyes can be remedied by a massaging device is to jeopardize the visual health of the people in order to gather in some easy money. There's no denying that many individuals use glasses when they don't need them, but that doesn't cancel the fact that glasses, properly fitted, do a great deal of good. Always be skeptical when faced with all-inclusive claims by individuals who have a financial reason for promoting some device to the injury of an important branch of science.

* * *

I have neighbors who keep playing the radio all the time, which leads me to ask how much time Americans give to listening?

Prof. Gordon N. Allport, Harvard University, estimates that we spend 1,000,000,000 hours each week listening to what comes over the air. The same authority estimates that we spend 150,000,000 hours per week at movie theaters.

* * *

In "Preachers Present Arms," by Ray H. Abrams, a statement appears on page 253 which I submit herewith for consideration in *The Freeman*.

The quotation from Mr. Abrams' book is as follows:

"That there has been excessively cruel and heinous treatment of Jews, Communists, and other groups in Germany seems to be amply verified. But is persecution in one country

remedied by stirring up hatred and vilification in another? Instead of laying all the blame on Hitler, might it not be more reasonable to try to understand and account for the present German situation?"

The author of the above lines is striving heroically to be "sweetly reasonable" while members of racial and political minority groups are being beheaded, tortured and persecuted. But his viewpoint is worthy of serious analysis.

First of all, notice how the word "excessively" is inserted before "cruel and heinous treatment." Are we to understand that if Hitler had been only a little less extreme in his acts of brutality we could forgive his sadistic behavior? Is our author suggesting to Hitler that he be just a little less cruel?

His second sentence suggests that persecution in one country should be received in dignified silence throughout the civilized world. Hitler is to destroy a helpless racial minority and behead the leaders of an outlawed political party, but the decent element of the world outside Germany is to go about its own business. That's what our author seems to imply. The writer of *Preachers Present Arms* seems to infer that the world's cry of protest and horror at the crimes of Hitlerism is really nothing more than a stirring up of hatred and vilification.

I don't intend to list the crimes of Hitlerism. During the past two years I have written hundreds of columns in criticism of Nazi policies, all of which are familiar to my readers. What else could any lover of justice, honor, fairness and sportsmanship say when faced by the obscene spectacle of a Hitler crushing everything that is fine and noble in German civilization? Protest—that is the least any civilized person could do. And I deny that the persons who have protested against Hitler's policies have been moved by hatred and vilification. Instead, their motive has been humanitarian regard for the sad, tragic plight of Hitlerism's bleeding victims.

We now come to our author's last sentence. Here, again moved by the sweetest and gentlest reasonableness, he advises his readers to leave Hitler blameless and seek for the real cause

of Germany's situation. Of course, what he means is that Hitler was made possible by the blind, stupid Versailles treaty. But first let us recall that hounding, mobbing and persecuting Jews and beheading Communists has not even the remotest connection with the Versailles treaty. These actions are the result of Hitleristic gangsterism, and it certainly isn't a form of vilification to call attention to this simple, obvious fact.

As for the Versailles Treaty, let me call attention to the plain fact of history that it was the very people who are protesting against Hitlerism who voiced protests at the monumental crime of Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George at Versailles. The radicals of the world joined hands in telling the rulers of the great powers that they were building the foundation for future war and strife in a treaty that was written in blood, conceived in hate and nurtured in vilification. Yes, those who are blazing away at Hitler's persecution of the weak and helpless did more than their share in trying to compel the capitalistic, imperialistic powers to treat the German republic with fairness and justice.

And, the record shows they made wonderful headway in convincing governments outside Germany to follow a policy of cooperation and mutual aid instead of attempting to make the Versailles treaty stick to the letter. Year after year, the leaders of the German Republic made new friends for their country. The old hatreds were dying out. Germans were no longer called "Huns." France, England and the United States poured hundreds of millions of dollars into loans for Germany and Austria. German foreign trade was increased. The world desired to be of help to republican Germany. The reparations problem was tackled each year, and every new consideration was followed by an easing of its onerous terms. Germany was headed for complete equality with the world—an equality that was being achieved by decent methods, instead of gangster threats of militarism and destruction.

The Germany of the Weimar Constitution was a civilized state and was regarded as such by the world's enlightened opinion. But when the Republic was struck down by Hitler,

did Germany go forward or backward in world opinion? Has Germany any real friends? Has Germany, under Hitler, the power to command any degree of credit, either in money or goods? Has Germany's foreign trade gone up or down? Has the world the least respect for German institutions, concepts of justice and freedom? The answers are known to my readers, I'm certain.

* * *

As the claim is frequently made that Communism is an international menace, it would be valuable to know exactly how many Communist members there are in the world, outside the Soviet Union.

An official report, printed in *Pravda*, Communist organ published in Moscow, says the world membership of Communist parties, not including Russia, was, on August 21, 1935, only 758,500. Including the Soviet Union, the membership was 3,148,000. From this it may be seen that the Communist party, powerful in Russia, is a tiny minority everywhere else. To put it another way, after deducting the Soviet Union's population of 166,000,000 from a world population of 2,000,000,000, we find less than a million Communists among 1,834,000,000 people. Those who have the time may figure out the exact percentage.

* * *

As a disciplined Socialist and Atheist, I am at a loss whether or not to stress my atheistic convictions. Would not such a practice be harmful to the best interests of the party, which, of course, avoids all religious questions?

Socialism and Atheism have always gone together among the great leaders, past and present. Lumping together radicals of different schools—such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, August Bebel, Eugene V. Debs, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Kautsky, Jaures, Hyndman, Morris Hillquit and a number of others whose names don't happen to come to mind at this moment—we find them solidly independent of all religious ideas. Some were outspoken, like Marx, Engels, Lenin. Others preferred to say very little on this subject, like Hillquit, Hyndman, and Debs. Socialist leaders in action and thought have always held that religion has invariably been a weapon of the ruling class to keep the toilers in sub-

jection, whether the system be chattel slavery, feudalism or the wage policy of modern Capitalism. They have usually concentrated their fire on the great social issues, but this doesn't imply they were "neutral" with regard to religious obscurantism.

No Socialist thinker has, so far as I know, ever even hinted at putting the religious question above the economic. That would be a serious tactical error. It has been accepted as a sane, workable policy to confine Free-thought propaganda to those who are already won over to the ideas of socialization of capitalistically owned industries. Thus, in your case, it is considered good practice to stress Atheism among those who are intellectually strong enough to digest such sturdy mental meat. That would mean you should feel entirely free to discuss, without undue pressure, the philosophy of Atheism among your comrades, but to carefully avoid bringing up that question among those who are still unaware of the socially valuable idea of collective ownership of economically necessary instruments of production, distribution and exchange. There is nothing in the platform, constitution or traditions of the Socialist party to prevent you from voicing your anti-religious philosophy. The party, as such, prefers to concentrate on the economic issue.

