

13th Series

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

E. Haldeman-Julius

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By E. Haldeman-Julius

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Questions and Answers

What about the reports, pro and con, regarding the Vatican's attitude toward Japan?

The first report, which was sent out from Vatican City by the official correspondent of the Associated Press, bore every mark of authenticity. I read it carefully several times and, as an experienced reporter, could see numerous internal proofs of its honesty. Every newspaper in the U.S. and Japan printed it. It told, in plain, blunt speech, that the Catholic Church, which supports Fascism wherever it shows itself, also supported the Fascism of Japanese Imperialism and blessed the Mikado's invasion of China, with its attendant horrors, bombing of unfortified cities, killing and maiming of thousands of women and children, and the entire economic and political subjugation of an immense, fine people.

The statement, which came from official Vatican sources, blessed the rape of China and accepted the usual red-herring of supporting aggression because it was saving the world from the "menace of Communism." The statement went on to say that Catholic priests were to give every possible aid to Japan and that its aims in China were in complete accord with the ideas of the Church.

This statement was released shortly after the brother of the Mikado had visited the Pope. While the Japanese rulers are too intelligent to accept the superstitions of Catholicism, they are also smart enough to know that this tremendously powerful engine for reaction could be made to give valuable services to the Japanese Fascists. One doesn't look a gift horse in mouth, nor does one ask that one's strong supporters shall share all of one's prejudices or superstitions.

The Catholic Church, which is following the Fascist policy of segregating the Soviet Union and preparing the way for a combined attack on the workers' fatherland, wants to see Japanese militarism win in China so that it will then be free to move to the North and help Germany de-

stroy the Soviet Union. That is the real reason why the Vatican supports Japan.

The statement was received with shouts of joy in the Japanese press, while the reaction in the U.S. was obviously bad, because it happens that many millions of our citizens still believe in Democracy, in decency, in justice and humanity. The American public was shocked by the Vatican's statement supporting Japan, because our people are overwhelmingly in sympathy with the Chinese people. The Catholic Church in America must hide its anti-Democracy, its anti-Semitism, its Fascism and its general anti-progressivism as much as possible lest new millions of our people be educated into an understanding of the menacing policies of the Catholic hierarchy. So, within the next 24 hours the Associated Press was compelled to carry a denial by another unnamed source in Vatican City, but it's interesting to note that this denial, which was sent to Japan as well as the U.S., wasn't used by the Japanese press. The Catholic Church wanted its pro-Fascist views accepted in one country and unofficially denied in a country that is still "afflicted with the poison of Liberalism."

The Associated Press gave the American public the Church's true position in the first statement; the second statement was carried, without explanation, because it was compelled to or else stand the full fury of the angry hierarchy. It took its punishment without muttering a word of protest because it has learned to fear the powers of the priests. Someday the truth will come out. Meanwhile, those who know how to read the signs of the times know that the first statement told only what was obvious to the informed. It revealed, furthermore, the interesting, and again obvious, fact that the Catholic Church is more interested in its reactionary economic policies than it is concerned over the religious convic-

tions of the world. Fascism is its real religion. And, when it's given its choice between Fascism and Catholicism, it takes the former. Consider the spectacle of the Pope supporting Franco's Mohammedan Moors as they went about the bloody work of slaughtering thousands of Catholic Loyalists in the Catholic provinces of the Basque section of North-western Spain. It doesn't even stop at making deals with heathen Japanese, so long as the objective is the advancement of Fascism and the preparation of a combined attack on the Soviet Union.

* * *
Can a Socialist consistently support President Roosevelt?

This question has an academic or theoretical aspect and a practical side. Theoretically, a Socialist can only support a political ticket which has as its program the complete socialization of the large-scale industries, the establishment of industrial democracy, and a social order devoid of classes. In other words, his main objective is the elimination of the capitalist class's ownership of the mines, mills, factories, power plants, railroads, immense farms, shipping, communication, banks, and the like. That's the goal.

But that same Socialist is living in a real world and is facing immediate problems that must be treated today, not in the remote future. The intelligent Socialist knows that the American people aren't ready—intellectually and organizationally—to approve of full Socialism. The immediate is of more interest to the average citizen. And our President—who is by no means a Socialist—offers the key to the immediate reforms that are so urgently needed. Roosevelt is the man of the hour because he has in mind the most necessary and immediate social changes. He hasn't said a word in favor of doing away with the profit system; in fact, he believes in it. He doesn't envisage the day when the capitalists will be deprived of their control over the means of production, distribution, and exchange, because he believes such ownership is right and just. Socialists, of course, reject those views, but they admit, for the present at least, they are theoretical questions.

President Roosevelt, with all his belief in the desirability of the capitalist system of wealth production and distribution, knows what's in the minds of the groping masses. One might call that political genius and not be far from the truth. Roosevelt sees the day when the masses of workers and farmers will enjoy unemployment insurance, old age pensions, health insurance, minimum wages, maximum hours, and a number of other pressing reforms. Some of these progressive measures already have been enacted into law. Others are on his program for the near future, especially those involving minimum wages and maximum hours—changes that are badly needed for the protection of the vast army of unskilled, unorganized workers.

The practical Socialist knows that his theories about the ultimate perfect society look good on paper, but the immediate program is the need of contemporary society, so he is willing to let the former rest while he puts his voice and influence behind the President's worthwhile, social-minded program of reforms. When the reforms are firmly established, when the minor protections to labor will have been achieved, then will it be time enough to advance the major program of nationalization of the large-scale industries. The latter will be a social revolution—that is to say, a social change, which doesn't mean violence, by any means. The intelligent Socialist must make his choice during the near future between evolution and social change (revolution), and he knows that the former is closer to the ideals of the masses, a fact which the President seems to sense so intelligently and support so energetically.

If I have covered the economic and industrial situation accurately then it seems logical and consistent for a Socialist to support the President.

* * *
 It appears to me you are not quite logical in your position regarding the inevitable struggle between Democracy and Fascism. Your position, as an anti-Fascist, should be this: Since Fascism can be crushed only by force, all democratic countries should form a defensive alliance, declare war on Germany, Italy, Japan, Insurgent Spain and Portugal, and crush the infamous thing,

If I thought the problem could be solved as simply as that, I'd be out waving the bloody shirt and hurling no end of spread-eagle rhetoric at the enemy. But it isn't quite that easy. What reason have you for assuming that if the democratic countries were to go to war on the Fascist countries that Democracy would prevail? Did you ever stop to think that a war on Fascism might result in our democratic countries (including the U.S.A.) all going Fascist? Of course, if the Fascist countries drive us into war, I, as a convinced anti-Fascist, will do what little I can—and it will be done to the limit of my slight powers—to support my country in its resistance against organized gangsterism, but I certainly never suggested—and never intend to suggest—that we should all start a big war just because we don't like the kind of government some foreign countries are cursed with. The U.S.A., England, France and other democratic countries are harboring too many near-Fascists—and real Fascists—who are just waiting for the conditions to develop that will enable them to clamp down an authoritarian, tyrannical dictatorship on the various peoples who are still enjoying the blessings of free speech, free press, free assembly, civil rights in general, and a voice in selecting those who are to be entrusted with the powers of government. Let's fight Fascism all the time—with education and the white light of honest publicity—but let's be careful we don't go about it in such a way that we all blunder into the very system of tyranny we're trying to oppose.

* * *

What is the meaning of Brazil's surrender to Fascism?

The first fact that comes to mind—and by far the most important—is this: Mussolini and Hitler now have a strong foothold in Latin America. The largest in South America and, 258,539 square miles larger than the U.S.A., is now a totalitarian State, with Getulio Vargas as its all-powerful dictator. From this new Fascist citadel the forces of black reaction will conspire to spread their authoritarian dogmas to every country in Central and South America. The only possible exception is Mexico, which promises to be a democratic

country so long as Lazaro Cardenas is President.

The U.S., Canada and Mexico must adjust themselves to the appalling condition that Fascism is a near-at-hand menace. The Monroe Doctrine—which President Roosevelt wisely interpreted on the foundation of the "good neighbor"—must, before long, be put to the test, for Mussolini and Hitler (with Japan always in sight) intend to make the most of this development. Their first objective will be to wrest immense trade advantages from the Brazilian dictatorship.

It's only a question of time before Brazil signs the anti-Communist pact, along with the three great Fascist powers which have already agreed to its terms. Such a pact, as I've explained many times in the recent past, isn't intended to strike at the "menace" of Communism—that's just a smoke-screen—but to undermine all forms of democratic, parliamentary, republican government, which means that even countries like the U.S. will be looked on as "breeding-places of Bolshevism."

The Fascist beast has crossed the Atlantic. Every lover of freedom, humanity and progress will mark the lessons of this new usurpation and make every possible sacrifice to keep the political and economic disease within definite limits. For the present, such anti-Fascists will have to depend on the powerful weapons of education and enlightenment to keep the poison from infecting our own country, for we have numerous organizations—particularly the K.K.K.—which are only waiting for their chance to give the American people the same treatment that has been handed so brutally to the peoples now ruled by Fascist dictators. The first need, I repeat, is a powerful anti-Fascist press, by which the printed word will be used to fight the darkness of Fascism with the blazing light of truth. A free, independent, anti-Fascist press is our first line of defense. Every friend of democracy must realize the seriousness of the situation and be prepared to make every conceivable sacrifice to build and maintain such a press.

The first act of triumphant Fascism is always to destroy a country's free press. The first act of defense among anti-Fascists must be to es-

tablish and nurture a free press. The end of a free press always spells the beginning of Fascism. Let's learn this simple lesson now, before it's too late. Our duty is plain. Let us try to live up to our immense responsibilities. I keep pounding on this point because it's the most vital and pressing single fact in contemporary life. We must learn the bitter lessons from previous collapses of democracy. A free, powerful, truth-seeking press can serve as a wall to hold back the Fascist deluge. It isn't all there is to the fight, but it's the most immediate form of defense, the most essential introductory strategy.

I appeal to every opponent of racial persecution, to every hater of tyranny and Caesarism, to every supporter of the ideals of free labor, free press and free speech, to realize the gravity of the recent developments among the world's organized bandits. What strikes terror to every anti-Fascist is the astounding fact that most of our newspapers and magazines belong to the economic exploiters, to the greedy speculators, to the economic royalists. They feel that when the forces of social change become too strong they can always turn their tremendous influence in the direction of Fascism. Such elements can never be expected to become genuinely anti-Fascist. We must act together now to build a free press, from the bottom up. It isn't too late, if we act promptly, but if we stand by idly and let this torrent of Fascism move forward to newer and greater victories, we will find ourselves facing an overwhelming foe without the slightest possibility of self-preservation. I'm not indulging in idle pessimism. In truth, I am moved by real optimism, for I see possibilities of successful resistance and genuine safety if all Americans who are aware of the menace of Fascism act together today to establish a great, powerful, widely circulated, unsubsidized, truly independent press. The challenge is a real one, and I have sufficient faith in American anti-Fascists to believe they will rise to their vast responsibilities.

* * *

Will you please tell me what Fascism is? Also advise just what you have in print on this subject.

My 12 volumes devoted to questions and answers are crammed with

data on Fascism, Nazism, etc. I suggest that this reader turn to this source of authentic definitions, comments and analyses. Many of Joseph McCabe's works—especially titles in the A B C Library of Living Knowledge, the Appeal to Reason, The History of the World Since 1918, etc.—contain sound, informative discussions of Fascism.

* * *

The New York Herald Tribune, November 12, 1937, contains the report of a lecture by Sinclair Lewis before the League for Political Education in the N. Y. Town Hall. In this lecture, Mr. Lewis, according to the report, made an attack on the editor of The Freeman because "he (E. Haldeman-Julius) found he could sell classics better by dressing them up with lurid titles." Please reply.

I have never practiced sensationalism in my entire career as an editor and publisher, during which I distributed more than 200,000,000 books. I have always avoided the lurid, in subject-matter or in titles. A book, in order to get published, should be good. That's the first requirement. Then it should be given a title—not a lurid one but one which describes the contents of the book. It always has been my theory that a title that tells a lot about a good book (including a longer sub-title, if more ideas are to be emphasized) will help sell the book. I make no bones about saying that I like to see a book sell. Nothing discourages me more than to see a good book stay on my shelves like a bump on a log. To prove that I'm not given to the lurid, let me call Sinclair Lewis' attention to a few of my most recent books. First of all, consider my own 12 large volumes, which are called only "Questions and Answers." That's pretty quiet, but it tells what the books are about. Then look at these: "A Popular History of the U.S." "Great Court Trials of History." "Fundamentals of a Dance Education." "A History of the World Since 1918." "How to Improve Your English in Speech and Writing." "Modern Sex Book." "Newest Discoveries in Astronomy." "The Failure of Fascism." "Economic Gains of the Soviet Union." "The Causes of the Civil War in Spain." "Aphrodisiacs and Anti-Aphrodisiacs." "Famous Unsolved Murder Mysteries." "The King and Mrs. Simpson." And so on. These titles, I insist, are informative, not

lurid. Sinclair Lewis is merely repeating the nonsense of my publisher-enemies, who try to imitate me and malign me at the same time. Hurling the charge of sensationalism at the only editor in the world who publishes a paper that's totally devoid of headlines is to indulge in a peculiar, inverted form of the lurid. I may be wrong, but it seems to me Sinclair Lewis is trying to get even with me for the critical things I've been writing about his wife, Dorothy Thompson, in my lurid, sensational publication.

* * *

I am enclosing 13 preliminary sketches of the murals John Steuart Curry plans to do for the Kansas capitol. Please comment on them.

I have long been an admirer of Curry's art, but if these sketches are a warning of what we're to get I'm afraid this native Kansan is merely hurrying home to sew up \$20,000 and then skip off somewhere else where he can indulge his genius at will. The whole job strikes me as prosy, dull, commonplace—the sort of work any half-competent painter of mediocre talents could dash off in just enough time to entitle him to the neat fortune the people of Kansas are to raise. It looks to me as though Mr. Curry—who probably has struggled through too many years of depression—looked over the patriotic, right-thinking, respectable, sound and solvent committee and decided he was going to give just what it takes to satisfy such a colorless, drab, unimaginative crew of so-called celebrities. There won't be a real idea in a carload of such prettified junk. Curry is the smartest fellow in the whole deal, but he should be careful not to participate in too many such contracts or he will surely turn himself into a third-rate quack and hack. It seems apparent that Curry—the best politician in the room—sized them up for what they really were—a lot of stuffed shirts out to give art a boost and at the same time pay their own smugness an expensive compliment. The money, of course, won't come out of their pockets. And the artist, I'm positive, will rush for other sections before the paint dries. He knows right well that the sketches he submitted are the sort of things an uninspired, but first class, sign painter could do,

if he spit on his hands and really tried hard. Every muralist in the country will pat him on the back for getting the kale and pat him a little lower for delivering such a poor, undramatic, listless, conventional bill of goods. But the Kansas committee and most of the Kansas spectators will applaud Curry and congratulate themselves on the fine bargain they managed to squeeze out of an artist who decided to forget his talent long enough to do smart business that could deliver gobs of smart money.

* * *

Please comment on the argument frequently voiced to the effect that Jews control the wealth of the U.S.

I have discussed this subject many times during the past, all of which will be found in my books of questions and answers, but a newly issued book, "America's Sixty Families," by Ferdinand Lundberg (Vanguard Press), organizes the discussion in such a handy way that I want to summarize it below. We find that only a few of America's 60 richest families are Jews, and none of these are near the top of the list. The real financial powers with their aggregate family income tax for a single year, 1924, are:

Rockefellers, \$7,309,989.
 Morgans Inner Group, \$4,796,263.
 Fords, \$4,766,863.
 Harknesses, of the Standard Oil Company, \$2,776,735.
 Mellons, of the Aluminum Company, banking, etc., \$3,237,876.
 Vanderbilts, N.Y. Central R.R., \$2,148,892.
 Whitneys, Standard Oil, \$2,143,992.
 Standard Oil Group (including Archbolds, Bedfords, Cutlers, Flaglers, Pratts and Benjamins, but excepting others), \$1,737,857.
 Du Ponts, \$1,294,651.
 McCormicks, International Harvester Company and Chicago Tribune, \$1,332,517.
 Bakers, First National Bank, N.Y.C., \$1,575,482.
 Fishers, General Motors, \$1,424,583.
 Fields, Marshall Field Company, \$1,197,605.
 Curtis-Boks, Curtis Publishing Company, (Saturday Evening Post, etc.), \$1,303,228.
 Dukes, American Tobacco Company, \$1,045,544.

Not a single Jew is to be found in the above list of top-leaders. Later, in this list of 60 richest families, we come on the following Jews:

Guggenheims, American Smelting and Refining Company, \$817,836.
 Lehmanns, Lehman Brothers, banking, \$672,897.
 Warburgs, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, banking, \$598,246.
 Kahns, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, \$565,608.
 Mortimer Schiff, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, \$459,410.

Down towards the bottom of the list, we find a few more Jews, two of whom, Friedsam and Rosenwald, are deceased:

George Blumenthal, Lazard Freres, \$415,621.
 Michael Friedsam, merchandising, \$292,196.
 Julius Rosenwald, Sears, Roebuck Company, \$208,812.
 Bernard M. Baruch, stock market, \$268,142.

And that's all. In the entire U.S., with its vast wealth, we find nine important Jewish names, about half of whom are near the bottom of the list, and none of whom are near the top. Space limitations have kept me from listing powerfully rich non-Jews like the Wideners, Reynolds, Astors, Winthrops, Stillmans, Pitcairns, Metcalfs, Clarks, Phipps, Greens, Pattersons, Tafts, Deerings, De Forests, Goulds, Hills, Drexels, Thomas Fortune Ryans, and other families.

Adding up the income taxes paid by the nine Jews in the above list, we find a grand total of \$4,098,768, which is \$3,211,221 LESS than the income taxes paid by the Rockefeller family. The Morgan inner group paid more than all nine Jewish families, by almost \$700,000. The same goes for the Fords.

The facts, therefore, indicate there's nothing to the argument that "Jews control the wealth of the U.S." There are some rich Jews, but alongside our Rockefellers, Morgans, Fords, Mellons, and others, they are just so many amateurs.

* * *

Please comment on the Fascist-Catholic claim that the world enemy is Communism.

I have many times—along with others—called attention to this red herring that is the favorite alibi of Fascist-Catholic aggression. The Vatican and Fascists know that Communism is no threat to world peace. They know—though they won't admit it—that the Soviet Union is one of

the world's greatest forces for peace. But Communism and Bolshevism can be used as slogans with which to frighten their dupes, so they are trotted out whenever the mass-murderers want to cover or justify their violent attacks on peace-loving neighbors.

Communism means one thing to honest people and quite another to the Fascist-Catholic aggressors. The Vatican, Hitler, Mussolini and Japan brand anything that's progressive and liberal with the stigma of Communism. Thus, in the eyes of these remnants of the Dark Ages, anyone who believes in republicanism—as most Americans believe—is a Communist. Anyone who accepts democracy is a Communist. Anyone who maintains that a government should protect free speech, free press and free assembly is a Communist. Even a government that believes in parliamentary rule is communistic, in the eyes of the Fascist-Catholics.

That means countries like Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, France, Loyalist Spain, Mexico, Great Britain, China, Canada and the U.S.A. are really breeding-places of Communism. So says the Fascist dictator, and so says the Vatican. When Czechoslovakia is finally attacked by Hitler, the war-cry will be "Crush Communism!"

Once we get this idea clear in our minds we cease wondering at the way our Fascists find Communism in everything that's fair, free and human. We aren't even surprised when the Fascist officials in the Brazilian province of Rio de Janeiro saw fit to order the removal of Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," from all public schools and libraries because of the novel's dangerous ideas and Communism. I suspect that even Tom's despairing Aunt Polly never looked on him as an agent of the ideology that was later to become a moving force in what came to be known as the Soviet Union. I make bold to say this even though Mark Twain wrote that Aunt Polly was positive the young scoundrel would come to a bad end. While it's true I have ceased wondering at the stupidities of jittery Fascists, this suppression of the tale about the barefoot

boy who lived near the banks of the great Mississippi compels me to suspect that the worst manifestations of Fascism are still to be achieved. I once thought, in my innocence, that the bottom was scraped long ago. As I recall the story, Tom Sawyer had something of the impulses of a shrewd exploiter, as shown by the way in which he got 30 yards of fence white-washed—a job he hated to do himself—by making the boys in the neighborhood want to do the job for him, a desire that was so pressing that they actually paid him for the privilege of doing what he himself considered outside his tastes. There's no Communism there, especially since the exploited boys never even thought of revolting. In truth, if a Tom Sawyer were to show up somewhere along the Nevsky-on-the-Stalinsky River and try to pull the white-washing stunt that Mark Twain says happened about a century ago in Hannibal, Missouri, he would be arrested for counter-revolution, for Trotskyism, and for conspiring to bring back the regime in which wicked capitalists exploited humble workers. Maybe the Fascists think Tom Sawyer wasn't quite Aryan, but here I can assure them there wasn't even a Jewish great-grandmother in his family tree. Perhaps Tom Sawyer betrayed his Leninism by associating with that obviously proletarianized, incipient rebel against constituted authority and scorner of smug respectability, Huckleberry Finn. Even here the argument doesn't seem to hold up well. Huckleberry Finn, had he lived long enough, might have ended up running a filling station and voting for Hoover and Landon. Tom Sawyer's friendship for Injun Joe begins to look menacing when we give proper notice to the Fascist mumbo-jumbo about racialism and the eternal inferiority of anyone who isn't exactly like a Fascist in mind and body. Well, at any rate, "Alice in Wonderland" is still read, even in Fascist countries, though I wouldn't be surprised if some censor were to find that Alice's adventures were really intended as thrusts at the topsy-turvy wonderland of Fascism.

* * *

The Nazis frequently make use of the argument that it was necessary for them to rule Germany because "Jews

and Marxists had taken control of the government and undermined the whole governmental bureaucracy." Please comment.

This argument's falsity can be demonstrated by figures which the Nazis themselves have released. Hermann Neef, Leader of Government Officials, in his 1937 report to the congress of government officials in Munich, stated that 5,433 officials had been dismissed since 1933 on grounds of political unreliability (which means they weren't Nazis) and 1,984 because they were Jews. His report then showed that this amounted to only seven-tenths of 1 percent of government officials. The number of Jews in public office amounted to far less than one-half of 1 percent, while the proportion of Jews to the general population was 1 percent.

* * *

How many newspapers are published in the Soviet Union and what is their total circulation? How does this compare with czarist times?

I gave some official figures on these subjects several years ago, but I am glad to again take up the matter because I have more recent data. In 1938, the Soviet Union has 9,250 publications with a combined circulation of 37,971,000, as against 859 publications and 2,700,000 circulation in the days of the Czar.

The Soviet Union's campaign against illiteracy has been one of the most important and successful efforts of the regime. The figure I just gave for 1938 could be multiplied at least three-fold if the publishing industry could get sufficient supplies of print paper.

It is estimated that from six to eight persons read each newspaper that's printed in Russia. Because of the paper shortage, workers chip in to buy newspapers for their club or group, and by arrangement each copy circulates until it's worn to shreds. *Pravda* (Truth) is the most popular newspaper in Russia, with a circulation of 1,900,000. *Izvestia* (News) comes second, with a circulation of 1,600,000. Each could easily triple its circulation if the paper situation permitted. A paper which circulates among the peasants, *The Peasants' Gazette*, has a circulation of about 5,000,000.

There are no privately owned newspapers in Russia. Each newspaper

represents some department of the government, organization or industry. Thus, *Pravda* is the official organ of the Communist Party, which rules Russia. *Izvestia* is the official newspaper of the government. The army has its own newspaper, *Red Star*. The trade unions, cooperatives, heavy industry, light industry, youth movement, etc., all have their official organs.

* * *

Please comment on Lord Mottistone's statement, "The general peace of Europe is not threatened because only a lunatic would cause war now."

The Lord is right when he says only a lunatic would cause war, but he should take into consideration the obvious fact that two great lunatics—Hitler and Mussolini—are already at war in Spain and can have a general war whenever they feel ready for it.

* * *

How do the writings of Jack London stand in the Soviet Union?

Russian translations of Jack London's works are extremely popular. In fact, I even go so far as to say that London's stories are more widely read in the Soviet Union today than in the U.S. Over here, his popularity is at the lowest point since his lamented death, while in the U.S.S.R. larger and larger editions of his works are being issued from year to year.

* * *

Has Stalin ever taken a stand against anti-Semitism?

Some years ago, when questioned by the Jewish Telegraph Agency, Stalin wrote: "Communists, as consistent internationalists, cannot fail to be irreconcilable and sworn enemies of anti-Semitism." There's nothing to show that Stalin has ever shown the slightest sympathy for the beliefs and tactics of the Jew-haters.

* * *

One frequently hears the remark that Jews won't work, but prefer instead, to make their living as traders or peddlers. Please comment.

The charge has no factual basis. For centuries the Jews, in many countries, were denied, by law, the right to own land. Thus, after being kept by force from tilling the soil, they are accused of being averse to agricultural labor. Today, in Palestine, there is no land that hasn't more than its supply of Jewish farmers ready and anxious to raise all

kinds of crops and tend cattle, sheep, fowl, and the like.

In Russia, during the days of the Czar, only 4 percent of the Jews worked in the sizable industries, but this was because Jews were surrounded with every conceivable obstacle when they attempted to get jobs as industrial workers. That this is an accurate comment on the situation is shown beyond question by the way the Jews of Russia have gone to work in the large-scale industries since the downfall of Czarism and the rise of the Soviet Union. Today, according to official figures, 29.8 percent of all Jews in Russia are employed in the industries. Under Czarist rule, only 2.2 percent of the Jews worked on the land. Today, 6.7 percent are employed on the Soviet Union's farms.

Before the Russian revolution, 31 percent of the Jewish population were engaged in trading, or peddling. This was because they were forced into this sphere. Today, all trade is controlled by the State, so there are no Jews engaged in peddling, but the 31 percent thus previously occupied are much happier in the change to industrial, agricultural, cultural and professional activities.

* * *

Is it true that the newspapers are eternally at war with the radio?

There really isn't anything to this widely held belief, for, to begin with, many broadcasting stations belong to newspapers. They want to keep news reports down to the least possible wordage over the radio, because the publishers seek to protect their own economic position by compelling the public to turn to the newspapers for news. Outside of that, radio and the press are like loving brothers.

An interesting example comes to mind. Recently there was published a most useful book—from the viewpoint of the consumers—entitled, "Poisons, Potions and Profits," and carrying the following sub-title, "An Antidote to Radio Advertising." The book, which belongs in the class of "100,000 Guinea Pigs," was sent to the reviewers connected with New York newspapers like the *Times*, *Herald Tribune*, *World Telegram*, *Sun*, etc., and to important newspaper throughout the country, including the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Daily News*, *Kansas City Star*, *Los Angeles Times*,

San Francisco Examiner, etc. And, according to reliable reports, not a single metropolitan newspaper gave the book the least attention. If newspapers were fighting radio they would have pounced on this book as something right up their alley. Instead, they ignored it. Why?

The book is too truthful. It gives names of concerns and the articles they sell, and discusses the crooked claims made *via* the air. It exposes one advertiser after another who uses the radio, but as these same capitalists use generous quantities of paid space in the press, the reviewers and editors refused to touch the book with a 10-foot pole. The American capitalistic press isn't going to offend any great advertiser even though he indulges in dishonest advertising. As for the consumers—they always get a trimming, so they ought to be used to the punishment by now. Newspapers are out to make profits for their rich owners, not to serve the consumers by warning them against dishonest practices.

This is just another argument for a really free, independent press that isn't subsidized by advertisers. If the consumers, the workers and the farmers were to give generous support to papers that dare tell them the whole truth, their own interests would be better protected and they would be able to turn to unpoisoned sources for the truth about what's happening in the world today. The blame, I insist, rests with the dumb readers who keep on swallowing without protest the slop dished up by the average newspaper. They have the remedy at hand all the time, only they're too stupid to use it. But there's a growing minority that is beginning to see the light and is making itself vocal in its demand for the unfettered truth about commodities, advertising, politics, economics, religion, and the like. This minority is the hope of the country, and may its influence grow from day to day.

* * *

Do you publish all of the questions you answer by personal letter and which are accompanied by the usual fee?

No. Many of the questions I answer in personal letters are entirely too personal for publication. I publish only those that seem to be of general public interest. Many read-

ers write me about their personal, emotional, love lives—others go into questions about money, their jobs, business, and the like—all of which I try to answer to the best of my ability. An interesting, but somewhat unpublishable, inquiry was received from a Maine reader, who, along with his fee for a personal reply, asked what he could do about a chiropractor in his town who had treated his wife in a manner that caused his gorge to rise. The chiropractor had made the wife take off her clothes, spread herself out on some sort of a table, and submit to an elaborate series of adjustments, which included all sorts of massage movements in very private parts of her anatomy, parts which the husband insisted were reserved for his edification alone. He wanted to know if the chiropractor's license permitted such doings, and, finally, if there's any legal way to deal with such a rogue and scoundrel. Another communication comes from a young fellow in Brooklyn, who writes: "As Mayor La Guardia has made N.Y.C. the most puritanical city in the country and as I am a single fellow, I would like you to give me a list of cities in the country with open 'Red Light' districts. I expect to tour the country." In this case I had to summon all my grandfatherly dignity and oracularly chide him on his foolishness in risking his health on prostitutes in Red Light districts, where, according to reliable reports, a large percentage of the women are diseased and the chances of catching a dose are better than even. I told him I wasn't in favor of Mirth Control, but fun bought under such circumstances is pretty certain to end him up with a serious ailment. I'm not given to moralizing, but in a case like this I feel it my fatherly duty to set the young buck in the right direction—and that's away from establishments run by huge "Madames" who never believed in practicing Girth Control. Like the fertilizer salesman, I sell what others give away, but I've noticed that some people who pay for advice get angry if the answer isn't exactly as they thought they had a right to expect. Others are grateful, which gives me a warm feeling of well-being. Only recently a woman in

Minnesota asked for a personal reply to her question dealing with a health home in a Western State, which advertised to cure a certain disease by "painless and bloodless surgery." I succeeded in saving her a great deal of time and money by advising her against the so-called treatment and urging her to go to the nearby Mayo Clinic, where she could get the best kind of scientific care for a fee that is figured on the basis of her ability to pay.

* * *
Is "Middletown in Transition" worth the price asked for it?

This book is an important survey of almost every phase of a typical American city—Muncie, Indiana. It reports on the economic, business, financial, educational, cultural, amusement, domestic and social phases of every group in the community. It is a scientific, comprehensive survey, and always readable.

* * *
I am enclosing literature describing Father James R. Cox's lottery for your comment. I received this through the mails.

The literature proves beyond debate that Father James R. Cox is running a lottery, and using the U.S. mails to sell his \$1 tickets to suckers of all creeds. To show the scope of this immense lottery which Father Cox is running from his church in Pittsburgh, one need only call attention to the fact that the prizes total \$25,000, the first prize being \$10,000, the second prize, \$4,000, and hundreds of smaller ones. The scheme is based on the Father's "desire" to get a name for the monastery garden of Old St. Patrick's Church, Pittsburgh, and the one who submits the "best" name (after paying \$1 for his lottery ticket) will get the first prize. The \$1 ticket is covered by the sale of a St. Christopher-Miraculous Rose Medal, properly blessed by Father Cox, at \$1, when, of course, it costs about five cents when bought in the immense quantities that will be needed in order to put over this gigantic lottery. The whole scheme reeks with racketeering, but the chances are the postoffice officials will do nothing about it because it's tied up with a monastery garden, a "miraculous" medal which is guaranteed to prevent punctures, skids and blow-outs, and a lot of "sacred" messages and super-

stitious bunk. Priests can conduct lotteries through the U.S. mails, it seems, while racketeers like Al Capone have to go to the penitentiary because they weren't smart enough to connect their criminal acts with religion. Lotteries conducted for the glory of God—and the enhancement of the priest's bank account—are beyond the law, it seems.

* * *
Your frequent attacks on theories of race lead me to ask if you disbelieve in such a thing as racial purity.

There's a "racial purity" that's all bunk. I refer, of course, to the ignorant rantings of the Hitleristic type of race-monger, who hysterically insists that the race to which he belongs (and he can't be sure what that means) is the best in the world. He's sure a person with a dark skin is his inferior, or, when political and economic alliances aren't on the immediate program, that a little fellow with a yellowish complexion can't be more than two steps above the baboons. He breaks into a torrent of verbiage when Jews are mentioned, for here he is sure the race defilers are crouching, ready to spring on the first Teutonic blonde that passes before him. Such racialism is fanaticism.

There is, however, a true classification that indicates absence of racial purity. And it's so simple and obvious that even a child can recognize it. When a person can pass on insanity or disease, that individual is racially impure and should be sterilized, in order to preserve genuine racial purity, which, in its scientific sense, means nothing more than racial health. Such racial impurity can be found in the blood of the very one who, moved by Hitleristic insanity, accepts an emotional, irrational, un-factual interpretation of the ideal of racial purity. It can be found in a blond Nordic or a raven-haired Frenchman, a red-haired Irishman or a black-eyed Italian, a slant-eyed Mongolian or a chunky little Eskimo. Wherever it is, it should be eradicated. The question isn't one of racial prejudice but of social hygiene.

However, just because we seek racial health it doesn't mean we must follow every faddist who comes along with a string of dogmatisms which he may have disguised under the name

of eugenics. Before we do any sterilizing to root out diseases or forms of insanity, we must have scientific proof that the particular ailment we are aiming at can be eradicated by such treatment. In the field of insanity there are considerable differences of opinion among competent authorities. For example, Dr. Karl A. Menninger, well-known psychiatrist, in his book, "The Human Mind," tackles the issue with the following vigorous words:

"A great many people believe and will go on believing that not only personality traits but personality defects and personality diseases are inherited . . . 'Insanity in the family,' is pronounced as though it were an ominous warning or condemnation . . . In several States including my own (Kansas), patients in State hospitals who show some evidence of recovery from temporary illness with a prospect of returning to private life are rendered sterile by an operation, on the stupid theory that this will decrease the incidence of mental disease in the community. This absurdity is the more to be condemned because it fosters the delusion in the minds of the public that something definite and practical is being done by the State.

"The scientific truth is that at the present time we have no convincing evidence that 'insanity' or any generally prevalent form of mental disease likely to result in insanity is definitely transmitted by heredity."

Yes, we want racial purity, but before wielding the knife right and left let's learn clearly just what the facts are and what we'll get after we indulge in sterilizations. We don't want to substitute a new fanaticism for an old one.

Is there any truth in the charge that an exceedingly large percentage of aliens are on the relief rolls?

Fortune magazine made a survey of relievers in 11 communities, the two largest being Baltimore, Md. (805,000 population) and San Francisco, Calif. (684,000), and the two smallest being Scott County, Minn. (14,000) and Thomaston, Conn. (4,000). Such a report is necessarily incomplete, but it gives one a fair idea of the position of aliens on relief rolls. The survey showed, from a study of 1935 cases, that 86.5 percent were native Americans, 10 per-

cent were naturalized citizens, and only 3.5 percent were aliens.

Are Russians under the Soviet regime using more soap than during the days of the Czar?

In 1937, Russians used 5.7 pounds per capita; before the revolution, less than two pounds. The smallest yearly per capita consumption of soap is found in China, 2 ounces. The largest is the U.S., 25 pounds. Holland comes second with 24 pounds. Then follow: United Kingdom, 20; Japan, 7; Brazil, 6.8; world average 6.6 pounds. The production of soap is 10,000,000,000 pounds annually. One third of this production is consumed in the U.S. Authority: *Soap* magazine.

Since Freeman readers like an occasional problem, let me pass on a tricky little one, as follows:

In a small rural settlement in Kentucky there is a general merchandise store operated by two men. These two men have the same mother and same father. The parents claim them to be their sons. The two brothers acknowledge the mother and father as their own parents. Yet, according to the sign on the establishment, they are not related as brothers.

(Solution at the bottom of last column on page 29.)

Mussolini, who is always orating about the glories of Rome, gives the impression that his militaristic adventures are in the traditions of that ancient civilization. Please comment.

Mussolini imagines he must give Fascist Rome the glories of ancient Rome by bombing and gassing hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian men, women and children, and by tramping through North Africa and Spain in the quest for new opportunities to commit mass murders. There were Romans in the days of Caesar—great Romans—who didn't rattle the saber and threaten the world with destruction. In truth, they cautioned their people against violence and inhumanity. I refer to Seneca and Cicero. Listen first to Cicero:

"I prefer the most unjust peace ever made to the justest war ever waged."

Such a sentiment would sound strange coming from the Fascist gangster, who slaughters right and left (and teaches his sons that war

is a diverting sport), and the man who said those words during the days of Rome's glories would be put in prison if he dared utter the same words in Mussolini's madhouse.

The next glorious Roman—Seneca—said:

“We punish murderers and massacres among private persons. What do we respecting wars, and the glorious crime of murdering whole nations? The love of conquest is a murderess. Conquerors are scourges not less harmful to humanity than floods and earthquakes.”

That doesn't sound like good Fascist doctrine. During the past 15 years many Italians have been murdered for saying less. Italy will achieve true glory only when she succeeds in crushing Mussolini's infamous regime.

* * *
Will you be good enough to comment on the new wave of hysterical abuse against Czechoslovakia in the Nazi press?

I have, in numerous articles during the past few years (all of which will be found reprinted in my books) explained the unfortunate situation of plucky, little Czechoslovakia, the only democratic country in Central Europe. This island of democracy, surrounded by unfriendly, designing dictatorships, especially Hitler's Germany, is fated to be the next Spain of Europe. Hitler aims to annex all or most of Czechoslovakia, thereby gaining a direct road to the rich wheat lands of Russia, his ultimate objective. There's no telling when the lightning will strike, but judging by the way the Nazi press is abusing the Czechoslovakian Republic, it may be in the near future.

Hitler's personal representative in Czechoslovakia is Konrad Henlein, who is leading the Hitler-inspired Nazi Sudeten Deutsche party, which is striving to organize the German portion of Czechoslovakia's 15,000,000 inhabitants. Every effort is being made to keep the pot of trouble boiling, thereby enabling the German regimented press to continue to propagandize the German masses into favoring a fierce attack on the Republic. At this writing much is being made of the fact that two Nazi members of the Czechoslovakian Parliament, while participating in an anti-

democratic riot, were struck on the head by the police.

One would imagine that such an alleged incident could hardly impress the Nazi butchers. Beating up two Nazis is heralded as just cause for a war of aggression on Czechoslovakia by the tools of Hitler, who, as the informed world knows, murdered 22 members of the German Parliament, the following list being the names of his murder victims:

eggerstedt, Ferkel, Gerdes, Goetz, Henk, Husemann, Jacobs, Kasten, Langhorst, Landgraf, Maeder, Dr. Marum, Putz, Reith, Dr. Sachs, Scheer, Schulz, Stelling, Steinfurth, Stentzer.

Not a single one of Hitler's assassins were so much as arrested, let alone punished.

Numerous other members of the German Parliament were imprisoned—most of them terribly tortured—among whom I am able to name the following:

Beimler, Brandes, Ebert, Faust, Dobbert, Endemann, Felder, Fleisner, Freitag, Froelich, Gerlach, Graef, Hartsch, Hermann, Hirtsiefer, Jurgensen, Kunstler, Kuhnt, Kupfer, Dr. Leber, Liebmann, Litke, Loebe, Ludemann, Meier-Baden, Metz, Poeschke, Remmele, Reuter, Rossmann, Seger, Schirmer, Soldmann, Dr. Staudinger, Thielemann, Unterleitner.

Today, the following former members of the German Parliament are still in prison, some of them for more than four years:

Geschke, Graupe, Hellmann, Dr. Jasper, Maddalena, Dr. Mierendorff, Dr. Neubauer, Puchta, Overlach, Dr. Schumacher, Schumann, Stamm, Stoecker, Thaelmann.

And yet the beast who ordered the above atrocities has the impudence to raise a storm of threats and abuse against a decent country like Czechoslovakia because two would-be murderers got hit on the head in a street riot which the Nazis themselves had caused and which the police were trying to disperse.

* * *
What was the national income of the Russian people under the Czar and what is it today?

In 1913, the Russian national income was 31,000,000,000 rubles; in 1937, 105,000,000,000 rubles. Eighty percent of the 1937 figure was made

in the heavy industries, which have increased production seven-fold over 1913.

* * *

Why is it that the Russian newspapers and government statements never use the word "proletariat" when referring to the Russian workers?

In the strict Marxian sense it isn't accurate to call the Russian workers "proletarians," because that word refers to toilers who work machinery, etc., belonging to capitalists. As there are no capitalists in the Soviet Union the workers, according to Kremlin decree, mustn't be called members of the proletariat.

* * *

Why does the Soviet Union insist that it is establishing Socialism but that Communism is still to be achieved?

The difference, according to Marxian ideology, is clear. Under Socialism all workers are paid according to the social value of the wealth they produce. Today, in Russia, the industrial workers—who are employed in factories, etc., which belong to the State instead of to a capitalist class—are paid in proportion to the volume of goods or services they are able to produce. Therefore, wages vary. Under Communism the workers would be paid out of the national wealth "according to their needs." It follows that Communism—in its pure form—is still to be established. Equal wages for all—one of the important tenets of Communism—may be inaugurated at some future time, but so far as I can learn there's no element in the Soviet Union which is looking forward to its attainment in the near future. While it's impossible to say that wage differences will endure permanently, it's pretty safe to infer that the differences will be in force for a long time.

* * *

Which government spends more money—New York State or New York City?
The State spends around \$400,000,000 annually, while the City spends around \$550,000,000.

* * *

I am with you right down the line in your fight on all forms of Fascism. I believe it was your steady stream of facts attacking Father Coughlin—despite your small circulation—which helped expose that incipient Fascist and blatant anti-Semite. I recall, during the years from 1921 to 1926, how you kept pounding, in edition after edition, on

the acts, philosophy, policy and ideology of the Ku Klux Klan. You see, I've been following your editorial fights for many years. Of late, you have made only occasional references to the Ku Klux Klan. Do you look on that secret organization as dead?

From about 1926 until a few years ago the K.K.K. was dormant. It wasn't dead, by any means, but its powers were greatly lessened. Today, there are growing signs that the K.K.K. is coming back fast, which indicates that some American financial powers must be pumping new life into that united front for bigotry and racial intolerance. I have no actual membership figures—they are kept secret, of course—but facts keep creeping forth in many States and show that the K.K.K. is staging a come-back and that there are possibilities that its rebirth may make it stronger than it was in the days of its greatest power in the middle '20s. My readers know I'm not given to alarmist tactics. I always make it a point to understate serious situations, rather than exaggerate them. So, coldly and dispassionately, I write down the sincere conviction that the K.K.K. is riding again, and my informed readers don't have to be told what that means in these terrible times.

Naturally, I don't intend to ignore such a phenomenon. As an open organ of anti-Fascism, this paper will do more than its share in exposing every form of emerging Fascism in the U.S. Until a year ago, the great force for Fascism in this country was Father Coughlin. But he has declined, and I have shown in several articles why he can't be used any longer by the elements which would like to destroy American democratic rights, free institutions, and genuine social progress. The reactionaries now look to the K.K.K. as the spearhead of American Fascism. The contemptible work won't be done in the name of Fascism—the slogans will be "Americanism," and that sort of thing—but the results sought after are alike. The objective is the destruction of everything that's progressive in American life. Labor's free organizations must be crushed. Racial minorities must be persecuted. Jews must be boycotted, because anti-Semitism everywhere is one of the favorite tools of Fascism, and that vicious dogma

will be exploited to the limit by the reborn K.K.K. The Negroes will be terrorized. Aliens will be made to suffer, however innocent they may be and however loyal they may be to the finer ideals of American life.

Mussolini and Hitler have their eyes on the U.S. They have already established themselves in South America, where Brazil went over to Fascism on November 10, 1937. Such forces can be relied on to make use of every possible reactionary in the U.S., and since the K.K.K. comes closest to their "ideals," we can look to some sort of an alliance, though it will be hidden from public view. The Fascists are the spiritual twin-brothers of the K.K.K. leaders. Let there be no doubt on that score.

Naturally, such an issue can't be ignored by this paper. It will be fought with every legitimate weapon of truth and candor. For the present, let me warn every anti-Fascist—and that includes all members of minority groups, progressives, labor unionists, Jews, Negroes, foreign-born citizens, aliens, etc.—that the issue mustn't be ignored or hushed up. Bigotry grows fat on collective indifference. It was lack of intelligent foresight that made possible the triumph of Hitler and Mussolini. We mustn't permit ourselves to underestimate the powers of the enemy.

For the present, while the Fascists (as they're presented in the K.K.K.) are organizing and laying their plans, all anti-Fascists must rise to the issue and face it with unblinking eyes. Nothing is more fatuous and stupid than self-deception. I have made the point in many other articles, and I mustn't neglect this opportunity to repeat it—the anti-Fascists must make every conceivable sacrifice to erect a defensive organization in the form of a trustworthy, reliable, fearless, informed free press. If some of my readers think I'm becoming a fanatic on this point, let me tell them, once for all, that it's the foundation upon which the whole anti-Fascist movement will operate. If it fails to provide such a foundation, then the day of surrender to American forms of Fascism is near indeed. I keep repeating this lesson because I'm convinced it's the most important job I can do today, while the battle lines are forming. Tomorrow may be too late. I feel like a

voice crying in the wilderness, but I intend to keep warning the anti-Fascists everywhere in the United States that the wilderness we will be forced into will be without end if we let ourselves be caught asleep by the organized forces of bigotry and persecution.

I wish I knew some way of getting this lesson over to the American people in one declaration. But I know there's no easy solution. The remedy is a long and hard one, but we shouldn't flinch on that account. The cause of freedom—political and economic—is too precious to sacrifice, when we have it in our powers to save ourselves from disaster by doing the simple and obvious thing of supplying the country with a press that's actually free.

We still have our constitutional rights. We still can speak our minds freely and openly. We still are free American citizens. Let's keep what we have. Let's strike back at the Fascists (including the K.K.K.) while we still have the right to think aloud. I urge every reader to take these words to heart. I never was more serious. And I am serenely confident that American anti-Fascists are going to see the issue, are going to understand the dangers facing the country, and are certainly going to make every reasonable effort to destroy the beast before it gets a death-hold on the country.

* * *

In case of war will the Soviet Union remain in its own territory and use its army for purely defensive tactics or strike into enemy lands?

Just what the war plans of the Soviet Union are, no commentator can say for sure, because the government keeps its military strategy secret. But it happens that Defense Commissar Voroshilov discussed this particular point in a statement in November, 1937, as follows:

"The Soviet Union wants peace but she is prepared to beat off any attack and carry the battle into enemy territory. When attacked, the Red Army will counterattack with a force unprecedented in the history of the world, and will penetrate as far as possible into enemy territory."

* * *

An editorial in the November 14, 1937, issue of The New York Herald Tribune

says the Soviet government rules a country that embraces "an area covering one-sixth of the world." Is that correct?

The statement should have been revised to read that the Soviet Union covers one-sixth of the *land area* of the world."

Why is it that you have no children?

The answer is: I have two children. Alice, who'll be 21 on May 26, 1938, is a senior at Kansas University, where she is majoring in science and serving as editor-in-chief of the university's daily newspaper. Henry, who was 18 on November 1, 1937, is a freshman at the same university, and, from reports, I learn the fellow is developing into a serious-minded, studious, ambitious, conscientious, hard-working young man.

Please give data as follows: The States which will be paying unemployment compensation in 1938; the number of employed persons covered; the amount of money already collected.

The facts, as of September 15, 1937, are as follows:

State	Employed	Funds
Alabama	277,000	\$ 6,730,042
Arizona	70,000	1,464,733
California	1,216,000	47,814,344
Connecticut	408,000	11,096,815
Dist. of Col.	131,000	4,332,233
Louisiana	214,000	5,399,169
Maine	132,000	2,710,990
Maryland	295,000	6,016,920
Massachusetts ..	851,000	28,119,145
Minnesota	395,000	7,329,730
New Hampshire ..	93,000	3,029,010
New York	2,646,000	73,163,175
North Carolina ..	370,000	6,972,856
Oregon	146,000	4,201,679
Pennsylvania ..	2,404,000	53,504,191
Rhode Island ..	169,000	5,792,679
Tennessee	296,000	5,833,051
Texas	708,000	14,318,749
Utah	68,000	1,772,597
Vermont	44,000	1,001,395
Virginia	316,000	5,921,153
West Virginia ..	316,000	6,993,222
Wisconsin*	435,000	28,000,000

Total 12,000,000 \$331,157,778
*Payments already in effect.

The old die-hard reactionaries who are still opposed to unemployment compensation use the argument that the vast funds collected from employers for the protection of the unemployed will be diverted by politicians to other purposes, mainly of a vote-getting nature. But this argument loses force when we learn that under

the law every dollar collected by the States must be deposited with the Federal Treasury and can be used only for the benefit of the unemployed.

How many people sleep nightly in Pullman berths?

About 30,000.

Why does Mussolini always refer, in private, to Hitler as "The Sniffer"?

Because Hitler always inhales noisily.

What is horse sense?

Stable thinking.

What is your full name? Why does it never appear on any of your publications?

The first name is Emanuel. I hope you feel better now that you know this hidden secret. Since you ask, let me add I never use it because it makes my John Hancock too long.

Do you think the Ritz Brothers are funny?

Yes, provided I don't get too much of them at a time. Fifteen minutes of the trio of slam-bang rowdies is enough. Of course, they don't throw a subtlety in an entire season, but I've always had a tender love for pure, mugging, rough, clownish slapstick, and in this Shakespeare, among other good authorities, joins me. I may be all wrong, but it's my pet notion that the Ritz Brothers, unlike the Marx Brothers, shouldn't be starred. It's plenty good enough for them to be featured in three or four spots. But maybe the bosses at the box-office know better just what to do with these hysterical zanies.

Some time ago I wrote to have my subscription stopped. Now I want to tell you why. It's because of my job. The company might find out about my taking your magazine and discharge me. I have to be careful, for I can't afford to lose my job. I guess you know as well I do that a workman is supposed to work like a horse and he as dumb as a jackass to get in good with his bosses.

You have nothing to fear about the reading matter that's delivered to your home by the postoffice department. I think you've worked yourself into an unhealthy state of mind about an issue which shouldn't bother you in the slightest. Remember, this is still a free country (without the ter-

rors of Germany and Italy) and, so far as your employer is concerned, I'm positive he doesn't give a damn whether you read *The American Freeman* or the *Police Gazette*. Besides, even if he did care, he has no way of finding out, for the postoffice employes are compelled by law to keep such information confidential. No one expects you to flaunt your ideas at your place of employment—and you would be foolish to argue about them, except when you're sure about your personal contacts—but you are your own master in your own home, so far as reading is concerned, and no one can move a finger to pry into your reading habits. I advise you to snap out of your almost pathological fear. Throw out your chin, stand out of the shadows of cringing self-slavery, and act like an independent, free American citizen. Your letter bears all the earmarks of a weak character afflicted with the psychology of slavery, when, as a matter of fact, you still have constitutional rights, except you're afraid to enjoy them. Try to remember there aren't any capitalistic spooks spying on you, in your own home, as you read a publication of your own choice.

* * *
 "Democracy is a Jewish device," says Julius Streicher, Hitler's director of anti-Semitic propaganda. Can you bring yourself to discuss this charge?

If Streicher is right, the city-republics of ancient Rome and Greece were under the thumbs of Jews. And that goes for the Italian free communities of the time of the Renaissance. A certain British King who got his head chopped off because he was positive he ruled by divine right must have been humped off by non-Aryans. And, naturally, every signer of the Declaration of Independence must have been a Jew or at least influenced by Jews. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and the other founding fathers must have had Jewish grandmothers hidden away somewhere. Abraham Lincoln's democracy, we now learn, was nothing more than a Jewish device. The Jews would be proud indeed to be able to take unto themselves such praise, but they refuse to be puffed up because they know that while individual Jews made fine contributions to the democratic, freedom-living spirit of progress, they

can't hog the whole show. What are we to think of officially recognized propagandists who, like the notorious Streicher, indulge in such idiocies?

* * *
 How does today's industrial and agricultural production in the Soviet Union compare with the U.S. and with the output in czarist days?

I have made numerous comparisons in previous articles, but as I have new data I'm glad to see these questions brought up again. When the first five-year plan was announced 10 years ago, the goal was to industrialize the Soviet Union, and the results were so good that the quotas were reached even before the five years had passed. The second five-year plan, which has just closed, has put Russia far forward, and in certain important categories it has gone to first place, as I shall show below. The third five-year plan, which begins on January 1, 1938, and ends at the close of 1942, is intended to "overtake and surpass America," and while such a goal sounds fantastic I believe the record made thus far indicates every chance of success, barring a disastrous war between the Fascist countries and the Soviet Union. What makes the record so impressive is that the forward steps in industry and agriculture were taken, and are now being taken, in times when war always threatened, compelling the Soviet Union to expend a great part of its energies and resources to the ends of defense, but the results, from Russia's viewpoint, have been happy, for not only has the country done wonders industrially and agriculturally, but it has, at the same time, built the world's greatest army and is pressing other immense military projects, all of them, of course, devoid of a single gesture of aggression against any other country. The Fascist countries are building up an anti-Communist front, not because the Soviet Union is a failure and therefore easy of conquest, but rather because its economy is too successful.

The U.S.S.R. is now the unquestioned, unchallenged farm leader of the world, so far as the following crops are concerned: wheat, barley, rye, oats, potatoes and beet sugar. It is a part of the third five-year plan to double all cereal harvests. The first objective, which is expected to be

reached before 1942, is to increase the average grain yield to 22½ bushels per acre. The average for the U.S. is between 17 and 18 bushels.

In previous articles on Russia's industrialization, I have been careful to say again and again that comparisons should be made between the U.S.S.R. of today and that of the Czar's regime in the year before the World War. Every such comparison shows gigantic progress, records actually achieved. As I write this, the plan figures for the third five-year plan are still to be issued by the Soviet authorities, but it's safe to say that the program, which is to close in 1942, will approach the production records of the U.S., perhaps even passing them. Such an achievement, in so short a time, staggers the imagination, when we recall that only 20 years have passed since the revolution and much of that time occupied with civil wars, resisting invasions, famine and backward industrial equipment. The figures below give the Soviet Union's production under the Czar, in 1913, the 1937 figures, and, finally, the estimated figures for the U.S. in 1937.

Item	1913
Pig Iron (tons)	4,200,000
Steel (tons)	4,231,000
Copper (tons)	30,000
Coal (tons)	29,040,000
Oil (tons)	9,500,000
Electric Power (billions kw.hr.)	1.9
Automobiles	None
Tractors	None
Locomotives	600
Cotton (bales)	1,100,000
* Estimated	

In addition to the above, the Soviet Union is able to point proudly to numerous advances in construction, education, public health service, amusements, water power projects, canals, roads, railroads, publishing, hospitals, sports, museums, libraries, music, literature, art, science, the theater, exploration, movies, and so on.

A number of these intangible, cultural, educational, artistic advances are covered in figures gathered firsthand by Joshua Kunitz, who writes in the *New Masses*, November 9, 1937, as follows:

"In 1914-1915 czarist Russia had 7,800,000 students in its elementary

and secondary schools; in 1937 the total number of students in the Soviet elementary and secondary schools was over 30,000,000. In 1914-15, czarist Russia had 91 higher institutions of learning with a student body of slightly more than 124,000; in 1935-36 the Soviet Union had 595 such institutions with 524,800 students; in 1937 the graduating classes alone comprised 93,800 students. These figures do not take into account the various schools for adults, the countless study circles, and the classes all over the country for 'liquidating' illiteracy.

"In 1914 czarist Russia had 12,600 libraries with 8,900,000 books. In 1936 the Soviet Union had 55,400 libraries with 115,600,000 books.

"In 1913 czarist Russia had 859 newspapers with a total circulation of 2,700,000; in 1936 the Soviet Union had 9,250 newspapers with a total circulation of 38,000,000.

"In 1913 czarist Russia published 26,200 books with a total circulation of 86,700,000; in 1936, the Soviet Union published 43,300 books with a total circulation of 571,000,000.

"In 1914 czarist Russia had 176 theaters and circuses; in 1936 the

	1937	U.S.*
U.S.S.R.		
16,000,000		40,000,000
20,100,000		52,000,000
149,000		960,000
152,500,000		500,000,000
34,500,000		187,500,000
	40.5	118.0
	220,000	5,000,000
	66,000	295,000
	1,425	450
	3,400,000	17,500,000

Soviet Union had 724 theaters and circuses.

"In 1914 czarist Russia had 112 museums; in 1936 Soviet Russia had 738 museums.

"In 1914 czarist Russia had all together 200 clubs and cottage libraries; in 1936 the Soviet Union had 71,000 such institutions.

"These are cold figures. They do not tell the whole story. The appetite for culture, enormously stimulated by the revolution, has hardly been satisfied. There is a great hunger in the land, a hunger for schools, books, newspapers, theaters, musical instruments, radios. The supply cannot possibly keep pace with the mounting demand. And if the fig-

ures cited above bear witness to the splendid progress of the Soviet spirit, the rising clamor for more and ever more 'cultural wares' suggests that what we have witnessed so far is just the beginning of an advance whose potentialities cannot now be even remotely envisaged."

The record is staggering. The facts are overwhelming. If the great Russian people could be spared the horrors of Fascist wars of aggression, they could, in a few short years, move to the first position as the economic leader of the world. Its leaders know this, which, in great measure, explains why they are so anxious to advance the ideals of peace and international harmony. For one thing, the Russians have absolutely nothing to gain by going to war. They have all the land they want, and all the land they can use for many decades to come, so they wisely ask the world to let them alone as they tend their garden. But Hitler, Mussolini and Japanese Fascism say otherwise. They want to split up this vast granary and workshop, for their own enrichment. Like so many gangsters they look at rich, growing Russia and covet the fruits of the nation's toil. But the Russian people will fight the Fascists the moment they set foot on their soil. There can be no doubt about that. They'll fight hard, too, because they'll know what it's all about and why they should drive the invaders from their territory. The Fascist dupes will be fighting on Russian soil because their dictators want booty—and that incentive won't move them to acts of the highest heroism, by any means—but the Russians, on the other hand, will have real reasons for resisting—they will give their all, if necessary, to keep the gangsters from despoiling their gigantic garden. A country that was able to crush Czarism, that destroyed reaction and counter-revolution, that started at scratch and built up immense social and public projects, ought to be expected to give a good account of itself when the Fascists try to destroy what its masses have toiled to build.

* * *

Can you explain the meaning of the padlocking of a newspaper in Quebec?

The office and plant of *La Clarte* (The Light), in Montreal, was raided by order of Premier Maurice

Duplessis, in November, 1937, in order "to protect this Province against Communist propaganda"—the old red-herring of the Catholic-Fascists. The establishment was cleared of its records, files, etc. and padlocked. This act of tyranny was committed under a law forced through by the Catholic-Fascists, under which anything unacceptable to the clerical reactionaries can be described as Communism and immediately suppressed. Quebec—as I've written many times in the past—is under clerical control, and, in harmony with its usual policy wherever it's able to exercise undisputed power, veers towards Fascism whenever such a policy can be made to work. The premier is a Catholic-Fascist and his goal is a dictatorship, along the lines jammed through by the Catholic-Fascists of Italy, Austria, Poland Insurgent Spain and Portugal. The Catholic-Fascist regime in Quebec has as its immediate objective complete control over all free unions in order to strengthen the fake trade unions organized by the Catholic-Fascists, which are nothing more than carbon copies of the "labor fronts" of Germany and Italy.

In Western Canada, Premier Aberhart, head of the Alberta government and leader of the Social Credit Party, is a semi-Fascist with leanings in the direction of a totalitarian State. His pipe-dream of paying each citizen a monthly income of \$25 blew up during the first few months of his administration, but he has, by the clever use of demagogic appeals and slogans, turned his followers towards semi-Fascist ideas, which includes attempts to control the press, radio and civil rights in general.

The Canadian Commonwealth Federation, a Socialist organization, has denounced Aberhart and his Social Creditites for promoting laws which strip Canadian citizens of their "civil liberties and denies the long cherished freedom of the individual to engage in whatever calling may be open to him without Nazi regimentation." This last complaint refers to Aberhart's move to compel every worker in Alberta to take out a license to work, without which he can't get or hold a job, all of which is nothing less than a form of Fascism.

Aberhart is a Protestant evangelist, of the most fundamentalistic kind,

who combines religious superstition with political vaporings, with a view to continuing his hold on the Province and entrenching himself and his lieutenants behind a barricade of Fascist dogmatisms.

Abehart, a Protestant, can't command the support of solid church bodies, though many Protestant leaders and laymen are with him. In Quebec, on the other hand, Catholic-Fascism has the solid, powerful backing of the entire Catholic hierarchy.

* * *

I don't recall your having commented on the frequently repeated statement among journalists and politicians that Fascism and Communism are really the same thing.

I've touched on the idea more than once. Let me call attention to the first difference. Fascism everywhere is an orgy of inflated nationalism, with war as the ultimate objective of its economic, political, financial and industrial policies. That in itself puts the Soviet Union and the three great Fascist powers millions of miles apart, for even the worst enemies of the Russian government have to admit that Moscow has nothing to gain from war, doesn't want war, and will make any reasonable sacrifice to maintain peace. The second difference has to do with the ownership of the industries and the large-scale instruments of communication, distribution, and the like. The Soviet Union, which has no capitalist class, is going in the direction of democracy, Socialism and a classless society. The Fascist nations permit capitalists to function in production, distribution and exchange, in fact claim as its prime purpose the preservation of capitalistic enterprise, though they invariably follow up such declarations with new levies on capital, which, in effect, amount to legalized robbery. The Fascist governments, like gangsters, prey on the capitalists in the same way that they exploit and rob the workers. In the Soviet Union the government frankly outlawed all forms of Capitalism. The above two differences, to my mind, make ridiculous the statement that Russia is no different from Italy and Germany.

* * *

I am not a Jew, but I have an unalterable hatred for anti-Semitism, as I have for all forms of racial persecution and discrimination. We non-Jews must find

a way to help our Jewish brothers—and other persecuted minorities, including the Negroes. I have been wondering if there is any validity to the suggestion that Jews fight anti-Semitic propaganda—such as the Rev. Gerald B. Winrod is promoting—by suing for libel. Please comment.

Countries that don't have a specific law against anti-Semitism present a difficult problem to Jews who would use the courts to combat the hate-mongers. The U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia have plain, clear laws against anti-Semitic activities—the former covering all forms of expression and actions; the latter covering only actual overt acts—so Jews can easily use the courts to defend themselves. But in countries like the U.S., Canada, Switzerland, etc., any attempt to curb the propagandistic efforts of a Rev. Winrod brings up the question of free speech and free press. Under such circumstances, Jews can expect to make slight headway in opposing their bigoted enemies. Their only remedy—pending the enactment of actual laws against appeals to prejudice against racial groups—is the splendid weapon of education and truth. They must join in building a powerful press that will be able to meet all the "arguments" presented by the anti-Semites, analyze them, expose them, and then present the actual truth about the would-be victims of the Jew-baiters. Educational work is hard work, but it can get results in a democracy. When a press is built up which knows how to handle every point advanced by the anti-Semites, the result, in time, will be an educated public that's too wise to be fooled by the vicious propagandists of reaction and medievalism.

* * *

Nazi publicists insist that it's Hitler's duty to take steps against Czechoslovakia because of that country's bad treatment of its German minority. Hitler has sworn he intends to rescue Germans wherever they are persecuted.

That's just a lot of bunk. First of all, the 3,500,000 Germans in Czechoslovakia aren't being mistreated, and never were in the entire history of the Republic. The country—with a population of 15,000,000—doesn't have any desire to deal unfairly with its German minority. The Nazi party that's led by Konrad Henlein, according to authoritative reports, has been slipping of late, and that accounts

for Germany's suddenly revived interest in Czechoslovakia's "oppressed" Germans. If left to themselves, these Germans would prefer to live under Czechoslovakian freedom and democracy than to be placed under the yoke of Hitlerism. What keeps the Fascist pot boiling in Czechoslovakia is Hitler's constant propagandistic campaigns and political conspiracies. That Hitler is sworn to defend all oppressed Germans is just another joke. If that were so why doesn't he say something about the way Mussolini is really oppressing the Germans in the Tyrolese, in North Italy, where great numbers of Germans are even denied the right to use their own language. Under Mussolini's direct orders German cemeteries were put through the Fascist mill, because Mussolini didn't like the idea of the German lettering on the tombstones. The stones had to come down. That's just one illustration out of hundreds available, all of which show that Italian Fascism is truly persecuting and oppressing its German subjects. But since Mussolini and Hitler are pals—since they are co-signers of the anti-Communist pact—the mistreatment of Germans isn't even referred to. Hitler's claim that he will always defend and protect German minorities in Europe is pure bunk.

I applied what I learned from your "How to Become a Writer," with the result that a letter I wrote to the Houston (Tex.) Press was printed in the letter department of that newspaper. I am enclosing the article. Do you think I have sufficient ability to write for profit? I am enclosing fee for a personal reply.

This reader's letter to *The Houston Press* is an excellent piece of writing, and I'm sure he can be useful if he were to continue employing his pen to advance anti-Fascism, and related subjects. (His letter is a clear, convincing attack on Governor Allred and two other prominent Texans for accepting Italian decorations from the Italian consul.) Whether or not such authorship can result in professional rewards I'm unable to say. No one can tell what such writing can lead to. I'd suggest, therefore, that he keep on writing, using whatever medium comes to hand, including the letter columns of the press. It he doesn't become a practicing journalist he'll at least get a lot of satisfac-

tion out of his work, and that's something. (The above, slightly rewritten, went to my correspondent in a personal letter, because he paid for a private reply, but as some of my readers have literary ambitions I thought it best to use the material here. The thought I bring out above may cover other cases.)

Some years ago, while the San Francisco Bay bridge was being built, you gave some interesting data on it. Now that the structure is in use, are the tolls enough to pay for the project?

On November 12, 1937, the \$77,200,000-San Francisco Bay bridge was a year old. The first year's business shows a healthy financial condition that indicates the structure may be operated on a free basis in about 20 years. During the first year, more than \$5,000,000 was collected from the drivers of almost 9,500,000 vehicles. This is ample to cover bond and maintenance costs.

I see you answer every question under the sun, so here I go. Please send me a personal reply, for which I enclose fee. I have a plan to go to Baffinland and capture a few musk ox and bring them to this country and try to domesticate them or their offspring. I think it will pay big in years to come. As it will cost a considerable sum of money—more than I have at my command, and I'm not a high pressure salesman or promoter—my problem is to approach the proper people who have the means to back this venture with money. Please tell me how to go about this.

This plan is so unusual that I feel safe in saying my correspondent will be wasting his time if he tries to interest other people to put money into it. He will simply have to go to Baffinland after the coveted musk ox and do the job on his own. The chances of getting financial backers for such a project are about a million to one against him.

What is it that makes the difference between primitive and civilized man?

Anthropologists generally agree that the most important difference is civilized man's ability to write.

Is it correct to say that white is the presence of all colors and black is the absence of all colors?

The late Dr. Wilhelm Ostwald (1853-1932) worked out logical theories of color, and it's from his works,

as summarized by Egbert G. Jacobson, president, Association for Color Research, that I learned to look on color as a sensation. We can approach color in one of three ways—as physicists, as chemists, or as psychologists. The Ostwaldian theory holds:

“When physicists use the term they have in mind the phenomenon of light, its reflection, refraction, and absorption; while chemists think of pigments and dyes from which paint and other coloring agents are made. We shall use the word ‘color’ in its psychological meaning only, because we refer to what we see applied with paint or ink. This definition at once implies that black and white are colors, for we receive definite sensations of white from paper and of black from ink. You have probably heard the phrase, ‘white is all colors together and black is the absence of color.’ This has no meaning for us; for us, color is a sensation.”

* * *

How long, on the average, do convicts serve who have been sentenced to life imprisonment?

Dr. R. N. Whitefield, a Mississippi public official, in an address before the American Public Health Association, said he had made a study of 6,415 homicides committed during the 16 years from 1916 to 1931, in Mississippi, and found:

“There were 2,190 convictions in the 6,415 homicide cases. Of those convicted, 1,083 were sentenced to prison for life, but at the close of the period, only 171 of these were still in prison. More than 500 had been pardoned after serving an average term of seven and a half years. Almost 300 had escaped or had died. Some were free under suspension of sentence.”

The speaker added the opinion that if the same kind of survey were made in every State, “we should find similar consequences in a majority of them.”

* * *

Is it true that the bicycle has regained its popularity in the U.S.?

Yes. The following facts are taken from an article in *The American Magazine*:

“The bicycle is definitely back. More wheels (750,000) were sold in the United States during 1936 than in the year of the ‘scorchers’—1899—the previous all-time high. The new bike is streamlined, has balloon tires. Some models have

three speed gears, chair seats, and steering wheels instead of handle bars. A new racer, made of a strong aluminum alloy, weighs only 13 pounds. Bicycle archery and bicycle polo are new sports growing in popularity with America’s 4,000,000 bicyclists.”

* * *

What was Goethe’s attitude towards the Catholic Church?

The following passage from Goethe’s *Faust*, as translated by Bayard Taylor, gives the great German’s general attitude:

The Holy Church has a stomach healthy,
Has eaten many a land as forfeit,
And never yet complained of surfeit.
The Holy Church beyond all question
Has for ill-gotten goods the right diges-
tion.

* * *

Is a feather bed a safe haven from flashing lightning?

The sense of security that comes to one who jumps into a feather bed and covers his head isn’t based on anything substantial, says Dr. W. H. Humphreys, of the U.S. Weather Bureau. He offers better substitutes, as follows:

“A room with all-metal roof, walls and floor.

“A cave.

“The bottom of a railroad cut.

“A recumbent position in most any ditch is a good idea, and a steel frame building is nearly as safe as the all-metal room.

“Any house is better than an open field, but a tree is dangerous company when the celestial fireworks begin.”

* * *

Supposing that the entire State of North Dakota had a rainfall of one inch, how much would it weigh?

Five billion tons.

* * *

I frequently hear it said that more people die during the night than during the day. What are the facts?

It’s just another bunkette. People die at the same rate during the day or night, or, for that matter, during one hour and another.

* * *

What is an inch?

An inch is one thing in the U.S. and another in England, the two countries having failed thus far to agree. An American inch is slightly more than 2.54 centimeters long. The British inch is slightly less than 2.54 centimeters. To be exact, the U.S. inch

is about 28 millionths of a centimeter longer than the British inch. That makes a difference of more than two centimeters in 10 miles. The U.S. Bureau of Standards has asked Congress to pass a law making our inch precisely 2.54 centimeters long. The trick then would be to get the British to agree on the same inch, which, I'm afraid, may bring up grave international problems.

* * *

I have been advised against mentioning names in a forthcoming book of mine because, while I have praise for some of the names, I have criticized others and I have been advised that it is best to refer to the works of others indirectly or by inference but not to freely advertise or mention others in a published book. There is also the question in my mind of libel, of which subject in the publication of an ordinary book I know nothing. I do feel, however (at least tell me if I am wrong) that the publisher of a paper as yours may say things which the author of a book, such as I have in mind, may not say. (I am enclosing one dollar for a personal reply at once, so that I may get an answer at once even though you may later on publish the question and answer in *The Freeman*.)

It isn't libelous to criticize an author or his book in another book. An author has the right to disagree even if his own views are wrong, inaccurate, or extreme. As for personal attacks, an author must be careful because he may be called on to prove his personal attacks. If he has proofs and published the facts in the public interest, he has nothing to fear. As for quoting from another book or referring to it, an author has a right to do this, even to the extent of using up to 300 words from the book under discussion.

* * *

What is the maximum life span of snakes?

Twenty-five years.

* * *

A few words on "They Won't Forget," please.

This is one of the better movies—a serious approach to the problem of prejudice and the lynch spirit of the deep South. "They Won't Forget" is a movie version of the infamous Leo Frank case, in which a young Jewish man was persecuted and finally lynched, not because he had committed a murder—the evidence on this was as thin as tissue paper—but be-

cause he was a stranger, a Northerner, and a Jew. In the movie, the unhappy, terrorized victim is presented only as a stranger and a Northerner, the racial angle being eliminated, as one comes to expect from the movies. At that, the picture's lesson is powerful, its story is a moving drama of current life, its acting—especially Claud Rains'—is perfect, its direction is comparable with the best, its dialogue rings true—in all, one picture in a thousand. As bad as the lynch problem is in this country, we must remember, however, that it is the expression of only a minor portion of American life—the smaller, backward communities of the hinterland. Nazi propagandists, who like to keep harping on American lynching, forget this important fact and then close their eyes to the more damning fact that in Germany the lynch spirit has been turned into an official arm of the regime. But this doesn't mean we should shut our eyes to the responsibility facing us. President Roosevelt's long-continued efforts to have Congress pass a Federal anti-lynching law, if crowned with success, would serve to rid this country of practically all of its lynching in a few years. A picture like "They Won't Forget" warns us in an intelligent manner how essential it is for the nation to do something to curb this ignoble, cowardly expression of mass hysteria. "They Won't Forget" shows us why we mustn't forget to support the proposed Federal anti-lynching law. In the picture we see how small-time, shyster mob-baiters—this time a typical county prosecutor—makes adroit use of the public's mob psychology to force his way into the governor's office, over the dead body of an innocent victim. I feel sure that all decent Southerners will welcome this fine, constructive picture of an ugly side of their community.

* * *

Please comment on the movie, "The Life of Emile Zola."

It's one of the finest pictures ever made. Paul Muni rises to new heights, with artistic creativeness that is a triumph. Long one of my favorites, he now steps forward to the very front of the procession. Every lover of freedom and justice should see this powerful indictment of

black reaction that still strikes at everything that's decent and worthwhile in civilized existence. In Germany, Japan, Italy, Poland, Austria, Portugal, Nationalist Spain, and other centers of medievalism, this element is in the saddle and riding mankind. In almost every other country in the world it is conspiring to crush liberty, Democracy, Free-thought, economic emancipation, and racial tolerance. The story of Zola's beautiful life should inspire every anti-Fascist. My only objection to this picture—and it's not a small complaint, by any means—is the fact that the real issues in the infamous Dreyfus case weren't given complete elucidation. The element of anti-Semitism—for it is a fact that the Jew-haters were out to destroy Captain Dreyfus because of his racial origin—was ignored completely, except for one fleeting mention that couldn't have been observed by more than 1 percent of the audience. Zola not only fought the incipient Fascists in the French army, but also aimed his guns at the great and powerful Roman Catholic Church, which give its support to the war on innocent Dreyfus because of the Church's long-standing encouragement to the inhuman, savage forces of racial persecution. But, the picture is so great that it rises above this serious omission and stands as a human document worthy of the attention of the most social-minded persons. Zola—who, as Anatole France says in the picture's last scene, "was a moment of the conscience of man"—was a brave and fearless soldier in the liberation war of mankind, in the sense in which Heinrich Heine spoke of his own life as he saw himself nearing the hour of his death. In "The Life of Emile Zola" the movies reach artistic maturity; they are still to achieve intellectual integrity.

* * *
Are there any species of snakes that are vegetarians?

No. All snakes are meat-eaters.

* * *
Editor, The American Freeman:

Thank you for your comment, in January, 1938, Freeman, on the efforts of Dorothy Thompson and those for whom she is a mouthpiece to prove that minority rule is true democracy. Theirs is true jesuitical "logic"—logic worthy of Hitler and Mussolini, who have more

than once solemnly stated that theirs is the only real "democracy."

It seemed to me significant that on November 5, 1937, Miss Thompson broadcast on the subject, "The Underprivileged Man." He is, it appears, the colored sharecropper of the South. That is, "to the Bureau of Statistics he is the underprivileged man." All the bright little anti-New Dealers know the colored sharecroppers are incomparably happy in their poverty, and wouldn't live otherwise if they could! "He gets his cabin and keep. He always has a roof over his head, and can never starve." (Make a note of that.) "He does gruelling work 120 days of the year. Then he is free to play with his fellows. . . . Suicide among Southern Negroes is almost unknown. . . . A child in a Negro sharecropper's family is an asset. The more children he has, the more land he is likely to get. . . . There are no orphans in the deep South. If one set of parents dies, another set of parents takes the child. He has the same status as their own children."

The Negro 'cropper enjoys "making love, singing songs, fishing for catfish, riding on trains for the pure pleasure of the ride." (I'm anxious to know where he gets the carfare.) No mention is made of the floggings and lynchings he enjoys, or of the educational advantages he does not enjoy. What rotten taste to bring that up!

"In the Good Book it says, 'Take no thought for the morrow,' so he takes no thought for the morrow." (I take it that Miss Thompson and the Tories are unbelievers—at least they seem to be taking considerable thought for the morrow.)

"He often compares his existence to the white man's, convinced that his own is superior." So that's that, and we are quite absolved from doing anything for the colored man.

Would you say it was ominous when our politicians begin assuring the public that the masses are very happy in their misery? It's quite in the style of European dictators.

In her broadcast of October 29, 1937, Miss Thompson remarked that Queen Wilhelmina of Holland has been called "the only monarch who would dare sit with her back to a window." Rather broad statement, that. What of Scandinavian monarchs?

Eulogizing Thomas Dewey for his war on New York racketeers, she goes out of her way to lug in a slap at the New Deal. The practice of organized gangsters to force merchants to keep prices at a certain level she caustically designates "a sort of Racketeers' NRA." Now so intelligent a woman must know she is being dishonest in comparing

the efforts of the government to make sweatshop owners pay a living wage, to those of ruthless gangsters exacting tribute from law-abiding citizens. Don't you think this calls for sharp comment? Wilmington, Del. W. MATHEWS

* * *

One lesson I never tire of driving home—the need of a free press to fight the advance of international Fascism. Many of my articles close with the admonition that if anti-Fascists do nothing to build up a free press then the future is dark for democracy and freedom. Translated into everyday life, such warnings simmer down to one thing—anti-Fascists everywhere must get behind free organs like *The American Freeman* with every form of financial and moral aid. In the case of *The Freeman* the conditions demand several forms of reader-activity. First, donations to help wipe out the deficit. Second, prompt renewals from subscribers. Third, the introduction of *The Freeman* to new bodies of readers, which is a form of activity that can best be advanced by sending in at least four subscriptions at once, with more to follow. If *Freeman* readers who believe in this paper's tireless war on Fascism will stand by their paper, help it financially, and add to its influence in the way of circulation, then the country will have a powerful weapon with which to help beat down the dark, ominous, menacing forces of reaction and tyranny. Express your anti-Fascism in concrete, constructive acts. Help strengthen *The Freeman*, a paper which never fails to fight every form of reaction with every weapon of exposure, truth, history, logic, and humanitarianism.

* * *

How can one travel from New York to San Francisco and pass through the least number of States?

This piece of oddity has been appearing in our newspapers for several years, which means it's a favorite "filler." It's possible to take a trip by motor car from New York to San Francisco and pass through only nine States, as follows: New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. But what makes that piece of information quite valueless is the fact that the route doesn't include the best highways.

* * *

Do snakes have a sense of hearing?

No. They are deaf. The common error that snakes can hear is fostered by pictures of Indian snake charmers blowing music out of a wood instrument, to which the snake is sup-

posed to respond. The fact is, the snake doesn't hear the music at all but bobs back and forth in response to motions and in reaction to felt vibrations.

* * *

Can snakes spit?

Only one kind—cobras—can spit.

* * *

How many Negroes live in New York City?

327,700.

* * *

How do you account for the different ways cars behave when brought to a quick stop on a wet pavement?

The Kansas City, Mo., police department found, after experiments, that a car equipped with new, good tires will stop quickly on a wet pavement. It was then shown that a "taxicab, with worn tires but good brakes, used twice the stopping distance of the motor car equipped with good tires. Then a taxicab with one brake disconnected used a third more distance than the taxicab with good brakes."

* * *

How many radio sets are there in the world? How many of them has the U.S.?

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, there were, early in 1937, 56,000,000 radio receiving sets in the world, of which 30,000,000 were in the U.S.

* * *

Do you believe that absence makes the heart grow fonder?

Not always. The French moralist, La Rochefoucauld, in his *Maxims*, got to the heart of this idea when he wrote:

"Absence diminishes little passions and increases great ones, just as the wind blows out a candle and fans a fire."

* * *

One of the favorite arguments of supporters of astrology is the fact that the so-called system has an immense following, prints a vast literature, including magazines that have as much as 500,000 circulation. Please comment.

The fact that a piece of pure bunk has many dupes doesn't make the bunk true, but merely proves that the world still supplies a sure crop of fools and suckers. William Marias Malisoff comments on this point, in an article in the August, 1937, *Forum*, as follows:

"That he (the astrologist) has a

large following . . . is scarcely relevant to the strength of his position. So has Voliva, Father Divine, Hitler. So had Billy Sunday, Dr. Abrams of electronic fame, and their numerous historic predecessors."

* * *

Do these thousands of mystics—such as crystal gazers, astrologists, etc.—use their influence over their suckers to put over crooked business deals?

Only the other day a crystal gazer was sent to prison for running a crooked stock business under the pretext that he was selling his occult "powers." This mystic philosopher specialized in moneyed women, who during his seance, were told the spirits weren't pleased with her ownership of such poor stocks as U.S. Steel and General Motors but would prefer to have them turned in for an issue the crystal gazer was pushing on the quiet. One woman, with \$10,000 insurance money, bought stock in a fake rayon corporation and lost every cent, but the crook got caught and was sent up. Another victim—this time a man—was talked into buying whisky warehouse receipts. The crystal gazer said the spirits told him the spirits now under government bond (pardon the awful pun) would be worth almost their weight in gold when they had become four years old. The spirits failed to warn the sucker that the receipt-holder couldn't legally remove the whisky even though he held a receipt, and, besides, the whisky could hardly be sold if released because the big whisky companies control this field and are themselves putting away more whisky than the market is likely to absorb. So, another sucker got a hang-over without touching a drop.

* * *

At what rate does an elephant grow in height?

Six inches per year. Its annual growth in poundage is irregular.

* * *

Is it true that a certain tropical tree gives off red wine when tapped?

You probably have in mind the "whoopie" tree, found in the tropical jungles of Lower Mexico by Llewellyn Williams, curator of botany at Field Museum, Chicago. The tree is a species of palm, which the natives chop down, after which a small trough is cut in the trunk. They then cover

the trough with leaves and let it stand for two days, after which they find it filled with a red wine, formed from fermentation of the sap. It was delicious, said Williams.

* * *

Which is the coldest State in the Union? Wyoming. On February 9, 1933, at Yellowstone National Park, Wyo., the thermometer registered 66 degrees below zero.

* * *

Is the weather always hotter in the South than the North?

No. South Dakota has a higher heat record than Georgia. Alabama has had colder weather than that of Delaware. Washington State has had hottest weather that exceeds South Carolina by 7 degrees. Rhode Island's lowest temperature is 18 degrees below zero, which is only 2 degrees lower than the coldest day officially recorded in Louisiana.

* * *

Which is the hottest State in the Union?

California. On July 10, 1913, the temperature in Death Valley reached 134 degrees above zero.

* * *

Which State registers the least range of temperatures?

Florida. Its hottest day was 109 above zero; its coldest, 2 degrees below zero, a spread of 111 degrees. Rhode Island comes next, with 100 degrees above and 18 degrees below, a range of 118 degrees.

* * *

Is it correct to speak of "Hudson Bay"?

The older form is "Hudson's Bay," but the popular "Hudson Bay" is all right, as is "Hudson Bay Company" for the older "Hudson's Bay Company."

* * *

Which form of communication is used most—letters and postcards, telegrams, or telephone calls?

Telephone calls lead. Every day, more than 65,000,000 telephone calls are made in this country, an average of one for every two inhabitants. The annual number of calls is about 25,000,000,000, which is almost twice the number of letters, postcards and telegrams.

* * *

What's your opinion of guaranteed freckle removers?

Dr. Frank J. Clancy, director, Board of Investigation, American Medical Association, says women

should be warned against these "guaranteed" freckle removers. He cautions the public, as follows:

"If they remove freckles, they must remove the outer layer of the skin, and many contain caustics. Better to have freckles than scars."

* * *

Do you like to eat cauliflower?

I don't mind a little of it, though I agree with Mark Twain that cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

* * *

Is there any remedy for baldness?

Science knows of none. Once the hair goes, it's gone—for good. Dr. Frank J. Clancy, director, Board of Investigation, American Medical Association, says there's just nothing the doctors can do about a bald head. He adds:

"Tonics may create a little fuzz, but nothing more. I'm getting bald myself, but I don't try to kid myself into thinking there is anything that will grow hair on my head."

* * *

How did the ancient Romans make ink?

The ancient Romans used soot as a base for ink and black paint. The soot was made by burning resin in a stove. The soot that resulted from the burning resin was drawn through vents into a room that was walled with smooth marble. When a sufficient coating of soot covered the marble walls it was scraped off, later to be mixed with gum to manufacture ink or with size to produce paint.

* * *

I have made three bad guesses in matrimony. I am contemplating my fourth. Am I all wet?

I can't advise you. This fourth wedding, if it comes off, will suggest, in Balzac's words, the triumph of hope over experience.

* * *

How does the mine-run of humanity go about the delicate work of forming an opinion?

The first requisite is to dispense with all information that doesn't fit in the general pattern of wishful thinking. Take what's left and mix with plenty of bunkistic notions that are accepted as gospel truth by all persons except the experts, and they, of course, don't count. Flavor with a pint of prejudices, but be sure to call them "principles." Throw in a few quotations about mother, home,

God and the flag. Add a passing compliment to pure womanhood. Sprinkle plenty of the juices of emotion over the concoction, but insist it's nothing more than cool reason. Serve immediately because the mess sours quickly.

* * *

Have any tests been made to learn if radio listeners know the names of products advertised in radio broadcasts?

Royal H. Ray, formerly a member of the journalism faculty of Ohio University, conducted a survey at Athens, Ga., and found that "fewer than 10 percent of the radio listeners questioned in a survey could identify the product advertised in the programs, to which their sets were tuned." This is a rather limited test, but I'm inclined to believe the inference drawn from Mr. Ray's inquiry is sound.

* * *

What have you in mind when you reproach others for their mysticism or metaphysics?

I use the reproach in Voltaire's sense, who said when the speaker and he to whom he speaks do not understand, that is metaphysics. Or, as someone else said, metaphysics results when a man describes a black cat in a dark cellar in which there isn't any black cat. In other words, anyone who hands out metaphysics is a muddlehead out to further confuse the muddlehead.

* * *

Do you accept circumstantial evidence?

One has to, but one should always try to be extra critical when a decision must rest on nothing but circumstantial evidence. As Mark Twain worded it:

"Even the clearest and most perfect circumstantial evidence is likely to be at fault, after all, and therefore ought to be received with great caution. Take the case of any pencil sharpened by any woman: if you have witnesses, you will find she did it with a knife; but if you take simply the aspect of the pencil you will say she did it with her teeth."

* * *

I am quite amused at your occasional explorations into the Bible's oddities, absurdities and contradictions. I'm sure they are offered to your readers in the spirit of fun rather than a serious attempt at FreeThought propaganda, though I notice you are always ready

to put in your oar for Freethought. In your studies of Bible contradictions did you ever come upon one that appears in absolutely adjacent verses?

If you will turn to Proverbs 26, verse 4, you will find: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." The verse that follows, 5, urges: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."

* * *

I know a man who is always boasting about his ancestors. How can such a person be squelched?

You can't do a thing about it. He's as dead as his ancestors, only the board of health hasn't found out about it yet. Avoid him.

* * *

What do you think of the slogan, "America for Americans"?

With liberal naturalization laws such a slogan can become an instrument for progress, provided we saw to it that it didn't continue to mean "America for a few Americans."

* * *

I'm very fond of peaches but heartily dislike the heavy fuzz. Can anything be done to remove this fuzz?

It is possible to "shave" the heavy fuzz off, if fruit growers will avail themselves of a simple, inexpensive machine now on the market. When the peaches are sent through the sorting machine they can be treated to a vigorous brushing by a set of de-fuzzing brushes.

* * *

Is it true that comic strip artists make poor husbands?

I don't know, but I'm sure they can't be worse than their comic strips.

* * *

I had a friend who borrowed \$2 from me, and now I never see him again. What should I do?

You're lucky.

* * *

What are the duties of a receiver?

A receiver is appointed by the court to conserve your remaining assets in such a way that he gets them.

* * *

Is there any truth to the claim that plant food raised from artificial fertilizer is not as nutritious as that which is raised from natural fertilizer?

There's no difference, according to experiments made by Prof. Arthur Scheunert, who used two groups of rats, keeping one to a diet of plant

food from "artificial" and the other from "natural" fertilizers. After 30 months he found the rats were all about the same in matters of health and weight.

* * *

Does steel last longer than it did in the past?

The American Iron and Steel Institute reports that the 34,000,000 tons of steel produced in 1936 will last for an average of 33½ years, as against an average life of about 15 years a half century ago.

* * *

How long can a bedbug live without food?

These sweet-odored pests can go a long time without victuals. Tests have shown they can live as long as a year without nourishment.

* * *

Solution to problem: The sign reads "KNOTT BROTHERS."

* * *

Can you tell me what the world is paying for arms?

The armaments yearbook issued by the League of Nations, December 11, 1937, said the world's armaments bill for 1937 totaled \$11,857,000,000. This is almost three times greater than the money spent for armaments in 1913, the year before the World War began. The same source says the world spent \$7,181,000,000 in 1932 and \$9,352,000,000 in 1935, thus showing that the war machines are taking larger sums yearly. The figures above, especially the one for 1937, would be considerably higher if the compilers of the League of Nations volume could get the secret sums spent on arms by Hitler. The book adds that the world's standing armies had 8,000,000 men in 1937, as against 6,000,000 in 1913.

* * *

Is there any factual basis to the widely held belief that living costs are lower in the South than in the North?

The facts show that the belief is nothing more than a myth. A few items—rent, fuel, and light—are cheaper in the South, but clothing, furniture and other house furnishing goods, and many other articles, cost more in the South. The Department of Labor has issued a valuable report that shows the above-mentioned facts, and adds there is only slight difference "in the cost of food when the prices of commodities necessary to

make up a minimum standard of living are compared." The government figures actually prove that when all prices are averaged "the cost of living in many Southern cities is considerably greater than in many Northern cities." Walter White, secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, referring to this report, writes:

"For example, the index of the cost of goods purchased by wage-earners and lower-salaried workers, as of September 15, 1937, shows that the average for all items in Chicago is 81.3, but in Atlanta the average is 83.9; in Baltimore, 88.2; in Jacksonville, 82.4; in Norfolk, 86.9; in Savannah, 83.3; in Memphis, 82.9; in Mobile, 85.1; in New Orleans, 85.2."

Comparisons between the South and the North are too often based on living costs in New York City and Washington, D.C., two communities where prices are notoriously high. But even here the federal figures show there is very little difference, for New York averages 86.7 and the average for Washington is 89.7.

Commenting on the argument that wage levels should be lower in the South than in the North because of alleged differentials, Mr. White says:

"As this point of view grows in the South, as it is growing rapidly, the South itself will repudiate the claims made by its politicians and those who seek to lure, with the bait of lower wages, industries into the South on the false premise that the South must have the benefit of differentials in order to exist. Increasingly intelligent Southerners realize also that differentials mean not a difference in cost of living, but in lower standards of living, which in turn mean higher morbidity, mortality and illiteracy rates, lower moral standards and other conditions detrimental to the South and to the country as a whole."

* * *

Please comment on the practice of saying "Jew down" when referring to an attempt to get a bargain.

It's a disgusting expression and should be avoided by all persons who don't want to see racial prejudices grow more intense. Only the other day I met the expression, "Jew down," in an article by Dr. M. Shadid, in the *Community Hospital News*, published at Elk City, Oklahoma. Dr.

Shadid is a social-minded man who is doing splendid work in organizing a successful cooperative hospital, and yet such a man writes over his signature the words "Jew down" when describing the attempts of some of the hospital's patients to get better terms elsewhere. I'm pretty sure not more than 1 percent of the patients in Dr. Shadid's hospital are Jews, and yet he uses them as horrible examples when the 99 percent, who aren't Jews at all, go out hunting for a bargain. The simple fact is, everybody likes a bargain. As one who has sold hundreds of millions of books through the mails. I soon learned that everybody enjoys getting something for nothing, or close to nothing, whether Jews or non-Jews. So why characterize a universal trait as a Jewish form of behavior?

* * *

I want a soft drink that contains a good supply of calories. Would you recommend "Dr. Pepper?" Its advertising makes some heavy claims.

The Federal Trade Commission has compelled "Dr. Pepper" to sign a stipulation wherein he "agrees to stop representing that there are more calories per pound in Dr. Pepper than in oranges, lemons, pineapples, spinach or buttermilk." The newspapers and magazines which carried this false advertising were careful to avoid mentioning the newsworthy fact that Dr. Pepper had been cracked down on by the FTC. This is just another argument for an independent press. We'll get one if the consumers wake up and boost the press that supports their interests.

* * *

What is the greatest speed at which a typewriter has been used?

The record is 14 strokes per second, with human fingers used. A "mechanical stenographer," used to the limit of its capacity, succeeded in delivering 20 strokes per second.

* * *

Walter Winchell's column, "On Broadway," refers to three football stars as "yiddles." Please characterize.

I'm sure that Winchell, a Jew, would feel insulted if a Nazi came up to him and called him a "yiddle." He ought to know better than to give wide publicity to such an insulting word. In my writings against racial prejudice I urge my readers to be-

ware of those insulting words which are so offensive to the sensitive people of various races. I refer, of course, to crudities like chink, kike, Jap, nigger, wop, dago, bohunk, sheeny, frog, greaser, and other disgusting epithets. Intelligent, civilized people who deplore the spread of racial hatred always will refrain from using such names, even in jest.

* * *

Enclosed please find literature describing Passion Gum, which I am offered at five sticks for \$1. You will see from the text that it is supposed to act on certain glands in such a way as to bring happiness to "husband, girl friend, boy friend or sweetheart." I am enclosing fee for a personal reply.

Passion Gum is the bunk. Don't waste any money on such foolishness.

* * *

Now that the Ku Klux Klan is back in action again, I would appreciate being given some data showing the extent of the organization's violence during its most flourishing period in the 1920's. I am moved to ask for this information after having just read in the public press of November 17, 1937, how more than 100 hooded klansmen raided a gaming resort in Miami, Fla., broke up the furniture, beat up attendants, and walked off with something like \$350.

The New York World, from 1921 to 1926, kept several correspondents busy covering the activities of the Ku Klux Klan, the purpose being to inform its readers regarding the violent tactics of this bigoted and intolerant body. In one of its reports, the *World* gave a tabulation of violence committed by the Ku Klux Klan, from October, 1920 to October, 1921, as follows:

"... four killings, one mutilation, one branding with acid, 41 floggings, 27 tar and feather parties, five kidnappings, 43 persons warned to leave town or otherwise threatened, 14 communities threatened by warning posters, and 16 parades by masked men with warning placards."

Violence is a living part of Klanism, because this secret society bases its appeal on the less intelligent standards of the unthinking portion of the community, which can be used by shrewd higher-ups to wreak personal vengeance or gain political and economic advantages. Take violence out of the Ku Klux Klan and it decays. Since its foundations are emotional, bursts of violence are but nat-

ural expressions. Men join the Klan presumably to "save" the country from aliens, Negroes, Jews and Catholics, but along with these prejudices and hatreds are irresistible cravings for a show, for excitement, for diversion—and violence against individuals and groups offers the best outlet for pent-up emotions, especially when they are stirred to almost uncontrollable action by leaders who are motivated by ulterior designs.

* * *

What's your opinion of the Japanese argument that they are in China for the good of the Chinese?

Certain good judges, including Heywood Broun, say the Japanese lack a sense of humor. So the argument isn't intended to be funny. The humor, therefore, is unconscious. Needless to say, the Japanese militarists are in China for no one's good but their own, and they will continue doing themselves good turns until they get all of China, the East half of Siberia, the Dutch possessions, and anything else that comes to hand, unless something is done to stop them. An amusing characterization of Japanese aggression is expressed in Ogden Nash's poem:

How courteous is the Japanese
He always says, "Excuse me, please."
He climbs into his neighbor's garden,
And smiles and says, "I beg your pardon";

He bows and grins a friendly grin,
And calls his hungry family in;
He grins, and bows a friendly bow;
"So sorry, this MY garden now."

* * *

I see that a lady grammarian at Columbia University is raising hell with our President for using bad English. What was his crime?

President Roosevelt, in his Cheyenne, Wyo., speech, is supposed to have said "Engineers are human just like I am." This upset the professor, and the result was a hiding for the President, who should have said "as I am." Of course, Roosevelt technically was wrong, but one shouldn't be too strict about a person's construction when he's speaking extemporaneously, as F. D. R. was doing when he committed his offense against the sacred cow of pure English. "Like I am" isn't so barbarous in colloquial speech. I'm pretty sure he wouldn't use such an expression in a message to Congress, though he's capable of

it in one of his fireside chats. After all, the great and beautiful English language wasn't developed by university professors. It's a growth, with its roots in the common people, who are the final arbiters. Still, "like I am" does sound a little awkward, even in conversation, so we'll consider the President rebuked and turn to weightier problems.

But first let me mention that she turned on Charles Dickens and George Bernard Shaw shortly after she castigated the President, holding that Dickens, always a poor punctuator, "averaged one error of usage to every 30 words," and that Shaw "does some queer things with apostrophes." On second thought, before leaving the controversy let's take a look at the grammar of the President's critic, Dr. Janet Aiken. In her letter of protest to Roosevelt she wrote: "Let's you and me get together and have a new deal in grammar." It's plain that "let's you and me" doesn't look quite right. What she meant was "let us, you and me," in which case "you and me" should have been set off by commas. As former dean of Yale's graduate school, Dr. Wilbur L. Cross, now Governor of Connecticut, explained, "Let's you and me" is "a peculiar construction. . . . I suppose you might call it a sort of pleonasm." A pleonasm, let me explain, means "redundancy or fullness of language in speaking or writing." Granting "Let's you and me" is permissible, it's no whit better than "like you and me." So, having had it out with both sides, let's you and me turn, finally and irrevocably, to more pressing problems, and this time I don't mean maybe.

* * *
Which snake is the most generally distributed in the U.S.?

The rattler. It's found from Vermont to the Pacific, and in every Southern State.

* * *
How many times does the word "and" occur in the Bible?

46,271 times.

* * *
I have always looked on you as a radical—one who seeks to go to the roots of social and intellectual problems. By this I don't mean to infer that you are a Communist, for I know you're not an upholder of dictatorships. You have always made apparent to your readers

that you are a true believer in democracy, with a little d. I notice, however, that sometimes you refer to yourself as a progressive. Then at times you use the word "liberal" with approval. I don't mind your using "progressive" now and then, but a "liberal" has always struck me as the middle-of-the-roader who merely takes a position between radicalism and conservatism. Please do a little arguing.