A soapboxer who gets up in Columbus Circle, in New York City, to urge Atheism on an audience that is yet to be won over to the economic remedy proposed by the Socialist movement, is making a serious error. He serves only to confuse the issue. But that same lecturer has a perfect right to suggest among members, at party meetings and classes, that Socialism and Atheism have numerous similar ends—freedom from social, class, clerical, sectarian, religious exploitation, deception, parasitism, and mental and physical subjection. If such hearers are already Atheists then you only make yourself a nuisance by beating a dead horse. But if they are newly won over to Socialism and are still ignorant of the enlightened position of the great Socialist theoreticians regarding religious issues, then it is a privilege and a duty to do your best to courteously and patiently explain these rather difficult points

with a view to cleansing their minds of churchly, as well as political, superstitions.

* * *

I wonder if the health conditions in our C. C. C. camps are up to par.

Our Civilian Conservation Corps shows excellent results. According to an official report, the annual death rate was only 2.7 per 1,000 enrollments. This is surprisingly low, when we consider that the normal death rate in young men of this age group is three times as high. The same report also shows that during a 6-month period the men showed marked increases in weight, which, according to the *Monthly Labor Review*, for July, 1935, ran from seven to 12 pounds per person.

* * *

Is the Catholic Church very strong among American Negroes?

Of our 13,000,000 Negroes, only 250,000 are Catholics, who support 210 churches and 205 parochial schools. There are 35,092 Negro children in the parochial schools. Protestant churches claim a Negro membership of 5,000,000. There are about 7,750,000 American Negroes who are completely independent of all church affiliations, which should indicate that our Negro brothers and sisters aren't as church-ridden as general opinion believes.

* * *

It is claimed that the Catholic priesthood's practice of non-indulgence in sexual intercourse makes for greater intellectual powers. Please comment.

There is no real evidence to support that theory. In fact, the most casual survey tends to strengthen the conclusion that continence has an effect that is opposite to increased intellectuality. On this point Havelock Ellis, undoubtedly the world's greatest authority on sexology, holds that the celibate Catholic clergy "can scarcely be said to display a conspicuous excess of intellectual energy, on the whole, over the non-celibate Protestant clergy. . . ."

An interesting case suggests itself, that of Joseph McCabe, the scholarly Materialist and Atheist, whose greatest intellectual achievements resulted after he quit the monastery and its continence to go into the world, marriage and complete sexual experiences. It is the plain lesson of history that the world's truly great in-

tellectuals were not continent. Great thinkers like Epicurus, Lucretius, Shakespeare, Voltaire, Goethe, Darwin, Haeckel, John Stuart Mill, Lester F. Ward, Karl Marx, Bertrand Russell, Joseph McCabe, Havelock Ellis, Dr. Freud, Einstein, and scores of others, lived, or live, sexual lives totally unrelated to the ideal of chastity. In one of Joseph McCabe's most useful chapters he devoted himself, with compelling logic, to the task of proving to the hilt that the whole idea of Catholic scholarship is nothing more than a myth.

* * *

If every employable person and available factory, plant, mill, etc., were used to full capacity, what would the total output be?

In his book, *The Chart of Plenty*, Harold Loeb claims the total value, figured in the money of 1929, would amount to \$135,000,000,000. This would mean an average of \$4,400 per year for each family.

* * *

I am a coal miner and have to accept scrip on payday, which I must spend at the company store. I know I'm being robbed. What is the general experience with regard to these hold-ups?

The government's *Monthly Labor Review*, July, 1935, reports that there are something like 4,000 company stores in this country, mainly in lumber camps, bituminous mining towns, textile plants in the south, and iron and steel plants in various states. Most of these company stores compel employes to patronize them by seeing to it that they receive wages in the form of scrip, which can be turned into cash at a discount of from 10 to 30 percent. The same official source says that prices at company stores are higher than the general market by from two to 10 percent. Your complaint is therefore well founded. About the only hope for an immediate remedy would be a powerful labor movement, combined with a strong cooperative organization.

* * *

Is it true that Italy is stronger than Great Britain in the Mediterranean Sea?

On September 1, 1935, the naval situation in the Mediterranean was as follows: battleships, Italy, 4; Britain, 3; France, 6. Cruisers, Italy, 23; Britain, 7; France, 18. Flotilla leaders and destroyers, Italy, 45; Britain, 27; France, 40. Submarines,

Italy, 51; Britain, 7; France, 30. Totals: Italy, 123; Britain, 44; France, 94. If Britain and France were to combine their naval resources in that explosive section, they would have 138 ships against Italy's 123. The difference between Britain and Italy—44 for the former, 123 for the latter—could easily be changed if the English were to decide to move larger forces to their positions in the Mediterranean, which may happen before this gets into print. In addition, one must bear in mind England's strong control of focal points—Gibraltar, Malta, the Suez Canal, and several other strategic places. If Britain and Italy were to lock horns, there's little doubt that the English could turn the Mediterranean into a British lake.

* * *

Which station reports the most accurate time?

The palm goes to the Naval Observatory at Washington, D. C., which broadcasts time signals from the Arlington radio station. It is accurate to within one-thousandth of a second. The observatory reports that its method is almost independent of human observations, the work being done by automatic photographs of the stars.

* * *

Will not Socialism destroy initiative?

There are certain kinds of initiative that ought to be destroyed. Such as: the initiative that provokes war scares in order to sell munitions; the initiative to adulterate food and other articles; the initiative to exploit the masses of workers and farmers; the initiative to keep the necessary industries in private hands for the profit of a small minority; the initiative to provoke imperialistic attacks on weaker people in order to increase capitalistic profit; the initiative to destroy food and other necessities in order to maintain higher prices; the initiative to use priests, preachers and rabbis to keep the suffering masses in a state of intellectual coma in order to make them satisfied with their lot as wage slaves; the initiative to drive into the streets older workers who can't compete with younger workers and thereby pile up dividends for great corporations; the initiative to lie to and deceive

the masses regarding the facts of the present economic system; the initiative to distort, misrepresent and deceive for the sake of commercial advantage.

But true initiative need not be afraid of a system that produces wealth for use instead of profit. Under a social order in which the workers will receive the full social value of their labor, true initiative will be protected and nurtured. Such as: the initiative to serve the community rather than a small owning class of capitalists; the initiative to provide for the aged through decent old age pensions; the initiative to guarantee peace by making imperialistic wars impossible; the initiative to help humanity by producing a surplus of needed goods in order to destroy poverty for all time; the initiative to seek for the truth in academic fields; the initiative to reduce overwork among the working masses by making all able-bodied men producers of useful things, thereby giving a reasonable, humane amount to all instead of back-breaking toil to only a portion of the working class; the initiative to do away with the disgrace of charity by instituting a system of social justice; the initiative to make the producers of wealth the important people in the community, instead of the parasitic exploiters; the initiative to place human beings above profits. Real initiative will not suffer under a Cooperative Commonwealth.