Norman Thomas, leader of the Socialist Party, has an article about liberals in the December, 1937, issue of *The Commentator*, in which he gives what struck me as a pretty good definition of a liberal. He packs it into a short paragraph, from which I quote:

"Liberal, like liberty, is derived from the Latin word for free. The true liberal is, or ought to be, the man whose mind is free, who respects himself and his neighbor, who believes that government has something to do with reason, fair play, and the free discussion of issues. The true liberal neither fears ideas because they are new nor rejects them because they are old. He is vitally concerned with the integrity of the Bill of Rights, with the preservation and increase of what we call civil liberties, 'the right to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience' in Milton's noble phrase. More specifically, with the right to immunity from arbitrary arrest, to fair trial, to freedom of speech, the press, and of conscience; the right of association with one's fellows in churches, unions, political parties, cooperative societies, and social organizations."

Norman Thomas' picture of a liberal hits me in the right place. I hold that radicals, progressives and free thinkers should try to adopt that brand of liberalism, because it's an attitude of mind, and a way of living, that makes possible a decent civilization, if enough men and women were to believe and apply such humanistic doctrines. Norman Thomas, who is a radical in that he would do away with Capitalism and put in its place Socialism, closes his article with a paragraph in which he applies liberalism to current life. He writes:

"To me it seems clear that the principles of this liberalism, which is based on respect for equality of rights for ourselves and our fellows, can best be applied under the economic forms of a truly democratic

socialism. With that judgment many of you who read these lines will not agree. Here, then, is my challenge: let us show our faith by our work, and each of us justify our respective claims to liberalism by our zeal in protecting and increasing those liberties which have been the inspiration of the most glorious chapters of the political history of our own country and of mankind."

Used that way, liberalism can never degenerate into namby-pambyism.

* * *

How widely are poisonous snakes distributed in the U.S.?

There are poisonous snakes in every State in the Union, with the possible exception of Maine.

* * *

I was in accord with your comments on Hollywood's treatment of Mussolini's son. Herewith please find a different viewpoint, which is taken from *The Hollywood Reporter*, one of the industry's trade papers.

The clipping, from Frank Pope's "Tradeview," a column in *The Hollywood Reporter*, follows:

"The private opinions and beliefs held by picture-players are their own and no one has the right to say that they shall not hold such opinions. But when they make those opinions public, to the detriment of their own screen-value and therefore to the detriment of the company that employs them, that is something else again. In such cases, we believe, the industry has the right to object.

"Ambulances, autographed by 100 players and driven across the country on their way to Spain, are not likely to increase admiration for the signers in the minds of those in the opposite camp. Nor are public advertisements, denouncing Vittorio Mussolini, calling for a carload of medical supplies to be sent to Spanish loyalists and signed 'Motion Picture Artists Committee,' liable to help the grosses of Hollywood pictures in Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany."

The article, of course, doesn't question the right of the owners of the great movie companies to express themselves in favor of reaction, clericalism, Fascism, etc., through interviews, speeches, and even in the films. For many years we have had to follow the tory minded movie magnates in their deliberate use of the camera for propagandistic purposes. But

when a group of socially minded actors get together to denounce a confessed mass-murderer, they are scolded for the "harm" they may do to Hollywood's profits in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Why a Hollywood star must surrender his constitutional right to free speech just because he is employed by some movie company isn't quite clear to people who still believe it's no crime to give expression to one's views on public questions.

So far as offending Mussolini and Hitler is concerned, the box-office argument isn't very weighty because Hollywood isn't permitted to take its profits out of Germany or Italy. I have seen the report that Hollywood's yearly profits in Italy (which, because of Fascism's stranglehold on the country's economic life, must remain there) amounts to something like one-hundredth of 1 percent of the film industry's invested capital. I can't see why outraged stars can't express themselves about Vittorio Mussolini lest his papa grow angry and deny them the few remaining "privileges" they still "enjoy" in that benighted land. If the box-office appeal should be the only one to consider, then even here the owners would be justified in getting out of the Fascist countries entirely, for, as I showed in my previous article, they have worked out a system of robbing American companies on such a magnificent scale that they invariably end up perilously close to, if not in, the pot of red ink.

The Hollywood stars who helped expose Vittorio gave voice to their honest convictions, and they should be protected in that action, instead of being criticized. It's really pleasant to see them take a stand on questions of great public concern, instead of being the vapid, empty, artificial, stupid puppets the managers tried to make them out to be during the past 25 years. It's true that their paying for ambulances for the Spanish Loyalists will displease the Fascist butchers, but isn't that all the more reason for doing these humanitarian acts of mercy? As I've said many times in the past, Hollywood is still to grow to intellectual integrity. That this criticism is sound is shown by the way the bosses grow apoplectic when some of their hired artists jump

the traces and do something that shows them to be decent folk after all. The Motion Picture Artists Committee drew up a reply to Frank Pope's complaint, from which I want to pass on the following sentences:

"The President of the United States was aware of the sentiment of the country when, in Chicago, on October 5, (1937) he recommended a quarantine of aggressor nations. The A.F. of L. and the C.I.O., in convention, went on record as favoring a boycott of Japan. The nation is not concerned with the possible loss of those markets. It is of more importance to the industry to maintain the goodwill of the people of the United States, than to court the favor of Herr Hitler or Signor Mussolini.

"By making their sympathies for anti-Nazism, anti-Fascism, and other antics, public, the stars are identifying themselves with the great mass of the American people and the democratic peoples throughout the world. We cannot believe that creative artists are injuring themselves, or the industry in which they are a part, if they join with the President of the United States and all organized labor in 'active endeavors for peace.' By their sincerity as human beings they are achieving greater respect and greater popularity in 90 percent of the world's markets."

To return to Vittorio Mussolini, whose ecstatic paens to the spirit of war caused the controversy, let me quote a few more sentences from his 150-page book, "Flying Over Ethiopian Mountain Ranges," which, so far as I know, is to be had only in its Italian edition. According to the Rome correspondent of the United Press, Il Duce's aviator son looks on war as an artistic, esthetic experience, a "magnificent sport." "War," he sings, "is the quintessence of beauty." Looking on every moment of his seven months in Ethiopia as "fun," and refusing to take any other view of his father's mass-murder of a defenseless, helpless, innocent people, he presents himself as a pathological case, a sadist, a victim of a terrible blood-lust.

In one place, Vittorio, describing a bombardment of Ethiopian Galla cavalry, writes:

"We arrived on them unobserved and immediately dropped our loads

of explosives. . . . I remember that one group of horsemen gave me the impression of a budding rose as the bombs fell in their midst. It was exceptionally good fun."

Turning to the bombing of a village, Mussolini's son paints this picture:

"The bombing of Adowa failed to give us any satisfaction, owing to the fact that there were only small huts, which flattened out without raising smoke or flames as one could see in an American film."

Turning to the preface, the UP correspondent found that Vittorio's purpose in writing the book was "to have Italian youth learn from a young man what it feels like to be fighting a war when only 20 years of age, and to be above war's sorrows, seeing only its beauties."

This is the brute who was exposed in the original statement issued by the Motion Picture Artists Committee. This is the swine, in the view of the ruling powers in Hollywood, who shouldn't have been given the cold shoulder when he visited their studios. Decent folk everywhere will agree that the artists who told Vittorio what they thought about his savagery were presenting a side that should be praised, not criticized.

* * *

The Hollywood people keep harping on the immense sums they spend for pictures. We are given to understand that many pictures to cost at least \$2,000,000 are always in process. Are these figures straight?

Most of the figures that come out of Hollywood are inflated. It's considered good showmanship to give the impression that one is about to see a \$2,000,000 super film. The fact is, pictures that cost \$2,000,000 are very rare indeed. Very few films produced in any year cost that much. It's a pretty safe rule to make a practice of cutting all Hollywood figures in half. A source that knows costs says a super-super film usually costs around \$850,000; the average "A" or first-class film costs around \$500,000; the average "B" job, which is the mine-run of movie fare, costs around \$200,000.

* * *

Are there any valid objections to a third term for Roosevelt? I mean, of course, constitutional or real precedent.

As I've explained several times,

there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent President Roosevelt from being elected for a third term. The Constitutional Convention never expressed itself against a third term, or, for the matter, a fourth term.

We now come to the delicate question of precedent, on which rests the objection to Roosevelt as a candidate for a third term, should he decide to run and be nominated. Much is made of the fact that George Washington limited himself to two terms. That's true, of course, but, as an editorial in *The Nation* puts it, "the relevant passage in his Farewell Address is not so much a warning against a third term as an apology for not continuing in office." Washington wanted to return to private life for personal reasons, mainly the desire to put his business matters in better order.

J. Fred Essary, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, finds that "it actually fell to Thomas Jefferson, the Democrat, to speak with positiveness upon the question. He made it plain to the American people that he withdrew at the end of his eight years in office as a matter of principle. He told his countrymen that he firmly believed that rotation in office was necessary to overcome a temptation toward bureaucracy and despotism."

Mr. Essary, who is Washington correspondent of *The Baltimore Sun*, then admits that "even Jefferson conceived an exception to the rule by which he governed his own conduct." Jefferson said, in 1805, "There is but one circumstance which would engage my acquiescence in another election—to wit, such a division about a successor as might bring in a monarchist."

The American people might very well conclude that the threat of Fascism is much more serious than the remote possibility of a royalist coup, and for that reason prefer to see Roosevelt continue his progressive policies for another four years. All anti-Fascists, all true believers in democratic republicanism, know that so long as Roosevelt is in the White House there's not the slightest danger of Fascism. I don't mean to infer that Roosevelt is the country's only anti-Fascist who is capable of serving the country as President, but

there's no doubting the fact that our Fascists—and we have plenty of them—would care for nothing more than to see Roosevelt eliminated for all time. A change might be the signal for accelerated action by our Fascists. If the American people want democracy continued, if they want to see Roosevelt's progressivism given more time in which to develop socially useful policies, there's no valid reason for assuming that the fact he has already served eight years as President should disqualify him for another term.

* * *

On December 16, 1937, the U.S. circuit court of appeals voided the conviction in the Southern Texas Federal District court of Norman Baker, official of station XENT of Neuvo Laredo, Mexico. It was found that the Federal Communications Law did not apply when the defendant made a phonograph record in the U.S. for transcription over a station in Mexico. The record would have to be used over a U.S. radio station to be subject to our federal law. The case grew out of the attempt to keep Norman Baker from using radio facilities to exploit his cancer "cure." Baker is still without a license to use any U.S. radio station for cancer advertising.

* * *

Do you look on the late Arthur Brisbane as a sincere man?

Brisbane was sincere about only one thing—to make a lot of money. Money was his passion, his God, his life. Money was the yardstick by which he measured success. As a writer and thinker, Brisbane was the most insincere man who ever served journalism, and that's saying a whole lot, for if there's no profession that's loaded with insincerity it's journalism.

To give my readers an illustration, let me quote from an article he wrote on March 12, 1916, in which he charged the moving picture was "based for its success on stupidity and the lack of intellectual development of the human race." I believe he actually was speaking what he really felt at the moment he wrote those words. But they created a storm of protest from the movie magnates (who were big advertisers in the Hearst press), so in less than a month (April 9) Brisbane wrote the motion picture was "one of the greatest mediums of all times for

educating and developing the human mind." There was no sincerity there. He was plainly out to save the wounded feelings of the film advertisers.

About 12 years ago, while in Chicago, I found it necessary to see the manager of *The Chicago Herald-Examiner*, one of Hearst's newspapers. When we finished our conference, the manager mentioned that Brisbane was in the building and that he would be there for some hours before taking a train for California, where he was to meet his boss, Hearst. He then led me to the great Brisbane himself, and I spent at least an hour with him.

During the first minute of our conversation, Brisbane drew from his pocket a well worn, penciled Little Blue Book edition of Oscar Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Jail*. "This great poem," he told me, "the greatest ballad in the English language, first appeared in the Hearst press." He then went on to compliment me for issuing millions of copies of literary masterpieces in paper backs at a price the man-in-the-street can afford to pay.

At this point he was particular to call my attention to the fact that he—as a "lover of Rationalism"—had issued Buckle's great historical work in a popular edition priced at only \$1 per copy, "in order to help liberate the minds of the masses." I think he mentioned this experiment in popular education cost him \$10,000. He then talked about other Little Blue Books he had read and even suggested ideas, several of which I thought really good enough to act on, which I did.

Toward the close of our talk Brisbane promised he would write a piece about me in his daily column. I don't remember just how long I had to wait, but roughly I'd say about a week later I read a paragraph in his column, in which Brisbane bewailed the fact that no publisher in the United States had ever seen the value of issuing sound literature in cheap format at a nickel per copy and hoped to see the day when some benefactor would take up the idea and act on it. I happen to know that he received letters from readers telling him there was such a man at work in this country. Those letter-writers didn't

know that Brisbane already knew this, nor did they know he had promised me personally that he would give me an unsolicited boost before his millions of followers. How can one explain such conduct, except to say that the man was insincere to the core?

Of course, I didn't mind being left out of his column. What burned me up was the way the "great" publicist could write himself down—to one knowing person, at least—as a liar and a cad.

Brisbane inherited a good brain from his father, a man who was a real character, a social reformer, and a person of integrity. But the younger Brisbane threw over his inheritance and turned his mind into a brothel. He was journalism's greatest prostitute. But Brisbane never sold himself at bargain rates. He always got big money for his whoring. He was such a wonderful hustler that the "madame" (Hearst) paid him \$250,000 a year, and figured he was getting more than his money's worth from his star wench.

* * *

Have you ever made a survey of the freakish sandwiches Americans are addicted to?

American sandwiching (I hope I hit on the right word there) leaves me bewildered. As I never eat the good ones, let alone the screwy ones—except for hot dogs and hamburgers—I can't list the freakish ones, of which there must be thousands. Ye Sandwichie Shoppes alone must be able to account for at least 952 different kinds that include marshmallows in one form or another, mainly cooked, fried, roasted, baked and pickled. My wife, who acts as official secretary of my interior, doesn't permit such concoctions to pass my sensitive tonsils.

The New York Daily News sent out Jimmy Jemal, its Inquiring Photographer, to ask restaurant people, "What was the most unusual sandwich preparation you were ever asked to prepare?" Here are a few of the answers:

A ham, smoked salmon, and cream cheese sandwich. A sandwich of tuna fish and sliced egg, the whole sandwich covered with whipped cream. A combination sandwich made of anchovies, cranberry jelly, and whipped cream, on raisin nut bread toasted. A tomato, herring,

cottage cheese, and peanut butter sandwich. A sandwich of roast beef and Bismarck herring, smothered in sour cream.

Now I begin to understand why Americans consume more constipation pills per capita than any people in the world. Just a look at the average freakish sandwich is enough to throw one into the clutches of costiveness. I'm reminded of that wonderful five-decker hamburger sandwich which Billy Gilbert made for Sonja Henie and Don Ameche, in their recent movie, "Happy Landing." That was a masterpiece, though the brief close-up didn't give me a chance to identify all its vast ingredients. The candle which surmounted it was that ineffable artistic touch one hears so much about. And, while I'm at it, that little scene—in which Billy Gilbert tried heroically to make his customers take pot roast instead of hamburgers—is another hilarious triumph for this ever-funny comedian.

* * *

Is there any sound reason why cousins shouldn't marry?

The prejudice against the marriage of first cousins is found mostly outside scientific circles. As *Hygeia*, published by the American Medical Association, says, "If two healthy cousins of sound ancestry want to marry, there is no good reason why society should forbid them to do so." It happens that my own father and mother were first cousins, and as they had sound physiques they gave me a good, healthy body—and as for the kind of brain they passed on to me, modestly compels me to let my readers decide this question for themselves.

* * *

Did Robert G. Ingersoll ever lecture at McCauley's Theater, in Louisville, Ky? If so, give date, subject, attendance, and how received by the people.

The Bowling Green, Ky., reader who asked the above is going to be disappointed, for I don't intend to make the slightest effort to find out what the great Agnostic and Free-thinker did in Louisville. I know—and most of my readers are familiar with the same facts—that Ingersoll was a great lecturer, he attracted thousands to each meeting, and he cleared the cob-webs of superstition from millions of brains. That's all I know about the lecturer's platform

ability, and I believe most informed readers are willing to have their knowledge held within the same limits. In fact, I almost hold to the opinion that even my Bowling Green reader doesn't give much of a damn which Louisville theater Ingersoll spoke in, the date, or the attendance. As for the subject matter, it was probably one of his famous Freethought lectures, all of which are still available in print, some in Little Blue Book form. I'm giving this much space to my Bowling Green reader's inquiry to show my other readers how I must select subjects that will command a reasonable amount of general interest. Getting something like 500 questions a month, and limiting myself to a little over a hundred in each issue, I'm bound to disappoint—and even offend—more readers than I satisfy. That's one of the tough aspects of handling this job. I enjoy every bit of the task of finding answers to questions of general interest, but the fact that many readers each month find themselves left out sometimes drives me to a two-finger slug of Canadian Club in order to forget the appalling hurt I cause those gentle souls who go to great pains to ask questions that don't interest anyone, let alone the letter-writer. I grant you right off that some of the questions that barge their way into these columns should have been left out—but that knowledge too often comes to me after I see the cussed thing in print, when it's too late to do anything about it. Many readers who ask questions that aren't answered don't get mad at all and don't order their subscriptions stopped, but some do, and that adds to the misery of my life, for nothing disturbs me more than a sharp, conclusive, imperious note telling me to stick The Freeman up my sooty stove-pipe. And while I'm discussing unanswered questions, let me pass another one on to my patient readers. This is from a young fellow who wants me to outline his life's program for something like another 45 years. He puts his trouble up to me in these words: "Please help me solve the big problem of my life. I'm to be discharged from a CCC camp in 60 days and want to know what I'm to do until I'm ready for Social Security." That's a pretty hard question to an-

swer, so I had to disappoint another customer. And while I'm on this subject of unanswered questions, let me mention the unblinkable fact that those readers who sent the usual fee for a personal reply were handled handsomely during December, 1937, in which time I received 102 questions and answered all of them except one, my single failure receiving a refund in the form of trade coupons. It seems that when a questioner puts a dollar on his query he tries to pitch one that goes right over the plate. But when he knows he can have his question answered free in the columns of this organ of piety and righteousness, he busts loose any which way.

* * *

Will you comment on the frequently heard argument that individual initiative, enterprise and invention will disappear under Socialism.

I have written on this theme several times in recent years, but some new data makes me want to take it up again. The Soviet Union, with its socialized industries and collectivized agriculture, is building a Socialist society, and if there's any validity to the suggestion that inventive genius can't flourish under such a regime, what is happening in Russia would have to square with that conclusion.

In the days before the Russian Revolution the argument about initiative under Socialism bore a certain degree of plausibility, because the world was still to see a country run along socialistic principles, especially that part of it which has to do with the production of wealth. We find that the position of the scientist is stronger in the Soviet Union than ever in the history of that country. Today, according to a report issued during the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Revolution, there are 40,000 scientists employed in the various laboratories, research organizations, etc. The Soviet Union's Academy of Science conducts 51 laboratories, which are staffed by 2,179 scientists. Medical institutes, health establishments, and the like, have 300 research departments, with 10,000 scientists at work. The large-scale industries have 2,000 laboratories, but I have no figures giving the number of scientists employed in them. The Soviet Union's agricultural scientists have done, and are doing, research

work of the highest importance, with achievements that have won praise throughout the world of science.

Socialist leaders, since the days of Marx and Engels, have had the healthiest respect for science. Lenin was of this tradition, and Stalin's regard for scientific workers is known to every informed person. These thousands of scientists are working tirelessly in Russian industries, hospitals, collectivized farms, etc., to build the resources of society, not to win dividends for themselves. They are well paid for their efforts, but the impulse isn't capitalistic profit but social production and distribution.

Under Capitalism, by the way, only an insignificant number of scientists profit by their inventions. Most of the gain usually goes to private corporations. The profit motive works under Capitalism—but usually to the benefit of the Capitalists, rather than the inventors and scientists. On the other hand, I have, in recent articles, shown the "dividends" that science has paid society in the Soviet Union. Give most scientists a good laboratory, plenty of equipment, and the other facilities of organized research—plus a decent standard of living—and they'll work their heads off, because science is moved by the quest for truth more than the hunger for dividends.

Another important point to bear in mind is that scientific research is no longer an individual enterprise, as it was in the days before Capitalism became a powerful medium for the production of goods. In the early days, a single scientist like James Watt would spend years working on his steam engine. But all this gradually changed as Capitalism became more complex. Even during the later days of Edison's life his research constituted the combined efforts of hundreds of chemists, physicists, engineers, and the like. Today, the individual scientist hasn't much to do. He must, under new conditions, work in cooperation with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other men and women. For example, today we have literally thousands of men throughout the civilized world, hard at work on problems connected with the advance of television, a scientific enigma that is still to be conquered, though great

progress has been made. Hardly a month passes without scientists in New York City, Moscow, London, Paris, and other great centers of scientific research, announcing new steps in their attempts to develop television. First-rate scientists are working on various phases of this problem. They exchange ideas, correct one another—and progress is made. But who will be able to say, when television becomes a public facility, that Mr. So-and-So invented television? The credit will have to go to organized scientists who spent years of cooperative labor in dozens of large laboratories.

The lesson, it seems to me, is clear. Invention has lost its old individualism and has become a matter of organized teamwork. Take group efforts out of modern research and you would get back science a hundred years. Let me give another illustration. The Soviet Union's scientists who are doing such wonderful work in the Arctic, under Professor Otto Schmidt, are cooperating, not going out on each individual's own. Alone a scientist in the frozen North would get nowhere. By cooperating, we find that science in Northern Siberia is getting somewhere, what with the development of new oil and ore fields, the work with new plants to find a substitute for rubber, and in scores of other spheres of endeavor. The hundreds of scientists in the Russian Arctic are pooling their efforts—and getting magnificent results. Even the great physiologist, Pavlov, wouldn't have gone very far in his studies of conditioned reflexes, if he hadn't been given a crew of some 60 young men and women who were sent to him to learn what he knew and to help him find out more of nature's secrets.

The position of science in a Socialist State was expressed by V. M. Molotov, chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, in the following way:

"The distinguishing feature of the Soviet order finds its expression . . . in a close alliance . . . between labor and science; and the toiling masses, free of the rule of rich parasites, see a bright future for themselves in the growth of the culture of the peoples of all nationalities and races in the develop-

ment of Soviet and world science." Individualistic science is dead.

* * *

Recently I suggested to a workingman's wife (who already was caring for four children) that she should practice birth control, to which she replied that her religious scruples wouldn't permit such behavior. Please comment.

Dr. Rachele S. Yarros, in her valuable book, "Sex Problems in Modern Society," touches on this argument by quoting from H. G. Wells, who "pointed out that there is absolutely nothing in the Bible, nor in the cardinal teachings of any church, not excepting the Roman Catholic, to preclude fervent advocacy of birth control by the most devout Christians." Dr. Yarros continues:

"Profound students of religion assure me that Mr. Wells's assertion is thoroughly well-grounded."

Of course, the Bible tells its believers to have children, but even non-believers have done more than their share of replenishing the earth with new millions of humans, joining with the believers in begetting so enthusiastically that the race has grown from perhaps 400,000,000 (or even less) in Bible times, to more than 2,000,000,000 today. While the Bible warns the faithful to become excellent begetters, it doesn't say in so many words that people shall not space the arrival of babies.

The devoutly religious then fall back on the good, old word "immorality," which is supposed to put down birth control as something vicious. Here Dr. Yarros comments:

"As to the alleged immorality of birth control, obviously the position one adopts depends upon his definition of morality. If it be moral to increase and multiply recklessly, regardless of poverty, unemployment, ill health, lack of educational opportunity, then birth control is indeed immoral. If it be moral to seek rational happiness for one's family, and even for oneself, and to maintain decent standards of life, then birth control is profoundly moral. I cannot accept any criterion of morality that does not frankly accept human happiness as its objective and justification. To talk of patriotically bringing children into the world for the sake of the military State or the army and navy, or the glory of the empire, is, in my judgment and in the light of my

professional experience, to talk ar-rant nonsense and to make oneself ridiculous in the eyes of all intelligent and humane people."

* * *

Please comment on Aberhart's decision to continue ruling Alberta because he has a divine mandate.

According to a United Press story, Prime Minister William Aberhart, of Alberta, Canada, said: "I had no ambition at any time to be premier, but I believe God wants me to occupy my present position and I shall not be moved by any other consideration." That makes anyone opposed to Aberhart's premiership, or his pretty scheme to get votes by promising every inhabitant a monthly pension of \$25, an enemy of God and righteousness. Maybe Aberhart, who has spent most of his life as a Bible-thumping evangelist and Fundamentalist, has found the answer to democracy at last. Aberhart is to be the sole judge of God's mandate. What are we to expect when some other man of God decides that he, and not Aberhart, is to take on the big political job? Would that be treason or heresy?

* * *

I agree with you that minority groups will suffer terribly if Fascism were to be established in the U.S. But, since there are almost three times as many Negroes as Jews in this country, it seems to me the Negroes will be made to take the worst blows. Mark you, please don't get the impression I'm trying to get you to soften your blows. I make bold to say that even if the Negroes were the only ones to suffer from Fascism I'd still be against it as firmly as I am now. What I'm wondering is this: Do the Negroes realize their insecure position? Or, are they placidly closing their eyes to the menacing possibilities?

Intelligent members of the Negro race realize what Fascism will mean to our Negro brothers. The November 27, 1937, issue of *The Chicago Defender*, one of the most influential and widely read Negro newspapers in the country, contained a valuable editorial on this topic, from which I select the following stirring sentences:

"In every capitalist country Fascism is mobilizing its forces, backed and inspired by the monopolists of finance capital, who, where not already in power, are preparing with all energy, ruthlessness and dema-

gogy to seize control of government.

"In the United States this camp is headed by the dominant leadership of one of the major political parties, with its allies of the Liberty League, Hearst, Black Legion, Ku Klux Klan, Coughlin and others.

"Fascism, if established in America, and that is not a remote possibility, will with one sweep reduce us to our former position of servitude. It will cancel with one stroke all of our so-called constitutional rights; it will remove from us the political means by which we are now slowly liberating ourselves from the yoke of economic slavery; it will declare our rights to suffrage null and void, and reduce us to so low a state of poverty and destitution that death would be a welcome relief. Failing to starve us to death, it may persecute and force all of us out of the country, like the Jews in Germany.

"Let us decide now before it is too late under what banner we intend to fight the American Hitler when he reveals himself to the people.

"We should now join those liberal forces upon which depends our future salvation and which are committed to the defense of all oppressed minority groups. Prepare ye now, for the day of Fascism is near at hand."

* * *

Can you give me some of the highlights of the situation faced by Holland in the present state of international affairs?

The Dutch people are in a bad spot, no matter how you look at them, and they know just how difficult their problems are. This wonderful, energetic, highly civilized, steady, decent, thrifty, fair-minded, commercial, peaceful people see trouble ahead, and they're doing their best to prepare for eventualities. Though their country in Europe is small, they are rich in great colonies, which they manage with exemplary efficiency and fairness. The Dutch East Indies, which are great sources of oil, are directly in the path of Japan's expansionist program, with Germany egging on the Japanese so that Hitler might be able to share in the spoils, especially in the oil supplies so badly needed by the Japanese and German war machines. Down there, Holland is doing its best to fortify strategic places and add to its fleet, but if the Fascist powers decide to swallow Holland's

colonies there isn't much to be done in the way of resistance, for it's generally realized that little help may be expected from the British fleet, especially since the British seem so reluctant about defending their own menaced interests in the Mediterranean and the Far East.

In Europe, Holland's position is hardly any better, though it's recognized by its prospective enemy, Germany, that any attempt to strike at France or England through the Netherlands will be resisted by the united Dutch people. Their army is small, when compared to Hitler's, but it is strong, thoroughly mechanized, and well munitioned. Holland won't be able to stand off the Nazis indefinitely, but there's hardly any doubt about its ability to make the price of its defeat pretty steep. During the World War, the Germans were tempted several times to go through Holland as well as Belgium in their campaigns against France, but hesitated when it was realized that the Hollanders wanted to remain neutral but were willing to fight if invaded. Hitler today is able to whip Holland, of course, but he knows—or at least his General Staff knows—that it won't be just a parade.

Holland wants desperately to be protected as a neutral in the war she sees coming. But she doesn't blind herself to the situation's discouraging facts. The British are friendly to the Dutch, but they can't be relied on to rush to the rescue once the German war forces decide to take over and march through their splendid little country. If attacked, the Dutch will have to do most of their own fighting—at least during the first stages—so they are methodically going about the immense tasks of preparedness.

If Germany fights England, there's little doubt that Hitler will want to send his bombers over Holland, for therein is the straight line to London. It seems certain that Hitler would not only insist on violating Holland's air-lanes, but would demand the right to use its airports as bases for flights to England.

All shades of opinion in democratic Holland—from conservatives to Communists—are of one mind. They cooperate wholeheartedly with the gov-

ernment in its struggle to prepare to resist German aggression once a war begins and Hitler's men are ordered to violate Holland's neutrality. This complete unity gives the Hitlerites something to think about. They know the Dutch won't be bluffed or intimidated.

The Nazis have attempted to further their propaganda in Holland, but with no success. The Dutch are deaf to the ideology of the Nazis and refuse to give them moral or material assistance. All they ask of Germany is to be let alone. They don't want to move a finger to hurt Germany, if only Hitler will keep his hands off, which they realize is doubtful. But the Dutch will fight like demons, if provoked.

* * *

One of the du Ponts complains that his State (Delaware) is being treated unfairly because it pays out more in Federal taxes than it receives from the Government in relief and recovery. Please comment.

Pierre S. du Pont draws his inference from the fact that during the five years ending 1937 his small State of Delaware paid \$160,267,000 in Federal taxes and received in return "only" \$28,400,000 in Federal funds for relief, emergency purposes, public works, etc. The argument looks plausible at first sight, but the facts soon demonstrate that it's fallacious. First of all, the money paid by Delaware in Federal taxes wasn't all made in the State. Most of it came from the rest of the country, because of Delaware's policy of giving large corporations charters that provide privileges not obtainable elsewhere. The du Ponts, through their long control of the State, themselves were, in great measure, responsible for the legislation that enables corporations to rent desk-space somewhere in Delaware, call the State its "headquarters," and thereby receive in return almost limitless powers throughout the other 47 States. By enabling so many immense corporations to escape their just responsibilities in other States Delaware has, in no little degree, caused abuses to arise that resulted in economic distress in the country in general. It should be made to pay for this, and the best medium for such a reform is the Federal government; in fact, it's the only one.

Delaware has been treated generously by the Federal government, even though the State has been unfair to the taxing authorities elsewhere. The du Ponts should be the last persons to complain about a situation which their greed helped establish.

* * *

What's your opinion of the new Nazi policy which insists that Germans in the U.S., even though they become American citizens, must continue their loyalty to Germany?

Such hyphenated Americans will be untrue to their oaths to support the Constitution and American democratic institutions. It's impossible for a German to become a real American citizen and at the same time pledge allegiance to a dictator who is the sworn enemy of freedom, republicanism, democracy, free speech, civil rights, free press, and the other civilized blessings of a progressive nation.

Our citizens of German extraction must decide whether they are to be Americans or Nazis. They can't be both. Hyphenates are only 50-50 Americans. They can't deposit their bodies here and leave their minds, their consciences, their ethics, and their sense of decency in Germany for the Nazis to misuse for their vile ends. They can't be true Americans if they look on this country merely as a feeding-place, a station where money may be made, while they give moral and material support to a foreign government that's opposed to every standard of traditional Americanism.

The American melting-pot is a good receptacle for all hyphens. That's what the melting-pot is for.

America needs the lessons of true German culture—the liberal, humanistic culture which Hitler destroyed—but it can only suffer if citizens who are German subjects at heart use their blessed freedom to import the vicious ideas that are advanced by Fascists. America welcomes new citizens who sincerely hope for what Samuel Adams described as “freedom of thought and the right of private judgment in matters of conscience,” but it must act sternly with those who would destroy freedom's asylum.

We accepted with open arms men like Dr. Albert Einstein—one of Nazi Germany's most distinguished exiles—and his presence has been an in-

spiration to all true Americans, for he has continued his scientific research (to the benefit of all humanity) and used his tongue to voice the lofty ideals of American democratic freedom. In his New Year Greeting to the American people, in 1931, Dr. Einstein uttered these uplifting words:

“I feel that you are justified in looking into the future with true assurance, because you have a mode of living in which we find the joy of work harmoniously combined. Added to this is the spirit of ambition which pervades your very being, and seems to make the day's work like a happy child at play.”

There speaks a real American, though he has been in this country only a few years; the kind of American who will never make a move to destroy the political and social monuments which the founding fathers erected at the cost of so much blood and tears. Despotism can't tolerate a Dr. Einstein, but America is the richer for taking him into its arms. An Einstein can repeat every word of “The American Creed” with fervor and sincerity, because he accepts it wholeheartedly, which means he has become a real American citizen. All Germans who would stand with Einstein should do the same, if they want to be citizens of this country, instead of mere residents. The creed, of which I have just written, is by William Tyler Page, and was accepted by the House of Representatives, April 3, 1918, on behalf of the people of the U.S. It reads:

“I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign state; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies.”

A true American says with Walt Whitman: “O America because you build for mankind I build for you.” And let us close with the words of

Thomas Paine, who, in 1776, wrote, in *The Crisis*:

"We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free, and to make room upon the earth for honest men to live in."

* * *

I am enclosing a clipping from *The Literary Digest*, which warrants comment. It says religion is creeping back in Russia because the Militant Godless have dwindled to 2,000,000 from 5,000,000.

The League of the Militant Godless has done its work too well to suit the orthodox. This body, dedicated as it is to fighting religious superstitions, is purely negative—it exposes and opposes religion. As the positive enemy, religion, declines, the reasons for militant opposition wane. As a result, there is less need for the more obvious forms of anti-religious propaganda. Where *The Literary Digest* makes its mistake is in assuming that because the anti-religious body has seen its membership decline the followers of religious bodies must be increasing. There's no evidence to support such an inference. The Soviet Union's 170,000,000 people have full religious freedom, and yet only groups from the old men and women of the country still respond to the mumbo-jumbo of the orthodox priests. The whole country is saturated with anti-theistic ideas, and, judging by the way the government, the educational institutions, the social organizations and the political institutions of the country follow materialistic lines of thinking, religion will suffer even further retreats as the elderly people pass out of the picture. After all, the Soviet Union has had only 20 years since the revolution against Czarism and entrenched clericalism. It takes a long time to educate the people away from a religious ideology that has had unqualified and unopposed support for many centuries. The amazing thing about the position of Atheism in the Soviet Union is its tremendous power after only so short a period of education. The work of scientific progress goes steadily forward, and that means religion must move into the twilight zone. Religious notions can't thrive in the bright light of rationalistic thinking. At that, even if the Soviet Union were to continue for centuries its present

realistic policies there would, most likely, still be a small minority of mental cripples who would still insist they needed the "comforts" of religion, in the same way that a physical cripple needs his crutches. False ideas die hard. They're like weeds—hard to kill. But the religious obscurantists know full well that the Soviet Union's scientific education bespeaks a dark future for priestcraft. Where only a few years ago it ruled the minds of well over a hundred million Russians, today it gasps for the breath of life, unhonored, unsupported, and disbelieved by the growing generation. The time will come when atheistic propaganda will cease almost entirely in Russia—not because religion and its notions will have been justified and substantiated but because the urgent reasons for its program of religious controversy will have been lessened by the growing weakness of the medieval-minded clericals. Only a reactionary force like Fascism or a return to capitalistic Czarism could reestablish religion in Russia to the position it enjoyed only two short decades ago. And such a return to the Dark Ages is most unlikely, which means that the future of Materialism is bright while the future of supernaturalism is without promise. The Soviet Union has shown the world that the masses can think in terms of reality, without bowing to the forces of superstition and cultural backwardness. The masses are marching in the direction of science, and each step forward means two steps backward for the church.

* * *

Robert Montgomery, in a movie, pronounced the word "wastrel" in this way: wahs-trel, with the accent on the first syllable. It didn't sound right.

Mr. Montgomery, of course, was in error. The correct way is wayst-rel, with the first syllable accented. The *a* is sounded as in *ale*.

* * *

The Jesuit writer, Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen, in a speech in Boston, said: "The Spanish Communist party is issuing permits to its members by which each has the privilege of raping 20 women." Is this true?

I haven't seen the report, so I'm unable to say if my correspondent quoted the Jesuit journalist accurately. If he said it, he should be made to prove

his absurd, cruel charge. It stands to reason that if such permits were issued, the Fascist-Catholics would have had one reproduced long ago for use against the Communists. No such document has ever been printed because none exists.

* * *

Can you tell me how many cases of incest are described in the Bible?

Incest is described 19 times, of eight different kinds. Charles Francis Potter identifies them, as follows:

1. Lot with his elder daughter, Genesis 19:33.
2. Lot with his younger daughter, Genesis 19:35.
3. Abraham with his half-sister, Genesis 20:12.
4. Nahor with his niece, Genesis 11:27, 29.
5. Reuben with his father's concubine, Genesis 35:22; 49:4.
6. Amram with his aunt, Exodus 6:20.
7. Judah with his daughter-in-law, Genesis 38:16—18.
8. Amnon with his sister, Second Samuel 13:2, 14.
- 9—18. Absalom with his father's 10 concubines, Second Samuel 15:16; 16:21—22.
19. Herod with his sister-in-law, Mark 6:17—18.

See also Amos 2:7 and First Corinthians 5:1.

And how about Cain (Genesis 4:17) and Seth (Genesis 4:26)?

* * *

Are snakes slimy?

No. Another superstition.

* * *

Please comment on Upton Sinclair's statement that the reviewers on the staffs of the capitalistic papers are boycotting his novel, "The Flivver King."

I have seen a few belated reviews of this brilliant, realistic, powerful, moving story of the rise of Henry Ford and its effect on Abner Shutt and his family, who symbolize the hundreds of thousands of workers, past and present, who have tightened bolts and turned screws for the man who helped take the American people off their legs. Whether or not this is a conscious conspiracy of silence I'm unable to say. It may not be as simple as all that. Some reviewers may be afraid of the advertising department, but others may think it beneath their "dignity" to give space to a discussion of a novel which happens to be printed in pamphlet form. Having published about 3,000 pamphlets and

having distributed more than 200,000,000 copies of them, I may be in a position to pass on a few opinions on this subject. I soon learned that it was just about a waste of time to send review copies of pamphlets to the literary editors of a newspaper or magazine, for they seem victims of the notion that only books that are bulky and bound in hard covers are worthy of space. Now I don't even send out a review copy when one's requested, so disgusted am I with the snobbish reviewers. If they want a copy of one of my publications they have to send the money, like anyone else. I can be snooty too, when I try hard. Since I can't get their voluntary reviews I can, at least, console myself with their involuntary money. And, to be frank, I'd rather have their money than their opinions, because their money is good while their opinions are usually bunk. All of which may be a perfect case of sour grapes or wishful thinking, according to whether you get your psychology from Aesop or the Freudians. I say they can stick their reviews up their holy spouts, but Upton Sinclair is made of more sensitive nerve tissue, so he wastes time and energy (to say nothing of a lot of postage) trying to talk the reviewers into a reasonable mood. It happens that Irita Van Doren, editor of the book review section of the Sunday edition of *The New York Herald Tribune*, when asked about the reasons for neglecting my friend's fine story of proletarian life, responded toploftically—but I don't want to go into all that because Sinclair himself covered all of it—and a whole lot more—in one of the most scorching and devastating letters ever to come across my desk. On December 10, 1937, Upton Sinclair wrote Mrs. Van Doren, according to a copy he sent me, as follows:

My Dear Irita Van Doren:

Francis Henson of the United Automobile Workers has sent me a copy of your letter to him, explaining that you have been unable to review "The Flivver King" and other novels of mine "because so many of them are printed in pamphlet form, and are hardly books in any sense of the word." Mr. Henson asks me to answer this letter, and I trust that you will not take offense if I comply with his request.

It seems to me that "The Flivver King" is a "book" in the only sense of the word which has any real meaning or dignity. It is a novel of 72,000 words, which is ample to be made into a book in the conventional trade sense, and sold for \$2.00 or \$2.50. But it seems to me a great injustice to literature to accept the commercial definition of a "book"; that is to say, something which is printed in large and expensive form so as to allow a margin of profit to a whole series of persons who handle it. We are so bound by the restrictions of our commercial system that we come automatically to accept them, and we do not even stop to think what we are doing to literature when we say that a competent and conscientious piece of writing is not a "book" unless it is bound in cloth covers, and priced sufficiently high to allow a 30 or 40 percent discount to book stores, and 15 or 20 percent royalty to the author, and a sufficient margin of profit to the publisher so that he can maintain an expensive office in New York City, and pay large sums for advertising in newspapers.

This system of restricting books by commercial definition results in the fact that America is the worst book-buying nation among the great nations of the world. I forget the exact figures, but we spend 10 or 20 times as much on cosmetics as we do on books. In the Soviet Union, to take only one illustration, my recent novel, "No Pasaran," sold several hundred thousand copies in many editions. On the other hand, the last conventional book which I published in the United States, a novel called "Co-op," which contained nearly 200,000 words and represented a year's work, was published at \$2.50 and sold only about 5,000 copies.

In other words, if you write a "book" in the commercial sense of the word, you exclude the working class from your readers. As it happens, I want the working class to read my books, and so I have devised a cheap form of publication. As a result of this low price, the United Automobile Workers were able to purchase 200,000 copies of the book for distribution to their members. It seems to me that that is an event in American history, and also in American literature. It seems to me a grievous wrong that for adopting a low-priced form for my book I should be penalized by a complete boycott of the daily news-

papers of the United States. One is irresistibly driven to suspect class bias as the cause of such a boycott, and it seems to me that high minded editors would hesitate to give their readers such cause for distrust.

I assert that "The Flivver King" is a "book" in every sense of the word that has any meaning to one who loves books for their contents and not for their clothes. I will go farther and assert that "The Flivver King" is as important as any book you have reviewed in the past year. It deals with the most vital problems of our time—the struggle of labor to receive its proper share of the benefits of the machine process. It tells the American people a mass of facts which have been deliberately withheld from them. The truth of these facts has been certified to in a letter from Prof. Paul H. Douglas, of the Department of Economics, University of Chicago, as follows:

"You will also be interested to know that they (the 'Saturday Review of Literature') questioned some of the statements of fact of my review which I based on your book. I checked up each and every one of these questions with a wide variety of outside sources and they confirmed the accuracy of your statements, and this seemed to satisfy the 'Review.'"

The skill of the telling has been certified to by Senator Borah, in a letter which I quote:

"I read 'The Flivver King,' and you have told a splendid story. I am not sure just how much belongs to your healthy imagination and how much belongs to reality, but I am sure it is a magnificently told story."

I appeal to your conscience as the editor of one of America's leading organs of literary opinion. I ask you to put "The Flivver King" into the hands of an open-minded economist of the calibre of Paul H. Douglas, and be guided by his opinion as to whether it is a book, and whether it is worth a front page position.

Or, if you cannot do that, I will suggest as an alternative, that you publish this letter and invite your readers to write and tell you whether they want their literature reviewed on the basis of intellectual and moral content, or on the basis of expensiveness of paper and binding.

* * *

Please comment on the way the capital-

istic newspapers keep saying year after year that everything that's done in the industries of the U.S.S.R. is wrong, incompetent and wasteful.

I never thought such generalizations worthy of serious attention. Once, I recall, a large newspaper printed an editorial along this line, in which the readers were told how everything that's made in Russia is worthless. On the front page of that issue was a news report which informed the public that Russian tanks and airplanes in Spain were the best in the world.

* * *

Can you tell me if Senator Capper is free of racial prejudices?

One couldn't ask for a better friend of oppressed racial minorities than Senator Arthur Capper, of Kansas. Not only does he invariably vote right on questions involving racial discrimination, but the man acts right and speaks right as well. He is an opponent of anti-Semitism and serves the Negroes in a useful manner as one of the officers of The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. On November 28, 1937, Senator Capper spoke before the American Jewish Congress, in Washington, D.C., saying, among other things:

"The persecution of the Jews is symptomatic of the hatreds with which the world is festering. It would be blindness not to see that the attack upon the Jews everywhere is the beginning of the attack upon democratic liberties; that if today discrimination against the Jewish or any other group is allowed, tomorrow that discrimination may be extended to all other groups. What has happened in Germany is a tragic example of how whole peoples may become enslaved."

* * *

Please write a piece about the "ghetto benches" inaugurated in Polish universities.

Catholic-Fascism—under the menacing leadership of the hierarchy—has been following a relentless anti-Semitic program in Poland, the latest outrage being a regulation compelling Jewish students to sit by themselves on special benches. It's just one more move in the merciless campaign to degrade, humiliate and stigmatize a helpless, innocent, unoffending minority group.

I was favorably impressed by the protest cabled by 200 American edu-

cators, who signed an open letter containing, among other things:

"Such discrimination seems to us alien to the spirit of academic freedom and of the free cooperation in the pursuit of knowledge that is so essential to the world of scholarship. . . . In the pursuit of the truth there is no room for religious or racial segregation.

"We look with admiration in the glorious record of Polish participation in the great republic of letters; on the contributions of Kopernik, Konarski, Lelewel, Cieszkowski and Michiekiez, as well as of more recent Polish scholars. We are heartened also by the fact that a number of very distinguished members of the faculties of your institutions of higher learning, continuing in the spirit of an honorable tradition, have raised their voices against this discrimination. We appeal to you, our colleagues in Poland, to oppose this plan of segregation and to seek peace through means that are in consonance with the great tradition of Polish and world scholarship."

The above commendable statement was drawn up by Dr. Alvin Johnson, director of the New School for Social Research, for scholars associated with the International League for Academic Freedom. Signers included such scholars as Professor John Dewey, Columbia University; Dr. Albert Einstein, of the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton; Wesley C. Mitchell, of Columbia; Horace M. Kallen, secretary of the League.

* * *

Is there any evidence to support the claim sometimes made that early man in America could have developed independently?

The evidence all points to an Asiatic origin of America's earliest man. In a book written by Joseph McCabe, "Earliest Man in America," it is shown, as I've reported several times, the American Indian and Eskimo are descendants of Asiatics, who crossed over by way of Siberia and Alaska. McCabe writes:

"There are no traces of prehistoric man in South America that are today seriously entertained, while the assertion that man was evolved in any part of America has been disproved by the fact that no traces of anthropoid apes or of any simian creatures from which man might conceivably have descended has ever been discovered on the American

continent during a century of search."

In the first chapter of this book McCabe has a lively moment with the guesses of the "few men who found time or inclination for speculative thought in America before the days of Franklin" and who were "sorely puzzled about the origin of the aboriginals." Making the presence of Indians here (before the arrival of the white man) fit into the Bible story about the children of Adam, caused many a headache. One explanation rested on some twisted words from the Bible which could be made to mean there had been a pre-Adamite race. But this argument couldn't hold when it was confronted by the Flood. The pre-Adamites "must have disappeared in it." The theory met new difficulties when it was learned that the west coast opened on a vast ocean. Others tried to solve the problem by bringing in "the myth of the lost 10 tribes of Israel." Others, of more profane minds, "turned to Plato's philosophic joke about a Lost Atlantis or to the navigating exploits of the ancient Phoenicians."

* * *

A German, recently returned from a 3½ months' visit to the old country, tells me there is a good deal of sentiment in that country today, even among former radicals, to the following effect: that, while conditions under Hitler are not what one might hope, still, conditions in 1933 were so depressed and hopeless that had they continued things would now be much worse than they are; unemployment has been abolished; youth has been given new hope, etc. Please comment.

The "argument" advanced by the returned visitor are the usual propaganda circulated by Dr. Goebbels, who is one of the world's cleverest manipulators of mass psychology. To say that conditions might be worse today, if the Republic had continued, is to offer only an assumption. The fact that other democracies are better off today than they were in 1933—including England, France, Canada, Mexico, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, the Scandinavian countries, and the U.S.—should serve to compel one to the conclusion that Germany, had she remained in the family of democratic countries, would also be on securer economic ground today. All these countries have shown marked in-

creases in employment, and other important advances. Germany, on the other hand, is much worse off than she was in 1933, despite Hitler's hired propagandists. Germany then had friends and credit. Germany, under the Republic, had no enemies. The financial structure of the country wasn't any worse than that which prevailed in other depression-ridden lands.

Today, Germany hasn't a friend in the world. Its few allies mass murderers like Mussolini and the Japanese imperialists—aren't reliable, and, what's more, they themselves are in too bad shape to do anything of a substantial nature about their "friend's" calamitous economic and financial situation. The German treasury is so out of whack that it is necessary to keep all data secret lest the country be thrown into a panic. The floating debt, mostly caused by rearmament, would spell collapse, were the facts to become known to the people.

As for unemployment, let's not forget that the Soviet Union has solved this problem in its entirety, and, furthermore, democratic countries have, without exception, made substantial and REAL progress. I say REAL, because the facts show that Germany's "solution" isn't a real one, but a gross fake. Instead of putting the unemployed to work in productive enterprises, Hitler forced millions of the best manhood of the land to go into the army and related activities. The armament race put additional millions to "work," but how long can a country exist on such artificial activities? Besides, every possible job held by Jews was taken away and given to "Aryans," and, to add insult to injury, the displaced Jews weren't counted among the unemployed.

As for German youth's "hopefulness," what have they to look forward to except to die for Hitler's insane Fascism? I'm proud of the fact that millions of young men in democratic countries aren't moved by such "ambitions."

The sentiments now expressed in Germany are forced ideas, which must be accepted without question. Anyone who dared protest at any of the "great advances" made by Hitler's

Germany would be sent to a concentration camp or beheaded. The masses know that under the Republic they had plenty of butter. Today, they are denied butter and fed the empty propaganda that it's better to have cannon than butter. I'm sure the masses really feel that it would be more advantageous to have fewer cannon and bombers and more butter and other fats.

Hitler has done only one thing "well"—and that is the remilitarization of the Third Reich. But that's the kind of "good" job that will eventually ruin Germany. Not only that, but other countries will be dragged down into the mud, to drown in their own blood. There isn't a ray of hope for the common people, so long as Hitlerism is in the saddle.

Lowell, Mass., is all agog over a miracle that is supposed to have happened to a girl. I enclose one of the press reports. Please comment.

I don't usually care to waste my time or space on these "miracle" yarns. I think I have a right to assume my readers are intelligent enough to know that all these fairy tales about miracles are merely the outpourings of minds saturated with the poison of supernaturalism. However, since this miracle is getting a lot of publicity in the New England press, let me go into the facts briefly.

Lorraine Frechette, 122 Dracut Street, Lowell Mass., is a 16-year-old girl, a devout Catholic, and afflicted with chronic arthritis. She claims she prayed for health in the Ste. Therese's Church, and immediately afterwards walked out of the cathedral a well and sound girl.

But her physician, Dr. Leon D. Sullivan, says otherwise. Here are a few sentences from his statement, issued on November 26, 1937, and quoted in *The Boston Evening American*:

"That was not the first time she walked. A week ago last Saturday, Lorraine walked through the house with my assistance. It was only a question of time until she got sufficient confidence to walk by herself. She is far from cured and it will require at least another year before she is recovered. . . .

"Her hands are still stiff and she can turn her head only in one direction. She is unable to get up

from a sitting position or to seat herself because the spine is still stiff."

* * *

I have been following your controversy with Upton Sinclair over the so-called ESP tests of Dr. Rhine. Like yourself, I am a Materialist. Looking at this problem from its philosophical side, would you say that proofs for telepathy, if once established, would give Materialism a smashing blow?

If it could be shown that the human mechanism were able to receive impressions without the aid of its physical senses, then the philosophy of Materialism, for the first time, would be put to a real test, but sufficient mass of evidence to prove that have shown ESP (Extra-Sensory Perception) to be childish and frivolous. I believe I have compiled a sufficient mass of evidence to prove that the gallivantings at Duke University are silly, and it's only a question of time before Dr. Rhine's superficial and sophomoric meanderings pass into oblivion.

But let's put the question as though telepathy were established beyond debate. What then? Would Materialism survive? Joseph McCabe, in his new book, "Our Wonderful Glands," puts this interesting question to himself and discusses it, this way:

"The answer is easy. Scientific men of a mystic turn (Myers, Lodge, etc.) claimed that they proved the truth of telepathy half a century ago, and it is 20 years since I grew tired of refuting such claims. The statement that the professors had made a discovery is, therefore, preposterous. Secondly, if telepathy were proved tomorrow to be a genuine process, it would be as irrelevant to Materialism as is the discovery of the planet Pluto. The idea is that the vibrating molecules of the active brain send out a pattern of waves like those from a radio broadcasting station. Even the Spiritualist scientist, Sir W. Crookes, said that."

As a Materialist, I have never been afraid of true telepathy—the ability to transfer thoughts from one brain to another without the aid of words or symbols—for such a process, if it were established, wouldn't be the least bit less mechanical than the transference of thought through our regular and common facilities. The spiritualistic interpretation of life could

get no comfort there. And that's one reason why I have never said that telepathy is an impossibility. It might become a reality at some future time, but thus far we haven't been given the opportunity to accept telepathy on the basis of verifiable data.

* * *

Your data on Jack London's popularity in the Soviet Union moves me to ask the position of Upton Sinclair in the same country.

Upton Sinclair's novels are deservedly popular in the Soviet Union, with much greater reader acceptance than that accorded Jack London. On November 29, 1937, Upton Sinclair sent me the following:

"The Moscow News, of November 7, 1937, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Soviet Union, gives interesting figures regarding the sales of books during that period. Gorky's works have appeared in 32,000,000 copies; Pushkin in 19,000,000; Tolstoy, 14,000,000; Chekhov, 11,000,000. The report also gives the sales of 'foreign classics' as follows: Upton Sinclair, 2,700,000 copies; Guy De Maupassant, more than 2,000,000; Victor Hugo, 1,800,000; Zola, 1,700,000; Anatole France, 1,300,000; Balzac, 1,300,000; Dickens, 1,100,000. From the above it would appear that Upton Sinclair constitutes 19.3 percent of 'world classics' in the opinion of present-day Russian readers."

There's no question that Upton Sinclair—the Daniel Boone of Spookology—is the most popular foreign author in Russia. However, it seems only fair to add that his position would be undermined gravely if the Russian book publishing department translated and published his non-fiction books, most of which would be laughed at in a country like Russia, where so many readers are educated to demand only the most hard-boiled, realistic, materialistic, scientific viewpoints. The spookery that Sinclair pours into such amazingly inept books as "What God Means to Me," if issued in the Soviet Union, would lessen his audience right down the line. Fortunately for Sinclair, the Russian editors eliminate his writings that stand among the worst examples of religious superstition and mysticism. In fact, most Russians actually believe Sinclair, even outside his novels, is devoid of supernaturalism and spirit-

ism. Sinclair can cater to trashy-minded religionists and spook-hunters in this country, and get away with it, but he couldn't get to first base in Russia, where the public is trained to hoot down such cultural piffle. If he told Russians what he tells Americans—for example, that a spiritualistic bunketeer actually ordered a desk to float through his window—he would be put alongside Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, so far as intellectuality is concerned. I don't believe in censorship, but this is one case in which it did a fine novelist a lot of good.

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To what extent has our annual birth rate declined?

From 1870-80 our birth rate was 37 per 1,000; in 1935, 16.8 per 1,000.

* * *

Why do bed sheets sold in department stores have a three inch hem on one end and a one-inch hem on the other?

Department store managers say this is done to enable one to tell which is the top and which is the bottom of a sheet, but it seems to me that it isn't at all important to know which end of a sheet is the top and which is the bottom. Sheets get most of their wear at the ends, so consumers should insist that both ends should have three-inch hems. The bigger the hems the more resistance to wear.

* * *

Who gets the consumer's food dollar?

The lion's share of each dollar spent for food goes to processors and distributors, not to the farmer. This is shown beyond debate by figures released by the U.S. Bureau of Agriculture Economics. During 1937, food processors and distributors took for themselves about 56 cents out of every dollar the consumers spent for food, leaving only 44 cents for the farmers. The farmer's share, in 1936, was 44 cents; in 1935, 42 cents; in 1929, 47 cents. The bureau adds:

"Although the farm value of the 58 foods consumed annually by the workingman's family was \$163 in 1937, the retail value, or what the worker had to pay, was \$337. The difference, \$194, went to the processors."

This is a tremendous argument for consumers' cooperatives. We have made a start in protecting the economic interests of our consumers, but the surface hasn't even been scratch-

ed. The capitalistic press, subsidized by the great advertisers, won't tell the consumers the facts about prices, cooperatives, quality, etc. The consumer must meet the issue by building up an independent press.

* * *

What was our population at the last census? What is it now by official estimate?

In 1930, when our last census was taken, the U.S. had a population of 122,775,046. On July 1, 1937, according to an official estimate of the Census Bureau, we had 129,257,000, an increase of 828,000 or six-tenths of 1 percent, over the estimate for the previous year.

* * *

Do you believe there's no military significance to the Berlin-Rome-Tokio anti-Communist pact?

The united Fascists would have the world believe that the accord applies only to the Comintern (which is only a building in Moscow) but informed people aren't fooled by such protestations. A few generations ago the aggressors screened their violent intentions as a pro-Christian project. Today, it's considered more effective to claim that each imperialistic advance among the Fascists is intended only to "save the world from Communism," a piece of bunk the Fascists themselves cynically smile at. According to their definition, Chiang Kai-shek (who fought the Communists for years) is a Communist. Czechoslovakia, which is a democratic country, is supposed to be a jumping-off place for Communists. France, England, the Scandinavian countries, and even the U.S., according to the Fascist definition of Communism, are Red cesspools. The pact must have military agreements (keep secret, of course) if it's to mean anything. On this point it is germane to consider the confidential comment sent to its businessmen subscribers by the Whaley-Eaton Service, as follows:

"Most chancelleries understand that the Italo-German-Japan pact is more than a mere 'understanding' and probably contains explicit provisions for common military support."

* * *

Exactly 16 days after the last Freeman reached its readers, the postoffice department took drastic action against the lottery run by Father James R.

Cox. The Freeman, which was the only paper in the country that dared even mention Father Cox's misuse of the mails, scored a victory, for an Associated Press dispatch from Pittsburgh says the government took action after the department had received numerous complaints about Father Cox's \$25,000 lottery. As The Freeman was the only paper to mention the scandalous activities of Father Cox it stands to reason the complaints must have emanated from Freeman readers. According to the AP dispatch, Father Cox was arrested on December 16, 1937, charged with operating a lottery and mail fraud. The priest, amazed that the government would dare take action against an activity of the Catholic Church, was defiant, saying: "The federal government will have to call out the troops to stop me from carrying out my pledge to award \$25,000 to winners." I'm sure the U.S. district attorney will be able to handle Father Cox's lottery scheme without having to call out the army and navy. Freeman readers deserve credit for the worthwhile measure the government has taken to protect the public from a fraudulent scheme that was put over in the "sacred" name of religion. This is only one more illustration of the power of Freeman readers when they take a mind to write letters on issues that are important. Those readers who protested to President Cardenas about Norman Baker's use of a Mexican radio station to promote his fake cancer cure, will be pleased to learn that I have received word direct from Mexico City to the effect that high government officials are impressed by the protests of Freeman readers. At present, as stated elsewhere in this paper, the immediate task of public-spirited Freeman readers is to write to Governor Carl E. Bailey, Little Rock, Ark., expressing their opinion of Norman Baker's newly opened cancer "hospital" in that State after he had been compelled to serve a jail sentence and pay a fine for practicing medicine without a license in Iowa. A few hundred letters from Freeman readers will have a good effect. We know from actual experience that great things can be done in the service of truth and justice when Freeman readers act together for the common good.

* * *

Is there any truth to the claim that smoking, especially by women, will result in stunted growth?

Russell Sage College reports that its women's freshman class of 25 years ago showed an average height of 5 feet 3 inches. In 1938, the aver-

age is 5 feet 5½ inches. Most of these women smoke. The facts show there's something screwy about the argument that smoking stunts one's growth.

* * *

Please comment on the furore caused by Mae West's radio skit about Adam and Eve.

I didn't hear the broadcast, but from press reports I take it that the curvacious trouper, portraying Eve, seemed anxious to get Adam started at the delightful exercise of nibbling on the famous apple. The protests which the Fundamentalists—especially the Catholics—made were because they actually believe in the Garden of Eden myth, believe that Adam was the first man, that Eve was made from one of his ribs, and all the rest of the fairy tale. Since Genesis says Adam and Eve got into a jam because they ate of the tree of knowledge (which we usually take to mean they had carnal "knowledge" of each other) I can't see what's wrong about Mae West's sketch. It couldn't be any hotter than the original Bible story, because it plainly gives us to understand that if the pair had followed the road of chastity all would have been well, though I can't for the life of me figure out how they could possibly carry out the Lord's edict to beget and beget without resorting to the old and tried biological ritual. If Mae West was indecent (and here I can't speak authoritatively because I didn't let the pearly notes from her throat fall on my sensitive ears) she should be able to plead artistic license because she was dealing with a story from a sacred book that is crammed with all kinds of incest, fornication, cruelty, murder, rape and mayhem. Let the Fundamentalists "clean up" their Bible before pouncing on poor Mae West, who, after all, is only one more daughter of Eve.

* * *

How many men can a cobra kill at one time?

The king cobra of India carries enough poison to kill 15 men at one time. It takes about an hour for the venom to have its full effect.

* * *

Did Jehovah give Eve a second name?

The evidence gives the first lady of the world the name of Adam, the family name being handed down by God himself, according to Genesis

5:1-2: "... In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." Therefore, to be strictly accurate, we should give her the full name of Eve Adam, but I'm afraid this won't be accepted even by our Fundamentalists, because it sounds a little screwy.

* * *

If 100 persons are bitten by poisonous snakes, how many of them will die if untreated, and how many if treated?

About 15 percent will die if untreated; about 3 percent if treated quickly and competently.

* * *

Is there such a thing as a "glass snake"?

"Glass snakes" are supposed to be able to break into parts and then come together again to become whole once more. That's all bunk. There's no such snake in the world. The nearest that comes to it is a legless lizard, which is able to break into two, but once it's disassembled it can't come together again.

* * *

Is the Western whip snake capable of covering ground at a great rate of speed?

No. All snakes are rather slow. The best the Western whip snake can do is three miles per hour. The usual speed is at the rate of about a quarter of a mile per hour.

* * *

Which State registers the greatest range of temperatures?

Wyoming. It has known a high of 116 degrees above zero and 66 degrees below zero, a range of 182 degrees. North Dakota comes next, with a high of 124 degrees above zero and a low of 56 degrees below zero, a range of 180 degrees.

* * *

I thought flag-pole sitting was dead for good, but a local businessman has revived the practice in order to attract "favorable" publicity. Don't you agree this is the acme of foolishness?

It's a form of ability that I wouldn't dream of emulating or envying. In fact, I'd say any man who would try to gain "distinction" by such means must be a grade A moron. I'm reminded of the following, from Plutarch:

"A traveller at Sparta, standing long upon one leg, said to a Lacedaemonian, 'I do not believe you can

do as much.' 'True,' said he, 'but every goose can.'"

* * *

Do men and women have the same color preferences?

Frank W. McClure, Chicago advertising executive, says that while women prefer blue ribbons for their little girls, for themselves they like red better. Men take blue as their favorite color. "Tests made at world's fairs and by several universities reveal that men are more easily attracted by blue displays and women by red," he said.

* * *

Are men better drivers than women?

According to an AP dispatch from Washington, D.C., a year was spent by experts, employed by the American Automobile Association, making tests to find out which were safer drivers, men or women. The tests, which were held in every State, showed certain superiorities among men drivers, and others among women. The results:

For the men:

Men generally have better vision.
Men are not so easily blinded by the glare of other headlights as women.

Men hear better.
They concentrate better at the wheel.

They park better.

For the women:

Women see better from the corner of the eye.

Women distinguish the color of traffic lights quicker than men.

And—women drive slower.

* * *

How many persons have been imprisoned by the Nazis? What is the total number of years to which they have been sentenced?

According to Hitler's official figures, 229,000 Germans have been condemned to a total of 600,000 years "for not obeying Nazi commands." I must point out that these 229,000 victims of Nazi terrorism weren't criminals. They were merely political offenders who, by word or act, showed they believed in democracy, republicanism, liberalism, unionism, free speech, free press, and the like.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

Concerning your correspondent who suggests that the democratic countries all go to war to wipe out Fascism: I may say that the same thing has been proposed to me several times. In addition to the good arguments which you

have used against such a move, it might be said that no finer plan than making war on them could be thought of to stir their entire populations to a unity and a fanatical zeal for self-immolation which would make them very formidable opponents indeed. And there is no way of knowing how much additional aid they might drum up under such a spur in regions like Central and South America, and the Baltic and Balkan lands.

As things are now, the people of the Fascist nations—at any rate from the fearful viewpoint of their jittering and hare-brained leaders—are all too ready to falter in their up-to-now, blind tendency to follow. By holding aloof and permitting the folly to burn itself out in relatively localized areas such as Spain and northeastern China, we may look for an increasing tendency in these Fascist peoples to awaken and throw off their misleaders. That, I should say, will involve enough misery for them without piling upon them the added horrors of foreign intervention.

But, of course, the business of holding aloof governments which may be influenced, if not controlled, by interests which are seeking profits, is not without its perils either. The people as a whole within these countries cannot be too well informed about what is going on, nor too vigilant, nor too well organized to see that their will is done. Things that have happened in France recently show how real the danger can be and I sometimes wonder—in view of the pro-Fascist influences which are more or less in evidence in our midst—just what sort of a devil's-cauldron we are sitting over ourselves. France, at any rate, and not Brazil, has shown, and continues to show, some of the ways of dealing with the menace.

Maplewood, Mo.

C. A. LANG

(Editor's note: Reader Lang's support of non-military opposition to Fascism is one of numerous proofs I've seen of late which would indicate that believers in democracy are realizing the danger of fighting Fascism with force. It can, as my article showed, result in Fascism at home. Mob psychology, under war conditions, can be directed by a cunning demagog to accept dictatorship. A totalitarian State easily can be erected under war conditions. However, this doesn't mean the democracies are to stand idly by and do nothing when they are made the objects of aggression by Fascist adventurers. Democracy must always be ready to defend itself against Fascism, or Nazism, or Japanese imperialism, or whatever name we prefer to give the world's illiberal, dictatorial, authoritarian elements. We have serious duties to perform. First, we can educate

the world that's still free to think. By that I mean we can use the powers of the printed and spoken word to show the masses why they must avoid Fascism, and how they can keep themselves free of the danger. As I've said perhaps a hundred times in recent years, the first duty of anti-Fascists is to cooperate in the immensely important job of building a free, independent, progressive, liberal, anti-Fascist press. That is freedom's greatest and most effective weapon. Every anti-Fascist must be ready at all times to make real sacrifices in the war on anti-democratic ideologies. Next, we can all work together to boycott Fascist nations. Personally, I refuse to buy even a 5c article if I know it was made in Japan, Germany or Italy. Men and women everywhere can help fight Japanese imperialism by refusing to buy silk stockings or socks, because something like 85 percent of all silk that goes into hose comes from Japan. It's Japan's most important article of export. A popular boycott on Japanese goods should include other forms of silk goods, electric light bulbs, and every other article that bears the words: "Made in Japan." A boycott against every Fascist country—that is a legitimate weapon in the hands of every anti-Fascist. Finally, our democratic governments can cooperate—without resorting to military measures or even threats of force—to protect democracy and "quarantine" Fascist aggressors, as Roosevelt said in his Chicago speech. Trade agreements and credit policies can be made to work strongly in the defense of democracy. The recent trade pact between the U.S. and Great Britain is an excellent example of what I have in mind. Let the democratic, peace-minded nations work together commercially, buying and selling among themselves as much as possible. Also, let them see to it that no gold from any democratic country goes into the till of a dictator. Let's pay them when we owe them anything, but let's always avoid renting them any of our money, even when they resort to threats. One of the big aims of Fascist blackmail is to frighten democratic countries into lending money to their tottering economic organizations. We must buy nothing, and, above all, never lend a dollar to a Fascist regime. Such policies can be made to work effectively against the dictators. Of course, they are unspectacular, but that doesn't reduce their usefulness. Keep them functioning long enough and the day will come when the Fascist bluffs will explode.)

* * *

"By way of further comment on your

able refutation of the statement that "Jews won't work, but prefer instead to live by trading and peddling," I might ask, since when is trading and peddling not work? It seems to me that that is just about the hardest work—everything considered—which anyone can undertake. Which is undoubtedly the reason why the Jew was forced into that mode of living along with money-lending, another precarious pursuit, especially when security in it was without legal sanction, as it was—when Christian usurpers were gobbling up every other worth-while thing in sight."
—C. A. L., Mo.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

I'm glad you told Sinclair Lewis a thing or two about his charge of sensationalism. I've discovered before now that Lewis can be quite superficial on occasions. In this instance the superficiality probably arises from the same thing that has been brought to my attention before by other would-be critics: your catalogue of Little Blue Books usually begins with a page or two of titles about sex. Well, what do these superior sophisticates do but elevate their noses and assume that it is all nothing but trashy pornography. Even the price has its influence with them; if printed on expensive paper in leather bindings at \$5 instead of 5c a volume all of it would at once acquire lots of face. What they overlook, however, is the fact that, next to a well-fed belly, sex IS just about the most important thing in the lives of the people whom you are trying to reach with all kinds of other liberating ideas as well. Even if all of your books dealt with sex alone it would still be quite a proper subject to put before the public so long as it were handled in a scientific and informative manner. If, however, you have the wit to use it as a lead to whet interest in a host of other matters, far from censuring you for that, you are to be commended. Even from Lewis' own interested point of view it might be asked, who BUT relatively liberated persons could appreciate the satire which he has woven into all of his books?

READER

* * *

"Concerning Upton Sinclair, it may be that he is getting old. And yet, on looking it up, I find that he is only 59. And, in all other matters, he seems to have had a life-long habit of approaching new developments critically; why should he be so gullible in this charlatan mysticism? After the way he labored to maintain his position before you—with just a hint of ruefulness be-

tween his lines—I actually pitied him when reading your own lusty, though certainly well-merited, rebuke.”—Rationalist.

* * *

Can you give me Alfred Russel Wallace's criticism of the church?

The great biologist, who was a Socialist and Rationalist, and whose discoveries in Evolution paralleled and even antedated some of Darwin's, said:

“What is the matter with the church? This: It strains at the gnats of individual peccadilloes and swallows the camels of social diabolisms.”

* * *

A Fundamentalist of my acquaintance defends the institution of the Church on the ground that it is the world's repository of idealism. Please comment.

The Church—it teaches love, and practices hate; it preaches peace, and blesses war; it holds out the promise of eternal happiness in heaven, and sustains the system that spawns poverty on earth; it flays the sinner for erring, but praises the Lord who created the sinner; it extols faith, but derides man's attempts to use Reason in order to establish a workable faith in the powers of the people to reconstruct the living world; it beckons all to turn their eyes toward heaven, while the miseries of this workaday world are glossed over; it teaches brotherhood, but encourages racial hatred and persecution; it scoofs at materialism, but carelessly invests its vast endowments in gilt-edge securities.

* * *

“To a few of us reverent ones the disclosure of The Freeman editor's given name might have been invested with additional chuckles had you explained its meaning something like this: IM (Em-) with, plus ANU us, plus EL god; hence, god with us. Verily, verily, when dishing out cognomens, parents seldom realize the inadvertent ironies they may be committing.”—Subscriber.

* * *

What do you think of shop-talk?

Shop-talk is supposed to be a low form of conversation, but I've had many occasions to learn that shop-talk, by one who knows his business, can be interesting and informative. Many times, certain that I was in the presence of a bore, I've turned the conversation to his trade or profession, and soon had him talking sensi-

bly, and to my benefit. But shop-talk is worthless when a good shop foreman gives his opinions on how to run a hotel properly or how to edit a questions and answers magazine. When up against such a case the wise thing to do is to switch him to his foremanship.

* * *

“Have you heard the ravings of the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith on the radio lately? To think that such stuff can get on the chain while the tempered, well-reasoned discourse on venereal disease by Gen. Hugh Johnson was adjudged unsuitable for presentation in the ‘family group’! Great is the family! So great that the N.B.C. would doom it to involuntary suicide by syphilis rather than make it uncomfortable by permitting a dispassionate discussion on how to avoid that fate.”—Reader.

* * *

Don't you agree that the public's immense interest in vitamins has encouraged many quacks?

While it's a demonstrable fact that vitamins are important, it's undeniably true that many quacks have developed worthless preparations that are intended to exploit this interest. As Dr. Morris Fishbein so well puts this matter:

“Vitamins are vaunted for their use in colds, rheumatism, blood diseases, acidosis, and even baldness, without the slightest evidence that any shot-gun preparation of vitamins can accomplish anything very definite in any of these conditions.”

* * *

Recently, while attending a movie, I heard one of the college characters use the word “cadet” and pronounce it “kay-det” with the accent on the first syllable. Is this right?

Webster's New International Dictionary gives the pronunciation as “ka-det,” the “a” sounded as in “ask” and the accent on the second syllable. This is just another illustration of how our college high-brows mispronounce words that the common people get right all along.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

Notwithstanding your doubts and denials, I happen to know of a man who actually lost his position on account of your monthly paper. You suffer from an illusion in believing that this is a free country “without the terrors of Germany and Italy.” A man who reads liberal or radical papers in this country is not put in a concentration camp,

but he is put in the bread-line. You treat the matter very lightly in maintaining that a man's employer does not care whether he reads *The American Freeman* or *The Police Gazette*. The Catholic and conservative employers do watch over the reading matter of their employes. Nor is a man his own master in his own home, as far as his reading matter is concerned. You may sneer at the "psychology of slavery" and brag about our constitutional rights, but these vain words cannot contradict the facts known to most of us. The man whom I have in mind was professor in a Catholic college, which was run by a religious order. Your monthly paper was sent to him as a premium in connection with his purchase of several batches of your books, he bought mostly for his classes. He lived at the institution together with the monks and students, and the post-office was run by the brothers of the order. The post-office employes may be compelled by law to keep all information confidential, but they hold a greater allegiance to their order, for which they act as spies. Besides, the man used to show certain passages in your paper, passages which had nothing to do with anti-Catholicism, to his Catholic colleagues, and their allegiance to the Church was greater than their loyalty to their friend. The upshot of the whole matter was that, although this man guarded himself from ever uttering any criticism of Catholic principles or practices, he was dropped from the faculty for anti-Catholic views or for lack of sympathy with the institution which employed him. Of course, the authorities will not admit these facts to outsiders, but they told him frankly the reason why his services were no longer needed. He has now been without a position for two years, and he has only your paper to blame for it.

ACADEMICUS

(Editor's note: The case described above doesn't quite jibe with the one treated in my article. I wrote about mail coming to one's own home, or to one's private postoffice box, not to a box used by all the monks and students connected with a Catholic educational institution. Had this reader ordered his paper sent to his own address no one need ever have known about his interest in this paper. Under average conditions, I insist, any person in this country can subscribe safely to any kind of reading matter that strikes his fancy. At this point let me quote from a letter written by my favorite subscriber, C. A. Lang, Maplewood, Mo., as follows: "I wish I could cry from the house-tops your reply to the fellow who was afraid to read *The Freeman*; it was done to a

turn. But the fact is that such slave-psychology is far more prevalent than most of us think. If this were not true I could get more subscriptions to *The Freeman* than I do. I know a number of people who would as soon have a box of rattlesnakes or a ton of dynamite in their homes as to possess my small collection of books."

* * *

Please comment on Dr. Robinson's "Psychiana." I'm enclosing what it takes for a personal reply.

I don't know what Dr. Frank B. Robinson is doctor of. Off hand, I'd say he has long qualified as a doctor of Bunk, for his "Psychiana," which he sells from Moscow, Idaho, is nothing more than a mess of intellectual garbage. I've read some of his "lessons"—I could endure only modest portions for I have a sensitive stomach—and found that this Idaho Messiah has served up a hash of eccentric religion, psychological hokum, inspirational hogwash—all at a right handsome price. Only fools fall for Dr. Robinson's trash. Anyone who pays good U.S. money for Robinson's pieces of paper will soon find that the best use he can make of them is to wipe something that seems to need wiping. Dr. Robinson has shown one thing to be a cold fact—that he is one of the best mail-order salesmen in the world. He has a genius for taking a few sheets of bunk and selling them to a lot of gullibles at a price that brings him a handsome, substantial income. The man's pretty smart to be able to get away with it. He didn't establish a method of talking with God for nothing. He has a fat bank account to prove that God gave him the divine dope on how to rake in the mazuma. As for Dr. Robinson's literary style, here my raptures threaten a blood-vessel. As a master of English this man stands as a fine artist (with a capital F).

* * *

Do you favor split infinitives and using a preposition to end a sentence with?

I split an infinitive whenever I take the notion, and many times when I don't even give the operation a thought. As for ending a sentence with a preposition, I end the line with the best word that comes to mind, and if it's a preposition I let it go at that. I've noticed that those bloodless corpses who worry about split infinitives and ending sentences with prepositions are usually dull, for-

bidding, tedious, precise, boresome fuss-pots.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

You will doubtless be interested in the following incident reported in a letter received by a friend from a relative in far-off Alaska:

Willard Olsen, of Bethel, while making a trip in his dog-sledge over the snow-covered tundras to a remote Eskimo village, spied what appeared to be a piece of paper or printed matter some distance off the trail. As such evidence of civilization is extremely rare on these isolated tracts of ice and snow, he stopped to investigate and retrieved from its frozen repose one of Haldeman-Julius' Little Blue Books, "Psycho-Analysis—the Key to Human Behavior," by William J. Fielding. Mr. Olsen took our frozen brain-child along with him, carefully thawed and dried it out upon reaching his destination, to add to the fund of local winter reading matter.

So you see you have been very close to the top of the world—if not "sitting pretty"!

WILLIAM J. FIELDING

* * *

Is there any sound reason for the belief of many fishermen that one must keep very quiet while near the stream lest the fish be frightened away?

This old superstition is nothing but bunk. Albert Edward Wiggam, in his "Exploring Your Mind," sails into this nonsense as follows:

"Fishes can't hear. When we were children we used to begin to whisper when we were a quarter of a mile from the creek. What wasted hours of boyhood silence!"

* * *

How many motor cars are there in the world? How many of them are in the U.S.?

On September 1, 1937, according to an estimate by Alfred Reeves, vice president of the Automobile Manufacturers' Association, there were 41,759,000 motor vehicles in the world, of which 29,000,000 (24,600,000 passenger cars and 4,400,000 commercial conveyances) were in the U.S., which gives this country 70 percent of the motor cars of the world.

* * *

Why don't the countries that haven't petroleum use olive oil as a lubricant for motor cars?

Olive oil, when mixed with motor oil, can be made to work, but there is a serious drawback which chemists will have to remove before it can be used generally. It leaves a

gum deposit which harms the motor. At that, the Tunis government, which has access to large supplies of olive oil, compels the mixing of 25 percent of this oil with 75 percent of ordinary motor oil.

* * *

How many times does the blood pass through the lungs in 24 hours?

2,000 times.

* * *

The Associated Adjusters, Milwaukee, Wis., has offered to give me ample territory as an adjuster, on the basis of \$1 per hour and all expenses. Please advise me what to do about this offer.

If you will read the literature of the Associated Adjusters you will find that no position is being offered you at all. You are merely being given the "opportunity" to send this outfit \$5 with your application form. Later you will be called on to pay monthly "dues" of \$1, or \$12 per year, for the privilege of having your name and address listed with perhaps thousands of other "adjusters." Motor car insurance companies (which already have large organizations of trained adjusters, usually attorneys) will be circularized from time to time, offering the list of names, among which yours will be found. That is the limit of this outfit's responsibility. For jotting down your name and address and for submitting it to companies that never even asked for it, you will pay as already stated. If this outfit can land 25,000 men like yourself, this will mean an initial payment of \$125,000 and monthly receipts of \$25,000, or a yearly income of \$300,000, not counting the original \$5 payments. That would be my idea of a pretty soft thing. I advise you to keep out. Remember, most companies, especially all of the large motor car insurance corporations, keep their own men in the field and would be most unlikely to call on you for your services, because they would have no reason to assume you knew all the intricate legal aspects of this complicated business, and, furthermore, they either have their own representatives or pool their cases with other insurance companies, thus reducing costs. You have sent me a dollar for a personal answer, which I've sent, but as I'm positive this information may be of value to other Freeman readers I'm printing it here.

This is just another instance of my readers spending a dollar for data that may be the means of saving them losses of money, time and energy.

After sending the above reply to one of my readers, I came on the following paragraph in the November 1, 1937, issue of *Newsweek*:

"Don't fall for letters from an 'association of insurance adjusters' in Milwaukee. Operated by two men who've been the object of post-office fraud orders for previous rackets, the 'association' has already nicked 14,000 Americans for \$5 each. On dignified stationery, the operators write to a prospect, offering to sign him up as an auto-insurance adjuster qualified to cover his locality for all U.S. insurance companies. In a second letter, the prospect is asked to remit \$5 to cover inclusion of his name in a list sent to all companies. Payment of the fee practically ends the deal, since no responsible insurance company will use such independent operators."

The reader, who had paid for my letter analyzing the literature of the concern described above, forwarded my missive to the "adjusters" in place of the \$5 they had tried to get out of him. Shortly afterward, a stern letter from the Associated Adjusters, of Milwaukee, written on the fanciest letterhead that's come to my desk in years, warned me that I was laying myself open to a nice libel suit if I ever repeated the offense. Well, it looks as though I'm a glutton for punishment, for I'm spilling the whole plate of beans right out in public. At first I intended to limit the criticism to the single reader who sent me the usual fee for a personal reply, but now I'm convinced the racket is large enough to warrant my spreading the material before all my pious readers.

* * *
Please give me a few facts about hay fever.

August A. Thomen has an article, entitled "The Truth About Hay Fever," in the July, 1937, *American Mercury*, from which I quote a few statements and debunking of fallacies, as follows: 1. Hay fever isn't caused by hay and it doesn't set up a fever. 2. Heredity is an important factor in the disease. 3. Hay fever is curable, but not by any operations on the nose. 4. Diet has no bearing on the ailment.

5. It's a serious disease that mustn't be taken lightly. 6. A patient who neglects hay fever may soon become afflicted with asthma. 7. Instead of being a disease of the eyes or nose, it's constitutional. 8. Hay fever isn't contagious. 9. Hay fever is caused only rarely by goldenrod.

* * *
How long does it take for a sealed bottle to cross the Atlantic?

E. Thomas Gilliard, ornithologist, American Museum of Natural History, has an article in the September, 1937, issue of *Natural History*, organ of the museum, in which he tells of having sealed 100 bottles and dropping them into the Atlantic Ocean at Newfoundland, each containing a note asking the finder to write the date the bottle was picked up on a card addressed to the museum. They were ordinary beer, whiskey and other bottles. Seven months later, on February 14, 1937, the first bottle was picked up on the Irish Coast. Shortly after, cards began arriving from Ireland, two from Cornwall, England, and, later, from France and Spain. Of the 100 bottles, 13 were found within the first year, the best time, as stated, being seven months. Six of the 13 were found on the Irish coast. The distance from Newfoundland to Ireland is 1,800 miles, so the bottles must have floated at least 257 miles per month, or about 8½ miles per day.

* * *
Do you care for the epigram as a form of literary art?

As an editor, I have always shown a preference for collections of epigrams, as anyone familiar with my publishing program knows. A perfect epigram is a generalization, which means that its very perfection can let it tell only a part of the truth. A good epigram is a jewelled finger pointing at an idea. But, as in the case of La Rochefoucauld, a thousand epigrams can serve to expound a philosophy of life, whereas a single line can only express a momentary, unrelated, and impulsive thought. Practically all of Nietzsche's philosophy is borne through the medium of the epigram. An epigram is all light, with no shadow, and that means the author's idea is isolated from its intellectual background. But a great many epigrams can serve to establish

the philosopher's background in the world of ideas. The epigram is a dangerous weapon in the hands of a novice. If he can't cut perfect jewels he had better leave it alone. As a polished, finely cut diamond carries no hint of the dark place it came from, so does a solitary epigram fail to reveal the misty caverns of the mind which gave it birth. An epigram never explains; it only tells. An essay is written; an epigram is chiseled.

* * *
Keep telling your readers about the virtue of being open-minded at all times.

That all depends on what you mean by open-mindedness. If you mean a willingness at all times to face the facts squarely, to base one's opinions on verifiable data and one's conclusions on reason—I'm for it right down the line. But too often an open-minded person is merely one whose brain doesn't function at all in a realistic way. He falls for every fad, quackery, and piece of bunk. He eats up mysticism. Such open-mindedness is nothing more than muddle-headedness. A hard-boiled, realistic open-mindedness is a wonderful thing to behold. The other kind makes one feel discouraged about the future of intellectual progress.

* * *
I have read somewhere that Theodore Roosevelt coined some compound words that quickly went into the language. Can you give me a few?

H. L. Mencken, in "The American Language," lists some of them as follows: strenuous-life, nature-faker, pussy-footer, weasel-word, 100% American, hyphenated-American, Ananias-Club, big-stick."

* * *
How long ago did the plants live that form coal fields?

At least 10,000,000 years.

* * *
How many legs has a caterpillar?

There are only six, the others being pro-legs.

* * *
I like the way you cut a line between words and deeds. We need such lessons, especially in international affairs.

At the same time, while I'm always careful to study words as they are translated into deeds, I accept the thought of Democritus, Greek philosopher (460-370 B.C.) that "Words are the shadows of actions." Many

people cast the shadow, but fail to go beyond the shadow. Words and actions should harmonize.

* * *
What are safety matches made of? I mean the kind that come in boxes and which must be struck on the side of the box to ignite.

The head of a safety match is made of antimony trisulphide, potassium chlorate and powdered glass. Glue is used to hold all three substances together. Many people have the idea that the place on which the safety match is struck contains the same chemical combination as that which goes into the head of the match. This is erroneous. The box on which the head is rubbed contains red phosphorus, antimony trisulphide, manganese dioxide and glue.

* * *
Is it necessary to use a teaspoonful of tea to make a cup of tea?

Many people hold to that idea, but it is wasteful. A spoonful of tea ought to be enough to make from four to six cups of tea. Good tea usually goes farther than cheap tea, because the latter frequently contains too much stem and leaves that give off little or no flavor. It's often economical to buy the best tea, and the careful housewife shouldn't hesitate about spreading it out to make as many cups as possible. And, speaking of economy, take my advice and avoid buying tea in the form of made-up balls. That's the most expensive way in the world to prepare tea.

* * *
Is it proper to say a picture was "televisioned"?

The correct word is "televised."

* * *
What is meant by "footswallowing"?

"Footswallowing" means you've said something you wish you hadn't said. In his little book, "I Wish I Had Said That," by Jack Goodman and Albert Rise, an amusing example of footswallowing is given, as follows:

A young American who found himself at a banquet sitting next to the distinguished Chinese diplomat, Wellington Koo, was puzzled at what he might say to the Chinese. Anxious to get started, the American, with a recklessness that can come only with brash tactlessness, said "Likee soupee"? The diplomat, ever the gentleman, smiled and nodded his

head. A few minutes later, Mr. Koo rose to make a speech, which he delivered in perfect English. When he sat down, the Chinese turned to the American and said: "Likee speechee"?

* * *

When television is a practical success, will the public call it that or some word like Radio?

"Vidco" is the word that's already in use, and it seems to be a good one.

* * *

I've heard it claimed that Moses, in the five books of the Pentateuch, says not a word about a future life. Is that so?

Granting that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible—a point that is strongly disputed by the Bible's best students—it's true that he nowhere mentions a future life, heaven, hell, or future rewards and punishments in another existence. As one who has qualified himself as a complete master of God's will and intentions, let me say it seems reasonable to assume the great Moses was too busy getting the world started to bother about where it was headed and how God's children would end up. The obstetrician doesn't concern himself with the problems of the mortician.

* * *

Is the Catholic Church consistent in its stand against divorce?

Not at all. Poor Catholics, of course, must stay married if they are to remain in the good graces of the Church, but Catholics of extreme wealth can, by paying enough, get their marriages annulled.

* * *

I have been advised by a friend to go to a naturopathic sanitarium in Wisconsin. Can you tell me whether the methods are of any value?

Any naturopathic sanitarium can't be anything but a center of quackery and public deception because the whole scheme of healing is based on unsound notions, hare-brained fads, and ignorant posturings. (This question was accompanied by a dollar for a personal reply, which was sent, but I use the article here because I feel others may be interested.)

* * *

What do you think of the automobile insurance policy sold by Sears Roebuck?

It's excellent. A good buy.

* * *

Do you approve of women who henna their hair?

I haven't noticed many of late, so

I assume the henna business is out of style, which sounds like good news, because I never thought much of that attempt at "beauty." The other day I heard a man tell a woman (both were gargling at a bar) that she couldn't have him and hennaed hair at the same time. When she asked why, he roared: "Because it makes you look like a bay horse!"

* * *

Could you tell me where I could dispose of some old-time books of history and poetry, mostly leatherbound, and published prior to 1860?

The fact that a book was published prior to 1860 doesn't mean it has any exceptional value. The usual way of disposing of a private library is to call in a dealer in second-hand books and ask him to make an offer. I don't like to be the least bit discouraging, but I'm afraid the bid will prove lower than expected—it always is. On the average, the offer amounts to about 10c per volume, which is pitifully small, but it's about all a dealer can pay, for he, in turn, disposes of the volumes at prices much lower than prevailed when the volumes were purchased by the reading public. (The usual fee came with this for a personal reply, but the matter is printed here for the usual reason.)

* * *

How much does the U.S. Government pay for type writers?

The price of typewriters was set by Act of Congress at \$70 per machine, which is about \$50 less than the regular retail price for a standard machine. The manufacturers are always glad to fill orders at this special price because of the immense number of machines bought by the government.

* * *

Which poisonous snake does the most biting in the U.S.?

The rattler. Next is the copperhead. Third comes the cottonmouth or moccasin. About 700 persons are bitten each year, in this country, by poisonous snakes.

* * *

Do rattlesnakes have to coil in order to strike?

No.

* * *

How often is a rattler's bite fatal?

Dr. Hiram E. Essex, in a bulletin entitled "Poisonous Animals and Their Poisons," issued by Mayo Clin-

ic (of which the author is a staff member), says the more dangerous species of poisonous reptiles, during a two-year period, did damage as follows: 475 persons were bitten by rattlesnakes, with 35 fatalities; 308 by copperheads, with one fatality; 82 by cottonmouths or water moccasins, with five fatalities.

* * *

At what distance is a snake capable of striking?

Snakes can strike from a distance about half their own length.

* * *

It is claimed that a certain toothpaste will cure pyorrhoea. Please comment.

There's no toothpaste in the world that'll cure this disease.

* * *

Can the use of the much-advertised dentifrices prevent tooth decay?

No. Brushing the teeth is all right, but it has nothing to do with preventing decay. The popular slogan, "A clean tooth never decays" is false. Science is still to learn the cause of dental decay.

* * *

Certain bath salts are being advertised as cures for obesity. Have they any value?

Persons suffering from obesity are asked—at a price—to rub themselves with certain proprietary concoctions or to put "reducing powders" in their bath, but they are worthless. Recently, according to an article by August A. Thomen, the U.S. government analyzed a widely advertised treatment for obesity, which sold at \$20 per quart, and found it to contain a pound of powdered alum, 10 ounces of alcohol, and a quart of water, the water, of course, having been added to dissolve the "reducer." The whole mess was a fake. Other preparations were found to contain epsom salt and washing soda, which are worthless as reducers.

* * *

Does it mean a person has diabetes if he has sugar in his blood?

There is always sugar in the blood of a normal person, and if there were none he couldn't survive. August A. Thomen says that since an adult has about five quarts of blood, "he has approximately a teaspoonful of sugar circulating throughout his body—a very small quantity indeed. If this quantity is reduced to ½ a teaspoonful or less, distressful symptoms ap-

pear, even in a healthy individual—hunger, weakness, nervousness, and convulsions; even coma and death, if the quantity be further reduced."

* * *

Is it a fact that it is not healthful to sleep on the left side?

The notion has it that one shouldn't sleep on the left side because to do so results in cramping the heart. There's no sound authority for the superstition. Sleep on whichever side you feel like. The pump won't act up for that reason.

* * *

Is it true that it's unwise to keep flowers in the bedroom because they let off gases that can prove injurious.

The belief is nonsensical. August A. Thomen studied this superstition and wrote: "Some persons think the alleged injuriousness is due to the fact that flowers exhale carbon dioxide and absorb oxygen, especially at night. Such individuals forget that that is just what the patient is doing, only many thousands of times more intensively."

* * *

What are the seven degrees of drunkenness?

Brewer's "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable" gives the seven degrees of drunkenness, as follows: Ape drunk, lion drunk, swine drunk, sleep drunk, martin drunk, goat drunk, fox drunk.

* * *

Who coined the phrase "innocuous desuetude"?

Grover Cleveland, in a message to Congress, March 1, 1886, originated the phrase in a passage which referred to laws that have been unevenly enforced for a time, as follows: "After an existence of nearly 20 years of almost INNOCUOUS DESUETUDE these laws are brought forth."

* * *

Can you let me have Anatole France's version of the prayer to Mary?

The great French writer took the prayer that starts "O Mary, conceived without sin," and put it into the mouth of a smart virgin, this way: "O Mary, conceived without sin, help us to sin without conceiving."

* * *

How much money do the oil companies spend annually on advertising gasoline, and where does it go?

During 1936, the gasoline sellers spent \$25,000,000 advertising their product, of which 41.2 percent (\$10,360,422) went into newspapers; 26.4

percent into billboard advertising; 15.1 percent into chain radio broadcasts; 11.9 percent into magazines, and the balance into miscellaneous methods of advertising.

* * *
Do you consider nuts to be an essential part of the human diet?

While I believe we could get along without nuts, I'd hate to be deprived of that pleasing, nourishing article of food.

* * *
How much gross profit does a filling station make on a gallon of gasoline?

Four cents.

* * *
Can one tell a rattlesnake's age by the number of its rattles?

No. The rattles have nothing to do with the snake's age.

* * *
It continues to be reiterated by Dorothy Thompson and others that the policies of the Communist party in America and in all other countries are dictated by Moscow. To what extent, if any, is this true?

I don't believe Stalin wastes five minutes each month on the policies of the Communist parties outside the Soviet Union. I say this out of respect for the man's executive ability, for I feel certain that if Stalin were to take a real interest in the Communist organizations of the U.S., France and a few other countries, they would make something of a showing instead of being the innocuous, futile, semi-conscious organizations they happen to be in Western lands. I feel fairly certain that Stalin looks on Browder's American organization as something beneath his contempt. On the other hand, the Communist leaders of France and the U.S. watch Moscow with the greatest care, getting hints here and there as to what might constitute the best party line, though usually the line is pretty uncertain. It seems to me that Stalin is so anxious to do a good job at home that he prefers to keep out of foreign countries, where he has learned, from experience, that Russian Communism isn't an exportable item. Of course, this doesn't mean he looks on happenings in Spain or China with complete indifference. They concern him deeply, and he would like to help them resist Fascist invasion and aggression, but he knows there are limits to his powers to succor the

needy foreigners. It's a fairly safe assumption that Stalin will never really cross lances with any foreign government until something really destructive is done to the Russian State. He'll grumble and growl over Mussolini in Spain and Japan in China, but so long as they keep their hands off the Soviet Union he's satisfied. Stalin is a hard-boiled realist. He has neither time nor patience with day-dreamers. Idealism is all right in books, but in everyday life it's an expensive luxury. Stalin will sacrifice a hundred ideals so long as Russian soil is left unharmed. But strike at a single acre of the Soviet Union's vast domain and there'll be hell to pay. Such being the truth—and I have a notion I'm on the right track—Stalin doesn't care a rap what happens to the Communist organizations outside his country.

* * *
I have just finished reading "The Plan in Action," by a writer who signs himself Earnest Sincere, and published by the Brandt Co., in Ill. This book praises Hitlerism and says that chemical analysis shows the blood of Jews is the blood of a yellow race, not a white race. Please comment.

There isn't a single scientist of established reputation who would ever think of endorsing such nonsense. Racial differences can't be detected by chemical processes. In fact, scientists generally agree that the blood of all races is precisely alike. Ordinarily I wouldn't stoop to notice such trash, except to cause a laugh, but in these days of Fascist racialism it's necessary to give space to counteract the so-called arguments of professional deceivers and hate-mongers.

* * *
What's the Pope's telephone number?

Vat 69.

* * *
In her syndicated column of December 12, 1937, Elsie Robinson declared: "Someone should revise Hell, bring it up to date, put the fear of it back into our hearts again." Please comment.

It's very hard to pay serious attention to a writer who shovels out such intellectual garbage. Think of the mental bankruptcy of a journalist who seriously proposes that we return to a belief in some sort of infernal region, where we spend an eternity getting roasted for our sins. Fortunately, the people are learning to

think. They are beginning to realize that social and other problems won't be solved by fear of Hell but by realistic faith in man's own powers to grapple with economic, business, social and cultural maladjustments. In the old days the so-called good people were sure they were headed for an everlasting orgy of bliss, while we poor sinners were sure to nurse an endless stream of blisters. But those days are gone—forever, I hope.

* * *

Anatole France said: "Let our teaching be full of ideas. Hitherto it has been stuffed full of facts." Do you agree?

The education that stuffs heads with facts without giving the student the key to the meaning of facts is a lopsided and useless form of learning. But that doesn't mean we can appreciate and suggest ideas without a clear understanding of the essential facts. Facts are the raw material of ideas. If the facts are wrong, the ideas are cock-eyed. The most terrific noises I hear result when one of my pet theories collides with a fact. Ideas are the expression of true education, but they can degenerate into mysticism when they aren't instrumented with sound, verifiable data. The worst bore in the world, to my notion, is the learned boor who reels off an endless stream of facts and figures, without the slightest knowledge of what ideas such facts can suggest. Education will be at its best when it seeks out the facts and draws its conclusions, or ideas, from such sources. The wise man uses facts as tools, as a means to an end.

* * *

What's your opinion of New York's sky-line?