* * *

What is the American Civil Liberties Union?

This organization, with headquarters at 31 Union Square, New York City, is one of the finest, most useful bodies in the country today, devoted as it is to fighting for civil rights wherever threatened. This society is often accused of being communistic, but, after many years of observation, I can state emphatically that here is one group that is strictly non-partisan and devoted wholeheartedly to its announced purpose—the preservation of our constitutional rights to free speech, free press, free assembly, the right to strike and picket without molestation by the police, the struggle against censorship in literature, the movies and the radio, the protection of aliens

who are mistreated and frequently framed in order to make possible their deportation for being political radicals, the right of the unemployed to organize and demand ample relief from local, state and federal authorities, the freedom to teach the unpopular truth in colleges and schools, the tireless opposition to lynching and mob violence, the ending of labor injunctions, and so on.

This Union reaches everywhere, fighting, mainly in the courts, to preserve the Bill of Rights, and many a victory for civil rights has been won by its officers and committeemen.

At its head is Roger N. Baldwin, who directs the work of the Union wherever the rights of citizens or aliens are jeopardized. He is, without a doubt, one of the finest characters in American life.

Next to Baldwin stands Arthur Garfield Hays, the famous lawyer, who handles so many of the Union's cases in the courts, and many have been his victories for freedom and tolerance.

Other important figures are Dr. Harry F. Ward, Morris L. Ernst, Corliss Lamont, Amos R. Pinchot, Elmer Rice, Norman Thomas, all of whom are on the Board of Directors.

A National Committee includes such distinguished Americans as Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes, Clarence Darrow, Heywood Broun, Prof. John Dewey, John Dos Passos, Sherwood Eddy, Prof. Felix Frankfurter, Norman Hapgood, James Weldon Johnson, Prof. Robert Morss Lovett, Prof. Alexander Meiklejohn, and Oswald Garrison Villard.

There are active state chairmen in almost every state, ready at all times to serve, without pay, whenever civil, educational, cultural, racial, artistic, literary, or dramatic freedom of expression is threatened.

The great Scopes trial, in Tennessee, in which the medieval anti-evolution law was put to a test by Clarence Darrow and Arthur Garfield Hays, was arranged, financed and directed by this Union. But this is only one case in thousands wherein the Union showed its willingness to fight for civil liberties. The Civil Liberties Union carries forward the real patriotism, traditional ideals and

democratic liberalism of true Americanism.

* * *

What is the size of the British forces in India?

57,000 soldiers.

* * *

The other night I had an argument with a former reader of yours, who claims he quit reading you because you had become too prejudiced and bitter and because you are a millionaire. Of course, I grew indignant and asked him what was the basis of his claim. He wouldn't tell me, but stupidly kept asserting that you are rich and derisively suggested that I write and ask you.

I wish your friend had the right dope when he described me as a millionaire, for that would mean the end of worry about subscriptions, book sales, wages, taxes, and the other problems of a hard-pressed printer.

It is true that I live in a nice home out in the country, drive a new Ford V-8, smoke a number of 5c cigars daily, and never fail to buy a ticket for some movie or concert I think will interest me.

Then there's the printing plant—and a right nice institution it is, without a mortgage against it. The main plant is two stories and basement, and contains a large rotary press, four fine cylinder presses, four jobbers, a stereotyping outfit, eight folding machines, two large stitchers, two cutters, two linotypes, about 20 tons of linotype metal, a good assortment of type, 23 typewriters, five adding machines, two large fire-proof vaults filled with book plates, and the necessary line of desks and other office tools. Then there are two large warehouses—one filled with a car of waste-paper and two cars of good book paper (all paid for); the other filled with about 10,000,000 finished little and big books.

Against all these substantial assets stand only about \$10,000 of unsecured notes and \$2,000 of bills payable. This substantial position was made possible by the public of the entire world which, during the past 16 years, bought 200,000,000 small books and 50,000,000 larger volumes.

The only weak spot in this line-up is the woefully meager bank balance, because of the public's inability to buy as many books as it should. However, this financial stringency

isn't as bad as it sounds, for I keep this business strictly within its income. If all this makes me a millionaire then I'm afraid I'm guilty and should be sent to perdition pronto.

Personally, I live simply, preferring constructive work and instructive writing to conspicuous display. Had I wanted to grow rich, I could have used this plant to support the conservative, orthodox side of all political, economic and religious subjects, but, like a fool, I have preferred to publish the kind of material I think will do the most good, never hesitating to take the unpopular and unprofitable side of many issues.

As for my being prejudiced, I leave that to my readers. My intellectual enemies may think so, because I present a viewpoint which doesn't appeal to them. However, I don't rest my case on prejudice but on facts, verifiable data, science, philosophy and history. This is not only true of my own work but that of my contributors, men like Joseph McCabe, Isaac Goldberg, etc.

As for being bitter, I don't think that's quite the accurate word. Anyone who follows my work month after month must admit that bitterness never enters my method of expression. If anything, I'm given to too much levity, if some of my correspondents are to be believed. It may be that your friend thinks that because I'm hot for my subjects and relentless in attacking what I consider to be social and cultural evils it must follow that I'm bitter, but it isn't so. Instead of being bitter, I work constructively and patiently as an instructor of my readers, showing them what I consider to be the right position on numerous important ideas and developments. I've never lost hope in the strength of education, and anyone who has that hope never permits himself to be poisoned by cynicism or bitterness.

* * *

Please comment on the situation in Austria.

Political, economic and social conditions in Austria are very complicated and can only be highlighted in this brief article. Austria, which is about three-fourths the size of Cuba, is a poor, unbalanced country. By "unbalanced" I mean that it contains

a large city, Vienna, modest farm lands and only a few industries. It is cut off from its old industries in highly industrialized Czechoslovakia and its bread-basket (wheat) in Hungary, both of which were taken from Austria by the so-called peace treaty after the World War. So, as Austria stands, it is all head and no body. To go on as it has means slow suicide. Its present Catholic-fascist government, which is unpopular and violently hated by four-fifths of the Austrians, would collapse quickly if Mussolini were to withdraw his financial and military support.

Mussolini has poured a great deal of money into Austria, because it's part of his policy to keep Austria from falling into the hands of Germany. But Mussolini himself is broke—his unsound Fascist economy and his Ethiopian folly have just about cleaned out his treasury and destroyed his credit—so it is safe to predict that before long the great fascist will be compelled to let Austria try to get along without Italian money.