I've worked high up in some of the offices in downtown New York, and the view was majestic, especially towards the Hudson River when the great liners sail in or out. Or at night, when millions of lights are on. But I think that's the limit of my enthusiasm. The idea of getting into an up-and-down machine to reach the 56th floor, where one intends to sit down to a typewriter to turn out some copy, sounds silly, as does the practice of pouring hundreds of thousands of persons out of these immense structures, to jam the streets and subways. Under certain conditions the New York sky-line is an impressive sight,

but as an example of city-planning it's downright lunacy. Why this mania to crowd so many gigantic structures into a small portion of a small island? The trouble, you see, is with the capitalistic system, which creates an overcrowded condition in order to enhance realty values, and then has to build skyscrapers in order to get the full benefit (or rather, profit) from the congestion, thus making a bad condition even more intolerable. I've been amused many times to see how other American cities, which have no end of room, feel they must imitate New York City and have their own sky-line. In Kansas City, Mo., during the past decade, a whole bunch of skyscrapers have gone up, and if you travel to only the 15th floor of any of them you can look out on miles of prairie. Skyscrapers under such conditions are idiotic even from the viewpoint of capitalistic economy.

Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the world's most distinguished architects, spoke as a guest-delegate to the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Architects, in Moscow, early in August, 1937, and paid his respects to the American skyscraper in the following vigorous, and sensible, words:

"Our much-praised achievement in architecture is the skyscraper. But what is the sky-scraper? Nothing more or less than the victory of engineering and the defeat of architecture. The steel carcasses of skyscrapers are raised, covered with a thin layer of stone slabs attached to the steel in imitation of the stonework of feudal towers. They are staggering, but false. Just as false as the economy which made possible their construction in congested areas."

* * *

Can you tell me what has happened to German universities under Nazi rule?

I have given a considerable mass of data on this subject in my volumes of questions and answers, all from authoritative sources. The showing is worse than pathetic; it's positively tragic. The glorious German universities are things of the past, gutted by a gang of hoodlums. The point has been reached where the dean of a once-great German university now placidly informs a learned body that the establishment's interest is no longer to achieve "mere" truth but to

express the State's ideology, which means, in so many words, that learning is considered treason in Hitlerland. As for attendance, the figures are appalling. The University of Hamburg, for instance, with almost 3,500 students in the days of the Republic, now has only 1,200. The entire city of Berlin now has but 6,000 university students; Jena only 800.

The Manchester Guardian, December 17, 1937, contains a letter from F. Elwyn Jones, who quotes a letter he received from a German teacher in which tells about the sad state of German culture in its uneven struggle with Fascist militarism. We learn, for example, that the best professors have been dismissed for racial or political reasons, many of the victims being kicked out because they were considered too "liberal." The result is that the universities have been unable to get professors to take the vacant places, some even abandoning courses in mathematics, foreign languages and the classics. Where lectures used to be attended so heavily that main auditoriums had to be used by certain popular professors, today the students—rarely more than two dozen in number—gather in small rooms. In the Hamburg University, in 1937, only eight students took foreign languages; only one studied the classics.

Qualitative declines have accompanied quantitative drops, among both faculties and students. The caliber of students is low. The German teacher's letter, to which I referred above and which I drew on for the facts in the previous paragraph, says students are judged by their political reliability and the positions of their parents in the Nazi organizations, instead of by true standards of scholarship. It's common knowledge that such young hoodlums even go so far as to tell their instructors what kind of marks they are to receive when their papers are graded, and the professors obey, like so many messenger boys. The young men boast openly of their ability to browbeat the professors into getting marks that will pass them, when it's generally agreed they couldn't pass an ordinary high-school examination if compelled to compete along the usual lines. No professor who hopes

to keep his job dare flunk these brazen Nazis.

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, in a report released on December 27, 1937, paid his respects to institutions of higher education in Fascist countries, as follows:

"The universities in these countries are in a state of coma. Some of these institutions were, not long ago, the world's leaders in almost every field of philosophy, of letters, of science and of the arts, but now their mouths are closed save to echo empty and futile formulas.

The facts support Dr. Butler's charges. Fascism is the sworn enemy of every precious heritage of civilization.

* * *

Can you explain the crazy cavortings of Mayor Hague?

There is method in the man's madness. Mayor Frank Hague, of Jersey City, N.J., is acting like a cockroach Mussolini in order to attract business to the city he rules like a czar. Everytime he locks up a union organizer or breaks up a public meeting, the papers give him endless streams of free publicity, which he thinks can be cashed in on. He's telling the labor-hating employers of the country—the bosses of the type of Tom Girdler—to bring their factories to Jersey City, where they will be guaranteed against "trouble," against unionism, and pestiferous crackpots who actually believe they have a constitutional right to speak their minds. Hague says he's the law in Jersey City, and that no CIO trouble-makers or Communists (that's the favorite red herring of the peanut Hitlers) can open their traps in his private domain without getting some teeth knocked out. The Tom Girdlers like that kind of a politician. Whether Hague has succeeded in bringing a substantial number of new businesses to Jersey City remains to be seen. I doubt he will get very far, on a long-term proposition, because American labor isn't so abject that it'll accept without protest and effective opposition a situation in which a political shyster claims he can deliver crews of workers to greedy employers to be exploited without thought of a decent standard of living. Jersey City is still in the U.S., and its mayor will learn, in time, that the workers have votes,

and that those votes will be used to elect men who believe in supporting the Constitution and not using it like cigarette paper.

* * *

Do you believe in being skeptical at all times?

Yes, skepticism is a wonderful habit of mind, and should be developed. Skepticism is an essential attribute of a civilized, cultured mind, for it is one of the keys to the exposure of the false and the enthronement of the true. A doubter, if grounded on knowledge and understanding, is pretty sure to detect bunk. The debunker, therefore, is nothing more than a first-class, up-to-the-minute skeptic. But this doesn't mean the doubts of ignorance should be encouraged; only the doubts of intelligence are worth having. For example, consider the unfortunate and unintelligent skepticism of the old settler, who, watching a trombone player do his stuff, warned his son: "Don't let on you're watching him, but they's a trick to it. He ain't really swallerin' it."

* * *

Please comment on the truth in the book, "Assignment in Utopia," by Eugene Lyons.

I read this book with great attention, for it certainly is unlaydownable, but I couldn't bring myself to believe all of it, though I confess parts of it sounded true enough. I don't doubt that Mr. Lyons was telling the truth when he told how he had to get a special permit to enter an ordinary public building, and how he was approached by two armed soldiers when he loitered too long in front of an office of the GPU (secret police), but many of his other charges left me cold. For example, when he goes about the business of putting the stamp of cruelty on the leaders of the Soviet Union by alleging that thousands of prisoners engaged on such heavy work as digging canals and building railroads are fed nothing but bread and water I couldn't resist a resounding razzberry. I defy any man to continue at heavy labor after even three days of a diet of bread and water.

I have shown time after time that the Soviet Union is a dictatorship which doesn't tolerate freedom of speech, press, assembly, etc., though I was careful to explain on several oc-

casions that there was a gradual move in the direction of democracy. So, while Mr. Lyons offers proof after proof of Soviet dictatorship over the Russian intellect and spirit—though some of his allegations leave me cold—I can only say that these bad conditions may be changed in time, something which Mr. Lyons is at great pains to deny and brand as impossible.

I have never pictured the Soviet Union as a paradise of the workers, and I don't need Mr. Lyons' book to tell me the facts again. But there are great achievements to the credit of the Soviet Union, which Mr. Lyons prefers to belittle, misrepresent or ignore. The industrial picture—and I have presented hundreds of reports and reliable statistics during the past few years—shows steady, even rapid, progress, considering the fact that the Bolsheviks took over a country that was in ruins, in defeat, its industries so much junk, and its spirit almost dead. The harvest, after so many years of war, civil war, international opposition, blockade, invasion, famine, is impressive, for the years of actual constructive work have been few indeed. And these few years of building a new society have been accompanied by uninterrupted fears of Fascist invasion from the West and East.

If the Soviet Union could really throw off its fears over the intentions of its Fascist enemies it could show the world what it means when 170,000,000 people are given the economic freedom to create the material foundations of a new social order. True, there are many things on the debit side, despite the numerous obstacles I have mentioned, but there are enough credits to make the country an inspiration to every progressive-minded person throughout the world. For example, much is made of the fact that the recent national elections in Russia permitted the people to vote on only one set of candidates. We forget that in the U.S., when we had the experiences of the American Revolution still in our minds, we went on year after year with only one set of candidates. It took years before the country reached the stage where opposition candidates, or slates, could be presented before the electorate. Furthermore, the Soviet Union will,

of necessity, be much slower in reaching the stage of opposition candidates because the fundamental law of that country is the establishment of a classless society. When political organizations can't branch off because of class differences, as we do in capitalistic countries, the development of an opposition must naturally take time, and then, when it arrives, it can only be on the question of which set of candidates or which individual candidate is more efficient and therefore more entitled to office.

We have political movements that represent different classes because we have a class-organized society—financiers, industrialists, middle classes, tradesmen, speculators, professionals, farmers, workers, and the like. Russia, so long as she remains true to the forms of a classless society, will be without such political manifestations.

This doesn't mean that I say that everything Stalin does is right. I wish I could. Many of his acts are highly debatable, but in all fairness we must admit that the man is a tremendous organizer and a brilliant executive who knows how to get things done, even though his methods are subject to the most extreme criticism. The Soviet Union will never take on the political forms of capitalistic countries for the reasons I've just mentioned, unless Stalin and his fellow executives have it in mind to lead Russia in the direction of Fascism, which I doubt, or towards Capitalism, which I reject *in toto*. No individual or group will be permitted to propose a return to Capitalism or Czarism, even within the political rights listed in the new Constitution. That's definite, it seems to me. Opposition, in Russia, must be limited to an appeal for election because of one's better ability to build the new economy, not on the reactionary program of Fascism or a return to private Capitalism. Much of the opposition I hear and read is based on this misapprehension of the situation in Russia.

Mr. Lyons hasn't been in Russia for a number of years. His book tells of what he saw, or thought he saw, years ago. I don't doubt that many of the harsh things he says are true, but I insist he doesn't give the whole picture. His deep hatred makes him

reject the good and the sound. Space doesn't permit me to catalogue those worthwhile achievements, but I know that the readers who have been following my reports on the Soviet Union during the past five or six years—all of which will be found in my 12 volumes of questions and answers—realize that the story can't be all gloom. There are many bright spots. But Mr. Lyons prefers to shut his eyes to them. In this, he is unfair and unreliable. A good reporter doesn't paint only the shadows. He tries to describe the constructive as well as the destructive, the bright as well as the dark, the uplifting as well as the depressing. I don't mean to infer that Mr. Lyons is dishonest. I believe he is well-intentioned, but it seems clear to this reviewer that he has permitted his unconscious prejudices to move him to an incomplete, unfair, distorted narrative.

* * *

As this issue goes to press word comes from Washington, D.C., that Solicitor Karl A. Crowley, of the postoffice department, has cited the Associated Adjusters, of Milwaukee, to appear at proceedings on whether or not the government shall issue a fraud order and deny the concern the use of the mails. This action undoubtedly came as the result of numerous complaints made by Freeman readers who acted on the Freeman's article describing what appears to be a rank racket. Here is just one more demonstration of The Freeman's power—through its active, alert readers—to get constructive action from the authorities and thereby help the public from being deceived. As explained before, the Associated Adjusters advertised widely for applicants, who were expected to pay \$5 for the "privilege" of having their names listed on a directory, from which the great insurance companies were to select their accident adjusters at \$1 per hour and all expenses paid. There was no evidence offered to show that any company was availing itself of this "opportunity" to use the suckers who had paid the Milwaukee outfit the much-sought-after five-spot. Listing the name of each registrant was the limit of the obligation of the Associated Adjusters. One Freeman reader—not a subscriber—happened to see the March issue and read about the Associated Adjusters at precisely the time when he had already filled out an application blank and had arranged to remit \$5. So grateful was he for this paper's information—which, by the way, saved him from parting

with his \$5—that he subscribed on his own. Other readers wrote strong letters of protest to Washington, with the result that official action was taken. This is just one more illustration of how a free, independent, unsubsidized paper is able to serve its public. Incidentally, the subsidized newspapers continued accepting the advertisements of the Associated Adjusters right up to the time the postoffice department took action. So long as they were sharing in the racket they saw no reason for warning their readers against a palpable misuse of the mails.

* * *

Are any insects trained to fight in the same way that fighting roosters are trained to give one another a knock-out?

The only fighting insect I know of is the cricket, which is trained to fight by Chinese sports, who bet as much as \$100,000 on the outcome of a "go."

* * *

In the last Freeman I reported how the U.S. government, as the result of protests by Freeman readers, had taken action against Father James R. Cox, for running a lottery and fraudulent use of the mails. This was another victory for Freeman readers. It was only after we had caused the priest's arrest by the federal authorities that the newspapers saw fit to give the public the facts regarding this holy man's activities. It now comes out, according to an article in the Pittsburgh (Pa.) Press, January 9, 1938, that not only did Father Cox use the mails for a gigantic lottery—in which the first prize was for \$25,000—but actually saw to it that the prizes went to insiders, including relatives of the promoters of the lottery. One office employe—the daughter-in-law of one of Father Cox's assistant promoters—worked in the priest's office and came out a winner of a \$500 prize. Most of the prizes went to Los Angeles, where the promoters who worked with Father Cox came from, though the great bulk of the lottery tickets were sold in Pittsburgh, Pa., where Father Cox's church is located. This can mean only one thing—that the bulk of the awards were kept from going to that deathless sucker, the Hon. John Public. The whole scandal stinks to Father Cox's heaven. Incidentally, Father Cox isn't as defiant of the authorities as he showed himself to be when first arrested. He now realizes that the robes of religion have been torn aside to reveal a mess of rotten money-grubbing. And it was Freeman readers who first "squawked" to the government, as it was The Freeman itself which was the first paper in the

country to call attention to Father Cox's racket. It happened that Cox's lottery literature came to The Freeman through the ordinary channels of the mail service, which caused the editor to write a brief but pointed article that told the facts and brought enough action to force the authorities into the mood for the prosecution of the leaders (holy and lay) of a criminal scheme

New inquiries into the activities of Father James R. Cox, of Pittsburgh, Pa., show that in addition to running several crooked lotteries he is the chief owner of a night club, at which liquor is sold and hotsy-totsy, steaming strip-tease artists, helped swell the priest's "charities," a word used to cover his underworld racketeering. Father Cox and his promoters—all of whom have been arrested by the federal government for mailing 2,500,000 lottery tickets, each "worth" \$1, through the mails—not only ran an illegal contest but conspired to defraud ticket buyers by arranging to have the main prizes go to insiders. A few small prizes went to the public—none over \$50—but these awards were never paid. Father Cox, whose greed for money leads him into almost any form of underworld racketeering, sent notices to the "legitimate" winners that informed them they had won prizes and enclosed receipts for them to sign, but failed to send the money. Most of the suckers signed the receipts and thus were unable to collect the few dollars Cox and his fellow-criminals had kept from a framed set of inside winners. In some instances, according to federal investigators, prizes went to insiders who hadn't even gone to the trouble or expense of entering the contest. At first, Father Cox presented a brazen front to the law, but when evidence started to pile up that Cox and his fellow-criminals were up against the real thing, he changed his tone and let it be known that he was the "tool and fool" of his promoters. In all these rackets—the latest lottery was only one of a series—the priest used the religious appeal, playing up every possible "sacred" angle, including the distribution of tin medals blessed by the priest and offered as protection against motor car collisions, blow-outs and skids during wet weather. Pittsburgh newspapers, at this writing, are giving a great deal of space to Father Cox's ventures into the criminal world, but it's interesting to note that a study of their pages before The Freeman first exposed Cox shows not a single line about the priest's activities. It was only after The Freeman exposed the lottery, and Freeman readers caused the federal authorities to act, that the

Pittsburgh press jumped into what is one of the biggest stories in the city's church history. The various facts mentioned above—particularly those dealing with Father Cox's hot joints and framed "win-lists"—come from recent issues of Pittsburgh dailies, which have, at last, jumped on a story that should have been exploited months ago.

* * *

Is there any factual basis for the common belief that truck drivers cause more than their share of accidents because of carelessness, road hoggishness, sleeping at the wheel, and general negligence?

Dr. Miller McClintock, of the Harvard Bureau of Traffic Research, our greatest authority on the problems of motor car traffic, insists that truck drivers, instead of being reckless, are really "the gentlemen of the road." I believe there was a time when truck drivers were road hogs, and all other sorts of bad things, but something has happened to change all that during the past few years. Today, it seems to me, they conduct themselves in a way that commands respect and admiration. My only objection to them—and here they're not to blame—is the fact that they are compelled to work too many hours at a stretch, with the danger that they may fall asleep at the wheel. Only the other day a truck driver delivered some envelopes at this office, and the way he wobbled led me to believe, at first, that the man was drunk, but I soon realized he was suffering from an acute attack of fatigue. After asking him a few questions I learned he hadn't left his truck since starting on his trip from Chicago, something like 700 miles away. A man who has to hold down such a shift can't be blamed if he falls asleep, for the real culprit is the company that owns the fleet of machines. Outside of that, they are, as Dr. McClintock reports, "gentlemen of the road," giving oncoming traffic more than its half of the road and moving over whenever some motorist in the rear wants to pass around.

* * *

Does greater intelligence make for greater morality?

When the average American speaks of morality he has in mind sexual behavior. Sexual behavior can certainly be immoral, if a person acts without regard for the rights of others.

Such a concept belongs to a natural morality instead of conventional habits of thought or conduct. But true morality goes far beyond sexual conduct. Morality, in its scientific sense, means love of justice, truth, honor, kindness, fair play, self discipline, and the like. Taking this broader view of morality it's safe to say that superior morality goes with higher intelligence, as Dr. Ira S. Wile pointed out in a recent article. The average conventional, orthodox-minded person who notices that people of higher intelligence frequently show small regard for theocratic notions of sex jump to the conclusion that such people are immoral. Thus do they fail to judge the men and women of greater intelligence by the higher codes of ethics, social consciousness, toleration, progressiveness, open-mindedness, and the moral qualities listed in an earlier sentence. Dr. Wile's brief comment on this question throws light in dark places, as will be seen by reading his words below:

"Is an intelligent person more likely to have a high moral standard than a stupid one? Dr. Clara F. Chasell, of Columbia University, says 'Yes.' After a long study of many types of people, she reported that college students who did well in scholastic work were usually superior morally to students with poor results.

"Intelligence, Dr. Chasell found, was an asset in developing unselfishness, loyalty, justice, the courage of one's convictions, self-control, reliability and interest in social welfare.

"Lewis Terman, the well known psychologist who has made a special study of gifted children, found that they rated higher in moral traits than youngsters of average intelligence. Hartshorne and May, two other investigators, noted that cheating, lying and stealing increased among children as their level of intelligence decreased.

"The same relationship between intelligence and morality shows up in many crime surveys. Of 500 criminal youths studied by Sheldon Glueck, 44 percent were mentally dull or feeble minded."

It takes greater intelligence to learn to distinguish true morality from conventional morality, to know which acts will work to the hurt of

others and which acts aren't to be construed as wrong merely because a theocratic moralist says they are. As Herbert Spencer states the case in one of his essays, "Absolute morality is the regulation of conduct in such a way that pain shall not be inflicted." Or, as Israel Zangwill puts it, in his "Children of the Ghetto": "Morality was made for man, not man for morality."

* * *

Do you believe a person should so conduct himself that he will never have a single enemy throughout life?

The fellow who conducted himself that way would have to be a nonentity, a moron, a hypocrite, a coward or a time-server. Any person who amounts to anything must have a crop of enemies, and the bigger the crop the better. As for myself, let me say, without boasting, that I've always been proud of the kind of enemies I attract. I'm very careful to see they are the right brand. For example, nothing flatters me more than the thought that a cancer quack of the caliber of Norman Baker is one of my most ardent enemies. Imagine my shame and chargin if Norman Baker were to advertise over his radio station that I'm one of his friends! I'd die of mortification. I accept Donn Piatt's dictum, "A man's greatness can be measured by his enemy." And, while I'm at it, let me quote another line from the same source: "The man who has no enemies has no following." As Oscar Wilde put it, "A man cannot be too careful in the choice of his enemies."

* * *

Please look down from your heavenly throne and tell us poor mortals what we should think about alfalfa salad.

A strong effort is being made in Texas' alfalfa belt to get humans to eat the hay as a health salad. Dr. Victor Heiser started the propaganda when, on his return from Africa, he said some of the natives over there eat alfalfa and like it. He added that "Alfalfa salad is delicious and rich in inorganic salts, of which the body never has enough." An El Paso society of gourmets put alfalfa salad on its next menu, but with results that should prove discouraging to the interests that would like to see alfalfa take its place with celery and lettuce. The good and patriotic Texans tackled heaping portions and

pretended (for the benefit of the press) that it was as good as anything that ever came out of the finest cafe in Paris, but privately they admitted the stuff was goshawful. I haven't tasted any yet, but it's my feeling (and here only orthodox conservatism may be speaking) that alfalfa should be saved for the cows, who have learned the neat trick of turning it into delicious milk. So, if you don't mind, I'll take my alfalfa in the form of a glass of milk.

* * *

Can you name the animal which has the most voracious appetite?

The honor falls to an insect—the little caterpillar of a polyphemus, which, during the first 48 hours of its life, eats food that equals 86,000 times its own weight at the time of its birth. Edwin Way Peale, in his book, "Grassroot Jungles," says if this were translated into human terms "you have a 10-pound man-baby eating, in its first 48 hours, a herd of 860 cows each weighing half a ton. Other insects are voracious, notably the praying mantis and the dragon-fly, which eats its own weight in flies in two hours, and is sometimes so hungry that it nibbles its own tail; but none matches the polyphemus caterpillar." That makes the water snake, which swallowed a three-pound frog in 15 minutes, something of a dilltante, though if we were to do the same thing we'd have to down a 50-pound steak in that short time, and that would be something of a trick at any man's eating contest.

* * *

I know you are a great reader—your editing and writing prove that—so please oblige me with some words on reading in general.

An experienced reader soon learns to be selective. He knows pretty well at a glance if a certain book will be worthy of his fullest attention or only of partial reading, or no reading at all. As Lord Bacon said: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts, others to be read, but not cursorily, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention."

I read a great deal, as my correspondent assumes, but I insist that I shall enjoy a book. Never read a book

because you have to, or because you feel it's the right and proper thing to do. If you read, do it for the pleasure you get out of it, not because you want to become a better citizen or a superior moral and intellectual guide. If a book tires, put it aside. It can't do you much good. A good book is always as interesting as life itself, or, as Herbert Spencer put it, "reading is seeing by proxy." If the book shows the author was cockeyed, don't strain your eyes and brain following him, for he'll make you cock-eyed too.

I like to read in bed. For almost 40 years I've followed that luxury, especially on cold nights. Even when I go to bed dead tired I do some reading before turning out the light. My idea of heaven is a large bed (with a good mattress, of course), plenty of tobacco, several pipes to select from, a jar filled with cigars, a light that's just right and that's set in exactly the right place—and a good book. Eugene Field expressed the same idea in his "Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac," with "all good and true book-lovers practice the pleasing and improving avocation of reading in bed."

While I always insist that reading be pleasurable, I avoid superficial, inferior, merely entertaining time-killing books. I don't insist that a book be serious, but I stand pat on demanding that the volume I'm to spend time on be sincere and that it shall soon prove that its author had some sensible, intelligent purpose and point in getting the writing done. I have no time to waste on the literature of escape. I want my books to be true and honest. Books written by blockheads should be read by blockheads, said Lord Chesterfield, and he uttered a mouthful there. My idea of a real book is one that moves me to want to write. Such a book may be filled with ideas of which I disapprove, but the book is worth while to me if it serves as an electric button to set off my brain and put me in the mood for getting out of bed and pounding my own notions on the nearby typewriter. I consider a book excellent when its sentences send my brain on an exploration of its own.

* * *

I often see advertisements of perfumes that sell for \$15 and even \$20 per

ounce. What is there about these perfumes that's better than moderately priced articles?

Dr. Charles F. H. Allen, chemist, Eastman laboratories, in a paper read before the Rochester, N.Y., chapter of the American Chemical Society, made the flat assertion that the perfumes sold in 5c and 10c stores are better "than the kind of which the ancient and medieval lovers of luxury and beauty were willing to pay its weight in gold." Dr. Allen showed that natural oil of rose sells at \$175 per pound, while synthetic oil of rose sells at only \$22.50. "The most delicate nose," said Dr. Allen, "cannot tell the difference between the two." Dr. Allen continued:

"Perfumes made from flowers have a base of essential oils. Each oil may average as many as 25 components, some more important than others. It is far harder to analyze a vitamin or hormone than one of these oils."

Dr. Allen then explained that chemists have learned not only to analyze the constituents of oils but are now able to produce them by synthetic means. "Most of the cheap good perfumes rely on these synthetic products for their scent," he said. "Musk is the indispensable base of perfumes. And musk was synthesized long ago."

Since experts can't tell the difference between cheap and expensive perfumes, it behooves consumers to buy only low-priced bottles, shopping around intelligently until they find the brand and scent that please them. Cheap perfume, properly used, is all right; it's when a person simply "pours it on" that neighbors turn up their noses and talk about "cheap stinks." If perfumes that sell at \$20 an ounce were used the same way they too would make a person exude and offensive odor instead of a pleasant aroma.

Needless to say, the average newspaper prefers to ignore consumer data like the above, because it's compelled to cater to the department stores (heavy advertisers) who find they can make larger profits from the distribution of perfumes offered at outrageous prices. They have actually convinced millions of women that a perfume should be judged, first of all, by its high price, and that if it's offered at a low or moderate price it

can be only very bad or merely fair-to-middling. If the average newspaper were to print an item containing the facts presented above, the advertising managers of the large department stores would be on its neck in no time, demanding a change of treatment under the threat of removing advertising copy. This is just one more argument for a really free, independent press—one that never fails to consider the best interests of the consumers. I repeat my favorite sermon—do your share of the work of building up such a truth-telling press. The remedy is in your hands. Use it.

* * *

I've heard that a skunk will eat hairy caterpillars. Do they swallow it whole, irritating hairs included?

The skunk is quite clever when he decides to sup on a hairy caterpillar, rolling the insect on the ground with a gentle motion which strips the pest of its hairs without crushing its body. It seems the skunk is born with his knowledge, according to Karl P. Schmidt, of the Field Museum of Natural History, who says he raised two young skunks on the bottle. From early infancy to near-maturity they weren't shown any woolly caterpillars, and then when finally presented with some of these insects the skunks proceeded to devour them as though they knew all about them.

* * *

What is the difference between propaganda and agitation? What is meant by "propaganda of the deed"?

Propaganda, as I've explained in other articles, is the use or misuse of the printed or spoken word, pictures, music, etc., to cause the public, or a part of the public, to accept a doctrine, dogma, theory, line of thought, viewpoint, code of behavior, and the like. Agitation, on the other hand, is the direct attempt to incite immediate action. For example, a propagandist may try to convince the working people—through lectures, articles, books, etc.—that their best interests rest with unionism. An agitator flies over such long-term activities and concentrates all efforts on an immediate strike or some other form of protest or demand.

"Propaganda of the deed" is a phrase used mainly among Anarchists, terrorists, nihilists, and such

political or social dissidents. It means that a certain act is to be performed—like destroying some object or assassinating some individual ruler or symbol of rulership—in order to call attention to some particular idea or set of ideas. Thus, when Alexander Berkman, in the last quarter of the 19th Century, fired some shots at the great capitalist, Frick, his purpose wasn't to commit an ordinary crime of violence but to call attention to certain grievances of the workers. Nihilists who wanted to end Czarism followed the theory that constant attempts at "propaganda of the deed"—assassinations of the royal family or powerful figures in the State—could serve the ends of the hoped-for revolution. The Serbian conspirators who planned the assassination of the Austrian crown prince in June, 1914, were indulging in "propaganda of the deed." It represents the attempt to advance a revolutionary, or other, philosophy by resorting to some direct, overt act. However, this doesn't mean that only revolutionists of the Left can indulge in "propaganda of the deed." It can be used by the extreme Right as well, as in the case of Fascist acts of violence, particularly the one which resulted in the murder of Austria's chancellor, Dollfuss.

* * *

I can't understand why it was necessary for Madame Curie to come to the U.S. to accept a gram of radium. Didn't she control the patents?

Madame Curie, who, with her husband, discovered radium—one of the greatest achievements in the history of science—refused to patent the process to produce radium. The idea of making money from radium never entered their minds. "It would be contrary to the scientific spirit," said Madame Curie. And this noble thought was expressed at a time when she was very poor, as she and her husband were poor all their lives. Denied the support they deserved, they conducted their vast, seemingly endless experiments in a laboratory that was hardly more than a shed. Unable to hire anyone to do the rough work, Madame Curie herself took care of the fire and shovelled tons of pitchblende ore in order to extract the tiny bit of radium that was to establish their fame as benefactors of the hu-

man race. Dr. Einstein, in speaking of her, uttered these beautiful words: "Marie Curie is, of all celebrated beings, the only one whom fame has not corrupted."

* * *
When is our population expected to reach 150,000,000?

Dr. Louis I. Dublin, statistician, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, our highest authority on population trends, predicted, in 1931, that the U.S. would have a population of 148,000,000 in 1970. Not that it has anything to do with so serious a question as population, but this constant growth reminds me of the silly story of the house-fly who went walking with her daughter on the shiny bald head of a sleeping man. "My darling daughter," she commented, "here you find a case of how things change in this world. When I was your age, this was only a footpath."

* * *
A scientist connected with General Foods pooh-poohs the idea that concentrated food tablets are on the way. Please comment.

Lewis W. Waters, who is in charge of the research laboratories of General Foods, tells lovers of the art of eating that concentrated food tablets won't supplant juicy steak dinners "because it would mean that they'd have to eat every day three pills the size of baseballs." I have respect for Mr. Waters, but if I were he I'd refrain from such sweeping predictions. To begin with, such generalizations are outside the scientific spirit. A few days ago I saw an announcement issued by Abt and Lewis, Inc., which said it had ready for commercial distribution "a new product known as Clam Broth Pennies, clam broth in tablet form, 10 for 10c." That's getting perilously close to telling Waters to shut his mouth and get back to his test tubes.

* * *
Some years ago I read a letter written by a landlord to a prospective tenant who had made inquiries regarding the W.C. Can you give me the text of this amusing piece of nonsense?

The way I heard it, a young couple, about to be married, went house-hunting in the country. On their way home the young woman fell into deep meditation, which caused the young man to ask why she was so silent. She replied that she liked the last

house they had inspected, but didn't remember having seen any W.C., by which she meant the water closet. Recalling that he too hadn't seen such an outfit he wrote to the landlord asking where the W.C. was located. The landlord, who didn't know what W.C. meant, concluded that his prospective tenant was referring to the Wesleyan Church. Accordingly, he replied as follows:

"Dear Sir: I regret very much the delay in answering your letter, but I have the pleasure to inform you that the W.C. is located nine miles from the house, on a good paved road, and is capable of seating 240 people. This is unfortunate for you if you are in the habit of going regularly, but you will be glad to know that a number of people take their lunch and make a day of it. Others who can't spare the time go by auto, but generally they are in such a hurry that they cannot wait. The last time my wife and I went was six years ago, and we had to stand all of the time. It may interest you to know that a Bazaar is to be given soon to raise funds to furnish plush seats, as many of the members feel that this is a long felt want. I may mention that it pains me greatly not to be able to go more often."

* * *
Two years ago I received literature describing Freethought books edited by a Mr. Lewis. Can you tell me how to get in touch with him?

Mr. Joseph Lewis is president of the Freethinkers of America 317 E 34th St., N.Y.C. He also publishes many good books on Freethought, Eugenics, and the like. I recommend his work.

* * *
Is it a fact that reference to God was left out of the Constitution because of Thomas Paine's influence on the Constitutional Convention?

Thomas Paine wasn't connected with the Convention, being at work, at the time, on an invention, which he "took to Europe during the year in which the Constitution was ratified by a convention of the States," according to William J. Fielding, in his book, "The Shackles of the Supernatural." The point to remember is that Paine wasn't the only Freethinker among the founders of the Republic. Jefferson, Madison, Washington, the Adamases, and others were Infidels

whose heterodoxy ranged from a mild Deism to plain, unadulterated Atheism. I have, of course, written voluminously on this subject in many of my books. I have quoted Washington's position perhaps a dozen times, and am glad to do it again. I refer, of course, to the Treaty with Tripoli, which Washington drew up and had ratified by the U.S. Senate, June 10, 1797, in which the following sentence appeared: "The government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded upon the Christian religion."

There are organizations in the country—the most active is in Philadelphia—which are endeavoring, and have been trying for generations, to get the Constitution changed so that it acknowledges the Christian religion and praises God, etc. In the Fielding book just mentioned, reference is made to the fact that "our government, constitutionally based as it is on the sovereignty of the people, has been declared by the Fundamentalists to be 'contrary to the express declaration of Holy Sripture.'"

Dr. M. M. Mangasarian presents the conflicting passages in parallel columns, as follows:

The Constitution declares: That all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit; and that they have at all times an undeniable right to alter their form of government in such manner as they may think expedient.

St. Paul says (Romans, XIII, 1, 2): "Let every soul be subject unto the higher power: for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

* * *

Is it true that "The Dynasty" was suppressed?

New York City won't see "The Dynasty," a drama dealing with the Rockefeller family, because of pressure brought to bear on the producers by the Rockefellers. The stage can spoof President Roosevelt, but it daren't deal with one of America's economic rulers.

* * *

I was greatly amused by your Christian Science story dealing with a be-

liever's back-door flirtations with medicine. Have you ever heard their alibi when they submit to the surgeon's knife, as sometimes happens? I recall a Christian Scientist who hired a surgeon to cut out a small cancer on his lip.

Dr. Alfred Cox, in *The Literary Guide*, London, England, tells amusingly of a Christian Scientist's rationalization of his dealings with a surgeon:

Mr. Herbert Paterson, a well-known London surgeon, said last year, in an address to a medical society, that he had once operated on a Christian Scientist, and on asking her how she reconciled this recourse to surgery with her religion she said: "You told me that if I was not operated on I should die, and suicide is forbidden by my religion!"

History doesn't relate how the lady came to ask the advice of the surgeon in the first instance, but I have no doubt she would have been able to find an equally convincing reason.

* * *

Has Walter Winchell been pulling any new boners?

Walter Winchell's column, as I've written before, shows what it's like when one conducts his education in public. The man's bright, but ignorant. For example, he tells about the Rancee of Sarawak, who was found in a night club in New York City going in for hi-de-ho hilarity and gaga gaiety by way of a flood of hot-dig-dig-dam likker. What struck Winchell was the fact that no one bowed to her or paid her any attention, while "in India, every person within sight, of her would have to bow before being allowed to move." Also, we're told the lady's husband is "the only white rajah in India." I'm afraid Winchell went in for some of the hilariously daffy stuff the lady was drinking, for he slipped up on his geography. That's what comes from spending too much time on the steamier side of life—it's a little hard on geography. Sarawak, my dear Winchell, isn't in India at all. This State, which covers 50,000 square miles, is about 2,000 miles from India. To be exact, it's in Borneo, in the Malay Archipelago. Winchell gets tripped up this way almost every hour, but he doesn't mind—and the big money continues

to roll in. So why should he listen to jealous pedants?

* * *

Do small cars enjoy any advantages besides low costs?

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology conducted a review of opinions from 50 scientists and engineers, in December, 1937, on the question of small, inexpensive cars versus large and expensive ones. The experts agreed that "the small, inexpensive cars outperform the larger and more expensive models." These authorities also agreed that the wise purchaser should look for fewer frills. One reply read: "A soundly built motor car in the hands of an intelligent operator willing to give it reasonable care should last 25 years." Most obvious objections: glaring headlights, tire-changing difficulties, sloping divided windshields, and heavy corner posts which obscure vision. Purpose of a car: to get the rider there and back, not to carry him in a balloon-tired boudoir.

* * *

Why did Mrs. Roosevelt resign from the Colony Club?

The press reports of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt's sudden resignation from the high-toned Colony Club—of which she had been a member for several decades—failed to mention the real reason for her decision. Her friend, Mrs. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., wife of the Secretary of the Treasury, was blackballed by the snooty outfit, which angered Mrs. F. D. R. and caused her to resign in protest against the club's anti-Semitism. Mrs. Roosevelt, like her husband, is quite free of all forms of racial prejudice.

* * *

Is it true that whales when stranded die of starvation?

A stranded whale invariably dies, but not of starvation, as commonly believed. Recently, when a large school of whales was stranded on the Australian shore, Prof. W. A. Osborne, of the University of Melbourne, made inquiries and learned from *Nature*, one of England's finest scientific journals, that there are a number of theories:

"The blood now being acted on by gravity . . . produces anemia of the brain."

"The weight of the body impedes breathing."

"The unaccustomed warmth . . . induces heat stroke."

"The . . . temperature . . . gives rise to internal chills and pneumonia."

"The whales do not die because they are stranded; they are stranded because they are dying."

At any rate, no expert said the whale starved to death, so that's out.

* * *

What are the commonest things of a harmful nature which motorists do to their machines?

The three don'ts below cover the most common practices which injure one's motor car. They apply to about 95 percent of all drivers and may be laid entirely to rank carelessness:

1. Racing a cold motor ruins pistons, rings and cylinder walls.
2. Excessive choking and running with choke out doubles gasoline cost and dilutes oil.
3. Abrupt acceleration and foolish use of brakes is plain folly and costs plenty in gasoline, tires and repairs.

These don'ts are taken from a letter sent by Ford dealers to purchasers of new cars.

* * *

What is the value of the motor cars now in use in the U.S.?

America's motor cars, in use early in 1938, have an estimated value of \$5,233,040,159, for 21,871,040 units. An estimated value of up to \$500 is given to 3,560,000 machines, and \$175 for each of the remaining 18,311,404.

* * *

What's your opinion of Dr. Locke's treatments and the special shoes he promotes?

Dr. Mahlon Locke, Williamsburg, Ontario, Canada, is a quack through and through, even though he has a diploma in medicine and a license to practice. He has worked out a simple system of money-making by twisting the patient's big toe, in order to cure everything from rheumatism to diseases of the nervous system. He attracts up to 1,000 patients each day, whom he twists at \$1 per twist. A few hours' work each day can easily net him \$1,000, which isn't bad at all. The treatments, so-called, bring him big money, but so far as the sick people are concerned they are so much hokum. Dr. Locke also promotes the sale of a special shoe which is sold under his name. I've seen these shoes and can say definitely they are about

the unsightliest footgear ever made. The trick about these shoes—the one which brings big money from the suckers—is to get the patient to buy a pair that's two or three sizes too large. Most people, when they buy shoes, usually choose ones that are too tight. The change to very loose shoes gives the impression of wonderful relief from the patient's real or imaginary ailments. The idea is nonsensical, but it works—like so many other forms of quackery. Dr. Locke has been attacked by reputable bodies, but without avail, because of his cleverness in refusing to make any claims. Dr. Locke just keeps his mouth shut and lets the fools do the claiming for him. After all, what can one do to him when his patient, and not Dr. Locke, claims an almost miraculous cure of some stubborn disease? Dr. Locke keeps mum while he grabs in the thousands of dollars each week. Why talk and stick out his chin when he can keep quackery paying big dividends without so much as making a single promise or assurance?

* * *

How does your wardrobe compare with O. O. McIntyre's, which you'll find listed in the enclosed clipping?

The cutting, as the British say, is from *The Saturday Evening Post*, authored by a Mr. J. Bryan III (whether that means 3rd or 11th I'm not certain), and sez with an air of authority that O. O. McIntyre, in moving from one hotel to another in N.Y.C., used 26 trunks to hold his clothes. No auditor's sworn certificate accompanies the inventory, but here it is, and you can take it or leave it:

200 neckties, 200 bathrobes, 100 pairs of sox, 100 shirts, 50 suits of Japanese silk underwear, 60 pairs of pajamas, 60 suits, 50 pairs of shoes, 40 hats, and I lost track of overcoats, mufflers, silk toppers, spats, and jockstraps, if any.

Usually anything connected with O. O. McIntyre gives me a pain in the monogram of Mrs. Archibald S. Smith. It's always been my notion that the paper he uses to write his pieces on could be better used to wipe his asinine snout, but this list tickles my belly-button. Usually I wouldn't give two hollers down a rain barrel for a ton of pieces by or about McIntyre, as I'm certain he wouldn't

give the sweat off a certain place for every line I've written in a life crowded with literary exhibitionism. If he ever thinks of me—which I doubt—it must be that I'm wild and woolly and full of fleas.

Take those 60 pairs of pajamas. You take 'em—I sleep raw. Or the 50 suits of Japanese silk underwear. I don't even bother with an undershirt, even in the coldest weather, thus limiting my underwear to latex-belted, rayon shorts which can be had anywhere for about 29c. One thing that puzzles me about McIntyre's wardrobe is the complete absence of handkerchiefs. What does he do, wipe on his sleeve? The 200 bathrobes can remain in his wardrobe, for I'm not even envious, preferring my single camel's hair robe—which I bought 19 years ago and which shows wear and tear in at least 40 places, and which I wear only when my room is actually chilly, or put on when I get out of bed at least two times each night to let the dogs out and, when they've attended to their private affairs, let them in again if they scratch long enough to wake me again. That's the time I always put on my one and only pair of slippers—a masterpiece that cost \$1.25 and which consists of sheepskin outside and the wool inside—a little letdowny to the esthetes but nice on the toes and ankles.

I can't flash 200 ties, but I can show off a dozen, all hanging from a patented metal gadget. Having a lot of ties doesn't mean much to me, for I keep wearing the same tie until it gets all wrinkled and sweat-marked under the chin, whereupon I put it on the rack and pick out another—usually a wrong match for my ensemble—and so it goes for about three years, at which time I throw half of them away and send what's left to the cleaner's. I don't remember buying ties. They just accumulate. But no matter what happens there'll always be a dozen on that rack, even after a major disaster, I suppose.

When it comes to sox and shirts, I'm jealous of McIntyre, for I like to have lots of them, even though I don't get around to actually putting in ample stocks. Once I read in a department store advertisement that no man ever has too many sox. At

the time I nodded my head solemnly, as I do when I come on anything particularly profound and deep. The same goes for shirts. But I prefer dime store sox and mail order shirts. Two bits for a pair of sox sounds extravagant to me. I believe I ought to get from five to eight pairs of sox for every buck I hand out. As for shirts, \$1.25 is plenty for the kind I like—plain ones with soft colors attached, with buttons on the cuffs, and a pocket on the left breast to hold my fountain pen, tiny comb and cigars when I'm not wearing a vest.

Any man who has 40 hats must be a screw-ball. Of course, I don't present myself as a perfect example, for I, unfortunately, go to the other extreme. I have only one hat, and I wear it only in the winter months. In the warmer months I leave it on the seat beside me—and usually lose it. That means I'm to go hatless until Fall, when I buy another hat. That's been going on for 15 or more years. Now we come to the 50 pairs of shoes. Maybe O. O. needs that many, but I believe I can continue getting by on the five pair I have scattered around. Thank you, I get by O.K. with five suits even though O. O. needs 60.

I understand Mr. McIntyre makes more than \$100,000 per year writing his daily masterpieces. So why should he listen to a sour-puss who couldn't write one of his columns if his life depended on it. But I'd rather work in a stable. It's more honest. Though, as Bob Burns says in that Wells-Fargo movie, working in a stable means one must keep everlastingly at it or one's work will pile up on him.

* * *
What is your opinion of the rhythm method of birth control?

The rhythm method of birth control is not reliable. I advise against putting faith in it, for disappointment is inevitable.

* * *
Theists often assert that Nature lacks meaning without a God. Please comment.

Jean Meslier, in his much-admired "Testament" (which is quoted in William J. Fielding's "The Shackles of the Supernatural") comments on this notion, as follows:

"Nature, you say, is totally inexplicable without a God; that is to

say, in order to explain what you understand so little, you need a cause which you do not understand at all. You pretend to make clear that which is obscure by magnifying its obscurity. You think you have untied a knot by multiplying knots."

It is an easy but futile device to "solve" Nature's mysteries by superimposing the supernatural. While we continue century after century to know absolutely nothing about the supernatural we learn more and more about Nature, so that while there are secrets still to be explained we have—through the powers of science—learned to know the natural causes of an increasing number of phenomena. And the more we learn about Nature the more remote becomes the God-idea.

* * *

I have received attractive circulars from a concern which advertises that it is in need of men and women to address envelopes at home, for which I can expect a steady income. Please advise.

You didn't tell the whole story. You were asked to send \$1 for instructions—and that's what the advertiser is after. It's a racket. Any employer who wants envelopes addressed can get the work done right in his home territory at the rate of millions per day, if he can use that many, which is doubtful. This scheme is intended to take a dollar bill from each person who stays at home and has plenty of time on his or her hands.

* * *

As a lover of music, what do you think of the fantastic prices at which old violins frequently change hands, musicians who can ill afford it sometimes paying, or pledging their futures, for such possessions? Are there not many modern fiddles every bit as good as, and perhaps even better than, the best of these expensive relics?

While I consider the violins of Stradivari masterpieces, I don't hold to the notion that the "secret" of great violin making died with the old artists of Cremona and elsewhere. I reject the argument that those wonderful craftsmen used wood that isn't obtainable today, or that it was seasoned in a way that's unknown to the modern world, or that secretly compounded varnish was made in those days and applied in a special way

that's beyond modern violin makers. There are at least a dozen workers in Europe and the U.S. who can make violins every bit as good as the masterpieces turned out two centuries ago. Today's skilled craftsmen know exactly what kind of wood was used by Stradivari, how it was seasoned, the precise dimensions to which it was cut, the exact mixture that went into the varnish, and how it was applied. It has been demonstrated several times that a fine American or European violin of the present century and a genuine product of Stradivari left experts sorely puzzled when they heard them played from behind screens. A good American or European violin of the 20th Century is just as good as the article turned out centuries ago, the differences being only in the price and prestige commanded by the older instruments. Many instrumentalists—especially those of great reputation—have to sport a "Strad" in order to impress their audiences and win additional publicity, though they have to invest as much as \$100,000 in a genuine old-timer. It isn't a racket, by any means. It's just suggestive of romantic, traditional hokum.

* * *

Are any of the much-advertised suppositories or tablets any good, referring, of course, to those which are promoted under such headlines as "One Frenchwoman Tells Another"?

The tablets will disappoint. I warn readers against them. Persons who can't visit a legally-operated birth-control clinic should go to a competent physician. Such a doctor has the legal right to impart birth-control information. The American Medical Association has passed a resolution expressing ethical endorsement for those doctors who decide in favor of educating patients in the use of birth control devices or chemicals.

* * *

What's your opinion of combination pens and pencils?

A Consumer's Union report says:

The pen-pencil combination in one instrument is of little value. It is satisfactory neither as a pen nor as a pencil; the ink capacity is very small and the storage space for lead is inadequate. . . . Of all the recent innovations in fountain-pen design, few, if any, have improved writing quality or durability.

. . . The writing qualities and serviceability of a pen do not depend on its price. A pen costing \$2.50 may, in fact, actually be superior in all essential respects to one costing \$10. The factors which materially affect the manufacturing cost of a pen are: the amount of gold (and the quality of the iridium) in the point; the type of material of which the barrel and cap are made; the amount of gold in any trimmings; workmanship. Best buys: Shaeffer Wasp, \$1.95, Waterman's Ideal, \$3.

Recently I bought an Esterbrook fountain-pen for only \$1, and I want to say I got a wonderful bargain, for the pen is a little gem. It works like a charm and is a good buy in every respect, even though the point isn't made of gold.

* * *

A movie magazine says a certain actor is such a stickler for realism that he insists on real champagne in his drinking scenes. Please comment.

I suppose he'd insist on real poison in a death scene.

* * *

What's the source of the word "Listerine"?

It comes from the name of Lord Lister, the English surgeon who made so many contributions to aseptic surgery.

* * *

I have been buying U.S. savings bonds, which are now widely advertised. Do you think it advisable to put my extra money in this type of investment? I have life and accident insurance. I am satisfied with a small return, preferring to be sure of having the money available. I am sending fee for personal reply.

This reader doesn't need any advice from me, because he is doing exactly the right thing. I urge him to keep on buying the government's securities, and while he's at it he might try to take the limit permitted by the postal savings banks. I advise small investors against foreign bonds and most corporation securities.

* * *

What is eight-day-old pea soup?

Certain French chefs make quite a specialty of eight-day-old pea soup, which is said to be extraordinarily fine "if heated to 100 degrees centigrade every night for eight nights." That strikes me as dawdling a whole lot just to get pea soup. Now, don't get the idea I'm prejudiced against

pea-soup, for I'm not. Next to vegetable soup (always my first favorite, if it's made thick enough) I like a thick, foggy-looking pea-soup. Then comes ox-tail, which, some wag complained, was going back pretty far to get some soup. Once—ah, the memory is still with me—a Chinese friend made bird's nest soup for me—it took something like 24 hours to get the dish just right—and the thrilling taste still brings stimulation to my mouth every time I think of it. Another favorite with me is a cup of beef juice, which I've had only a few times but which I intend to tackle oftener whenever I can spare something like \$1.25 for about four ounces of liquid. It seems the chef, after taking his roast beef off the stove, puts the beef in a press which squeezes out the pure juice. It's swell. Once, while in New York, I was taken to a famous German restaurant on 14th Street, by George Sylvester Viereck—this was before he became a paid prostitute of Hitlerism—and he tried to talk me into eating pure blood (in sausage form) but I resisted to the end, even when he smacked his lips over his own portion.

* * *

Will you be good enough to debunk the oft-quoted comment that a hog's right ham is always tougher than the left ham?

Official tasters connected with the Department of Agriculture studied this question scientifically and reported "a hog's right ham is just as tender as his left one." The question was taken up by government experts who referred to the theory that a hog exercises his right leg more, thereby causing those muscles to grow tougher. The problem was tackled in a thorough manner, and the result was that tests proved a group of hogs "which had not exercised at all turned out tougher than mates which had trotted all around the pen. A hog doesn't use his legs much anyhow. He just works his snout." Thus does the spirit of debunking find welcome in high places.

* * *

More power to you as you continue the work of making the people think.

I don't think I'm making the people think at all. In truth, I have no contacts with the people. With my small

circulation I can reach only an insignificant minority. The masses still prefer writers who pretend to make them think, all along catering to their prejudices, toadying to their mental timidities, and flattering them with a pseudo-wisdom which really is nothing more than conventional ideology, and that's another name for bunk. Such people never welcome a thinker who seeks to tell them the truth as he sees it. Such a firm-footed thinker is annoying to a public that has been fed too long on intellectual pap. But, I'd rather have the attention of a small minority of discriminating readers than the applause of a million morons. As some anonymous writer put it, "he who attempts to show his learning to the ignorant exposes his ignorance to the learned." The masses refuse to take Diderot's words to heart, to the effect that the first step towards philosophy is incredulity. When credulity is the popular vice, the teacher of incredulity can't hope for popularity. But popular or not, he teaches the important lesson that ignorance is killing and the ignorant man is a menace. I learned long ago that popularity is an empty luxury, for I've had numerous chances to watch really popular people. I never envy them, except that most of them find it so easy to make lots of money, while I, on the other hand, always need more money than I can lay my hands on in order to carry out the plans I have for the dissemination of knowledge. That's the only thing I envy them about, I'm frank to say. But if they didn't do as they are expected—merely deceiving the people into thinking they are indulging in thought—they wouldn't have the money. They are the kind who are always brave enough to come right out in public and tell their audiences exactly what they want to hear. The victims of bunk are always willing to pay handsomely for their own deception, especially if they are flattered in the bargain. The old proverb put it this way: "A flattering speech is a honeyed poison." The flatterers have nothing to say, so they keep right on saying it, to the admiration of their gullible listeners. Shrewd scoundrels have long known the secret that fools are willing to pay liberally for being ad-

mired and flattered. Mark Twain said somewhere we in this country have "three unspeakably precious things—freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them."

* * *

1. What does a ton of ammunition cost?
2. What is the cost of a shell fired from a 14-inch naval gun? 3. What's the price of a torpedo?

1. Between \$88 and \$1,000. 2. About \$125. 3. \$12,500.

* * *

Where did the word "typhoon" come from?

It's Chinese, coming from sailors, and means "the Mother of Winds."

* * *

It is frequently urged that belief in God is essential to moral behavior for the masses. Please comment.

I have written on this subject many times, so I'll turn over the platform to the magazine, *American Medicine*, from which I lift the following editorial, entitled "Religion and Conduct":

"A recent analysis of the character of the inmates of our prisons dismisses several smug theories as utterly fallacious. The contention that the foreign element is responsible for a vast proportion of the crimes committed is revealed as erroneous, the analysis showing that native Americans comprise the perponderant majority in our prisons. But perhaps the most interesting disclosure is that contained in the figures showing that, in an institution harboring several thousand criminals, **ONLY NINE ARE ATHEISTS OR NON-BELIEVERS.** That is perhaps the most distressing comment on the moral and ethical significance of modern religion as a directing force in the life of a modern individual. Perhaps the most frequent and insistent question directed against any attempt to discredit belief in the existence of God is the unfailing question, 'What influence would keep men good if they did not fear God?' It is perfectly evident that the question, generally regarded as final and unanswerable, is an impotent and pointless one. The prison statistics reveal that a belief in and fear of God is no guaranty whatever of good conduct, and, conversely, that a disbelief in God in no way releases man from a sense of moral responsibility. It has in fact always been a notable circumstance that

disbelievers and Atheists were generally extremely law-abiding and well conducted."

However, the old argument that without religion man would resort to rape, murder, flirting, and beer-guzzling on a gigantic scale goes right on being repeated by Cardinal Broad Plushbottom and Bishop Brakewinde. Anyone who pays too much respect for a mere fact shows himself to be a Communist, a New Dealer, a Nudist, or perhaps even an exponent of Einstein's Relativity. What, oh what, would happen to this divinely-protected world if the priests, preachers and rabbis weren't here to keep us straight? Think what a haven of peace and justice today's Spain would be if only the masses would listen to the sacred urgings of the Vatican! And look at Italy, where the Mother Church and Fascism have become bed-buddies—what a paradise of sweetness and light! What this country of ours needs is a priest in the White House, a nun in every school-room, compulsory church attendance, and a return to the tithe system wherein each individual must give at least 10 percent of his earnings to the Church. Then, indeed, would Utopia come at last! Speed the day!

* * *

Have you any figures showing what it would mean if some particular species of insect were to breed unhindered for a certain period of time?

There are many reports available in books about insects. The first to come to mind is the ordinary cabbage aphid, an insect which is so small that it weighs only a sixteenth as much as a grain of wheat. If this insect were able to continue to breed unhindered for a single season the descendants of only a single aphid family would weigh 822,000,000 tons. The author of a book on insects says this would mean that the aphid that descended from a single family in a single year would weigh more than the entire human race.

* * *

After reading "The History and Meaning of the Catholic Index of Forbidden Books," by Joseph McCabe, I wonder how Catholic leaders go about defending this strange, oppressive institution.

For centuries, when the Catholic Church, dominated most of Europe, the Index of Forbidden Books wasn't defended at all; it was enforced, with

all the powers of suppression at the command of the Church or its secular arm, the Catholic State? Heretical or skeptical books that originated in non-Catholic countries were the particular objects of the Index, the purpose being to keep such "harmful" works out of the hands of the "innocent faithful," lest they be corrupted by the new intellectualism and become non-believers.

Abba Ernest Dimmet, in his recent book, "My New World," has a strange defense of the Index, which shows how so-called Catholic scholars are able to twist any unpleasant fact to their advantage among the uninformed and unthinking. It's his peculiar view that the Index is really a blessing a perfect boon to free expression because it makes possible for an author to express his thoughts freely without "fear of offending pious ears."

What he is saying is that since the Church's Index serves to keep the pious from reading heresy, the heretics are free to go ahead with their propaganda! Thus, by Jove, the Index is an instrument for freeing the human mind! That's what I call damned clever squirming to get out of an unhappy situation. Thus, when the Church controlled the reading of perhaps 99 percent of the people of certain countries, during the days when the Church ruled supreme, this was done with a view to aiding the establishment of true Rationalism and Freethought, because the 1 percent were still "free" (if they didn't happen to have the bad luck to fall into the hands of the Inquisition) to make explorations into the intellectually forbidden. Therefore, it follows that the Catholic Church is the sworn defender of free inquiry.

I have followed your writings on religion, which you often describe as an intellectual blight. What do you intend to put in religion's place after it's destroyed?

That's one of the favorite arguments of the God-mongers. What will you put in religion's place? What a question! What proof of intellectual bankruptcy when clergymen actually have the crust to offer such a silly argument as support for the opium of religion. What would you say of the doctor who, when he cured you of

a bellyache, decided you need a nice carbuncle somewhere on your buttocks to take the place of the pain in your tummy? What would you think of the builder who removed a disease-breeding tenement and then erected it again on another empty lot? What would you think of an anti-militarist who stopped a war in one place and then provoked a new one somewhere else? What would you think of the housewife who moved a barrel of dirt out of the cellar and then dumped it in the attic? But why go on? The Freethinker isn't trying to remove one mental ailment in order to make room for another. The Freethinker fights religious ideology because he is man's real friend, because he wants to see man grow to his fullest stature, because he hopes to see the day when reason, instead of prejudice and superstition, will rule man's actions. When the mind has been freed of the poisons of religion there will be something of a chance to develop a healthy mental organization capable of judging truth, of studying science, of absorbing knowledge, of respecting logic, fairness, cultural honesty, brotherhood and freedom. One disease is never an acceptable substitute for another disease. The intelligent thing to do is to get rid of the disease in order to make way for health. And that's the attitude of the Freethinker towards religion. He attacks the evil thing because its history reeks with injustice, falsehood, superstition, darkness, fear, prejudice, persecution, slaughter, hatred, suspicion and destruction.

* * *

Recently, in a discussion with a religious man who insisted that religion is based on faith, I made the statement that it was based on fear more than anything else. I would like to see a quotation or two on this subject from some high, reliable, intellectual source.

There is plenty of authority for your remark. Joseph McCabe's works abound with quotations on this point. Bertrand Russell, the distinguished English philosopher, comments:

"Religion is based, I think, primarily and mainly upon fear. It is partly the terror of the unknown, and partly, as I have said, the wish to feel that you have a kind of elder brother who will stand by you in all your troubles and disputes. Fear is the basis of the whole

thing—fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand-in-hand. It is because fear is at the basis of those two things.”

That, I believe, puts it in pretty simple words. Notice how Bertrand Russell probes a little deeper and shows how “fear is the parent of cruelty” and how “cruelty and religion have gone hand-in-hand.” The point is an important one, and I have helped, in past years, to pile up my share of the proofs of this observation. Bertrand Russell goes into this issue in a paragraph that’s so crowded with sound criticisms that I feel my readers will welcome the opportunity to see it below:

“It is frequently argued that we should all be wicked if we did not hold to the Christian religion. It seems to me that the people who have held to it have been for the most part extremely wicked. We find this curious fact, that the more intense the religion of any period and the more profound the dogmatic belief, the greater has been the cruelty and the worse has been the state of affairs. In the so-called ages of faith, when men really did believe the Christian religion in all its completeness, there was the Inquisition with its tortures; there were millions of unfortunate women burnt as witches; and there was every kind of cruelty practiced upon all sorts of people in the name of religion.”

The church’s blind followers fear the power of the priests to bring down on their heads God’s wrath, so they accept the cruelties that accompany faith and fear, while the Church, on the other hand, fears the power of Truth, because it can undermine the immense structures the church bodies have erected on the decaying corpses of superstition and ignorance, so they resort to the vilest cruelties when they have the power to carry out their threats. What but fear of the truth would have led the Catholic Church, in 1558, to decree, in Spain, that any bookseller or individual caught with forbidden books in their possession would suffer the penalty of death and the confiscation of their property? There’s a perfect illustration of fear and cruelty going hand-in-hand, as Russell says.

The record is indeed a forbidding one, covered with oceans of blood. The tragic thing of it all isn’t so much that the Church’s influence has been to nurture dogmatism, bigotry, superstition and ignorance—bad as they are—but to reach out, like a pestilence, to strike down everything that is intended to advance man to a higher state of civilization. I have, on many occasions in the past, written voluminously on this phase of the subject, but before putting it aside in this brief article let me draw again on the writings of Bertrand Russell—one of the world’s most intellectual Freethinkers—to show what a great student of life and its problems has learned about the blight of religion on man’s affairs:

“You find as you look round the world that every single bit of progress in humane feeling, every improvement in the criminal law, every step towards the diminution of war, every step towards better treatment of the colored races, every mitigation of slavery, every moral progress that there has been in the world, has been consistently opposed by the organized churches of the world.”

The above paragraph, in my opinion, packs a terrific wallop. And how fortunate is Bertrand Russell—and the rest of the Freethinkers—that in parts of the world, at least—the most enlightened parts, needless to say—the Church has been stripped of its power to censor or suppress opinions like these, let alone sentence their perpetrators to the gallows or to death by slow torture, as was done in millions of cases by the damnable Inquisition, an institution that the Church would like to return to power, through the medium of Catholic-Fascism. Catholicism and all other dogmatic religions are products of mental disease. They represent man’s intellect in its most corrupt, pest-ridden state. The black robes of the priests and the Black Death go together. The sunlight of Truth will destroy the disease germs of supernaturalism, unless the priest and his Fascist cohorts are able to blacken out the sun of knowledge, thus sending the race back to the depths of the Dark Ages, when man grovelled helplessly in ignorance and filth because he had surrendered his mind and body to the priest and

his related exploiters and deceivers. This discussion reminds me of a valuable passage in "Christianity and Conduct," by A. G. Whyte, which is a contribution to the ideas we are developing:

"When we look back upon the history of Christianity, upon the perpetual and bloody wars of religion, upon the bitter and abominable persecution of heretics, upon the melancholy procession of martyrs, upon the organized suppression of secular knowledge, and upon the Church's desperate opposition to every movement of human emancipation, it seems astounding that sensible men should ever clothe that institution in garments of white and gold. Their hallucination is due, however, to the subtle manner in which, from early childhood, they have been led to look away from the truth."

With the great Voltaire let us cry: "Crush the infamous thing!"—not with dagger, gibbet, rack and faggot, but with learning, enlightenment, reason and Truth!

Please advise me where I can buy the cheapest and best insurance for protection only against death.

It is well to remember that there's no such thing as a cheap policy, even against death alone. Insurance premiums are too high, because they are issued by profit-seeking corporations. Insurance will become cheaper when the government assumes this socially necessary work, the motive being service instead of profits. Meanwhile, I suggest that you buy your policy from one of the old-line companies, such as Prudential, N.Y. Life, Mutual, etc. You'll pay too much, but the protection will be certain for many years to come. (This question was accompanied by a dollar, which paid for a personal answer, but I am printing the matter here because I'm sure others are interested in the same subject.)

How can one tell the difference between ganders and geese?

The farmers around here have a simple trick which I'm glad to pass on in the interests of pure research. They turn them all out together and let them figure it out for themselves. And that reminds me of the happy mother of twins, who was having her babies in a hospital. Regaining con-

sciousness, she heard one of the nurses say "It's a boy!" She dozed off a while and came to—it seemed to her to be only a few seconds later—when she heard the same nurse say, "It's a girl!" The young mother cried, "If you can't make up your minds, bring it over and let me have a look."

Whenever a pug wins a big fight and is invited to say a few words over the radio, he always lets loose with "Hello, mom." Don't you think he ought to put in a call for pop once in a while?

You should be ashamed of yourself for speaking so facetiously of mother love—the sweetest, most precious emotion in all the big, wide world. Where would we be if we didn't know the meaning of blessed mother love? Let me tell you of a heart-tugging real-life incident which showed a mother's poignant love for her daughter. The story—and I believe it was true—tells of a prostitute who used to go her rounds on Fifth Avenue. She disappeared for a time and was found pounding the sidewalks of Park Avenue. Asked why she had gone East one block, she replied, her bosom heaving with emotion: "My daughter got married and I gave her Fifth Avenue for a wedding present."

Does a pig's tail curl to the left or the right? Does it make any difference?

The New Jersey State Department of Agriculture made an elaborate study of how a pig's tail curves and whether or not it makes any difference. It was found that most New Jersey pigs (the report is limited to the swine of that State) have tails that curve to the left or counter-clockwise. It doesn't make any difference which way the tail curves, but, say these authorities, it shouldn't be straight. A straight-tailed pig isn't considered a good specimen and is denied prizes by the more discriminating, esthetic judges.

Can you give your readers the Chinese parable of "The Old Man at the Fort"?

An ancient Taoist philosopher told this charming wise, gem-like story. It is, to my notion, a perfect morsel of art. Dr. Lin Yutang gives us the following translation, which is taken from one of his books:

An old man was living with his son at an abandoned fort, on the

top of a hill, and one day he lost a horse. The neighbors came to express their sympathy for this misfortune, and the old man asked: "How do you know this is bad luck?" A few days afterward, his horse returned with a number of wild horses and his neighbors came again to congratulate him on this stroke of fortune, and the old man replied: "How do you know this is good luck?" With so many horses around, his son began to take to riding, and one day he broke his leg. Again the neighbors came around to express their sympathy, and the old man replied: "How do you know this is bad luck?" The next year there was a war and because the old man's son was crippled, he did not have to go to the front.

* * *

Your treatment of the pulpit's attitude towards the Negro, especially in his status as a slave, moves me to ask if your information can explain by what method of reasoning the pro-slavery preachers denied that Negroes were people?

Pro-slavery preachers—and they were in the vast majority—made steady, unthinking use of this twisted syllogism: Man is made in the image of God; God, as everyone knows, is not a Negro; therefore, it follows that the Negro is not a man. Three generations ago that piece of "logic" had the sanction of divine authority, according to the pulpiteers. The church's treatment of the Negro race—lending itself as it did to the Negro's physical and intellectual degradation—is one of the blackest records in the rotten history of clericalism. That great Christian statesman, John C. Calhoun, said, again and again: "Show me a nigger who can parse a Greek verb or do a problem in Euclid and I will admit he is a human being like unto ourselves." Calhoun preferred to close his eyes to the obvious fact that the Negroes were prevented by law from obtaining an education. Today, anyone who repeated Calhoun's cruel words would put himself down as an ignoramus, for the records shows not only that Negroes can parse Greek verbs and do a problem in Euclid, but that they are able to make mighty contributions to science, chemistry, art, sculpture, literature, music, poetry, scholarship and the other expressions of

civilized being. And yet, the parents and grandparents of these geniuses were, in many instances, slaves, who were kept in ignorance by direct action of the slave-holders' lawmakers, with the whole savage spectacle blessed by the kindly, saintly gents of the cloth. What would Calhoun, and the preachers who repeated the silly piece of "logic" quoted above, think if they were enabled today to meet men and women like Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson, and Marion Anderson (all great singers); composers like William Grant Still, Rosamond Johnson, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and Clarence Cameron White; artists like Augusta Savage, Tanner, Barthe, Aaron Douglas and Norman Lewis; writers like James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, W. E. B. Du-Bois and Langston Hughes? These people, had they been born in slavery, could never have been able to develop their talents and express their genius. They would have been condemned to an empty existence as slaves, with statesmen like Calhoun saying they aren't human and pious preachers using "logic" to prove they aren't men.

* * *

Please give me the title of a good book on how a consumer and man-of-the-street can educate himself to be on guard against professional glad-handers and high-pressure salesmen? There have been hundreds of books written on how to become a high-pressure salesman, but I have not found any on how the common man can defend himself against these sharks.

I'm pretty sure there's no book that instructs readers in the art of wriggling out of the grasp of high-pressure, professional glad-handers out to sell something you don't want. That there's need for such a manual goes without saying. It's unpleasant to be hounded endlessly by insurance salesmen and their ilk who refuse to take no for an answer. How not to be bullied by them is a difficult problem in behavior—one still to be explored by a man of the world who knows this subject and knows how to put it in writing. Such a book could be called: *How to Avoid High-Pressure Salesmen.* Its subtitle could be worded something like this: *The Art of Buying What You Want When You Want It.* Such a book would be a blessing, and the publisher who is-

sued it could not only count on a modest fortune but the thanks of a suffering public.

Several cases come to mind. I know a businessman who use to have a passion for expensive cars. He could afford them, and, what's more, he enjoyed them. Some 20 years ago he had started out with a Buick, later to drive a successive stream of cars like the Studebaker, Cadillac, Lincoln, etc. So long as he drove such expensive cars—they used to cost more then than they do now—he was visited almost to exhaustion by car salesmen. It got so that he traded in his car each year, when all along he intended to keep it two, perhaps three, years. Hardly a day passed but that some salesman—often from distant places—visited him at his office. At the curb, out in front, it was considered normal to see a different new car at least once a day, with the salesman pressing the prospect to “just drive it around a few minutes.” His telephone rang endlessly. His mail was jammed with letters. This nuisance didn't even stop when he had just finished his regular Spring trade. The man thought he'd go nuts if he didn't work out some solution. Finally, he solved the whole matter in a jiffy. How? By buying a V.8 Ford and letting it be known that he intended, from then on, to stay in the Ford-Plymouth-Chevrolet class. The word has gone around. The sad news has finally been accepted. The man can't be budged from that class, and he trades when he feels like it.

Another businessman was known to be heavily insured. He had two educational policies for his growing children, an income policy for himself, which was to go into effect when he reached 65, and a policy for his wife, the total protection amounting to about \$50,000. One would imagine that such a person should be let alone. But, no. He was considered the ideal prospect for still more. So here was a busy person who found himself the target of every insurance agent within 200 miles of his office. It was a serious problem handling the men and getting rid of them. Being in a small city he couldn't afford to offend any visitor, so he found himself giving

almost a half hour a day to insurance salesmen.

What could he do? He discussed the problem with some friends, who also realized how difficult it is for a small-city businessman to get rid of unwelcome visitors without giving them at least a few minutes of one's time. He knew that the information he was sold to the limit on insurance meant nothing to this hungry horde of frenzied high-pressure artists. They knew better. So he went them one better. He signed their application sheets. He took their medical examinations, for which the company paid the doctor's \$5 fee. He let the policy call for a much larger premium than he could ever afford to pay. But—and here's the ringer—when the policy was delivered and the time came to pay for it, he politely told the office he had strained his finances and was unable to swing the deal. The policy would have to be canceled. This was done. But now the home office was sore at the salesman. He had put the company to considerable expense. He had let himself loose too well—at the company's expense and inconvenience. This procedure was worked about two or three times before it got known that Mr. So-and-So was no live prospect for more insurance. Now, he's let alone. The word has gone out, via grapevine, that he lets insurance men write policies for any amount, but never lifts them. That's going to pretty far extremes to purchase freedom from annoyance, but this man insists it was the only thing he could do, short of slamming the door in their face.

The same man used to buy about \$4,000—his year's savings—of municipal bonds. The word reached a whole army of bond salesmen, and they made his life miserable. He solved this in the same way he handled the insurance policies. He let the salesmen ship the bonds to his bank (with draft attached) but he always failed to lift the draft, with the result that the bonds went back to the company, with some collection charges added to the bond house's expense account. He's let alone now, and, when he wants some bonds, he decides when, how, and where they are to be bought.

And so on. The subject is a big

one and the possibilities for discussion are endless. The consuming public must learn how to handle it, if one is to have any peace. And the public, I'm sure, would be glad to pay for a book that could show them some neat methods of keeping clear of the go-getters. Such a job, well done, should earn the writer a place in the Hall of Fame.

* * *

I have heard it said that man's brutality must be blamed on his ancestors who lived in the jungle trees. Please comment.

I think someone should rise to the defense of our monkey cousins. They have been made to take the blame too often for the behavior of "civilized" men like Hitler and Mussolini. Blaming the horrors of Fascist gangsterism on our ape-ancestors is being just a little too rough on the chattering little fellows who amuse us when we watch them cavorting in the zoo. I've noticed their love of a little rough fun—like pulling tails and slapping one another on the snuzzle, but I never saw any of them go in for poison gas, their babies weren't put to work in cotton mills, they didn't divide themselves into "racial" groups and decide the smallest group was to be persecuted, they didn't behave any of their kind for leaving one tree to join the "inferior" apes playing in another tree, they didn't pass decrees declaring monkeys with red buttocks were inferior to those with blue bottoms, and, of course, they didn't die to maintain a system that allowed a small class of apes to take possession of all the coconuts and hold them for private gain. The monkey family is in serious need of a minister of propaganda.

* * *

Is it a fact that the Chinese find that even the cleanest white people carry an odor that's offensive to them?

Carl Crow, in his book on China, entitled "400 Million Customers," says this is so, that, regardless of how neat and clean they may be, white people offend the Chinese sense of smell. Mr. Crow, who spent 25 years in China as an advertising man, writes that not only is the odor unpleasant to them but, according to some of the author's close Chinese friends, it's nauseating. Mr. Crow is unable to explain the reason for this.

He isn't inclined to blame the odor on diet. Maybe some of my Chinese readers—I have a few—will take me into their confidence and write me exactly what kind of a stink it is they object to, where it seems to come from, and anything else they care to tell me—all in the interest of pure research. I recall how, when I was a kid, I used to find it offensive to be near women who had just partaken of food fried in lard. It used to nauseate me. But I don't recall having suffered the same unpleasant experience in recent years, which may be the result of having grown accustomed to the stink. Or, have the women found the stink and eliminated it with their almost equally terrible perfume? Strange, but it seems that I didn't notice the lard stink so much about men as about women, when I was a youngster. Maybe this was because the women did the cooking, thus getting themselves reeking with the lard vapor. But, all this doesn't seem to make sense about the Chinese angle I've been discussing. The women I mentioned all belonged to the working class. The women and men who are usually met by the inhabitants of China belong to our middle or upper classes. And they rarely stink of lard. So, if that's a fact, then what is it they stink of?

* * *

Please give me the lines of Thomas Hardy's Christmas Day poem?

Thomas Hardy's biting satire, given out on Christmas Day, 1924, follows: "Peace upon earth!" was said. We sing it,

And pay a million priests to bring it.
After two thousand years of mass
We've got as far as poison gas.

* * *

Give the derivation of the word "panic."

It is derived from Pan, the Greek God. The ancients believed Pan was able to bring about quick, causeless fears.

* * *

Did Mrs. O'Leary's cow kick over a lantern and start the great Chicago fire?

Silas Bent, one of the ablest journalists in the country and the author of several volumes on the newspaper business, says in his book, "Ballyhoo," that "the last survivor of the group which reported the Chicago fire of 1871 admitted, shortly

before his death, that Mrs. O'Leary's cow had not kicked over the lantern." He continues:

"The fire had started from spontaneous combustion in a hayloft, but a fretful Bossie seemed to the reporters a more picturesque origin of the disaster. The myth was embalmed in song and story; it is a part of our childhood heritage; and a disenchanted public is aggrieved and distrustful at being let down in this fashion."

It seems that the job of tracking down bunk is an endless one, and that the debunker assumes the most onerous of tasks.

* * *

Did you see Joan Crawford and Franchot Tone in "The Bride Wore Red" and, if so, what did you think of it?

Pretentious trash.

* * *

How did you like the Russian movie "Tovarich"?

I found it fairly amusing, though I never got the feeling it was important stuff.

* * *

What did you think of "Nothing Sacred"?

A good show, crowded with hilarious nonsense and amusing entertainment. Ben Hecht is at his best when he writes this sort of comedy and at his worst when he busts loose with the mystical hokum of "The Scoundrel." "Nothing Sacred" is a fast-moving satire on sensational journalism, and when I say it's as good as the same author's "Front Page" I'm throwing out a lot of praise. Frederick March and Carole Lombard do great work, but I thought the picture was wiped from them during the few minutes Maxie Rosenbloom did his funny bit of phoning to his slow-witted brother.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

It seems that we shall have to drastically revise most of the notions which we have held for the past two decades concerning the effectiveness of the airplane as an offensive weapon for demoralizing civilian populations and causing them to importune their governments to sue for peace at any cost. From what we can observe at this distance it appears that the exact opposite from the expected reaction is pretty generally being evoked by resort to bombing of civilians; there has been a stiffening of resistance and a firmer

resolution to win wherever this brutal measure has been used.

However, I believe that a more extensive use could be made of the airplane for spreading propaganda behind the lines, that is, by the dropping of printed leaflets. In such an application of this new arm the advantage would be heavily in favor of the forces of democracy, because they have only to hammer away persistently with the truth. The lies, on the other hand, needed to bolster the Fascist's cause if they used the same tactic would tend in time to help defeat them, for is it not an axiom that every lie needs to be followed by a few more for support? Thus they would soon become so contradictory and varied as to largely nullify each other.

SKEPTIC

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

I think The Freeman the most interesting publication in America. As a Rationalist I can say that. But the members of our union are not Rationalists and therefore I could not endorse The Freeman. There is only one reason why I couldn't—your attacks on that sweet delusion, that mental drug—religion.

The language in The Freeman is clear, concise, forceful; it reeks with the guts of reality. Somehow the average worker can stomach all the scathing and blistering attacks on the economic and political set-up, and yet become sentimental as hell about his religion. This shouldn't be so difficult to understand when even such thinkers as Durant, Santayana and Dewey still play with religion and religious ideas.

I believe you will have to be satisfied with the Rationalist minority now on the subscription list of The Freeman if you wish to continue the practice of battling religion. On the other hand, I believe that if religion were side-tracked or more delicately and tactfully handled, The Freeman could become a mass circulating paper.

Personally speaking, you can bat religion in The Freeman all you please and I will laugh and clap my hands with glee. But what delights the Rationalist will alienate the religious, and workers are religious either sentimentally or dogmatically.

I have tested The Freeman on workers. They get a big kick out of your quips and stories, and your spicy reviews of movies, your brilliant comments on political and economic life; they get a sour puss when I read one of your attacks on religion.

Neville Island, Pa. MELVILLE KRESS

[Editor's note: While I won't try to

infer that religious ideas are unpopular, I don't intend to go to the other extreme and take the position that the working masses are steeped in piety. The trend has been in the direction of indifferentism or outright skepticism, though I grant too many workers let themselves remain the intellectual slaves of priests, preachers and rabbis. So far as *The Freeman* is concerned, it shouldn't make compromises with supernaturalism even if this means a smaller body of readers. Readers like Melville Kress should bear in mind that they aren't being asked to enlist whole organizations of workers as readers of Freethought literature. All they need do is to get five or 10 readers, which shouldn't be difficult.]

* * *

KNOWS THE ANSWERS

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, December 26, 1937. (Ferd Gottlieb, reviewer.)

In addition to the well-known series of Little Blue Books, Mr. Haldeman-Julius publishes a monthly journal, the *American Freeman*, whose columns are filled almost entirely by his answers to readers' questions. The choicest of these he has gathered together and published in 12 small volumes of about Reader's Digest size.

They are a remarkable potpourri of fact, opinion and advice. Mr. Haldeman-Julius seems to be regarded by his readers as a combined encyclopedia, oracle, counsellor and etiquette manual, for they consult him on every conceivable topic. He gives movie criticisms, discusses domestic and world politics, debates religion from the freethinkers' viewpoint, appraises patent medicines and dispenses assorted bits of general information.

So pat are many of the answers that one suspects the editor asks them of himself in order to pass on an arresting fact or air an opinion. The books indicate an active and inquiring mind, a wide field of knowledge, strong opinions and an elaborate filing system. Some of the material must be dismissed as trivial, some of it as prejudiced, but the writing is vigorous, often witty, and every page puts on a good show.

* * *

Are the rich people still as bitter about Roosevelt as they were during the last national election?

If the comments I hear among businessmen reflect the minds of wealthy people throughout the country, F. D. R. is still in the dog-house, but I'm sure he doesn't mind so long as the masses are with him, and I believe they're still for the President. Only the other day I was visited by

the head of a commercial organization, and when the President's name came up I thought the man was ready to pass out, for his face turned purple and the veins in his face stuck out like the proverbial whipcords. I'm reminded of a story. A woman stopped into the office of her husband, who was manager of a large office building. His office was in the rear. After telling his wife that President Roosevelt was about to pass in front of his building, he advised her to go into an unrented office that faced the street. "I wouldn't walk across the hall to see the—" and here his speech broke into a number of unprintable words. Taking the key, the wife went to the office, which she found occupied by a chiropractor, who had just moved into the office, still unbeknownst to the manager, for the deal had been arranged by his assistant. The wife was the first patient, so the belly-rubber decided to give her a good going-over. He laid her out on the table and started massaging her, and the more he rubbed the more he felt stimulated by this buxom female. She, on the other hand, took everything he offered, including plenty of old-fashioned hugging and loving. When she got back to her husband she thought it best to tell her old man how she had been treated. Outraged, the husband asked, "Why didn't you yell?" To which the woman answered: "Why should I yell and let Roosevelt think I was cheering him?"

* * *

"I note that you do not recommend the changing of oil in the crankcase of a motor car. I asked the U.S. Bureau of Standards about that and they sent me a circular which stated that probably no damage would occur if the same oil were left in the crankcase, but they added that if damage did occur, it would be so costly that it was not worth the risk."—Elmer C. Helm, Md.

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Editor, *The American Freeman*:

Columnist "Jay Franklin," in *The Philadelphia Record*, for December 27, 1937, headed his column "We Reap the Fruits of a Mistaken Faith in Material Motives." "A generation ago, when Henry Adams wrote 'The Virgin or the Dynamo?' he asked whether the hearts of modern men had not turned from the mystical worship of the principle of life, as summed up in the age-old cult of the Virgin Mary, to the practical wor-

ship of the principle of inanimate energy, as summed up in the generation of electricity by the dynamo. It should not require the presence of human misery in the midst of our plenty, the falling birth-rate and the suicidal impulses of modern civilization to convince us that we have already chosen the dynamo as the object of our daily devotions and racial aspirations. We build more dams than cathedrals and turn switches oftener than we fall on our knees. . . . The marrow of our bones, our very blood and entrails protest that life is what we would serve, that the Virgin and Child still symbolize our faith in human destiny. . . . We do well, for a season, to turn our backs on this world of smokeless chimneys and shuttered factories, to renew the old faith in the Cradle and the Child."

What do you make of that, from Jay Franklin's pen?

My nature is probably not mystical and sensitive enough to appreciate it. I can't see how building more cathedrals and fewer dams is going to solve the social and economic problem. Can you?

READER

* * *

Being a Freethinker and Rationalist, I frequently indulge in discussions on religion, sometimes even with Fundamentalists. These religious extremists usually insist they believe every word of the Bible because it was written by men directly inspired by God, that the book is one long revelation of God's will. What is the best way to handle such an argument?

An infinite, all-knowing God who went to the trouble to reveal himself to the creatures he created certainly should inspire his official reporters to do an accurate job of authorship. Instead, we find a book crammed with absurdities, inconsistencies, impossibilities, superstitions, and plain ignorance. There is a vast literature that exposes these weaknesses of the Bible, much of which I quote from time to time. As Ingersoll showed, in one of his most famous and brilliant works, "The Mistakes of Moses"—a masterpiece of Freethought literature which I place alongside Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason"—an infinite God certainly ought to know better than to inspire writers in such a way that no two minds can agree on what their words mean, and clinched his argument with the valid point that the birth of each religious sect—of which there now are hundreds—is plain evidence of God's bungling as

an expositor of his ideas and wishes. The inference to be drawn is a simple one—the book, instead of being the work of God, is merely a book created by men, some of them capable of lofty sentiments, but most of them inaccurate, slovenly in their mental habits, careless about nature's facts, and possessed of an ethical code that reflected the savage, crude society in which they lived. They wrote as best they knew how, and, while some of it was good poetry, most of it was terribly inadequate. To attempt to apply this book to today's problems is to bind and hinder man's growing, emerging mind. That can do nothing but harm. Recently, while eating in a restaurant with a friend, during which we discussed several powerful dictators, the waitress, obviously a Fundamentalist, interrupted, with a positive, dogmatic air, that Mussolini would lose out because the Bible said so. My friend, who likes to argue with casual acquaintances—something I usually avoid like poison—pressed her for her reasons. She said the Bible says Rome would lose the last war, and, therefore, Mussolini, who represents Rome, would lose. Any victories he might win would be only temporary, and would merely imply that he hadn't yet approached his last war. This struck me as both amusing—and dangerous. Here is a world harassed by Fascism and dictatorship everywhere compelled to reckon with powers that mean to set civilization back 500 years. In order to defend the institutions they look on as being precious, they must think in terms of airplanes, battleships, tanks, and the like. But here, on the other hand, is a Fundamentalist who wavers such things aside because she found several words in the Bible. This is a small incident, but it shows the general effects of the sacred, holy book. It is another proof of the book's anti-social, unrealistic, mystical influence. Millions of people would actually use the words of half-savage fanatics as guides to the problems of today's economic, industrial and social world. The Bible was written when unemployment didn't exist, when imperialism was unknown, when science was unheard of, when instruments for mass destruction—bombers, poison gas, etc.—were yet to be invented, when large-scale industries weren't

even thought of—and yet the words in that book would be used, by millions of people, to influence those who are touched by these great social, military and economic forces. Looked at from that viewpoint the Bible becomes a source of social danger, especially when its advocates insist that it contains the revelations of an infinite God.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

There is a matter I hope you will bring to your readers' attention. It is the new fashion of Bible-quoting. If I've heard it once I've heard it 50 times—most recently by Father Francis Young on the National Farm and Home Hour, and by Father Brennan in his Philadelphia broadcast of January 1, 1938. "Not," he says, "peace on earth, good will to men; but peace on earth TO MEN OF GOOD WILL." Now why this distortion of the "word of God?" Has it sprung from a desire to justify the Church in its attacks on peaceful Ethiopians and Spanish Loyalists? Does it mean, boiled down, "Peace on earth to those who will permit themselves to be run by the Catholic Church?"

Mr. McCabe, with his trenchant pen, could write a brilliant essay on this subject, and I hope he will do so.

Chapter 2, verse 14 of St. Luke says uncompromisingly, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." It does not say good will toward men whom we happen to like, or men of any particular race, color or creed. Who shall arrogate unto himself the authority to change the wording of the Bible to suit himself? And if one man change it, why should not the rest of us do so if we see fit?

It was a striking coincidence that the President, in his Christmas message, said, (quoting Heywood Brown): "Good will toward men means good will to every last son of God."

W. MATTHEWS

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

Mr. McCabe mentioned the belated interest the Catholic clergy are taking in the Negro. Father Wm. Walsh in a recent broadcast from Philadelphia, explained that "Up to 10 years ago Catholics were hindered from helping the Negro by lack of equipment and personnel." . . . "Communists in the world are doing all in their power to magnify the differences between men, so they may step in and conquer the country: They are endeavoring to set black against white, stirring up race hatred." (Don't you think this calls for comment?) The reason that so few intelligent (?) Ne-

groes join the Communist party is, it seems, that they know "the Communists will use them for cannon fodder in case of a war." This is amusing, if you feel like laughing, when you consider whom the Fascists are using for cannon fodder. He waxes indignant about this "people which has been in chains for 300 years." . . . "Popes have urged the faithful to awaken from their lethargy—awaken to this crushed people, to the diabolical system that has denied their rights as citizens."

Seems to me something was done about this from 1861-1865, something in which the Catholic Church took little part. But perhaps Father Walsh never heard of this.

READER

* * *

What's the origin of the word "calculate"?

The ancients used pebbles to help in counting. The word for this was "calculi," from which calculate evolved.

* * *

Recently I attended a six-day bicycle race and was impressed with the immense amount of energy expended by the participants. Has such energy ever been measured?

Engineers connected with the General Electric Corporation measured the energy expended by six-day bicycle racers in terms "of an equivalent amount of electric current." They found "the work done by a six-day rider, if continued without intermission for the whole period, would have produced 15.5 kilowatts."

* * *

"A Catholic play, 'The Right to Live,' deals with the life of Thomas Fitz Simons, who, according to a Catholic reviewer, 'has never been given his rightful place among Revolutionary patriots, due to bigotry and intolerance.' I should be more impressed by this concern over the slighting of certain patriots if it included that patriot without whom there might have been no struggle for liberty, and who has truly been the victim of bigotry and intolerance—THOMAS PAINE."—Reader.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

O. O. McIntyre came out with this gem in his column of December 19, 1937: "No radio news commentator in my book has improved so much in the past year as Boake Carter. . . . His following grows. If I were in public life I'd want him on my side. More so even than General Johnson."

Of course if one is afraid of venomous tongues, one would have to be on the

side of reaction, which plainly has a monopoly on them. I am afraid Mr. McIntyre and most of his colleagues have not the stamina of President Roosevelt, who has shown himself a thoroughbred at taking vituperation and below-the-belt punches. And you yourself, Mr. E. H.-J., I've never known to back down from any stand you've taken because you thought it advantageous to be on the "right" side of the vitriol-throwers. It goes without saying that Mr. McCabe is on the limited roster of the fearless, also.

Wilmington, Del. W. MATTHEWS

* * *

How much do Americans pay in premiums to the life insurance companies? How much of this money do they get back?

During 1935, the U.S. life insurance companies received from policyholders \$3,639,000,000, of which \$881,657,000 was taken in on behalf of them in the form of net income from investments, the remainder, \$2,757,348,000 coming direct from the policyholders. The Spectator Insurance Year Book for 1936 shows what the life insurance companies did with the above-mentioned money during 1935, as follows:

Received from or on behalf of insurance policyholders	\$3,639,000,000	
Used for companies' expenses	696,000,000, or 19.1%	
Paid to policyholders for death or other claims	1,152,000,000, or 31.7%	
Paid to policyholders as surrender values on lapsed policies	883,000,000, or 24.3%	
Added to policyholders' reserve account	908,000,000, or 24.9%	
	<hr/>	
	\$3,639,000,000	100.0%

The Labor Research Association, in its report on U.S. life insurance companies, comments on these figures, as follows:

"We see that of the vast premium sums collected only 31.7 percent went directly to serve the basic purpose of the insurance, that is to pay death, disability and endowment claims. For this service policyholders paid 19.1 percent of the premium sums to the companies in expense charges.

"Of the sums collected, 24.3 percent was returned to policyholders in the form of surrender values. These surrender values, while not lost to the policyholders, represented sums diverted from their basic purpose. They are evidence of the vast turnover of policies that is continually taking place.

"Finally, 24.9 percent of income from policyholders was added to

reserves. At the end of 1935 these reserves had reached the vast total of \$20,400,000,000. These reserves must run the gauntlet of depression, war and inflation. They belong to the policyholders in a legal sense but the degree to which they will serve the basic purpose for which they have been accumulated is shadowed by doubt.

"The above figures are of course average figures and conceal a great deal. For instance, in industrial insurance (weekly premium policies usually taken by workers), the percentage of premium income used for expense is about 25 percent. For certain classes of industrial policyholders, e. g. those whose rates of lapsation is highest, the proportion of premiums used for expenses may be as high as 75 percent."

* * *

Please write a few lines about the way our Tories insist that the Constitution is a sacred document which mustn't be touched.

Our Constitution—especially its Bill of Rights—is a great document, but let's not forget that the Constitution itself provides for methods by which that "sacred" instrument may

be revised. The founding fathers didn't approach the job of building a Constitution with the attitude that they were creating something for all time and under all conditions. George Washington expressed the sane, sensible position of the best minds of his day, when he wrote:

"The warmest friends and the best supporters the Constitution has do not contend that it is free from imperfections but they have found them unavoidable and are sensible, if evil is likely to arise there from, the remedy must come hereafter . . . I do NOT think we are more inspired, have more wisdom, or possess more virtue, than those who will come after us."

* * *

You frequently write of Mark Twain as being a Freethinker, which I accept as true, but I wish you would add a few

Mark Twain expressions to the ones you have already offered. I am interested in his opinions on God and religion.

One of Mark Twain's most devastating remarks runs this way:

"The altar-cloth of one con becomes the doormat of the next."

In another place he writes of the conventional paradise, which he says was thronged only with "a great white-robed host of hosannaing ignoramuses." One of the great humorist's most forceful passages follows:

"A God who could make good children as easily as bad, yet preferred to make bad ones; who could have made every one of them happy, yet never made a single happy one; who made them prize their bitter life, yet stingily cut it short; who mouths justice, yet invented hell; mouths Golden Rules and forgiveness multiplied seventy times seven, and invented hell; who created hell; who created man without invitation, then tries to shuffle the responsibility for man's acts upon man, instead of honorably placing it where it belongs, upon himself."

Omar Khayyam brings out the same thought when he says:

Oh, Thou who Man of baser Earth didst make

And who with Eden didst devise the Snake

For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man

Is blacken'd, Man's forgiveness give—and take!

Of course, Gods are man-made, and, as F. J. Gould, in the 1937 issue of the "Rationalist Annual," issued by the Rationalist Press Association, of England, says: "Man who made Gods, is slowly unmaking them. He made them unconsciously; he unmakes them consciously."

* * *

Our daily newspapers are open propagandists for the churches. Large space is always being given to church matters. Sermons are reported generously, especially on Monday mornings. Now, what I'd like to know is this: Are journalists themselves churchgoers?

Toadying to the church is considered sound editorial policy in practically every editorial room in the country. So far as the daily press is concerned, I know of no exceptions. Even *The Daily Worker*, edited as it is by Atheists, likes to pipe down on its skepticism in order to attract church-

goers to its political and economic policies. Most of the other newspapers are edited by Freethinkers, the minority still going to church being less than 10 percent of the whole profession. I have no figures on journalists in general, but I have a special inquiry to draw on, and it strikes me as sound in every way. Leo C. Rosten, on a fellowship of the Social Science Research Council, made an exhaustive study of 154 Washington correspondents connected with our greatest newspapers and news services. His book, "The Washington Correspondent," contains valuable data. Among hundreds of other subjects studied by Mr. Rosten was the one dealing with journalists as churchgoers. He found that only 9.4 percent regularly go to church. I think that figure will be found true over most of the country. This means that the members of a profession who are only one-tenth churchgoers go out of their way to spill tanks of ink daily boosting for religion and the church. The support is insincere, and the church has little to be proud of in the kow-towing it gets from a profession that privately despises its methods, its ideas, its dogmas, and its purposes. But, to read the editorial and news columns of a newspaper, one would imagine at least 99.95 percent of all journalists were as pious as the Rev. Gerald B. Winrod, when he isn't busy baiting Jews. Instead, these newspapermen are a ribald, blasphemous, skeptical, disbelieving, churchless, and Godless outfit, to the extent, at least, of 90.6 percent. And yet, these men and women who constitute 90.6 percent of the profession never hesitate to rush into print to tell their readers what horrible people Atheists, Agnostics, Rationalists and Freethinkers are, and that the Soviet Union will never go very far because it has rejected God and his pious spokesmen.

They remind me of Cicero's description: "Of all villainy, there is none more base than that of the hypocrite, who, at the moment he is most false, takes care to appear most virtuous." Or, take William Hazlitt's words: "The only vice that cannot be forgiven is hypocrisy. The repentance of a hypocrite is itself hypocrisy." The same author, in another place, tells how "a hypocrite despises those

whom he deceives, but has no respect for himself. He would make a dupe of himself, too, if he could."

But, while we're looking over our journalistic hypocrites, let's not be too harsh with them, for, after all, they are only a single line in the great Parade of Cant. Who knows how many hypocrites are right up in the pulpit, preaching ideas they loathe, attacking people they really admire, supporting doctrines they consider outdated, and mouthing adherence to superstitions they know can only serve to poison and warp the minds of those who hear their cant in good faith. The Great God Mammon makes hypocrites of millions.

* * *

Can you explain why ancient Greece produced such a large number of philosophers?

One of the most important reasons was the fact that ancient Greece didn't permit the priests to exercise any kind of political control. They were confined strictly to their so-called functions in the temples devoted to religious ceremonies. This subordinate position of the priesthood made possible an atmosphere of intellectual freedom. As a result, philosophy flourished. If Greece had elevated its priests to positions of public authority the result would have been a condition unfriendly to free intellectual pursuits. Priests have always had a vested interest in intellectual darkness.

* * *

How did Adam get the words with which to give names to all the animals?

God, who was exceptionally busy at the time, gave the job of naming the animals to Adam. They were marched before him, in a long row, and he looked each one over and thought of the name that would fit the beast. Where he got so many words shouldn't cause wonder, considering he had God right at his elbow to egg him on. For example, when the hog was brought before Adam to be named, how simple is it to assume that since the beast behaved like a hog it would be right smart to call him by that name.

* * *

Why was it that the Lord, after making all living creatures by just calling them into existence out of nothing, had to go to immense trouble, including a

delicate surgical operation, to get Eve made?

It seems I detect a note of sarcasm in the above, and such levity mustn't be tolerated. The Lord knew exactly what he was up against, for he'd used up all his raw materials before making up his mind that poor Adam needed a woman around the garden. He figured—properly, it seems to me—that Adam wouldn't miss a mere rib, practically in the way that a Ford owner today with 24 spare tires wouldn't miss one if some good friend got into trouble and needed one. However, it didn't look good for the Lord when he miscalculated so grievously, forgetting to make Eve for Adam until after all the universe's ready supply of nothing had been used up making fleas, skunks, crabs, termites, rats, and other useful animals, including the exceptionally necessary and delightful germs of diphtheria, tuberculosis, small pox, leprosy, gonorrhoea, and syphilis.

* * *

Bruce Calvert, in the Open Road, says "the germ theory of disease is laughed out of court." Please comment.

What Calvert writes on the germ theory can't be accepted as the expression of an informed person. I like to read after Calvert, until he breaks loose on scientific medicine, a subject about which he knows next to nothing. I wish Calvert would tell us just which court it was that laughed the "germ theory" out of existence, and, while he's at it, let him tell us why he calls it the "germ theory" when the reality of germs is an established fact. If he thinks there's no validity to the "theory" that germs cause disease, he should expose himself to the bugs of gonorrhoea and syphilis and see what happens.

* * *

After all, what can science do for us about life's mysteries?

With Harry Elmer Barnes I say: "If science can't explain the mysteries of life, surely religion can't."

* * *

What do you think of the statement that science has not replaced philosophy?

True, realistic philosophy is more necessary than ever now that we have advanced so far with our 40-odd branches of materialistic science. The first duty of science is to gather the

facts; the job of philosophy is to interpret those facts. Philosophy, therefore, is an essential part of science.

* * *

I have seen the statement made in the press lately to the effect that the Panama Canal couldn't clear a battleship weighing more than 35,000 tons. Please explain.

American naval architects claim that any 43,000-ton battleship built by the U.S. would have to be of 106-foot beam, at the very least. This is too wide for the Panama Canal locks, which would have to be widened at an estimated cost of about \$500,000,000, for the Canal itself as well as the locks would have to be rebuilt. The giant British cruiser, Hood, which weighs 42,000 tons, passed through the Panama Canal from the Pacific in 1923, but its width is 104½ feet. When the Hood was in the lock there were but 30 inches to spare between the hull and the walls of the lock on either side. If we were to build ships too wide to pass through the Canal they would lose their strategic value because they would be limited virtually to either the Atlantic or the Pacific. There is some talk of building battleships up to 60,000 tons with a speed of 35 knots, which would cost about \$2,000 per ton or about \$120,000,000 for the battleship. By a peculiar twist of logic the American public is isolationist and in favor of a bigger navy at one and the same time.

* * *

What do you think of Van Zeeland's remedy for international problems?