Mussolini's withdrawal of financial support might serve as an excuse for the return of the Hapsburgs, but this move would undoubtedly provoke a general European war. The Little Entente, especially Czechoslovakia, wouldn't consent to such a restoration without first resorting to a test of arms. The reason for this attitude on the part of the Little Entente is the fact that a Hapsburg on Austria's throne would immediately strive to get the other parts of the former Austro-Hungarian empire together again, which Czechoslovakia and Hungary certainly don't want under any conditions.

And, all along, there's Hitler just waiting for his chance to gobble up Austria. He wants that country for several reasons, the greatest being that of prestige. Himself an Austrian, he'd like to bring his native land under the Nazi regime. Also, taking over Austria would open the door to carrying out that very important Hitlerian policy of bringing under the German flag the 4,000,000 Germans scattered throughout Central Europe.

It would mean chaos if Hitler were to take over Austria, where, at the most, perhaps 40 percent of the population are favorable to his ideas.

It's quite likely that a majority would vote to join Germany—not because they love Hitlerism but because this would be a means of ending the unnatural Austrian situation—a country cut off from the world, surrounded by immense tariff walls, unable to make a living, unable to keep going without financial help from abroad. They figure that once they become a part of Germany they can at least hope for the return of happier, more liberal, more democratic days. It wouldn't be as though they were sacrificing a liberal, civilized government, for, after all, Austria is already under a fascist regime, and Mussolini is no more to Austrian taste than is Hitler and his gang of cut-throats.

But one shouldn't accept the opinion held by so many ill-informed people who innocently imagine that the suggestion of union between Austria and Germany germinated in the gigantic brain of Hitler. The facts tell a different story. Back in November, 1918, the parliaments of both the German and Austrian republics voted unanimously for union, but here the stupid French politicians stepped in and forbade the merger. Had the French permitted this union it's safe to conclude that the history of Europe would have taken a different, and happier, course.

* * *

In a speech delivered on September 16, 1935, Hitler said: "If other states have not yet decayed, the fact they rest on democracy does not prove our authority and principle are wrong, but rather that historical processes take time." Please comment.

With a Fascist regime that is less than three years old, Hitler already talks about the decay of those states which are based on democratic principles, the inference being that Fascist dictatorships are as permanent as Gibraltar. It's quite true that historical processes take time, but Fascism in Italy and Germany proves that decay can be stimulated. Dictatorship has just about ruined both countries, and their collapse is only a matter of time. Mussolini and Hitler are dictating to busted countries, and the fault here lies with Fascism. On the other hand, democratic countries like Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Denmark, Holland, France, England, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the U. S. and a dozen others,

show every sign of vigor and health, despite the long years of the depression. These countries have established legitimate, orderly, civilized machinery for the rectification of problems, and will survive. The historical process is slow, but a century and a half of democratic, liberal institutions in the U. S. proves clearly that this country is headed in the right direction. Democratic governments have their faults, but at least it's possible to live under them, which is more than any intelligent, civilized person can say about the Nazi and Mussolini brands of Fascism. The historical process works quickly at times, and signs accumulate that it isn't going to take decades to rid the world of the obscenities of a Mussolini or a Hitler.

* * *

Hitler claims that Germany must regain its colonies if it is to enjoy prosperity again. Please comment.

Hitler should first explain his assumption that Germany's pre-war colonies were sources of profit. The facts don't support that contention. In 1913, Germany owned 1,027,000 square miles of colonies in Africa, Asia and in the Pacific. At that time only 24,300 Germans and other white persons lived in those colonies. In 1912, only one-half of 1 percent of Germany's foreign trade was with its colonies. At the beginning of the war, in 1914, only one German colony—Togoland—was not a drain on the German national treasury. All others piled up handsome deficits, which had to be met by the German masses. If, in the almost ideal conditions that existed before the World War (from the viewpoint of Capitalism) Germany was unable to gain anything tangible from its colonial empire, why should we assume that Hitler, under far more difficult conditions, could turn from near-bankruptcy to prosperity by the mere piling up of more territory? The facts seem to indicate that Hitler's talk about more colonies is nothing more than a trick to divert the German masses from their economic troubles at home. If they can be made to think that prosperity will be theirs if only their colonies were returned, they will undoubtedly whoop it up for Hitler's new claims, at the same time being dutifully ignorant of the fact that

even in the best times Germany found its colonies more of a liability than an asset. Besides, until recently we were led to believe that all of Germany's troubles were caused by the Jews, but now that the German Jews have been hounded into liquidation, another myth is needed to keep the home folk off their troubles—in this case a gassy argument about colonies.

* * *

I've lived on the Pacific Coast all my life and while I'm not addicted to racial prejudice I feel, nevertheless, that the Japanese are playing havoc with our jobs. They have monopolized the fishing industry.

I'm sure you wouldn't feel that way if you knew the facts. To listen to complaints from the Coast, one would imagine the Japanese had settled in this country by the millions. There are only 140,000 Japanese men, women and children in the United States. As for their activity in the fishing industry, California has licensed 5,399 fishermen, of whom only 680 are Japanese, so they are a long distance from a monopoly.

* * *

Shortly after his marriage, Senator McAdoo said: "I'm growing younger each year and don't know what to do about it." Please comment.

When a man of 71 marries a young woman of 26 he does a lot of rationalizing, and McAdoo is no exception. As he was on his honeymoon, his head was in a whirl when he said he was growing younger each year. Any physiologist could explain, with a wealth of illustration, that each year the animal organism grows older.

* * *

Have you ever noticed how most Americans look on controversy as bad taste, or even worse?

Most American audiences prefer to listen to speakers, or read books and publications, that are non-controversial, and therein they show their intellectual timidity and, what's worse, ignorance. The ideal speaker is always the man who arouses no opposition.

Recently, I listened to the editorial writer of a daily newspaper published in nearby Pittsburg, Kansas. He writes something like 3,000 words per day, and year after year succeeds almost 100 percent in offending no one. He carefully avoids controversial questions, preferring to wax

oracular over such subjects as drunken drivers, the need for better roads, punishing offenders who ignore the town's stop lights, the social value of placing markers at the scene of great events in Kansas history, a law to limit the length of trucks and their trailers, better enforcement against those minor criminals who distribute advertising circulars from house to house instead of buying space in his paper, the bad state of the street down where his motor car must cross the Frisco tracks, and many other equally trivial topics for editorializing. He is, therefore, a shining mark in journalism.

In his speech he chose the least controversial subject he knew—the one dealing with the educational and patriotic value of historical markers along the highways of the state. When he finished, he beamed as he shook hands with me and murmured: "I guess my talk kept clear of controversy." And he said these words in self-praise.

The very thing that makes for cultural and intellectual life—honest, sincere controversy—was avoided like so much heresy. And that goes right down the line. When some great controversial question is taken up—like the one dealing with Russia, by Mr. Clarence P. Oakes, which I described recently—the sponsors are careful to see to it that the speech is entirely one-sided and prejudiced, but delivered to an audience that has been conditioned to taking it without a hint of heckling or vocal disagreement. Since the speaker wasn't interrupted or made to defend his viewpoints afterwards, it follows that the speech was a success. Had anyone risen to question the speaker, the chairman would have been shocked, and the audience would have frowned on such disgraceful taste.