I read his full report—it ran to thousands of words—thinking I might get material for a fat piece in this pious organ of righteousness, but I gave up the idea and decided it would be easier to characterize the whole mess of \$4 words this way:

It would be a fine thing if the U.S. would agree to stop expecting to collect on the war debts, for they are a constant source of annoyance to Fascist dictators who have their minds on the more serious problem of getting ready for a new war. After dropping the claims against its debtors the U.S. should dip into its vast gold supply and dish it out to Hitler and Mussolini who need it in order to finish their preparations for the coming war.

That's putting it in a few simple

2-cent words, for which I'm sure I'll never be able to collect, any more than Uncle Sam will ever be able to collect a dime of the money due him. Since the war debts are uncollectable, he's better forget about them, but he should be strictly opposed to joining in any clever scheme to help finance Hitler and Mussolini in their crazy spasms of aggression.

* * *

In case of war, what will Germany and Italy do to continue their supply of iron?

During the World War Germany already had iron mines in Alsace. But this source is now in the hands of France. Because the French moved their soldiers back 10 miles from the front at the beginning of hostilities in 1914, Germany was able to smash through and capture France's Briey iron mines. These mines, of course, have been restored to France. In addition, France has erected its powerful Maginot line, which is supposed to be able to hold back any force that Germany is able to hurl to the West. This will mean that Germany, at the outbreak of a new war, will have to depend entirely on Sweden, a country rich with high-grade iron ore. It's reported on excellent authority that while Sweden wouldn't dare refuse openly to sell iron to Fascist Germany it will, in order to show its support for the world's democracies, see to it that the iron industry is kept in the grip of a series of strikes. Labor and the government will work together to keep Germany from using iron in order to destroy democracy and freedom. The situation in Italy will be practically the same, for Mussolini has to import ore to keep his military machine supplied. The British and French navies can be depended on to make it impossible for iron ore to reach Fascist Italy. The same condition prevails with regard to cotton, another essential raw material of the war machine.

* * *

A pro-Nazi editorial says that Hitler's policies are accepted by almost all the people of Germany. Please comment.

Just because Hitler has gagged a man it doesn't follow he has won him over. Silence frequently is just another way of expressing one's disagreement.

* * *

I wish you would comment on the en-

closed clipping which claims that evolution is rejected by many of the world's greatest scientists. It lists famous names like Lord Kelvin, Sir Charles Bell, Rudolph Virchow, and others. All attacked evolution. After studying Joseph McCabe, E. Haldeman-Julius and many other reliable sources I have come to regard evolution as more than a theory. I am fully convinced it is a fact. Please comment on why so many distinguished scientists reject evolution as an obsolete theory.

For more than 30 years a list of anti-evolutionists, led by Lord Kelvin, Virchow, and others, has been used in newspapers and other publications by Fundamentalists who would have the educated world accept the creationist theory in place of the fact of evolution. Many uninformed persons are taken in when they see such great names on the side of the angels. First, let me warn my readers that these Fundamentalists never give their readers the dates when these scientists lived. At first glance one would accept the inference that these famous names represent men who are now active in the world of science. The fact is, of course, that these listed scientists lived and did their work in the last century, before evolution received universal acceptance among the educated. Let us look at just a few of their names, for space won't permit me to analyze all of them—though I want to emphasize the fact that the ones I use are not the least bit exceptional. Lord Kelvin always leads the parade of anti-evolutionists. This British mathematician and physicist was born in 1824 and did all of his work during the third and fourth quarters of the 19th Century. He died in 1907, aged 83 years. Another name invariably used is that of Rudolph Virchow, German pathologist. He was born in 1821 and died in 1902, in his 81st year. Then we come to another name always used by anti-evolutionists, Sir Charles Bell, Scottish anatomist and physiologist. Actually, he was born in 1774 and died in 1842, and was long in his grave before the world had its first look at Darwin's "Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man." If our anti-evolutionists were really honest in their position they would give their readers the full story, including the dates when their supporters lived, but since they suppress so vital a set

of facts one is compelled to accept the assumption that they are moved by dishonorable motives. Let these anti-evolutionists go to the great biologists, anthropologists, physicists and other leaders of science in great establishments like Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford, the Sorbonne, Chicago University, Johns Hopkins, Princeton, Columbia, and any of 50 other fine universities—let them go from department to department and I defy them to find a single first-rate scientist who rejects evolution. That's what the educated world of today thinks of evolution. Such scientists insist that evolution is no longer a mere theory but a series of established and verified facts. Fifty or 75 years ago the story was entirely different, for in those early days most scientists still accepted the creationist myth that's found in Genesis. I've said it before, but the occasion demands I repeat that when Huxley appeared before the yearly meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in London, in 1859, to defend Darwinism and the theory of evolution in general, he found that 95 percent of the assembled scientists were against him and earnestly in favor of Bishop Wilberforce, Huxley's opponent, who assured the convention that evolution was untrue because it conflicted with the Bible. Back in those days—with only 5 percent of the scientists accepting evolution—it was possible to make up an impressive list of anti-evolutionists, and men like Wilberforce were always ready to use names like Lord Kelvin's to keep the groping masses from rejecting the myths and superstitions of religious ideology. The world moves slowly, but it moves. Times change. Man's store of knowledge grows apace. Today, the shackles of the supernatural—if I may take William J. Fielding's happy phrase—are holding smaller and smaller numbers of even the half-educated. The cultural and scientific leaders of the entire world—wherever inquiry is free and education is liberated—are supporters of the facts of evolution. Our anti-evolutionists can't escape that simple, obvious fact, and their uneasiness is made plain by their tactic of hiding the simple truth under the cloak of distortion, for it's nothing less than

that to parade anti-evolutionists before the unthinking without telling them when such antagonists lived. Today, one must go to one-building, jerk-water colleges and educational rolling mills run by religious organizations to find teachers who reject evolution, but such ignoramuses have no standing in the halls of learning. They are cultural riff-raff. If such a freak were to appear in a real department of science—in Harvard, for example—he would be laughed to shame, if he still was capable of feeling the emotion of shame. Evolution is a settled fact. The educated world accepts it. Those who try to hide this condition are nothing more than disreputable deceivers.

When the American book publishers voted unanimously to stay away from Germany's book fair because of Hitler's destruction of free press, a Nazi spokesman answered: "In Germany we feel that the public, not the publishers, should have the freedom, and in Germany the government is the public." Please comment.

I'm glad to see that my fellow publishers have decided to boycott the 1938 International Congress of Book Publishers in Leipzig. If they attended they would be endorsing Hitler's savage orgy of book-burning, persecution of liberal authors, and censorship by barbarians who have lighted the fires of bigotry. As for that delicious morsel of logic which emanated from the German consul, let me turn it over to the editorial writer for *Business Week*, who simplifies it all this way:

So the government, being the public, stops the public, which is the government, from reading what the public, which is the government, wants to read but what the government, which is the public, does not want the public, which is the government, to read.

Can you tell me something about Count Manfred von Killinger, Nazi consul general in San Francisco?

Gerhardt Seger, who was, during the days of the German Republic, a Social Democratic member of the Reichstag and who escaped from one of Hitler's concentration camps, is now lecturing in the U.S. According to Seger—whom I have quoted before and have always found scrupulous about his facts—the Nazi official in

San Francisco "is a brute." Seger adds: "It is true he horsewhipped a 19-year-old girl. That is well known in Germany. It is also true he was one of Rathenau's assassins." (Rathenau, let me add, was one of the leaders of the German Republic and was assassinated by a band of Hitlerites.)

Can you explain why Nazi Germany is importing 30,000 Italian farm laborers?

Hitler's vast rearmament drive has dislocated Germany's agricultural structure, moving hundreds of thousands of the country's young workers from the land into the army or the arms industries. That explains the "shortage" of farm labor.

Nazi propagandists insist that everything in Germany is quiet and orderly. Please comment.

It's the quiet of the grave.

A German newspaper published in the U.S. justifies Nazi persecution of Communists on the grounds that Hitler is doing on a large scale what the U.S. is doing right along. The article says many Communists in the U.S. are in prisons or awaiting trial. Please comment.

I haven't seen the article referred to, nor does my correspondent send me the clipping under discussion. However, if he is quoting the paper accurately I can say definitely that the charges are false in toto. A survey conducted by the American Civil Liberties Union shows that not a single Communist is in prison or jail in any State in the Union for political activity or belief. The report also says that, "in sharp contrast to preceding years, no proceedings against Communists for political activities took place in 1937." There were a few minor cases in some American courts during 1937, but such cases had been held over from previous years. The Union "ascribed the cessation of prosecutions of Communists to the U.S. Supreme Court decisions a year ago sustaining the right of Communists to hold meetings and to distribute literature." An additional factor, says the report, is found in "the changed tactics of Communists in abandoning revolutionary propaganda in favor of support of democracy." Admitting that the country is being bombarded with an immense anti-Communist propaganda,

the report says "the civil rights of Communists are now generally exercised without interference." This condition stands in contrast to the situation in Germany, where Hitler beheads Communists, throws thousands into prisons and concentration camps, and in other ways tortures and persecutes them. All this is in addition to a complete suppression of free discussion, free press, free assembly, free conscience, and the right to organize.

* * *

Before joining the Nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek for the purpose of resisting Japanese imperialism, the Red Army of the Chinese Soviets, in Western China, worked out a series of rules of strategy. Can you let me have them?

Each recruit in the Chinese Red Army (now known as the 8th Route Army) was expected to memorize four military axioms, as follows:

1. Enemy advances; we retreat.
2. Enemy encamps; we harass them.
3. Enemy avoids battle; we attack.
4. Enemy retreats; we pursue.

* * *

I want to know how many miles of highway there are in the world and how many are in the U.S.

Our highest authority in this field is the Automotive-Aeronautics Trade Division of the U.S. Department of Commerce, which, after making a world survey, reported that at the close of 1937 the U.S. had about 3,065,000 miles of highway, which is about one-third of the world's total, which is around 9,687,000. The same report also says there are 40,459,000 motor cars in the world, of which 28,520,500 are in the U.S., which is more than two-thirds of the total. In the last eight years, the report continues, "the highways of the world increased more than 3,105,000 miles, and the number of motor vehicles registered increased by 12,028,400."

* * *

Several months back *The American Hebrew* magazine published lists of many prominent Jews in the U.S. The articles went on to state that Jews were to be found among film notables, and went on to list a number of names, which I am enclosing. We have had some controversy over this list. While the whole world is familiar with the fact that Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson and Fannie Brice are Jewry's gift to the

world of entertainment, we are somewhat in doubt as to the others mentioned. Kindly check on this.

I have gone over *The American Hebrew's* list with some care and must say that, so far as I know, the statement is correct. I believe it is well established that the following film celebrities are Jews:

Charles Chaplin, Joan Blondell, Luise Rainer, Kenneth McKenna, Ben Lyon, Patricia Ellis, June Knight, Sally Eilers, June Travis, Peter Lorre, Francis Lederer, Binnie Barnes, Douglas Fairbanks, Igor Gorin.

* * *

Can you give me the Trotsky fish story that's going the rounds?

The way I heard it, Trotsky went fishing near his home in Mexico City, and while at his favorite sport the world-famous exile from the Stalin regime met a friendly peasant, who also was casting. The story continues:

"How's fishing?" asked the peasant.

"Well," Trotsky replied slowly, as if giving the matter much thought, "it's rather like the international situation—unstable."

The peasant's eyes bulged out. "H-m-m," he mused. "Here's a guy that's been around."

They continued talking until finally the peasant said: "Did you know that Leon Trotsky is dead?"

"I'm sorry," said Trotsky, "but he isn't. . . ."

"How do you know?"

"Well, if Trotsky were dead he wouldn't be fishing in this little stream."

This rather bowled the peasant over. He looked up and down each bank, then said:

"Well, maybe I got it wrong. It's Stalin—Stalin's dead."

"Oh, no, he isn't," replied Trotsky emphatically.

"How do you know?" the peasant inquired.

"If Stalin were dead, I wouldn't be fishing in this little stream."

The peasant jerked his head to look at Trotsky.

"All right," he said. "Trotsky and Stalin are both alive—and so is Lenin." He look at Trotsky as if to say, "Now answer that one." And Trotsky did.

"Oh, no, Lenin isn't alive."

"How do you know?" inquired the peasant rather belligerently.

"Because if Lenin were alive, he

too would be fishing in this little stream."

* * *

Your statement that great church organizations supported slavery before and during the Civil War leads me to ask what words in the Bible served them as scriptural authority?

The literature of the pro-slavery church bodies was voluminous. A few of the arguments drawn from the Bible were:

1. Jesus, though surrounded at all times by the institution of chattel slavery, never raised his voice against it.
2. St. Paul plainly recognized slavery as a social institution.
3. The pro-slavery Christians urged that Abraham was an owner of slaves.
4. Isaac and Jacob, Job and the patriarchs all were slave-holders.
5. The Levitical Law authorized slavery.

Of course, these same church bodies—especially in the South—don't like to see these matters brought up again.

It's interesting to note that while millions of people in the U.S. turned to the Bible to support an inhuman social order, the great Karl Marx, in London, England—an out-and-out Atheist who coined the famous slogan that is still current in the Soviet Union, "Religion is the opium of the people"—worked for the Union cause in England, where he did much to keep England from coming out openly for the Confederacy. He even received a letter from Abraham Lincoln thanking the great proletarian philosopher and economist for his propagandistic efforts among the British working class, who, to the end, disapproved of the pro-South elements in the government and stood firmly for the policies of Lincoln, who, by the way, never joined a church, and was, according to excellent authority, a Freethinker.

* * *

How do the California citrus growers get their information about coming frosts?

The U.S. government does this work for them. Beginning on December 1 of each year, government experts use the radio to warn the growers when frosts are on the way. The service is so efficient that the frost experts are able to tell the citrus people at just what hour of the night or early

morning the temperature may be expected to be destructive to crops. They go even further and announce how many degrees to expect, the length of time the danger will last, and at what places.

* * *

Some years ago, at a public lecture, I heard a speaker discuss national characteristics, during which he told how different nationalities would handle the subject of elephants. I wonder if I could get the gist of it?

The quotation has been used many times in the periodical press, but I'm unable to trace its authorship. However, I happen to have the observation, which goes this way:

If the various nationalities had to write essays on the subject of the elephant, the Pole would write on this: "The Role of the Elephant in Securing Polish Independence." The Frenchman would write on "The Life and Loves of an Elephant." The Britisher would write on "The Role of the Elephant in the Development of the British Empire." The German would produce: "An Introduction to the Study of the Elephant in 15 Volumes." The American would present: "How to Produce Bigger and Better Elephants at Less Cost."

Not that it's important, but while I think of it let me pass on Hilaire Belloc's pleasant jingle.

When people call this beast to mind,
They marvel more and more
At such a little tail behind,
So large a trunk before.

* * *

In several of your articles on the weather—a subject which always fascinates me, for some queer reason—you mention places in Siberia where the temperature often drops to more than 80 below Zero. Do human beings live in such sections?

John Theaman, in the August, 1937, *Globe Magazine*, tells about the town of Werchojansk, Siberia, where the temperature often falls as low as 80 degrees below zero, and has gone as low as 95.6. Human beings adjust themselves to even such coldness. The writer says:

"The natives of this town live in crude wooden huts, with windows of thin ice cemented in place by pouring on water which freezes quickly around the edges. Walking in such cold air causes the breath to freeze, falling to the ground in a white powder. The writer has seen

children, when the temperature was only a few degrees above zero, making it summer to them, running around naked."

* * *

Will you be good enough to reprint Robert G. Ingersoll's famous "creed of Science"?

I'm glad of the opportunity. Ingersoll's "The Creed of Science" reads:

"To love justice, to long for the right, to love mercy, to pity the suffering, to assist the weak, to forget wrongs and remember benefits—to love the truth, to be sincere, to utter honest words, to love liberty, to wage relentless war against slavery in all its forms, to love wife and child and friend, to make a happy home, to love the beautiful in art, in nature, to cultivate the mind, to be familiar with the mighty thoughts that genius has expressed, the noble deeds of all the world, to cultivate courage and cheerfulness, to make others happy, to fill life with the splendor of generous acts, the warmth of loving words, to discard error, to destroy prejudice, to receive new truths with gladness, to cultivate hope, to see the calm beyond the storm, the dawn beyond the night, to do the best that can be done and then to be resigned—this is the religion of reason, the creed of science. This satisfies the heart and brain."

* * *

Recently, when my son graduated from high school, he expressed great pessimism over his future prospects. He insisted opportunities for good jobs were few and far between, that the chances of his getting killed in a new world war were excellent, and that defeat, rather than victory, hovered over today's youth. Please comment.

I wouldn't want to plaster your son with the goo of oily optimism, but at the same time I wouldn't dream of indulging in defeatist psychology. If the immediate future isn't at all rosy for your son, and millions of other young men, let's not forget that in a democracy the people, through political and economic organization, can bring about necessary changes in the social order. Defeatism would be understandable in a country where dictatorship controlled everything—though even under such circumstances I'd advise a strong determination to overthrow that tyranny at the first promising opportunity—but in a democratic country defeatism betrays an unworthy and unmanly weakness, a

shirking of true responsibility. Today's youth must endure many discouragements; I'll admit in all conscience, but I don't think we're any worse off than the masses were in previous generations. Someone—I don't know his or her name—compiled a short piece entitled "Discouraged? Think of Lincoln," which may not move the low spirits of my reader's son but it should prove to him that discouragement isn't anything particularly new in human history:

"When Abraham Lincoln was a young man he ran for the legislature in Illinois, and was badly swamped. He next entered business, failed, and spent 17 years of his life paying up the debts of a worthless partner. He fell in love with a beautiful young woman to whom he became engaged—then she died. Entering politics he ran for Congress and was badly defeated. He then tried to get an appointment to the United States Land Office, but failed. He became a candidate for the United States Senate and was badly defeated. In 1856 he became a candidate for the vice presidency and was again defeated. In 1858 he was defeated by Douglas. But in the face of all this defeat and failure, he eventually achieved the highest success attainable in life, and undying fame to the end of time."

The reader who asked for the foregoing comment sent the usual fee for a personal reply, which I supplied, but some of these thoughts may interest other readers, so I print the matter here.

* * *

Please give me some data, including weight, regarding the blue whale?

Dr. Johan Hjort, Professor of Marine Biology, University of Oslo, Norway, is an authority on whales. In a paper read at the Tercentenary Conference of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, September 8, 1936, Dr. Hjort said:

"The muscles of one blue whale may weigh over 56 tons, its blubber 26, the bones 23, the tongue more than three tons and the heart 600 kilos or 1,200 pounds. (Elsewhere he says: "one blue whale may weigh as much and more than a thousand men.") A new-born blue whale has a length of seven meters or 21 feet and weighs two tons or as much as 29 men; seven months later it reaches a length of 16 me-

ters or 48 feet, 12 months later 23 meters or 69 feet. In the first seven months the whale puts on a weight of 21 tons or 100 kilos or 200 pounds in 24 hours. If a blue whale puts on 10 knots speed it develops about 47 horse-power. For hours on end I have watched my friends the whalers trying unsuccessfully to overtake a blue whale in the Antarctic waters. Hour after hour the impatient gunner would call for full speed, but though he could steam at 13 or 14 knots he often had to give up, while I felt a thoroughly unbusinesslike admiration for the powers of the whale and marveled at the wonderful machinery that nature has constructed out of flesh and blood."

Dr. Hjort calls attention to the interesting fact that whales alternate between a superfluity of food supply and stark famine. Periods of plenty will be followed by starvation. He adds:

"In these circumstances their life has been preserved by evolving a capacity to store nourishment, i.e., wale oil, in their bodies. This reserve of nutriment is kept in the muscles, bones and layers of blubber under the skin. The stock is laid in in times of plenty, when the layer of blubber swells to many times its former size; later, in days of famine, it shrinks until, in many places, it is only one inch thick. These reserves give the whales the energy and stamina which enable them to undertake their enormous migrations; and the layer of blubber also makes it possible for these warm-blooded animals to stay about the ice in water, which is often below 1° Centigrade. This layer of blubber protects the animal from loss of energy and heat and gives it the necessary strength for its strenuous exertions."

It's difficult to say just how old the whaling industry is, but according to Dr. Hjort there are reasons to believe the business had its origin as early as the 11th Century "with the catch of the Biscay whale in the Gulf of Biscay, where there lived, even in these early times, a relatively dense population and where daring fishermen made the great discovery that it was not so dangerous after all to attack the large right whales swarming in the bay, even from small and primitive boats." Dr. Hjort continues:

"Since this modest beginning the

Nordcaper has been hunted over the great area from the Bay of Biscay to north of Norway and from Newfoundland to the coast and bays of New England, where there in Cape Cod Bay in one day (1700) were killed 29 whales."

* * *

Which queen told the breadless poor to eat cake?

Marie Antoinette is supposed to have said, "If they can't eat bread, let them eat cake." But Burton Stevenson, in his latest edition of "The Home Book of Quotations," insists the queen never authored the words. He proves beyond doubt that Rousseau used exactly the same words in his sixth book of "Confessions." This was before the queen came to France.

* * *

I notice that you write frequently about the Chinese philosophers and quote their quaint and amusing fables. Do the Chinese enjoy jokes the way we do?

Chinese don't like practical jokes the way some of our people do, and in that they are to be commended. Marital jokes are popular in China, but they are aimed more at the son-in-law than at the mother-in-law. In Chinese jokes the son-in-law is usually a dull-witted but otherwise estimable person who's married to an intelligent girl whose mother is always afraid her son-in-law will do the wrong thing socially. And, no matter how the mother-in-law coaches the oaf, and no matter how the wife joins in the constructive admonitions, the son-in-law invariably disgraces them by his boorishness. This situation is the basis of thousands of jokes. Henpecked husbands are also popular as material for jokes. In a talk before the Mark Twain Association, George Kao, a Chinese student, spoke of his people's love of humor, as follows:

"They love to deflate pomposity with tiny pinpricks of humor. They enjoy life with a light, almost gay, philosophy, and they feel that humor is best when it does not hurt."

* * *

What's a Feminist?

I don't intend to go into what's known as the "war of the sexes." That kind of Feminism doesn't quite jell in my mind. I've met many smart (and even cute) Feminists in my time, and the best (and cutest) among them impressed me as women who had caught onto the fact that men

have a better time than women and intend to do something about it. That kind of Feminism means something.

* * *

I believe your exposures of Norman Baker's quackery serve a useful end. I notice that you sometimes mention John R. Brinkley. Of course, I've heard his name, but I don't know just what his methods consist of, except for the big publicity he got as a result of his "goat gland" operations. Please tell Freeman readers a little about Brinkley.

"Dr." John R. Brinkley hails from my own State of Kansas, where he operated for a number of years. The man is far subtler than Norman Baker. The famous cancer quack could take lessons from the former resident of Milford, Kansas. When I first heard of "Dr." Brinkley, about 15 years ago, I thought he was sensational in his methods, but otherwise all right, because there seemed to be some evidence that he had received a formal medical education and that a foreign university had honored him with a degree. His rejuvenation operation was advertised at about the same time that some real scientists in Austria and elsewhere were working in this field, so I took him to belong among ethical doctors. When a debunker is fooled that way—and I was in the darkness for several years—think how easy it must be for the average layman to fall for Brinkley's quackeries! The February, 1938, issue of *Hygeia*, a popular health magazine, contains a sketch of Brinkley's life, written by Dr. Morris Fishbein, the distinguished editor of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, the world's highest authority in this field of scientific inquiry. I'm positive that Freeman readers will find the following article of real value and interest:

In John R. Brinkley, quackery reaches its apotheosis. Without anything resembling a real medical education, with licenses purchased and secured through extraordinary manipulations of political appointees, and with consummate gall beyond anything ever revealed by any other charlatan, Brinkley has achieved an enormous success financially. He continues to demonstrate his astuteness in shaking shekels from the pockets of credulous Americans, notwithstanding the efforts of various governmental departments and agencies.

He claims that he was born in Beta, N.C., in 1885. He claims that he was educated in Milton Academy in Baltimore, and he reveals letters on the stationery of that academy signed by a man on whom at one time he grafted the glands of the goat. Strangely enough, at the same time that he was supposed to be at that academy, according to his own statements he was also a traveling relief agent for the Southern Railway Company and an employee of various other railroads. How he leaped from place to place and went to school at the same time, deponent sayeth not.

In 1908 he enrolled in the Bennett Medical College, Chicago, where apparently he visited for three years. Then he left that institution and finally got a diploma from the Eclectic Medical University of Kansas City, Mo., and the Kansas City College of Medicine and Surgery, a diploma mill.

No one knows where he was between the time when he left Bennett and the time when he got his diploma. Somewhere in between he got a divorce from his first wife. Somewhere in that same period a man with the same name was arrested in Tennessee and charged with forgery. Brinkley says that at that time he was in the National University of Arts and Science at St. Louis, but his name does not appear as a student. Eventually, however, he appeared with a statement of study and graduation from that institution, signed by a man who later admitted that he had issued it for a cash consideration. Thus his record of education is full of chicanery and deception. From time to time the statements that he has issued on this subject have been without any resemblance to each other.

In 1920 he was arrested for selling liquor and sentenced to pay a fine of \$300 and to spend 90 days in jail. In the end he merely paid the costs of the trial, although he pleaded guilty. Is the same year he came to Chicago, where he performed several of his so-called rejuvenation operations. When the Department of Registration and Education looked into his record he left the State.

In 1921 he got a license from the Connecticut Eclectic Board, which later was found to be issuing licenses rather at random, and in 1923 Brinkley's Connecticut license was revoked. For the next few

years he was doing gland operations in various places, and in 1924 he was indicted in California on a charge of conspiracy to violate the medical laws of that State. About this time the Royal University of Pavia granted him an honorary diploma which later the university annulled. Apparently he had been able to convince the Italians in Pavia of his scholastic and scientific attainments.

In 1926, Sunday newspapers suddenly appeared with a magnificent write-up of the rejuvenator who preaches and who practices goat gland science. The article said that the famous surgeon combined old-time religion with new-fangled operations on a strange medical gospel farm in Milford, Kans., and here the career of Brinkley as a giant in quackery begins to develop. He had come to Milford when it was just a wide place in the road, gotten for himself a radio station called KFKB, and then he began to announce to the world far and wide the marvelous operation which he called the compound operation and which he claimed was "the best thing known for impotency, high blood pressure, and large prostate, sterility, neurasthenia, dementia praecox or any disease that is not malignant of the prostate."

In the Brinkley performance the patients came in on Monday and were required to leave on Friday. He never wanted next week's patients to know what last week's patients were doing. His usual fee was \$750, but a gland of a very young goat might cost as much as \$1500, all of this notwithstanding the fact that there is not the slightest evidence that the glands of a goat can be successfully transplanted into the body of the human being. He claimed in an interview in 1930 that he was receiving 3,000 letters a day, building a sanatorium at a cost of \$100,000, an apartment house for his employees and several bungalows for his doctors and their families. He had four motor cars (one a \$7,000 Lincoln), and he had given to Milford as a gift the Brinkley Methodist Memorial Church, which was "Erected to God and His Son Jesus in appreciation of the many blessings conferred upon me, By J. R. Brinkley."

When the American Medical Association exposed the development of the Brinkley interests, including the Brinkley Pharmaceutical Association, the Federal

Communications Commission decided to give him a hearing and then refused to renew his broadcasting license. The Brinkley Pharmaceutical Association was composed of druggists who dispensed medical preparations. These preparations were prepared according to formulas of Brinkley and were recommended in broadcasts over the radio of the Brinkley Medical Question Box. The broadcaster would read the letters received from sick people and then tell them to get "Woman's Tonic No. 50, 67 and 71" or "Men's Prescription No. 60, 87 and also No. 64." The prescriptions were common preparations of ordinary drugs sold under these numbers with the understanding that the druggist would keep a large portion of the money and send the remainder to Brinkley for advertising the preparations. Thus the doctor prescribed treatment for a patient whom he had never seen, basing his diagnosis on symptoms recited by a patient in a letter, and recommending secret preparations on which he shared a part of the profit.

The high point in the Brinkley performance was his candidacy for governor in the State of Kansas. He conducted extensive radio campaigns in which he promised free motor licenses, free textbooks and anything else that the public wanted. In fact, he claimed that Kansas being the driest State in the Union, he would build a lake in every county in Kansas so that the water being evaporated from the lakes would then be reprecipitated on Kansas, making it blossom like the land of Canaan. He filed late in his first candidacy for governor, so that it was necessary to insert his name in writing on the ballots. The election clerks were ordered to throw away the ballots on which his name was misspelled or wrongly marked in the slightest degree. Nevertheless, he polled 183,000 votes, which was some 14,000 less than were polled for the winning candidate. There are some who assert that if all the ballots had been counted he would easily have been elected. This is not surprising because it is said he received 20,000 votes in Oklahoma, and he was not even running in Oklahoma. He ran twice again but on each occasion was defeated.

When his radio station was removed he departed for Mexico, obtaining a license from the Mexi-

can government. Now he broadcasts from Station XERA at Villa Acuma, Mexico, just across from Del Rio, Texas. All sorts of efforts have been made to remove him from the air but apparently without success. Right now he is not doing much in the way of goat gland transplanting. He reads the symptoms of patients and then by remote control prescribes the pill that they should use. You send him your dollar, and you get your pill. In addition, of course, he has a hospital in Del Rio where he performs some peculiar operations. The main one is the compound prostate operation for elderly gentlemen in which he merely injects a little mercurochrome into the tubes passing from the male sex glands. He has a high pressure man in his front office who makes sure that those who come to the hospital will have the money to pay in advance for the work. They are able to develop mortgages, loans and conversion of securities in order to permit the patient to pay on the nail for what he is going to get. . . .

Many a charlatan depends on indigent and unethical physicians to extend his work. Another of the Brinkley schemes is to sell to the patient who comes to his lair five ampules of his remedy for post-operative treatment at a cost of \$100. These the patient is supposed to take home in order that the contents may be injected into him by his selected doctor. When an analysis of the selected ampules was made, it revealed that they contained a solution of approximately 1 drop of indigo in 100,000 parts of water—about what you would get by throwing a bottle of bluing into Lake Michigan.

The evidence assembled indicates that at various times, Brinkley has made as much as \$55,000 a week from his various quackeries. He has been the possessor of three fine yachts. He travels abroad and returns to this country in the finest suites on the finest boats, accompanied by his family and the little boy's tutor. . . .

* * *

Is there any truth to the Nazi charge that Jews dominated Germany's educational institutions?

In 1925, there were 3,050 university teachers in Prussia and Saxony, of whom only 125 were Jews. Of 21,700 instructors, professors and ad-

ministrators in Germany's secondary schools and universities, only 270, or 1.3 percent, were Jews. In 1933, the year Hitler took control of Germany, there were 37,505 secondary school teachers, of whom 317, or .84 percent, were Jews. In the same year, there were 7,272 professors and instructors in the universities, of whom 182, or .26 percent, were Jews. The facts, taken from official sources, indicate clearly that the charge is another Fascist falsehood.

* * *

Newsweek, January 24, 1938, contains a piece about Baltimore's symphony orchestra and says, among other things, that the conductor, Werner Janssen, "between intermissions . . . chatted excitedly with Mrs. Janssen." What does this mean?

The writer was trying to say that Janssen chatted with his glamorous wife (Ann Harding) during intermissions, but the way he put it Janssen led the orchestra and chatted with his wife at the same time, which doesn't make sense.

* * *

As an American Jew I want to thank you for your numerous defenses of my people against the unjust attacks of the Nazis and other anti-Semites. To read today's German literature (mainly that issued by the notorious Julius Streicher, Hitler's official Jew-baiter) an un-informed person could easily get the impression that Hitlerism is acting against an inferior, semi-barbarous, uncultured, anti-social mob. I believe you would be rendering a real service not only to the Jews but to humanity in general if you were to compile a list of the German Jews who served society before Hitler took power in 1933. Please include the Nobel Prize-winners.

I have given my readers considerable data on this subject, which will be found in my 12 volumes. As the names and achievements are scattered, it will serve a useful end if I gather the facts into a single list which enumerates the vast and constructive work done by Germany's Jews before Hitler began his despicable campaign of extermination, a war that bears all the earmarks of savagery. The names which I offer below don't cover the fields because the records show many Jewish scholars, scientists and artists whose names I am compelled to omit because of pressure of space. I believe I am presenting a Jewish roll of

honor which can only command respect and admiration. These are the men and women who made substantial contributions to German culture, and through Germany they helped uplift humanity everywhere in the world:

MEDICAL SCIENCE

Ferdinand Cohn, father of bacteriology.

Paul Ehrlich, originator of experimental chemotherapy.

Albert Frankel, discoverer of the pneumococcus.

Jakob Henle, one of the greatest histologists.

Eduard Henoch, father of pediatrics.

Otto Loewi, world-famous cardiologist.

Albert Neisser, discoverer of the gonococcus and founder of the German Society for the Prevention of Sexual Diseases.

Benedikt Stilling, author of classic studies of the spinal cord and the vasomotor functions.

Paul Gerson Unna, great dermatologist of the past generation.

Otto Warburg, noted researcher on cancer.

August von Wassermann, originator of the Wassermann test and discoverer of serum for typhoid.

NATURAL SCIENCES

Heinrich Caro, discoverer of various dyes, including methylene blue which stimulated medical research.

Albert Einstein, the world's greatest living mathematical physicist.

Eugene Goldstein, who did original work on the Cathode rays and in astrophysics, and discovered the ground spectrum of the alkaloids.

Leo Graetz, contributor to the advancement of electrical engineering.

Fritz Haber, originator of the process of extracting nitrogen from the air.

Gabriel Lippman, originator of color photography.

David Schwarz, original designer of the dirigible, which was built by the German Ministry of War in 1900.

Richard Willstaetter, made famous for his research in haemoglobin, enzymes, chlorophyll and various other aspects of organic chemistry.

LAW

Philosophy of Law: Eduard Gans, Friedrich Stahl.

Constitutional Law: Arnold Arndt, Georg Jellinek, Hans Kelsen, Paul Laband, Hugo Preuss.

Administrative Law: Edgar Loer-

ing., Eugen Schiffer, Eduard von Simson.

Criminal Law: Wilhelm Wilda, Max Alsberg.

Civil Law: Martin Wolff, Eugen Fuchs.

Commercial Law: Levin Goldschmidt, Hermann Staub.

Roman Law: Max Hachenburg, Orro Gradenwitz.

Canon Law: Emil Friedberg, Heinrich Singer.

PHILOSOPHY

Ernst Cassirer, logician.

Hermann Cohen, founder of the neo-Kantian movement.

Eduard Husserl, founder of phenomenology.

Moses Mendelssohn, founder of modern German aesthetic criticism.

LITERATURE

Alfred Doebelin, Lion Feuchtwanger, Ludwig Fulda, Georg Herrman, Richard Beer-Hoffman, Ernst Lissauer, Alfred Mombert, Ernst Toller, Clara Viebig, Jakob Wasserman, Franz Werfel, Alfred Wolfenstein, Arnold Zweig.

JOURNALISTS

Maximilian Harden, Theodor Wolff.

MATHEMATICS

Herman Minkowski, George Cantor, Leopold Kronecker.

MUSIC

Composers: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdi, Josef Joachim, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Jacques Offenbach, Arnold Schoenberg, Kurt Weill.

Conductors: Arthur Bodanzky, Felix Possart, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, Hermann Levi, Siegfried Ochs, Egon Pollak, Franz Schrecker.

Singers: Alma Gluck, Herrman Jadlowker, Friedrich Schorr, Josef Schwarz.

THEATER

Directors: Max Reinhardt, Victor Barnowsky, Otto Brahm, Leopold Jessner.

Actors: Ludwig Barnay, Elizabeth Bergner, Ernst Deutsch, Fritz Kortner, Fritzi Massary, Greta Mosheim, Max Pallenberg, Max Pohl, Emanuel Reicher, Irene Triesch, Rudolf Schildkraut.

PAINTERS

Max Liebermann, Rudolf Bendemann.

NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS

Paul Ehrlich, Medicine, 1908.

Otto Wallach, Chemistry, 1910.

Richard Willstaetter, Chemistry, 1915.

Fritz Haber, Chemistry, 1918.
 Albert Einstein, Physics, 1921.
 Otto Mayerhof, Medicine, 1922.
 James Franck, Physics, 1926.
 Otto Loewi, Medicine, 1936.

In addition to these Jews, there are four German Nobel Prize winners who are classified by the Nazis as "non-Aryan" because they have Jewish blood. These are:

Adolf von Baeyer, Chemistry, 1905.

Paul Heyse, Literature, 1910.
 Gustav Hertz, Physics, 1926.
 Otto Warburg, Medicine, 1931.

* * *

Was Ludendorff an anti-Semite?

General Erich Ludendorff's last years were spent in provoking acts of anti-Semitism and promoting an eccentric, crackpot religion based on Paganism. But he wasn't an anti-Semite all his life. During the World War, he and Hindenburg led 96,000 Jews in the German army, of whom 80,000 fought in the front-line trenches. About 12,000 Jews died for Germany. When Ludendorff, in 1915, wanted to win over the Polish Jews to the banners of the Central Powers, he issued the following proclamation, which was distributed throughout Polish sections of Russia, where many Jews lived at the time:

"We come to you as friends; the barbarian foreign regime has ended. The equal rights of the Jews will be built upon a firm foundation. It is now your sacred duty to muster up your strength to help in the liberation."

This manifesto, which was printed in Yiddish, won many Jews for German arms and thousands of laborers for the war industries, then badly needed in hard-pressed Germany. The facts of the record show that Ludendorff could be "nice" to the Jews when he thought he could use them to work or fight for the Kaiser, but when peace came he turned to Hitlerism and its degenerate racialism.

Incidentally, let me repeat the fact (for I've dwelt on the subject before) that one of Hitler's favorite "arguments" against the Jews is that many of them now in Germany are from Poland. He forgets, quite conveniently, that they were asked, or rather commanded, to go into German factories or trenches, where they were wanted during the World War.

* * *

Did Jews control the last Reichstag be-

fore the advent of Hitler, as charged in anti-Semitic literature?

The claim is without foundation. Out of 608 deputies in the last German Reichstag (parliament) only six were Jews.

* * *

Hitler justifies his suppression of the Republic on the grounds that its high offices were dominated by Jews. Please comment.

The charge is false. There were 19 cabinets from the end of the World War to the time Hitler destroyed the German Republic, in which 260 ministers served. Of these, two were Jews and five others were of Jewish extraction. Besides, no Jew whatsoever was a cabinet minister after 1927. Hitler took power in 1933, so for five years prior to his accession there wasn't a single Jewish member of the cabinet. Furthermore, during the entire life of the Republic not a single Jew served as one of the governors of the 12 provinces. The same goes for the 35 district presidents and the 400 presiding judges throughout Prussia during the six years before Hitler stole power. A survey of the 500 highest State officials during the life of the Republic shows only 15 Jews, some of them being only partly Jewish. Not a single Jew was connected with the State-owned railroads, the Treasury, the Reichsbank and the Prussian Gold-Discount Bank. In 1925, there were 236,000 Germans engaged in banking and the stock exchange, of whom only 7,509, or 3.3 percent, were Jews. The charge that Jews "dominated" Germany is a Hitleristic falsehood.

* * *

Please discuss the oft-repeated charge made by Hitler and his propagandists to the effect that German Communism was inspired and dominated by the Jews.

In 1932, Germany held its last democratic election, for Hitler took power early in 1933. In that election the Communist party polled 4,900,000 votes. At that time there were about 334,000 Jewish voters in all Germany. If every Jew had voted Communist, they would have given the Communist party only 7 percent of its vote. But a child should know that most Jews, especially those that belonged to the large middle class, voted for the Republic rather than for Communism.

That Jews, in the main, were indifferent or opposed to Communism in Germany under the Republic can be seen from the fact that when the Communist party elected its candidates to the Reichstag not a single member was a Jew. The facts clearly show that Hitler lies when he repeats, again and again, that Communism is a Jewish-inspired and dominated movement.

* * *

I have a most important question for your fiery little paper—and it may cut into you a bit to answer it truthfully. What action, if any, is being taken in this country to make vaccination non-compulsory? My personal opinion of vaccination or yours or of 10,000,000 people does not matter—if 15 people out of the above number were against it—why should not vaccination become optional? To me, compulsory vaccination is a clear-cut, medical offence, encroaching on the freedom of those who wish to avoid it and bears the stinking taint of Fascism. Now, as man to man, as Freethinker to Freethinker—I want to ask you personally what action, if any, have you taken in your paper or through other means to help make vaccination optional?

The reader who asks the above has been a subscriber for only six months, so he doesn't know my position on the above questions, though readers who have been with me during the past 20 years (there are some) know I have never let myself be swayed by the health faddists. I have always been a strong supporter of scientific medicine. In the past, every time I wrote a piece in support of vaccination I lost 50 or 100 readers at a shot. I have a perfect genius for offending some of my readers. Many people are patient, and even enthusiastic, when other people's bunk is swatted, but let me drop so much as a hint that their own bunk isn't acceptable to this truth-seeking editor and the place begins to look as though it had been the target of the wrath of Gawd. But, rather than stultify myself I'd rather lose 10 times the number of readers I have to sluff off whenever I say something that offends the tender sensibilities of our faddists. Only a few years ago, The Freeman's columns were shrieking with the shouts and groans of a steaming crew of controversialists. Vaccination was the bone of contention, and after I let go the

first salvo the late Dr. William J. Robinson—how we miss that wonderful guide and intellectual leader—took up where I left off, and, if I may say so myself, he sent the anti-vaccinationists scurrying like so many squirrels. Today, I can only repeat the point of that old quarrel. I accept vaccination as a thoroughly scientific practice. I don't think compulsory vaccination is tainted with Fascism. A person who is afflicted with a contagious disease may be segregated by the community, and such drastic action doesn't mean the individual's rights have been crushed. The rights of the community rise above the stubborn ignorance of eccentric faddists. And the same goes for vaccination. Its benefits are beyond debate. The community has a right to demand that it be accepted by all individuals who would be a part of that community, for the better protection of the greatest number.

The Medical Advisory Board, N.Y.C., has given the public a statement on this subject that contains much interesting and valuable data. I suggest a careful reading of the following paragraphs:

Smallpox today is a disease, which in most large cities of the United States is only a name. Yet not so long ago it was one of the great scourges that put terror in the heart of mankind. Doctors in New York City and Boston, for example, never see it and practically none of them has ever encountered a single case. The conquest of this disease by universal vaccination is one of the most brilliant pages in preventive medicine. Evidently this security is too much for certain intelligences, for every now and then the voice of some anti-vaccinationist is lifted up to decry vaccination and urge that this "injection of foul, pussy matter which poisons the system" be discontinued henceforth. We have here quoted one of their arguments verbatim. "Smallpox does not exist and you do not have to be vaccinated," they shout.

Let us see what the figures on smallpox tell us. In New York City, with a population of 7,000,000, where the law enforces the vaccination of all minors, in the past five years not one case of smallpox has occurred, and only 17 cases for the past 10 years. These came mostly

from people entering the port of New York aboard ship.

Montana, South Dakota, Wyoming, Iowa, and Nebraska, with a combined population equal to New York City, had almost 4,000 cases in 1936, compared to none in this city. Yet the States listed above are not congested like New York City. Those States are wide open spaces, where contagion should be slight. These States do not have compulsory vaccination for all minors, in all districts. That is the answer. Could any reply to the anti-vaccinators be more eloquent?

* * *

Over a shelf in a drug store I came upon the letters Rx. Please explain.

R stands for *recipe*, which is Latin and means "take." The letter "x" is the symbol for Jupiter, who was supposed to be the protector of medicines. Therefore, Rx means: "Take this medicine as directed, under the auspices of Jove."

* * *

MONEY PROBLEM—The cashier of a corporation wanted to put different sums of money into 10 receptacles, in such a way that he could get any amount from \$1 to \$1,000 without opening any of the bags and splitting up the sums in each. How did he do it? What amounts of money did he have to put in each bag? Answer at bottom of last column of page 121.

* * *

What's your opinion of toast?

I've been eating toast for more than 40 years, and this is the first time I've been asked to explain myself. Toast is one thing I've always taken for granted, like pure, cool water. Of course, I've developed some preferences about toast—and some pet aversions—but I never questioned the fundamental rightness of toast. Just because I like thick slices of bread lightly toasted, or just because I hate thin, hard slices of toast, it doesn't follow that toast, as issued regularly by the official secretary of my interior, is subject to review. The great Chinese philosopher, Dr. Who Flung Dung, said toast must make a great noise in the head when it's chewed, otherwise it's no good, but he never even hinted there was anything wrong with toast as an institution, when properly run. But here I disagree with the eminent humanist, for I prefer toast that's thick because it dunks better that

way and tastes much better than ordinary bread that's been dunked into a state of sogginess. A heretic, writing in *Judge*, delivers some powerful blows at toast, which I'm willing to pass on to my readers, with the warning that this man may never have learned the beauties of toast as used by habitual dunkers. His dyspeptic groans follow:

"For more years than we care to contemplate, we have been eating toast. It is dry, harsh stuff, devoid of flavor; it is burnt bread, and we have never seen a shred of evidence to show that it is better than unburnt bread; nor do we know any reputable people who prefer it to bread. Eating toast is a national habit: nobody likes it, but nobody has the initiative to stop it. We are resigned to toast; we expect to go on eating it till the doctors put us on a liquid diet and commend our soul to God. But one thing we do demand: we want our toast buttered on the edges."

Note, my fellow toast-dunkers, that our critic confesses he's served only "dry, harsh stuff, devoid of flavor." What would he say were the secretary of his interior to switch over to thick, lightly burned slices? I may make a convert there, if he ever gets to be man enough to reject the kind of toast preferred by Dr. Who Flung Dung.

* * *

What's your opinion of surrealist literature?

What little I've read of surrealist literature—mainly poetry—leaves me a little confused. One piece of poetry, which was quoted as a fine example of the new art, goes like this:

A quarrel between the boiled chicken
and the ventriloquist
Had for us a meaning of a cloud of
dust

Which passes above the city
Like the blowing of a trumpet.
It blew so hard that its bowler hat was
trembling.

And its beard stood up on end
To bite off its nose
It blew so loudly
That its noise cracked open like a nut
And the nut spat out
Into the far distance
A little cowshed
Wherein the youngest calf was selling
its mother's milk
In sausage skin flasks
That its father had vulcanized.

It's somewhat difficult to tell what

this means, but if I know my onions it warns the purchaser of a hot dog that got busted in the cooking to have it vulcanized. I may be wrong.

* * *

Can you give me some of the jargon of swing bands and their meaning?

The vocabulary of swing is extensive, with new words and word-combinations coming in right along. One may debate the merits of swing music, but one can't argue against the obvious fact that devotees of swing have enriched our lingo with dozens of vivid, happy, snappy, lively, fresh words and phrases. Here are a few:

Jam session—An informal meeting of musicians playing for their own amusement, without leadership or score.

Jive—Another term for swing or hot jazz.

Killer-diller—The ultimate in a swing selection.

Screwball—Crazy, extremely unbridled swing.

Whacky—Same as screwball, only noisier, more discordant.

Barrelhouse—Every man for himself, playing without regard for what the others are playing; good swingmen generally frowned upon it.

Alligator—A nonplaying swing devotee, a listener.

In the groove, feeling his stuff, going to town, out of the world, getting off on it—When carried away or inspired by the music, when playing in exalted spirit and to perfection.

Cats, brass blasters, jive artists, silver suckers, spooks, jogs, pops—The musicians of a swing band.

Frisking their whiskers, licking their chops—Getting warmed up to swing.

Paperman, long-haired boy, salonman—A term of contempt for a musician who plays only written music, as written.

Long-underwear gang—A term of contempt for a sweet band.

Commercial, schmaltz—A term of contempt for compromise swing.

Corney, umcha, icky, on the cob, strict union—A term of contempt for the "razz-mah-jazz" style of the '20s.

Mugging light—Soft, staccato swinging.

Mugging heavy—As above, with heavier beat.

Kicking out—Very free, enthusiastic improvisation.

Licks, riffs, get-offs—Original interpolated phrasings.

Ride—Easy-going rhythm.

Break—Dropping the rhythm for a few beats.

Gang—A medley of tunes.

Woodshed—To experiment in private with a new tune.

Sender, riderman, hot star—Creator of a swing style.

Wheat bender—A term of contempt for a person who doesn't like swing.

Grunt iron—Tuba.

Gob stick, agony pipe, licorice stick—Clarinet.

Doghouse—Bass viol.

Plumbing, piston—Trumpet.

And, while we're at it, let's not forget the master-word "swing," which Gene Krupa, drummer with Benny Goodman's band, defines as "complete and inspired freedom of rhythmic interpretation." Benny Goodman himself prefers *Down Beat* magazine's definition of swing as "collective improvisation rhythmically integrated." Chick Webb, leader of a Negro band, doesn't seem to care for these two definitions, preferring to break into an ecstatic piece of verbal-swing, this way: "Swing is like lovin' a special girl and you don't see her for a year, and then she comes back—it's somethin' inside you." Jazz (which, of course, isn't the same as swing) is defined by Paul Whiteman as "a form of syncopated music played in discordant tone on various instruments."