To be a perfect member of an ideal American audience, one must accept what is handed out by the lecturer without the slightest appearance of gagging. That attitude, which is all too general, makes for conventional thinking, dullness, and regimentation. And I don't know what to do about it.

* * *

Has any competent person ever examined the extraordinary claims of the various tooth-paste advertisers?

Dr. Bissell B. Palmer, former head of the American College of Dentists,

has written a book on this subject, entitled *Paying Through the Tooth*, published by Vanguard Press. According to this disinterested, expert authority, the well-known tooth-pastes are promoted through dishonest, inaccurate, deceiving, and in many cases downright fraudulent, claims. Dr. Palmer proves that:

Those pastes that claim to "alkalize acids" in the mouth (Pebeco, Bost and Phillip's Milk of Magnesia Tooth Paste) can make good this claim only a few seconds at a time, and furthermore there's nothing to prove that such chemical action is necessary or desirable.

"Teeth whiteners" (Kolynos) can't deliver the goods.

"Film removers" (Pepsodent) can't do as they promise, and furthermore there's no proof that removal of the film has any particular advantage.

The paste that guarantees "oxygen bubbles" (Colax) sounds impressive, but dentists say they don't know what the advertisements are palavering about.

"Pyorrhea cures" (Forhan, etc.) are pure fakes. This disease can't be cured that way. It calls for special help from the medical profession.

"Pink toothbrush" (Ipana) is just harem-scarem stuff. Ipana's paste can't stop "pink toothbrush." Hand massages will do much more good in this condition.

Pastes to "prevent cavities" (Squibb) are taking mean advantage of the consumer's lack of knowledge. Caries (tooth cavities) are caused by bad methods of dieting, which the tooth brush can't remedy, even when coated with Squibb's.

"Stain removers" (Colgate) simply won't do the job.

Dr. Palmer claims that a tooth-paste can, at the very best, merely serve as a "mechanical aid" to the brush. That's all one should expect. All other claims—a few of them are listed above—are just so much advertising ballyhoo intended to get consumers to spend. They are always disappointed. But they keep on buying. And that's what advertising is for.

* * *

I recall during 1932 that Hoover's RFC loaned a lot of money to Dawes' bank. Was it repaid?

Hell-and-Maria Dawes, ex-vice president of the U. S. and first head of the Reconstruction Finance Cor-

poration, under Herbert Hoover, hurriedly resigned his job when he was given the bad news that his own bank in Chicago was about to go on the rocks. He then resumed the presidency of his bank and arranged a double-quick RFC loan of \$90,000,000. Only \$33,000,000 was repaid. Uncle Sam is holding the sack for \$57,000,000, all of which is past due, and no sign of meeting the obligation. Not even the interest has been paid.

* * *

How many bicycles are there in the United States?

3,000,000 in 1935, an increase of 50,000 over 1934.

* * *

Please comment on the Consumers' Research lock-out.

This corporation has, through clever propaganda, established something of a reputation as the defender of the consumer, but the facts indicate that the greatest body of consumers—the working people—can expect no sympathy, cooperation or fair dealing from this capitalistic outfit.

One hundred and twenty-five employees—clerks, typists, chemists, research workers, etc.—walked out when they were denied the right to a regular labor union. The walk-out was then turned into a lock-out by the management, and at this writing the men and women are walking the streets without jobs or wages. The employees complain that this highly successful commercial enterprise paid starvation wages, many of the expert chemists receiving only \$16 per week, and lower pay for the less skilled.

I've shown before that Consumers' Research is not a real organization of consumers, being nothing more than a racketeering outfit out to clean up huge dividends at the expense of its poor employees and the gullible consumers at large. There's no denying that a real, non-commercial consumers' organization would be of real benefit to the public, but one organized along the outlines of this sweat-shop gang can't be expected to do the necessary job.

Consumers' Research works along the lines of the most reactionary corporations. It compels its employees to sign a "yellow dog" labor contract, which makes it an offense, punishable by discharge, to attempt to build a real labor union.

I first grew suspicious of this

racket when I studied its literature and found that subscribers must bind themselves to an agreement not to let any non-subscriber know the contents of the corporation's reports. A real friend of the consumer would beg its subscribers to broadcast its findings. But, since the prime motive is profit, it is compulsory for all subscribers to keep what they are told strictly confidential. That stamped the gang as being out for huge profits, instead of helping the consumers. And, according to accurate reports, the company has been rolling in wealth. One proof is the fact that it takes 125 employees to handle the promoters' business. The consumers are still out in the cold. But someday there will be a real, sincere society that will be fair to the consumers, decent to its employees, and aim at public education instead of vast private gain.

* * *

Are there any clocks that are absolutely accurate?

The clock that comes nearest to accuracy is in the Greenwich Observatory. It doesn't vary more than a fourth of a second in a year. According to Dr. H. Spencer Jones, the Astronomer Royal, this clock is actually three clocks. The first clock consists of a pendulum, without wheels or dial. This pendulum swings in a partial vacuum, and the room in which it's kept is held to a constant temperature. Dr. Jones adds:

"The pendulum will keep the time. It will be 'observed' by a photo-electric cell on which a beam of light will be trained and broken every time the pendulum swings past. A series of electric impulses will be sent out, amplified, and used to control the first 'slave' clock, which will actually work the dials.

"Controlled in turn by this will be a second 'slave,' the chief function of which will be the accurate timing of the impulses which will keep the master pendulum swinging. These impulses will have a minute weight, released electrically at exactly the right time to fall against the pendulum."

* * *

One glaring fault with many who write of Russia, is their failure to consider progress relatively.

In writing about the Soviet Union I have frequently gone to great pains to explain that conditions in Russia

today shouldn't be compared with the United States but should be compared with conditions in the czaristic year of 1913. On such a comparison the Russians of 1935 run away with the show. Every development works to the credit of the Soviet Union when we make the Russia of 1913 the yardstick. On that basis, illiteracy has been given stinging defeats. Science is far advanced. Industrial production is record-breaking. The masses of workers and farmers are better off, economically, financially and culturally. The people are enjoying greater leisure, security, recreation, education, health, dignity and freedom. Comparing the position of Russian women of 1935 to their lot under the czar in the second decade of the present century is like comparing sanitary conditions in the 20th Century to health conditions in the Dark Ages. We mustn't compare Russia with the U. S., because the Soviet Union has had only 10 years in which to build up its industrial, commercial and economic life. But what a record for only 10 short years! We've been more than a century erecting our industrial machine, building our schools, universities, institutions, homes, roads, and the like. These advantages didn't spring into being in a season. So why expect miracles from the Russians? They have demonstrated one thing beyond dispute—the workers and farmers under the hammer and sickle are far better off than the near-serfs under the lash of the czar's cossacks. Popular education is making tremendous forward strides. Racial persecution has been made a criminal offense. Books are being turned out at a rapid rate. There is a great intellectual awakening. Science is being subsidized as never before in the history of the race. The Soviet Union has already justified itself.

* * *

You contradict yourself. In one article you suggest approvingly the Socialist policy of socializing one industry at a time. In another article you criticize Upton Sinclair's EPIC because it doesn't aim at complete Socialism.

I fail to see the inconsistency which my correspondent stresses. The Socialist objective of taking over one large-scale industry after another—the railroads, communication, power plants, the banks, pipe lines, great

chain stores, etc.—constitutes social rebuilding, aims at the elimination of the capitalist system, ends the class struggle by placing the workers and farmers, through their government, in control of the media of wealth production, distribution and exchange, substitutes production for use instead of capitalistic profit, guarantees each willing worker the right to a job or social insurance in the absence of employment, and extends the principle of full political democracy into the industrial life of society. Bringing about the Socialist order is a vast, complicated transformation, and certainly can't be done by the issuance of a decree between days. It may take years, perhaps even decades, to build an economy based on Socialism.

On the other hand, Upton Sinclair promises to let the Capitalists continue to own the large industries. He has gone to the extreme of explaining to his followers that he and his EPIC plan have no designs on capitalistic control of our economic life, so long as these private owners keep their equipment moving. He limits himself strictly to a scheme of barter, under which a minority of the masses—the unemployed—will be put to work producing for themselves, in order to relieve the Capitalists of the expense and nuisance of having to provide for their victims.

The two plans are totally dissimilar. Socialism is moving to a clear-cut goal, presumably step by step. But EPIC has in view only one step—barter among the workless. The former is an express train going somewhere. The latter is a local, which intends to put up in the car-barn just around the corner.

* * *

In articles about Ethiopia I learn that the country has only one railroad, French-owned. Is the railroad run by the French for strategic or business reasons?

The strategic values are there, but the commercial impulse rules. The railroad is 487 miles long, extending from Djibouti, French Somaliland, to Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. The French draw dividends of 40 percent annually from this investment, which is certainly a corking money-maker. In other words, this property pays for itself every 30

months. The freight rate for this short run is amazingly high—8½¢ per pound. The passenger rate is 10½¢ per mile. The French have agreed to sell Mussolini 30 percent of this corporation's stock, 8 percent having been delivered in January, 1935, and the balance (22 percent) to follow when Mussolini calls for it—and has the money in hand.

* * *

How is Emperor Haile Selassie handling Ethiopia's slave problem?

Ethiopia's slaves are mainly domestic servants. By decree, the emperor has stipulated that all children born to slaves shall be free, and on the death of any master his slaves are to be liberated. These two measures, in time, will solve Ethiopia's ancient problem. There's every reason to believe he is sincere in his efforts and that his gradualism will reach the objectives outlined for the country. Meanwhile, capital punishment is provided for anyone who buys or sells a slave.

* * *

In an editorial on the assassination of Huey Long, The Belfast Telegraph said: "The regimes of Hitler and Mussolini are mild in comparison with his dictatorship." Please comment.

The editorial writer who got off that line knew nothing about the situation in Louisiana or he was ignorant of conditions in Germany and Italy. The statement is worse than childish—it's stupid.

To begin with, Long's rule in Louisiana was not clear-cut Fascism. As I wrote several times, his influence was in the *direction* of Fascism, which is an entirely different phenomenon. Long certainly could have become a Fascist dictator in time, but from beginning to end he was only a political boss. What Pendergast in Kansas City, Vare in Philadelphia, and Tammany Hall in New York City amounted to was bossism in local politics. Long took their local bossism and made it state-wide, which, to be sure, was dangerous, but still far from Fascism.

There are a number of reasons that make it impossible for an accurate commentator to call Long's regime worse than Hitler's or Mussolini's. First, Long tolerated opposition parties. There were even Communist candidates in the field against him in his home state. Opposition news-

papers spoke openly against Long's administration. There was no persecution of racial minorities or political antagonists. Constitutional rights of free speech, free press and free assembly were respected by Huey Long. He ruled Louisiana because he got more votes than the other fellows. Those who were against him still had the means of eliminating him from the political scene—by getting more votes than Long—which they didn't seem able to do, for the great demagogue could always get the dumb yokels to support him. He was so sure of his political position that he enfranchised 30,000 Negro voters by repealing the Poll Tax law, the favorite trick to keep southern Negroes from the ballot box.

Long certainly was dangerous, but I wouldn't call him America's No. 1 demagogue. That "honor" goes to Father Coughlin, a far more dangerous misleader of the masses.

It would have been healthier for the political future of the country if Huey Long had been eliminated by the pressure of political discussion and orderly action. That would have been a real victory of democracy. But assassination stepped in and made that solution impossible. The assassin did democracy a grave injury by removing Huey Long via the bullet route. It would have been far better if the masses of voters had learned to appreciate Long's position in the political scene and had ousted him through intelligent, orderly constructive action at the polls. As it is, the bullet removed the demagogue, but the demagogic leader who can rush in with a new line of Longisms will bring the country right back to where it was when Long was at his worst. Assassination removes the individual, but it leaves the social cancer untouched. The sane, scientific remedy isn't blind, stupid violence but constructive agitation, education and organization. Long is dead, but Longism lives. It will be known by another name—perhaps Coughlinism—but it will be here to plague the people until they learn what measures are necessary to solve our economic and social questions.

* * *

Is it true that Father Coughlin is organizing labor unions?

The notorious Fascist and anti-

Semite—Father Charles E. Coughlin—is the open tool of the great motor car capitalists of Detroit. Having sold out to General Motors, Father Coughlin is serving his Wall Street masters by confusing the workers in the motor car industry. When it was seen that 35,000 Detroit workers had joined the American Federation of Labor, the bosses became alarmed and decided to cause confusion and reaction by the device of a dual union. The ideal person to do this choice piece of dirty work was none other than Father Coughlin. Rushing into the field, where the legitimate labor organization was making rapid, sound progress, Coughlin announced a mass meeting in behalf of what he calls the National Union for Social Justice (a high-sounding name for plain fascism) and as a result got 21,000 auto workers to join Coughlin's scab-herding Automotive Workers Industrial Association. This organization is nothing more than the trick of a demagogue who is ready to betray his dupes at the behest of the moneyed powers in the motor car industry. Father Coughlin's one and only motive (after lining his own pockets) is to destroy the A. F. of L. organization in Detroit. With brazen impudence, he dismisses the A. F. of L. as a "dictatorial outfit," whereas, according to his own words, his National Union is Father Coughlin's own and exclusive organization, without voice or vote anywhere. Coughlin is the National Union's own little Hitler, and, like the Fascist Hitler, Coughlin is out to destroy legitimate labor unionism.