Let's turn to the men who make swing—the players. Louis Armstrong, who is a leading "cat," in his autobiography, "Swing That Music," writes:

For a man to be a good swing conductor he should have been a swing player himself, for then he knows a player is no good if the leader sets down on him too much and doesn't let him "go to town" when he feels like going. That phrase, "goin' to town," means cuttin' loose and taking' the music with you, whatever the score may call for. Any average player, if he's worth anything at all can follow through a score, as it's written there in front of him on his instrument rack. But it takes a swing player, and a real good one, to be able to leave that score and to know, or "feel" just when to leave it and when to get back on it. No conductor can tell him, because it all happens in a second and doesn't happen the same way any two times running. It is just that liberty that every individual player must have in a real swing orchestra that makes it most worth listening to. Every

time they play there is something new swinging into the music to make it "hot" and interesting. And right here I want to explain that "hot," as swing musicians use the word, does not necessarily mean loud or even fast. It is used when a swing player gets warmed up and "feels" the music taking hold of him so strong that he can break through the set rhythms and the melody and toss them around as he wants without losing his way.

The element of improvisation, which is one of the fundamentals of extemporaneous swing, is always exciting, if it's handled by imaginative, creative instrumentalists who are masters of their plumbing pistons, dog-houses, agony pipes, and grunt irons. As a boy in Philadelphia, where I often attended the opera at the Academy of Music, I recall one singer who always got into trouble with the impresario because of his habit of improvising. Finally, the boss, who was a formalist in music, warned his tenor that the next time he improvised he would be fired. At that night's performance, during a tense moment in the opera, a horse was brought onto the stage, who, to the astonishment (and amusement) of cast and audience, started to make a huge, round puddle, at which the tenor called out warningly: "Don't you know we're not permitted to improvise?"

When a reader asks you a very intimate and personal piece of advice do you always keep his name confidential?

Absolutely. I protect such correspondents to the limit of my powers. Anyone who asks me intimate, private questions (to be answered by sealed letter) can always depend on his or her name never being used in any way, shape or form.

What do you think of psychiatry as a cure for the drinking habit?

Psychiatrists and neurologists are able to do a great deal for habitual drunkards, but it's important to bear in mind that such treatments are expensive and can be expected to be of little good if the patient fails to respond with the most willing cooperation. It should be remembered that drunkenness is a serious disease, not merely a bad habit. A person who drinks to excess does so because of

some serious dislocation in his physical equipment and emotional life. Alcohol may be craved because it serves to enable the victim to think he has escaped from certain undesirable aspects of life. Seeking out the cause, or causes, of drunkenness is a difficult, often baffling, quest.

Can you give me "The Indian's Lament"?

The piece is supposed to have been written by an Indian on his 100th birthday, in New York City, after being bamboozled by the wicked white men. It goes:

Wife he die, I so sad. My o' hoss done gone bad.

Buy ol' Ford, no good, too—Ride and push, no can do.

White man banker no can trust. Take it monies—bank go bust.

Republicans, stock-market hogs. Run it country to the dogs.

Democrat, he big money man. Big money man, Republican.

No more money man, by damn, by damn. I done vote for Uncle Sam.

What is the meaning of the expression "thunder-mug"?

It's a light, humorous way of referring to those sometimes-ornate chambers which we used to keep under the bed.

What's a cootie?

Senator Josh Lee, of Oklahoma, says a cootie is nothing else in the world but a flea with military training.

Tell us a little about your tobacco habit.

J. C. Furnas, who is writing for Simon and Schuster a book on smoking, sent me a questionnaire to fill out, which I did, even though it took 30 minutes of my time on a busy day. However, as I'm able to use some of the material here, I don't consider the time wasted, by any means, though many of my readers may prefer to disagree on this highly debatable point. Writes Mr. Furnas:

"The questionnaire is being sent to prominent people in an effort to find out whether the celebrity's reactions to smoking differ from those of the man in the street. The idea is not to pry into your private affairs, but to learn all we can about the kind of dance tobacco leads people."

That makes the inquiry sound in-

teresting. I can't quote all of Mr. Furnas' questions, but here are a few, followed by my answers:

Q. Do you smoke? A. Yes.

Q. Check which—cigarettes, pipes cigars. A. Pipes and cigars.

Q. How many pipes do you own? A. 13.

Q. How many do you use regularly? A. Five.

Q. How much do you smoke per day? A. I estimate it at about 25 percent of the time.

Q. Do you smoke more than drinking? A. Yes.

Q. Do you habitually smoke before breakfast? A. No.

Q. Do you smoke while working at your job? A. Yes, when reading at my office or home, but never while writing my editorial material or letters.

Q. At what age did you start smoking? A. 15.

Q. Did your uncle or somebody ever offer you a lump sum of money to keep from smoking till 21, or some similar proposition? A. No. My father, who was a cigarette smoker (he rolled his own), taught me to like the fragrant weed.

Q. Have you ever sworn off smoking? A. No.

Q. If you could manage it without nervous strain, would you like to quit smoking and never start again? A. I doubt it. I have never been tempted to quit so pleasant and foolish a habit. The Rationalist in me tells me it is wasteful, destructive, expensive, and idiotic, but the stubborn mule in me says it's the least foolish of the many bad habits I have to choose from.

Q. What do you like about smoking? A. It's consoling, comforting, tastes good, smells nice, keeps me quiet and relaxed. If I'm not smoking I want to get up and go places when I have many good reasons for remaining right where I happen to be.

Q. What do you dislike about smoking? A. Nothing, except that it's damned foolish.

* * *

Kindly advise me how to get away from paying a fee of 5 percent to a real estate agent. I want to sell my house. Are there any other men or companies eligible to do the same work without having to pay the usual commission? I want a personal reply, so am enclosing fee.

If my correspondent is sure of every document relating to his real estate, if he is positive everything is in order, and if he already has a buyer, then he can handle the deal himself. But if he isn't sure of all the

details, he will find that an honest, efficient real estate man can be of real use to him and may save him more than the commission he takes for his services. I know several individuals who buy and sell real estate without the help of an agent, but they have had long experience and know all the ropes. If my reader doesn't feel sure of himself, let him take my advice and pay the usual fee of 5 percent. But I urge him to make inquiries regarding the man's standing in the community. He might make inquiries at a neighboring bank, where a good, trustworthy agent may be known to the officers.

* * *

Is it true that tires wear out faster during certain seasons of the year?

Owners of motor cars should, whenever possible, buy their new tires during the Winter. R. A. Gray, service manager of the Fisk Tire Company, says tires broken in during cold months can give the motorist an extra 4,000 miles of use. Tires receive little wear during Winter months and at the same time are "seasoned" and better prepared to withstand the high temperatures of hot roads during the Summer." Mr. Gray adds:

"Owners of truck and bus fleets have known this fact for some time and have taken advantage of it. But the private car owner has almost completely overlooked it.

"Tests indicated that a tire mounted in January will frequently give better mileage than will a tire mounted alongside it during warm weather. Many large fleet owners purchase large quantities of tires and run them three or four months during the Winter and then, after the breaking-in process, store them until needed."

* * *

I've been paying from \$3 to \$5 for my shirts, but after reading your advice I'm going to shop around for cheaper ones. I find that expensive shirts don't last long because of the treatment they get in laundries. Why is this?

A Consumers Union report on shirts brings out some interesting and valuable information, which I'm glad to pass on to Freeman readers:

The life of a shirt ordinarily depends more on the laundering it goes through than on the wear it gets. Few shirts, no matter how strong their fabrics, can withstand

the destructive action of commercial bleaches followed by the stresses and strains of commercial ironing. With such laundering, a poorly made shirt may wear as long as a better one. . . . The label "pre-shrunk" or "sanforized" is not insurance against shrinkage. . . . Points to examine in selecting a shirt are: the material itself; a finer weave indicates a higher thread count, better appearance and probably a more durable fabric. The seams: all seams should be well turned and sewn double. Button and button-holes: buttons on cheap shirts are scaly and lack luster and sometimes have two holes instead of four. Collar: Examine the collar points to see that they are well matched and that there are no lumps in the tips.

* * *

What is the best way to attack the problem of poverty in this country, to raise the standard of living and increase the welfare of those at the bottom of the economic ladder?

The best way is to put everybody to work producing more wealth. But this solution, when applied within the framework of the present capitalistic system, runs up against the determination of the owners of our great industries to operate only at a profit. The large-scale industries are capable of producing wealth in prodigious quantities, but since they rest on the exploitation of labor we find the problem made more difficult by the onerous fact that the workers, because they must create dividends and profits, can't absorb what the industries are capable of producing. This, in brief, is the ignoble contradiction of the capitalistic system. There are many schemes to mitigate the evils of Capitalism, but the only way to solve the problems enumerated in my correspondent's question is to have society take over the large-scale industries and run them for the good of the people instead of for the profits of the capitalists. A system of collective ownership and democratic control of the great utilities, mines, mills, factories, etc., including the means of communication and exchange, to say nothing of our banking system, insurance companies, and the like, would bring about a condition wherein the masses of workers would have not only employment but would be rewarded so generously that they would be able to purchase what the

instruments of production, distribution and exchange are capable of bringing forth. That is the ultimate solution, but while we are waiting for it we must work indefatigably to better the immediate conditions of the toilers by supplying unemployment insurance, old age pensions, health insurance, minimum wages, maximum hours within humane limits, and the other immediate demands of forward-looking economists.

* * *

I am considering establishing a magazine here in Los Angeles designed to circulate through the villages and small towns. The editorial policy is, I believe, sound. However, I have had no experience with advertising. I am unable to estimate the possible advertising revenue. Are there firms with which I could discuss the whole problem? Are there firms that undertake to handle the obtaining of advertising for magazines? Enclosed is your usual fee for a personal reply.

There's very little chance of getting anything but local advertising for my reader's project. Later, when he lands national distribution if he can get it! —he can make a deal with publishers' representatives in Chicago, who specialize in soliciting national advertising on a commission basis, and, believe me, the commission is stiff, frequently as high as 45 percent. But, until he is thoroughly established and can get his circulation figures audited by the A.B.C. (Audit Bureau of Circulation) the only thing left for him to do is to go out himself or hire someone to solicit local advertisers. A small magazine of local or even State-wide circulation hasn't much chance of getting national advertising. The big advertisers want publications of mass circulation. Such media are economical and more likely to make sales. In view of the facts it seems to me he should arrange his business structure on the basis of having his readers pay the costs of the enterprise, until such time as he can obtain mass acceptance.

* * *

Who was it that coined the phrase "in-briated with the exuberance of his own verbosity"?

It was first said by Benjamin Disraeli, in a speech delivered in London, July 27, 1878, and was di-

rected at his political enemy, Gladstone. The sentence reads:

"A sophisticated rhetorician, inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity, and gifted with an egotistical imagination that can at all times command an interminable and inconsistent series of arguments to malign an opponent and to glorify himself."

* * *

During his trial in England, Warren Hastings told his friends an Indian tale which he says gave him great comfort. Can you quote it?

Hastings frequently used the story of a monarch who, having suffered discouragement, asked his courtiers to devise a motto, short enough to be engraved on a ring, which should be suitable alike in prosperity and in adversity. After many suggestions had been rejected, his daughter offered an emerald bearing the inscription, in Arabic:

"THIS, TOO, WILL PASS."

Nathaniel Hawthorne, Thomas Bailey Aldrich and others have used the same sentence, in poems and prose. I find myself recalling the words when some particularly trying inconvenience or problem forces itself on me. At first, one's adversities seem insurmountable, but time has a way of healing the wounds. For many years it's been my habit, whenever I put a new calendar up in my office, to write at the bottom of it: "This, too, will pass." And it does. Perhaps it would pass even if I didn't give my assent. It's like Lord Byron's famous lines to the ocean, in which he tells the ocean to—"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!"—and, surprisingly, the ocean does exactly as told—it rolls on.

* * *

Is it possible to explain Einstein's Relativity to a person who is completely ignorant of higher mathematics?

Intelligent laymen can grasp the highlights of Relativity without resorting to mathematical formulae, but such knowledge can never give the amateur student a real understanding of the finer points of the theory. However, I don't think such technical foundations are necessary to the average man, as a practical proposition. Max Born's "The Restless Universe" gives an amusing description of a learned professor try-

ing to explain a simple fact to a person who is without knowledge of what he was talking about. The tale goes this way:

A friend of mine was once at a dinner-party and the lady next to him said: "Professor, do tell me in a few words what the Theory of Relativity really is." He replied: "Of course I will—provided you will let me tell you this little story first. I was going for a walk with a French friend and we got thirsty. By and by we came to a farm and I said: 'Let us buy a glass of milk here.' 'What's milk?' 'Oh, you don't know what milk is? It is the white liquid that—' 'What's white?' 'White? You don't know what that is, either? Well, the swan—' 'What's swan?' 'Swan, the big bird with the bent neck.' 'What's bent?' 'Bent? Good heavens, don't you know that? Here, look at my arm: when I put it up so, it is bent!' 'Oh, that is bent, is it? Now I know what milk is!'"

* * *

When a Fundamentalist wants to support his dogmas he turns to the Bible and hunts up passages which are intended to serve as his authorities. When you, a debunker, seek to make a point you have a passion for hunting up some authority and insisting the statement must be true because your authority said so. What's the difference?

All the difference in the world. The theological mind bases its dogmas on the mere fact that a certain sacred book says it must be so. That is unscientific.

When I make a statement of fact I want to know if it has the support of experts in the subject under discussion. I go to authorities who make a practice of basing their arguments on verifiable evidence, not mere say-so. There are always many experts in each field of scientific inquiry, and if one goes wrong he can be checked and set right by others. Thus, I believe the world is round, not because I have a wish to believe it but rather because the experts in astronomy agree unanimously, and present proofs that are subject to verification. The religionists who believe the world is flat—some still are of that mind—rest their case on a sacred book which carries assertions in the sphere of science which can't stand the light of independent inquiry. I'll always follow the practice

of going to the authorities in various classifications of knowledge for my data and the inferences that can be drawn from those facts. I like to ask the fellow who knows, especially if I'm certain he follows the method of strict, scientific research. This discussion reminds me of a story which Max Eastman, author of "Enjoyment of Laughter," uses in some of his addresses:

To his friend's amazement, a returned explorer stated that he had learned how to converse with animals.

"You mean you can talk to a horse?"

"Yes—and he answers me."

"You mean you can talk to a dog, and he answers you?"

"Indeed."

"You mean you can talk to a skunk—"

"Yes—and he answers me."

"Well, the next time you talk to one, ask him what's the big idea."

* * *

During the World War we used to be amused by letters written by war brides to the War Department. Did you save any in your files?

The only one I have is given below. It's an exact copy of a letter sent to the War Department during the World War:

Mr. Headquarters,

My husband was induced into the surface two years ago, and i ain't received no pay from him since he was gone. Please send me my elopement as i have a four months old baby and he is my only support and I kneed it every day to buy food and keep me enclosed. i am a poor woman and all i have is at the front. both sides of my parents are very old and i can't suspect anything from them as my mother has been in bed thirteen years with one doctor and she won't take another. Do i get any more than i am going to get? My husband is in charge of spitoon.

Please send me a letter and tell me if my husband made application for a wife and child and please send me a wife form to fill out. i have already written Mr. Wilson and got no answer and if i don't hear from you i will write Uncle Sam about him.

Very truly,

.....

We ought to be getting some funny ones from reliefers, W.P.A. workers,

applicants for old age pensions, etc. Only the other day I was told by a clerk, who is employed in the court house here in Girard, that he takes in the applications from oldsters who are looking for their old age pensions, all of them over 65 and some of them even in their 80's and 90's. The blank contains a line in which the applicant is to state his or her sex, and right here the office gets a laugh pretty regularly, for many of the old boys think they must inform the State how often they indulge. Some must be good, for they write, "three or four times a week," "now and then," "once in a while," and other revealing remarks.

* * *

Some days ago I received an invitation to a certain country club dance, which I accepted, for I am fond of social life, but today I received a letter telling me the invitation was a clerical mistake. I figure, of course, that the committee learned I am a Jew, which accounts for the insult. What can one do to meet such discrimination?

There isn't anything you can do, except to forget about ti. Intelligent Jews don't care a rap about social discrimination, for they figure they wouldn't enjoy the kind of company that selects its members on the basis of sassiety's snob-appeal. If you're not wanted in a certain club or gathering, smile graciously and turn to more important things. Intelligent Jews demand political, economic and professional equality—rights to which they are entitled in an enlightened democracy—but they wouldn't walk across the street to attend a function which is run on Nazi standards. I'm reminded of a sassiety queen who phoned to the commandant of a nearby military encampment, asking that 10 of his men be sent to her party, in order to enable her to meet the superfluity of females. She was careful to explain that Jews were to be excludud. At the right time five Chinese and five Filipinos showed up. The sassiety dowager looked as though she was ready to throw a fit when she saw the line-up. "Surely," she cried, "there's been a mistake." To which one of the soldiers replied, "I'm certain there's been no mistake because our Colonel Lefkowitz never makes mistakes."

* * *

In one of your articles you make a

number of enumerations, beginning each with "first," secondly," etc. I don't pose as a grammarian, but it strikes me that you should have written "firstly."

I also don't offer myself as an authority on grammar, for, as I've reported before, I practice literature by ear. However, "firstly" would be wrong, had I used it the way my reader suggests. The suffix "ly" in "secondly" was correct because it referred back to a first, but "first" doesn't point back to anything and is, therefore, correct usage. I grant you I'm not always consistent, for I recall using "firstly" several times, having forgotten to correct myself, which happens often when one is in a hurry.

* * *
Can you give me some of the slang of the broadcasting studios?

I'm not familiar with the lingo of radio, but *The Commentator* lists some of the slang words, and, so far as I know, they may be authentic. Here they are:

"In a broadcasting studio a tenor with a tight voice is an **ADENOID**, while a coloratura soprano is a **CANARY**. A singer with a frog in his throat is a **BELCHER**. To miss your cue is to **FLUFF**. A boring program is **ARSENIC**. An adventure serial is a **CLIFFHANGER**. A suggestive line is a **BLUE GAG**. An animal imitator is a **CRAWK**. And if you lack a cultural background you're **CORNFED**. Organists do their playing on a **GODBOX**, accordion players on a **GROANBOX**, and pianists on an **EIGHTY-EIGHT**. Early morning broadcasts are known as the **DAWN PATROL**."

* * *
I know that the Bible, in many places, speaks of the earth as a flat surface, but is there any evidence that Jesus had the same idea?

In one place, the Devil takes Jesus atop a high mountain, from which he shows him all the kingdoms of the earth. Only a person who thought the earth was flat could have such a notion.

* * *
The Daily Worker, February 8, 1938, says: "You can purchase what they are calling a Hollywood Sucker List for \$5,000. . . . It is a mimeographed sheet which purports to list all Hollywood figures who earned \$15,000 or over during 1936." Please comment.

Any person who would pay \$5,000 for such a sucker list must be the

champion sucker himself. I'll bet a second-hand navel lint-remover that James M. Mosely, 340 Congress St., Boston, Mass., who knows more about lists of names than any other man in the world, can supply the Hollywood list mentioned above (and for 1937 instead of 1936) for hardly more than \$15.

* * *
Will an empty truck stop faster than a loaded one?

The Kansas City, Mo., police department tried out this old theory that a loaded truck can't be stopped as quickly as an empty one and found it isn't true. Frank C. Lynch, director of the department's safety work, loaded a truck with sand, which made a gross weight of 21,900 pounds, and drove it through an intersection at high speed. He reported: "When the brakes were applied, the skid marks of the tires, compared with the skid marks made when the truck was run through at the same speed empty, disproved the old theory. If a truck has the right set of brakes, the loaded truck will stop just as fast as the same truck empty." Thus does Mr. Lynch qualify as a Class A Debunker.

* * *
Please give the fundamental reasons that caused the South to lose the Civil War?

Two psychological and a number of economic facts suggest themselves. Disposing of the psychological factors first, I'd say the North was helped by the moral force of the anti-slavery sentiment that moved millions of people in our free States; and, of course, the patriotic force behind the powerful emotional feeling that the Union shall not be destroyed. As for the material side, many books have been written to show the conditions that brought about Southern defeat, but it seems to me the whole situation is summed up brilliantly in a letter written on April 20, 1861, by a graduate of West Point (1853), James B. McPherson, of Ohio, to his friend and fellow West Point graduate (1857), Lieutenant E. P. Alexander, of Georgia. His letter:

"The war is not going to be the ninety days affair that papers and politicians are predicting. Both sides are in deadly earnest, and it is going to be fought out to the bitter end. . . . For your cause

there can be but one result. **IT MUST BE LOST.** Your whole population is about eight millions, three millions are slaves who may become an element of danger. You have no army, no navy, no treasury, and practically none of the manufactures and machine shops necessary for the support of armies, and for war on a large scale. You are but scattered agricultural communities, and you will be cut off from the rest of the world by blockade. Your cause is foredoomed to failure."

The writer—he was killed by a Confederate bullet while fighting in pine woods near Atlanta—packs a tremendous pressure of facts in the above brief paragraph. Study it carefully and you'll save yourself months of research among long-winded authors who have to take 500 pages to tell what Lieutenant McPherson was able to say in a sentence.

* * *

What is thunder?

Science News Letter (November 27, 1937) says: "Thunder is the result of a pressure wave caused by the sudden expansion of air created by quick lightning discharge." Webster's New International says practically the same thing, but not as well, it seems to me.

* * *

Please keep up your gentle debunking of the exaggerations of our advertising writers.

I don't mind exuberance, for any seller should always have the right to brag a little. That's human. What I object to is the habit of outlandish claims, rank deception, near or real fraud. At that, today's advertising writers aren't one-tenth as extreme as the unknown advertising Milton who, in an early 18th Century London newspaper, went into raptures over coffee. First he explained what this new, strange "grain or berry" is and then he busted loose with this masterpiece of inflated rhetoric:

"The quality of this drink is cold and dry, and though it be a drier yet it neither heats nor inflames. It closeth the orifice of the stomach, is very good to help digestion and therefore of great use at about three or four in the afternoon as well as in the morning.

"It quickens the spirits and makes the heart lightsome. Is good against sore eyes and the better if you hold your head over it and take in steam

that way. It suppresseth fumes exceedingly and therefore good against the headache and will prevent and help consumption and the cough of the lungs.

"It is excellent to prevent and cure the dropsy, gout and scurvy. It is known by experience to be better than any other drying drink for people in years or children that have any running humors upon them as the King's Evil, etc.

"It is very good to prevent miscarriages in child-bearing women. It is a most excellent remedy against the spleen, hypochondriac winds or the like. It will prevent drowsiness and make one fit for business, if one have occasion to watch and therefore you are not to drink of it after supper, unless you intend to be watchful, for it will hinder sleep for three or four hours.

"It is observed that in Turkey, where this is generally drunk that they are not troubled with the stone, gout, dropsy or scurvy, and that their skins are exceeding clear and white. It is neither laxative nor restraining."

The above, of course, couldn't get into print today, what with general laughter and the Federal Trade Commission. But I've long felt that the smart guy who writes the halitosis scares for Listerine should use a line Shakespeare wrote in "Cariolanus (Act 1, Scene 1):

"Poor Suitors Have Strong Breaths."

* * *

Have you any idea how much solid matter there is in a human being?

Prof. Eddington, in one of his books, writes that if we were to take all the space out of a man's body what is left would be so small that a magnifying glass would show it to be no longer than the period at the end of this sentence. The December, 1937, *The Reader's Digest*, quotes a short paragraph from Herman J. Muller's book, "Out of the Night," which also serves to give one an idea how little there actually is to the human race. He writes:

"If all the human sperm cells which are to be responsible for the next generation of the human species, some 2,000,000,000 individuals, could be gathered together in one place, they would occupy space equivalent to that of half an aspirin tablet. The nuclei of the corresponding number of egg cells,

which carry the stuff of life, would occupy an equivalent space; thus the essential substance of both eggs and sperm could be contained in a capsule the size of an aspirin tablet."

* * *

The argument is advanced that astrology must have something to it or it wouldn't have enjoyed such an immense revival in these days. Please comment.

The argument means nothing. Most of the people who run to astrologists for advice when to sell their mining stock, or when they may go on a long trip, or find a better job, belong to the ignorant portion of the population, and it appears as though they'll be with us for a long time. Let's not forget that even though we live in an age which has seen immense scientific progress and the growth of more vigorous realistic thinking, the bulk of the people still "enjoy" the average mentality of ordinary 12-year-olds. Such near-idiots, morons, yokels and nitwits, who are only one step from illiteracy, prefer to follow quacks, because they hand out what the ignorant masses want—a sure answer to all questions and a blue-print of the future. A really intelligent person couldn't deliver such a bill of goods, so his shop is passed up for the murky depths of muddle-headed astrologists, who blandly insist they they know all and tell all.

William Marias Malisoff, in his *Forum* article (August, 1937) discusses the argument that the astrologist must have something valuable and true or his ideas wouldn't have emerged from history, saying the point isn't relevant. "No one seriously thinks of reviving mystic alchemy in all its historic splendor," he adds, "Its hocus-pocus is dead. . . . The prevalence and hoariness of a superstition rather puts it in the class of pleasant myths, like the belief in the unlucky 13 and in the fatal appearance of black cats. If such allusions are meant as arguments, they prove merely to lend a vague credibility to an otherwise bald and unconvincing case."

* * *

Can you suggest a scientific method that could test astrology to find out for sure if there's anything to it?

There is at least one scientific test and it has been made more than once. Astrologists prefer to rely mainly on

"testimonials," in which they show how certain guesses came true. They weren't anything more than guesses, however the astrologist may insist they were divinations. Such testimonials have no scientific validity because they don't take into consideration the elements of self-deception, duplicity, trickery, and, finally, the average number of guesses which can be expected to come off right. The public is disposed to ignore the millions of bad guesses, preferring to pounce on the good ones that crop up now and then, some real, many plain fakes. I—a hardboiled, realistic debunker—can write down a hundred guesses about what will happen in the immediate or remote future, with a good chance of having a few come true. By ignoring the bad guesses and ballyhooing the ones that happened to click, I could, in no time, work up a lucrative practice as an astrologist.

William Marias Malisoff, in the August, 1937, *Forum*, tells of one scientific test made by Otto Bobertag, in 1932, described in volume 8, page 73, of the *Zeitschrift für Menschenkunde*. Malisoff adds:

"His technique consisted in having the most esteemed and serious-minded astrologists in Germany cast horoscopes on a set of men whose life history and character were thoroughly known to him and unknown to them. Each man's horoscope was cast by different astrologists. Even Bobertag was surprised at the result. He expected some slight favorable indication that would show perhaps a possibility of a science—but found just nothing. It is just . . . a gentle flow of ink. . . . Bobertag's tests were completely objective and scientific. Were it not better . . . to admit that the separation of astronomy from the parent mixture of astronomy and astrology, the so-called astronomy, was a happy event which moved the scientific in a lump, leaving the rest as a pleasant game? As a game, as a superannuated fad, it is still having its day. Leave it at that, writing off to the U.S. an economic annual loss of \$200,000,000 for the seemingly innocent sport."

Later, Malisoff insists that the sport isn't innocent after all, that it's really dangerous—a view with which I am in full accord. Only the other week I read, with amazement,

how Mr. Putnam, the husband of Amelia Earhart, wired to some astrologist in Seattle—along with \$200—the request that the mystic look over the stars and tell him just where and when his wife would be found in the South Pacific where her plane had met disaster. This was on a Friday. Immediately he received a receipt for his \$200 in the form of a “prediction” that she would be picked up two days later by a Japanese fishing boat, but there would be some delay in getting word from her because the boat lacked radio facilities. Such nonsense can be positively menacing, especially when the situation demands the help of realistic instrumentalities instead of moony astrology. Stressing this point of astrology’s powers of evil, Malisoff closes his argument with the following valuable paragraph:

“I think it is actually dangerous—anti-social—to press the case for astrology as a serious study in these times. It has done so much havoc. It has justified so many vague-speaking oracles, madmen who believed in their stars, heaven-sent rulers, and what not. Now on all sides we have the revolt of the irrational. It is even bolstered by force, as in the case of the Nazi ideology. . . . This revolt does not take the course of constructive criticism but seeks a return to absolutist, so-called ‘paran,’ and struttingly ‘inspired’ standards. And, to add to our woes, here comes another recruit—astrology, revamped into a second childhood by injections of higher foolishness!”

I notice that you often refer to the older U.S. humorists, such as Bill Nye, Josh Billings, and Artemus Ward. Can you tell me a little about Ward?

Artemus Ward’s real name was Cyrus Farrar Browne, and he lived only 33 years, but during his short life he established an enduring reputation as a humorous writer and lecturer. Abraham Lincoln often quoted Artemus Ward’s humor during the darkest days of the Civil War, when the great President needed relief from his ordeals.

During his lectures he had a little piece of business which always brought a laugh. In the midst of a sentence Artemus Ward would pass his hand over his forehead, feigning sudden illness, then adding: “Owing

to a slight indisposition I am now going to declare a brief intermission, but to pass the time away, I will continue talking.”

Artemus Ward used the Utah Mormons as butts for many of his jokes, the most famous wisecrack being “Pretty girls in Utah marry Young.” Josh Billings thought that was Ward’s best line, but Eli Perkins, another well-known American humorist, preferred Ward’s remark about being determined to live within his means even if he had to borrow money to do it. I’ve always liked the line in which he told about his great love for the Union cause, adding that he was willing to sacrifice all his wife’s relatives on the altar of his country.

Can you explain why so many people in Brooklyn, and other parts, say “erl” for “oil”?

The December, 1937, issue of *American Speech* contains an article by Professor Robert J. Menner, of Yale, in which this verbal oddity is discussed. According to his theory, the people who say “erl” for “oil” are really trying too hard to be correct. They seem to know in their subconscious minds that “thoid” for “third” is all wet, so when they come to an “oi” word, like “oil,” they react by throwing out the “oi” and putting in an “er.” Such persons don’t seem able to register that while “boid” is bad for “bird” “oil” is all right. That’s the theory and it sounds pretty reasonable, though I’m unable to say whether or not the argument is unbeatable.

Does aspirin have a bad effect on the heart?

The Medical Advisory Board, N.Y.C., says aspirin “has no ill effect on the heart.”

Can anything be done about the way the movies keep nursing their hackneyed formulas?

It seems almost futile to make war on the trite situation, the hackneyed phrase or the stereotyped expression. The trite is found in almost all pictures. Even good movies will resort to familiar tricks.

I have, for many years, been bothered by the regularity with which one character cries to another: “Get out! Get out!! GET OUT!!!”

(I believe Barbara Stanwyck has yet to appear in a picture that doesn't have her get off this get-out stuff.) Another corny trick is to bring in a sudden, unexpected bit of action, or even violence, that has nothing to do with the story and was put in just to stir things up when the picture seemed to be getting quiet. Even so good a movie as "A Star is Born" uses this trick. I refer to the scene in the hallway of the cheap hotel where Miss Janet Gayner is living while awaiting the call to stardom. From the first shot one notices a drop light that is perilously low, necessitating agile ducking whenever one walks by. A half dozen heads duck under before bald-headed Kennedy (who runs the hotel) closes a scene by ramming his shiny pate into that electric light bulb, causing a loud explosion that fetches a belly-laugh.

Another cliché—which *Webster's New International* says is a hackneyed phrase—is to "liven" things up now and then by having a character trip over a rug, or something on the steps, so that the audience, which has never failed to laugh at such sudden embarrassments, may bust loose with another inane snicker.

Another trick that is all frayed at the edges is to take the audience into a business office this way: first, a shot at the office building's name plate down near the entrance; then, a shot of the whole side of the building; then, a shot in the direction of the roof; then, a camera journey up the side of the building to the window of a certain office; then, at last, an interior view of the office itself, with the fact firmly established that the scene is taking place in a certain building.

And there's the usual trick of hurrying up action by paying off the taxi-driver with a bill and saying: "Keep the change." I've always noticed that passengers usually wait for their change.

Such clichés run to about 30 or 40 in a bad picture, but even good pictures carry about a half dozen.

Tay Garnett, an experienced director, lists 10 clichés that he describes as being the most famous, in this order:

1. The turning of the leaves of

a desk calendar to denote the passing of time.

2. Close-up of train wheels revolving rapidly.

3. Dying petals of a flower to indicate death or disillusionment.

4. Cigarette dangling from a woman's mouth to prove her character isn't what it should be.

5. The sewing of tiny garments to indicate an unexpected addition to the family.

6. A man kicking a dog to quickly show that he is the villain of the piece.

7. A couple walking smack into a sunset. A narrational device to prove that they are going to live happily ever after.

8. The turning down of the parlor lights; an invention which leaves quite a good deal to your imagination.

9. Close-up of a tree withering, then blossoming into flower to show that Spring has come to either the hero or heroine.

10. Last of all, the character clichés; gnarled hands to indicate poverty; fat paunches for unscrupulous bankers; lean, cadaverous faces for undertakers and reformers; wavy hair for heroes; curls for child actresses, and megaphones for directors.

* * *

Please comment on "In Old Chicago."

As a spectacle—especially the realistic fire scenes—the picture was worth seeing, but as drama it was trite.

* * *

What do you think of Billy Gilbert?

I consider him one of the funniest men in the movies. He never disappoints. Many times his presence alone saves a picture from being a total loss. I make the free suggestion to Hollywood directors to call in Billy Gilbert whenever a picture gets dull, for that comedian will save it.

* * *

Please say a few words about Walter Winchell and Ben Bernie in "Love and Hises."

I'm completely fed up on their fake feud. It's the phoniest thing put over on the public in many years. Simone Simon was fairly pleasing though I wouldn't say she was entirely acceptable.

* * *

Did you care for "52nd Street"?

It's just a lot of bladder-dew. But there were two bits in it that amused me. One was when the Italian ac-

cordean player (Leo Carrillo) telephones the morgue and the other was the few moments of eccentric dancing by a young screw-ball. Zazu Pitts as a cabaret singer was terrible punishment, which explains why I was a little groggy when I left the theater.

* * *

Please comment on "Wells Fargo."

A passable melodrama. Good photography; fast tempo; shrewd direction; competent acting, including an excellent performance by Bob Burns.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

My fellow-subscribers to The Freeman will be interested in a valuable symposium which was conducted by a weekly paper here in Norway, in which 275 prominent men and women in this country were asked: "What in your opinion is the greatest problem in the world today and how do you think it can be solved?" Seventy-six replied, three of whom I would like to quote, in somewhat free translations, as follows:

Dybwad Brochmann: "The greatest problem facing us is the problem of thinking, which cannot be solved because our generation has decided to abandon the art of thinking. Therefore, the whole of our thoughtless and thought-fatigued age is racing to arm itself. Hell is a condition near at hand, not a place far off."

Major Einar Sagen: "To get the press to quit lying and write nothing but the truth. The people of the press must, like Nicodemus, be born anew."

Arnulf Overland: "Today and always the greatest problem is to deliver man from oppressions of every kind: economic, social, political, religious, and moral—whether it's executed by money power, military power, police, priesthood, or educational systems (schools, press, radio). It can be brought about only by a Socialism built on scientific ground. It can free man from hunger and distress and from anxiety and hatred." (Overland is a poet who, at the instigation of a professor of theology, was put on trial, four years ago, for blasphemy, which was alleged to have been made in a speech, and acquitted. The clerics succeeded in getting our parliament to sharpen the blasphemy paragraph in the penal code.)
Bremsvagg Crevhus, CHRIS BREMNES via Bergen, Norway.

* * *

"In the St. Hyacinth fire. Says 'Time,' January 31, 1938, page 46: 'To the chapel ran another priest to save the Host.' Everybody is waiting—breathlessly—to

know whether the Host was saved. We know the children burned."—Reader, N. Mex.

* * *

"Our Sunday Visitor," prominent Catholic periodical, in its issue of January 23, 1938, comes out for a boycott of Haldeman-Julius publications through pressure on the newspapers and magazines which accept Little Blue Book advertisements. While admitting that the books published by my institution are legal, and therefore not subject to direct action by the authorities, the Catholic newspaper suggests a form of censorship that is frequently resorted to in countries where the principle of a free press are recognized—that is to say, a boycott or campaign of propaganda against publishers who throw open their columns to advertisements of books considered "dangerous" by the Church. In one place, the article in "Our Sunday Visitor" refers to my books as catering to "sex perversion"—a gross lie, of course, but an indication of how the times are changing, for only a few years ago such a Catholic writer would have sought to condemn my list of books because they contain scientific, informative, educational treatises on sexology, literature that even Catholic laymen are glad to read. So, instead of blasting away at me for publishing sex books by great authorities like Havelock Ellis, William J. Fielding, Joseph McCabe, Edward Carpenter, and numerous other enlightened mass-educators, the Catholic readers are given the impression that my list caters to "sex perversion." I take the attack as a compliment, something the Catholic editor never intended. Here is the article, as it appeared in "Our Sunday Visitor":

It may surprise the reader to learn that there are still several printing houses in this country which do a good business in publishing tracts which defame the Church. They have only one motive, to develop or capitalize hatred of the Church, although they seek by varying means to cover up that purpose.

One firm which we particularly have in mind is the Haldeman-Julius Company of Girard, Kansas. According to its own statement, this publishing house has succeeded in selling "over 200,000,000" copies of "little blue books" which retail for 20 for \$1.00, plus postage. Some of these pamphlets are reprints of classics, but for the most part they cater to sex perversion and defamation of the Church.

The firm has for years exploited "ex priest" Joseph McCabe, and he is the author of many of the tracts which deal with "the Catholic question."

How wide is the market for these pamphlets is indicated by the fact that the publisher of them can afford to purchase full page advertisements of them in publications such as the news magazine Time and the Sunday issues of the Chicago Tribune. Since full page ads in either of these publications cost in the neighborhood of \$2500, we estimate that more than 200,000 copies of the booklets would have to be sold through each ad to make it "pay out." Undoubtedly the persons who buy these brochures pass them among their friends, and thus the damage which they do is multiplied many times.

The full page ads appeared in Time on January 3 and in the Chicago Tribune on January 9.

Extending the decency campaign to literature of this kind is an all but impossible task, but editors of publications carrying advertisements of pamphlets which are openly insulting and antagonistic to the Church and all Catholics should be informed that they are thereby offending a large body of their readers. A united and continued protest of the advertisements whenever and wherever they appear would soon prompt the publishers to discontinue them.

This is an old story, for during my quarter of a century as a publisher, editor and writer I have seen many attempts made to suppress my publications through pressure on advertising departments. Now and then some individual responds to such abuse and threats, but the usual thing is for the advertising to be accepted, for the publishers usually know that the literature is worth while and educational. I have gone through at least a dozen organized drives against my books, and at times it seemed as though my enemies were going to get me, but I always triumphed in the end, with the result that my advertising was solicited and accepted in the face of the most violent attacks by bigoted and censorious medievalists. It will interest the editor of "Our Sunday Visitor" to know that the full-page advertisement referred to not only appeared in The Chicago Tribune and Time but in many other newspapers and periodicals, including News-Week, The Literary Digest, Harpers, Popular Mechanics, Popular Science, Liberty, Physical Culture, House-

hold Magazine, Life, Look, See, Radio Guide, Screen Guide, Forum, Nation, and many others. Since the editor of "Our Sunday Visitor" seems to be curious about how such advertisements "pay out," let me assure him that I don't like to keep valuable information secret and that I hope to give actual figures of returns, thus enlightening other concerns who may be interested in the mail order business, a branch of commerce in which I am looked on as something of an expert. Only the other day the editor of The Mail Order Journal, trade organ of the mail order world, asked me for an article on my advertising campaign, which I supplied.

The same article which appeared in "Our Sunday Visitor" contained a few paragraphs devoted to a full-page advertisement run in New York newspapers by Macy's department store. Here again the Catholic laymen are urged to put the screws on the publishers and the department store management because they advertised books by Confucius, Goethe, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, John Dewey, Voltaire, Nietzsche, Havlock Ellis, Karl Marx, Dr. Sigmund Freud, Montaigne, Thomas Paine, Plato, and others. Of course, in countries dominated by Catholic-Fascism, such works would be outlawed and their publishers and distributors jailed. But Catholic-Fascism has yet to capture the U.S. so we may continue enjoying the benefits of a free press, however hysterical our bigots may become.

* * *

Editor, The American Freeman:

I offer a year's subscription to The American Freeman to the party sending me the best answer to the following:

The scientific method of reasoning is the inductive-deductive. Karl Marx used the dialectic or philosophical method, a method discredited by scientists as never contributing one concrete discovery. How then can Marx be classed as a scientist?

Neville Island, Pa. MELVILLE KRESS

* * *

A PROBLEM WELL KNOWN TO MANY. A business man is in the habit of leaving New York on the 5:15 train. Just as he arrives at his destination, his chauffeur draws up with the car and takes him home. One day, however, he leaves New York on an earlier train and arrives at the station one hour earlier. His chauffeur of course is not at the station and he starts to walk home. On the way he meets his chauffeur driving toward the station. He gets into the car and is taken home, and notices that he has come home 20 minutes earlier than usual. How long did he

walk? Can you show that he walked 50 minutes? The writer would appreciate information respecting the problem's first appearance.

* * *
 "Congratulations on your excellent English and spelling. You usually get 'only' in the right place, which is more than university professors do. Have you noticed that the word 'only' is out of place about 40 percent of the time? In Washington, D.C., I once saw an advertisement of a 'School for Secretaries, on a car card. The closing sentence was, 'You can only afford the best.' Sears Roebuck had this sign in the front window: 'You only hear a radio program once.'"—E. C. H., Md.

* * *
 Please comment on Sir Arthur Keith's argument that war is a biological necessity because it serves as a "pruning hook" to remove the unfit members of the human race. He bases his thesis on the Darwinian theory of the Survival of the Fittest.

Joseph McCabe has written a great deal about Sir Arthur Keith's defense of war, and my own writings contain several references to the famous English scientist's fallacious view. Keith is an able biologist, but in this particular matter he has gone astray through failure to properly evaluate Darwin's ideas, though why he should do this I'm unable to say, for Darwin's methods of presentation were always simple and understandable even to laymen like myself. Keith should give careful thought to the following words, which are taken from Charles Darwin's epochal book, "The Descent of Man":

"In every country in which a large standing army is kept up the finest young men are taken by the conscription or are enlisted. They are thus exposed to early death during war, are often tempted into vice, and are prevented from marrying during the prime of life. On the other hand, the shorter and feebler men with poor constitutions are left at home, and consequently have a much better chance of marrying and propagating their kind."

The above excerpt was quoted in the August, 1937, issue of *The Literary Guide*, by Jack Lindsay, for the special benefit of Keith. The journal is the official publication of the Rationalist Press Association, England's most important organization of Free-thinkers, and as I happen to know that Keith is a member and officer of

that body it'll be interesting to learn how he answers Darwin's sentences. Jack Lindsay adds:

"It is clear from this passage that Darwin considered war as tending only to the Survival of the Unfittest. If he had written the passage with the conscious intention of disavowing those who were to make unscrupulous use of his great name, he could scarcely have made his meaning more unmistakable."

* * *
 What is the Catholic doctrine with regard to Eternal Punishment?

That's a difficult question to answer because Catholics themselves have such differing views. J. W. Poynter throws light on this subject, as follows:

"The Roman Catholic doctrine as to hell is full of uncertainty. Some people of that faith think the majority of the human race will go to hell; others say very few will; and some even think no one will (though that opinion is not really orthodox). The orthodox doctrine is that no one goes to hell unless he dies in a state of unrepented mortal sin. Mortal sin must concern a serious matter; must be committed with full knowledge of its gravity; and must be a free, deliberate act. When it is considered how few acts fulfill these conditions it will be seen how wide is the sphere of uncertainty. The fact is that the doctrine of eternal punishment is so revolting to the moral sense that it is impossible to frame any theory making it reasonable."

* * *
 Are you able to explain that peculiar phenomenon, the "crime wave"?

There isn't anything to "explain" because there's no such thing as a "crime wave." Often when a newspaper gets hard up for circulation it turns to that old-time favorite, crime, and by clever manipulation makes its readers believe the city is in the throes of a "crime wave," or "a suicide wave," of whatever it is that is needed to wave the circulation figures. As William Lewis Butcher, of the N.Y. State Crime Commission, put it: "We have waves of news and we think we are having waves of crime." In other words, the "crime wave" is just another piece of bunk. The William Lewis Butcher statement continues:

"The average person is always unduly impressed by that which is

prominently displayed and which has unusual attendant circumstances or which has been brought vividly to his attention in some other way. Consequently, the average reader of newspapers is often-times led to the belief that a crime wave is in progress because he has been reading an unusual amount of crime news. . . . Crime news is an ever present source of newspaper 'copy.' It can be used when other sorts of news are not readily available. . . .

I remember how, some years ago, it happened that several college students committed suicide. By playing up these coincidental cases and giving extraordinary prominence to every student suicide throughout the country, the newspaper public was given to understand that the U.S. was in the throes of a "suicide wave." But vital statistics soon showed that there hadn't been the slightest increase in the number of suicides among persons of that young age. And yet the newspapers, for weeks, kept roaring about the "suicide wave." Thus does bunk thrive.

* * *

Your constant debunking shows that there are countless millions of suckers who will always be that way because they haven't the intelligence to know any better.

Albert Edward Wiggam, in his "Exploring Your Mind," touches on this subject, as follows:

"Is gullibility and willingness to swallow everything you hear a sign of lack of intelligence? No. It is a sign of lack of education, particularly scientific education. Dr. S. B. Sells, of Columbia, recently pointed out that even students of physics are often as gullible as ignoramuses about facts of chemistry. In fact they are ignoramuses in this field. The person of genuine scientific training, taught to take all things outside his own specialty only on the word of recognized scientific authorities, is the least gullible of all."

* * *

Did General Sherman really say "War is hell"?

The statement has been questioned many times, but the facts indicate that General William T. Sherman really uttered the immortal words. During the Civil War, Sherman delivered a speech, from which the following is taken:

"I confess with shame that I am

tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. Even success, the most brilliant, is over dead and mangled bodies, the anguish and lamentations of distant families appealing to me for missing sons, husbands and fathers. It is only those who have not heard a shot nor the shrieks and groans of the wounded and lacerated, that cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more destruction. War is hell."

* * *

Did Noah take only two of each animal into the ark with him?

There's a little confusion about this matter, as the Bible contradicts itself. Genesis 6:19, 7:8-9, and 7:15 all agree he was to take two of each kind. Genesis 7:2-5 says only two of each of the unclean animals were to be taken, but seven of each kind of "clean" beast. The passage just mentioned (Genesis 7:2, 5) puts it this way: "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. . . . And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him." When we go on to Genesis 7:8-9 we learn the passenger list was to be made up along the following lines: "Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean. . . . There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God commanded Noah." Noah must have been something of a Philadelphia lawyer, deciding that since the Word didn't explain just what was a clean animal and how it differed from an unclean one, he concluded, sensibly, to take a short cut and give passes and rain checks to only two of each kind.

* * *

What kind of a proposition is this "Daily Five" business described in the enclosed circulars? Yours for success in your battle against bunk on all fronts.

"The Daily Five," according to circulars distributed by George Cary Earnist, N.Y.C., will rid you of T.F.—which means Tired Feeling. It will also rid you of B.O. Bowel Obstruction, or, if that's too refined, plain old constipation. The course of lessons consists of five special exercises, each to be worked for a minute every morning. Five minutes a day—and pfouf go the ailments that afflict

mortal man. I'd say, offhand, the exercises won't hurt anybody—nor will they do them any more good than a brisk five-minute walk.

* * *

Tell me which American university has the largest endowment. Then give me the next 10 richest educational institutions.

Harvard University is the richest in the country, with an endowment fund of \$141,941,666, on January 1, 1938. This was an increase of \$7,000,000 over the previous year. Of course, land and buildings used for educational purposes aren't included in the above, though they are worth up in the millions. The next 10 richest universities:

Institution	Endowment
Yale	\$100,300,000
Columbia	70,000,000
University of Chicago	67,200,000
University of Rochester ..	58,008,103
University of Texas	33,642,546
M. I. T.	33,000,000
Stanford	32,000,238
Duke	30,880,031
Cornell	30,311,743
Princeton	26,929,810

* * *

I am anxious to find a comic piece which tells about a devout young lady's experience in heaven. It was printed in Freethought papers years ago. I believe it was called "The Holy Ghost Joke."

The story—if I have the right one—goes this way:

"A very pious young lady had died and had gained admittance into heaven. Saint Peter took her around and presented her to God, Christ and various other notables. Being left alone, she strolled around and admired the scenery, but noticed she was being followed by a very small, mean-looking fellow, who kept bowing to her and was

evidently trying to 'pick her up.' Much alarmed, she ran back to St. Peter, told him what had happened, and asked him who this fellow could be. Looking up and seeing who it was, Peter replied: 'Oh, that's the Holy Ghost, but we don't introduce him to ladies since he had that little affair with the Virgin Mary.'

* * *

Have you figures showing how many quacks are operating in the U.S.?

Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, reported, on October 27, 1937, that "records of the A.M.A. contain the names and literature of more than 300,000 charlatans who have from time to time preyed upon the American people." Turning to the cancer quacks, this authority said:

"Of all the ghouls who feed on the bodies of the dead and dying, the cancer quacks are the most vicious and unprincipled. Notwithstanding the fact we do not yet know the cause of cancer nor any specific method of prevention, and notwithstanding the fact no drug, no serum, no vitamin, no vaccine, no electrical appliance ever has been established as having any virtue in the control of cancer, charlatans exploit all of these methods from time to time."

As for protection against quacks, the best advice he could offer was always to "BE SKEPTICAL." In view of the government's laxness or unwillingness to go the whole way in ridding the country of charlatans, especially the cancer quacks who use the mails and radio, the average layman can't do much more about these ghouls than BE SKEPTICAL.

* * *

MONEY PROBLEM—Answer: The cashier money bags contained: \$1, \$2, \$4, \$8, \$16, \$32, \$64, \$128, \$256, and \$512.

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