* * *

How much does the U. S. government spend yearly on scientific research?

Only \$70,000,000, or almost 10 percent of the yearly expense of the army. The country gets tremendous dividends on its comparatively small expenditures on scientific research. Our government scientists stand at or near the top. Their contributions to civilization are of incalculable value, despite our unwillingness to provide sufficient funds.

* * *

Please comment on the Communist charge that the C. C. C. camps are nothing more than new centers for militarism.

I have seen the statement many

times, but am still to come on some real evidence. I have visited two C. C. C. camps in this county—one was leveling a lot of land that had been torn up by strip-coal shovels; the other was building a large dam and lake about 10 miles north of Girard—and could see no signs of militarism. Of course, the camps are run by army officers, but I couldn't see anything wrong with that. I believe it would be a good idea if all our officers and soldiers were put to such constructive work, instead of strutting around in uniforms and acting like new editions of Napoleon. The C. C. C. boys weren't drilled or in any way being militarized, though I've noticed that there are certain elements in this country which would like to see these camps turned into army cantonments. The boys were in fine shape and I didn't hear a word about militarism. Of course, if war should come I don't doubt the government would see to it that these boys, or youngsters like them, would do the fighting, but there's nothing new in a thing like that. I criticize when the facts compel me to squawk, as my readers know, but when the government does something decent and constructive, I think it's poor policy to belittle and misrepresent.

* * *

Your boost for Missouri speech leads me to ask if you consider English usage better than American.

I don't care for the Englishman's pronunciation, whether he be an aristocrat or one of the rabble. But when it comes to word usage, it seems to be just about a toss-up, for we beat the English in some words and they beat us in others. For example, the English "lift" is better than our "elevator." The Briton's "trunk call" beats our "long distance call." His "gum" has it all over our "mucilage." Our "shoe" is just as good as his "boot." And the same goes for our "druggist" against his "chemist." We buy a "can" of sardines; the Englishman buys a "tin"—score even there. But he beats us when he calls our "pitcher" a "jug." But our "bug" is better than his "insect." An American's "vest" is an Englishman's "waistcoat," and I prefer the former, but here we bump into what the American calls an "undershirt," but which is a "vest" to

the English, so it's even-steven there. Our "baggage" is not a bit better than his "luggage." But I think our "check-room" is superior to his "left luggage office." "Custom tailor" is pretty awful, but no worse than the Englishman's "bespoke tailor." Many of us just say "tailor" when we think of a "bespoke tailor," and say "clothier" when patronizing the ready-to-wears. I order "chicken," but an Englishman calls for "fowl," and there the Britisher wins another point. But, in all, it's about 50-50.

* * *

Is it true that Julius Streicher has a criminal record?

Nazidom's chief Jew-baiter was convicted of blackmail in 1927 and was ousted from his job as teacher because of vicious behavior. He thus is able to qualify as a perfect Hitler henchman.

* * *

Is Uncle Sam doing anything about the proposed canal across Florida?

With an immediate grant of \$5,000,000 to the Army Corps of Engineers, President Roosevelt, on September 3, 1935, gave the Florida ship canal its long-awaited and much debated start. The canal, when finished, will cost from \$125,000,000 to \$150,000,000. Unlike the Panama Canal, it will be sea-level all the way, extending from the mouth of St. John's River to Palatka, after which it will go to the Gulf of Mexico via the Oklawaha and Withlacoochee rivers, with its Gulf terminal near Port Inglis. The canal will be 195 miles long, a hundred of which will follow natural waterways. It is estimated that ships will be able to make the trip in 25 hours, on the average.

The project was fought bitterly by business interests in the southern section of Florida, for it was felt that this canal through northern Florida would do serious economic damage to a large section of the state, but the canal's supporters in Jacksonville and Ocala carried their fight to a complete victory. One of the favorite arguments of the southern elements was the possibility that the canal would cause a great infiltration of salt water into the state's subterranean fresh water, causing damage to citrus lands, but army engineers were able to show that this argument was unscientific.

Ocean ships sailing between New

York and any of the Gulf ports will save from one to two and a half days, which will mean a yearly saving of about \$7,500,000. Work, which starts immediately, will be done by men on relief and workers from transient camps in Florida and elsewhere.

When was the discovery made that legumes fertilize the soil by manufacturing nitrogen?

No one knows, but experts in agricultural chemistry report that 2,500 years ago a Chinese wrote that mung beans could be used for green manuring.

Do logical thinkers first state a conclusion and then seek and outline a series of reasons for holding that conclusion, or do they reason first and state conclusions afterward?

The late Professor Charles S. Peirce, of Harvard, who was a fine logician, answered your question, as follows: "If the conclusion determines what the reasoning shall be, the reasoning is sham."

How does the international Socialist movement purpose meeting the problem of crushing Fascist tyranny?

The Executive Committee of the Second (Socialist) International, at its last meeting in Brussels, passed a resolution which answers your question. Pointing directly at Mussolini, it charged him with planning the spoliation of Ethiopia, and, aiming its words at the Italian masses, called on them "to oppose the Fascist tyrants with the same weapons that Fascism has put in their hands." There you have the whole issue in a few words. In a democratic country, where the workers and farmers enjoy full civil rights, it is possible to meet tyranny with legal, orderly action, but in a Fascist country like Italy, where the workers and peasants are denied all political and civil rights, there is no avenue of escape except through violence. Mussolini is putting a million rifles in the hands of his slaves. Very well, says the Socialist International, those very rifles will be the means of restoring decency and justice in Italy.

What is the Soviet's coal output?

1935 production of coal in the Soviet Union will be 112,200,000 tons, which is an increase of 20,000,000 tons over 1934. It is reported official-

ly that 41 new coal mines will be opened soon, which will raise Russia's coal production another 23,260,000 tons per year.

Now that England has permitted Hitler to build a navy 35 percent the size of Britain's, how does this compare with the times of the kaiser?

Before the World War, Germany refused to accept Britain's offer of a German navy 50 percent the size of its own. When war finally came, Germany's navy was 60 percent the size of England's. It is estimated that Germany will need about seven years to build up to the agreed 35 percent.

What is block-booking?

This describes a practice almost peculiar to the moving picture industry. Independent theaters and chains are made to take all or none of a company's films, which means that block-booking forces a manager to rent the bad in order to get the good. The producers like this unusual business method, because it provides a market for their entire output, but the theater people complain it is one of the worst enemies of improved movie entertainment.

As I am given to an excessive participation in sexual experiences, I wonder if it wouldn't be well for me to include some saltpeter in my diet.

Dr. William J. Robinson advises against the use of this drug. He notes that there is "no scientific proof of its anaphrodisiac properties." He adds this warning: "If it does reduce the sex urge, it is probably due to its depressing effect on the system in general. It is apt to cause indigestion and thus affect the appetite, which of course has a general depressing effect." He also says that continuous use of this drug will have a bad effect on the kidneys. Your dilemma, according to Dr. Robinson, is difficult of solution.

In a recent speech to his departing conscripts, Mussolini declared that war will bring out the best in all Italians and turn them into the finest of aristocrats. Please comment.

Pardon the rather metaphysical expression, but it looks and smells like crapvapor to me. Mussolini's idea of grandeur wasn't working when he sent his tools to a half

dozen foreign countries to warn them quietly against shipping arms to Ethiopia, thereby putting Haile Selassie in a bad spot. If war brings out the finest, and turns all its "heroes" into aristocrats, it seems to my crude mind that some sort of sportsmanship would want to give the Ethiopians at least the arms with which to defend themselves. After all, Mussolini should remember that it is these Ethiopians who are to make "heroes," "Caesars" and "aristocrats" out of his robots. But how can they do a good job when Mussolini insists that they shall fight without weapons while he sends forth what some say is the most mechanized army in the world?

* * *

How many telephones have we in use?

The Federal Communications Commission reports, for June 30, 1935, 14,335,135 telephones; for the same in 1934, 14,016,423.

* * *

Is money still being hoarded in the United States?

Figures issued by the Federal Reserve Board Bulletin would indicate that hoarding of money is still a problem in the U. S. On June 30, 1935, \$1,300,000,000 in \$50 bills was outstanding. In October, 1930, the amount was less than half. In July, 1935, total money in circulation was \$5,518,000,000.

* * *

I have often seen in print the statement that motor cars have killed more Americans than bullets in war times. What are the facts?

The statement sounds wild, but it's true. From 1925 to 1934, motor car accidents in the U. S. caused more than 300,000 deaths. We lost less than 250,000 lives in all wars—from the Revolutionary War to the World War. C. A. Harnett, N. Y. State Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, reports that 5,868 persons were killed by motor cars in New York State in 1933. During the World War, New York State lost 5,194 soldiers.

* * *

Which country uses the most tin?

The U. S., which consumed, during the year ending June 30, 1935, 51,576 tons; for the same in 1934, 55,934 tons. Great Britain comes next with 21,341 tons for 1935; 20,451 tons for 1934. The Soviet Union used 6,315 tons in 1935; 4,972 tons in

1934, an increase of 27 percent. According to the International Tin Research Council, The Hague, world tin consumption, in 1935, was 126,172 tons; in 1934, 128,056, a decline of 1.5 percent.

* * *

What is the value of the production of our mining industry?

Domestic Commerce, on August 20, 1935, reported our mineral production in 1934 had a value of \$3,350,000,000, as against 1933 production of \$2,555,100,000.

* * *

How many airports have we? How many pilots?

There are 2,353 airports and landing fields in the U. S.; 693 have night-lighting. According to the Air Commerce Bulletin, on July 1, 1935, we had 14,188 transport, limited commercial and industrial, private, amateur, and glider pilots. The glider pilots number 111. There are 8,883 airplanes, autogiros and gliders.

* * *

Being a postal clerk, I am anxious to know how many men and women will be benefitted by the bill which establishes the 40-hour week in the postoffice department. Also, how many jobs will this create?

The Meadow-McKellar Bill, signed by the President, will give 235,000 employes a reduction in working hours from 44 to 40. It is estimated that 20,000 new jobs will result from this change.

* * *

Which American city has the highest suicide rate?

San Francisco comes first, with 31.9 suicides per 100,000 population, in 1934. Next comes Los Angeles, with 26.0; others, New York City, 16.6; Philadelphia, 16.1; Chicago, 15.0; Detroit, 11.4.

* * *

How much American capital is invested in Canada?

Of a total of \$6,406,140,000 foreign capital in Canada, U. S. investments amounted to \$3,919,937,000. Canadians have \$1,115,400,000 invested in the U. S.

* * *

In how many banks has Uncle Sam stock?

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, by July 15, 1935, invested more than a billion dollars in the preferred stock of 6,468 banks. Of the 14,187 banks in this country, the

RFC has an interest amounting to 16 percent. This money could have been used better to build up the postal savings banks, especially by providing the public with the usual commercial facilities, including the clearing of checks.

* * *

I, like Hitler, am a homosexual. Can I be cured?

"No, true homosexuality cannot be cured and has never been cured," writes Dr. William J. Robinson, who certainly is an authority. He adds that "true homosexuality is inborn," and that "he who advises a homosexual to get married is a criminal fool."

The notorious Hitler, whom you mention, has given the world another illustration of the queerness of his nature. An official report shows that, since taking power, the chief Nazi has commuted to life imprisonment only five men condemned to death by the courts, and of these men three were found guilty of murdering their sweethearts. Hitler again shows his inborn hatred of women by saving murderers convicted of taking the lives of their sex partners. An expert in abnormal psychology could write an interesting paper on this theme.

* * *

Mussolini defends violence against Ethiopia on the score that his militaristic policies are based on the objective of obtaining more land. Please comment.

Mussolini's best lesson should be Italy's experience in the World War. After spending \$27,000,000,000 and losing 1,597,000 in killed and wounded, Italy received 9,084 square miles of additional territory. This was at the cost of 175 casualties for each square mile, or, on a money basis,

each acre of land Italy grabbed cost \$4,276. That's paying a pretty stiff rate for land. Any Kansas farmer, who thinks he is being skinned alive when he pays \$50 for an acre of good dirt, could tell Mussolini that he's headed the wrong way when he decides to use militaristic power to gain more of the earth's surface. There's no telling what Ethiopian real estate will cost the great Fascist chieftain. Of course, Mussolini's answer to the above, most likely, is that Italy paid too much during the World War, but that he has worked out a system to get land on a bargain basis. That, of course, is an assumption. It may cost him even more than \$4,276 per acre.

* * *

I read often about the number of unemployed in this country, but don't recall seeing the figures on employment. What are they?

The Alexander Hamilton Institute reports that in June, 1935, there were 37,746,000 employed persons in the U. S. This was an increase of 4,728,000 over March, 1933. In October, 1929, this country had 45,971,000 employed persons. The same authority estimates 12,804,000 unemployed in June, 1935, as against 2,094,000 in 1929.

* * *

What does gasoline cost in Italy?

The lowest grade sells at 87c per gallon; high test, 95c per gallon. Most of this money, of course, goes in taxes to Mussolini. A new decree, issued late in August, 1935, will compel motorists to use gasoline substitutes, but the prices will be even higher, as Mussolini's war expenditures go up. Yes, Fascism is a howling success and "what this country needs is a Mussolini"!

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