

The Moving Finger Writes

Informal Comment on
Developments of the Week
Lloyd E. Smith

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"WHAT A BOOK!"

Joseph McCabe's monumental work, *The Story of Religious Controversy* (\$4.85 postpaid), clothbound edition, is creating much stir in literary circles. The book was selected as the FreeThought Book-of-the-month, for September, by the FreeThought monthly book club—a copy was sent to each of their members. Hurrah! James Gurnelgard, Napa, Calif., liked *The Story of Religious Controversy* so well that he penned this enthusiastic letter about it, shortly after receiving his copy:

A few days since I duly received *The Story of Religious Controversy*. Reading a few pages here and there I said to myself "what a book"; such stupendous thoughts it contains, exposing the fallacies of centuries past. The thorough honesty of Joseph McCabe imbued in this enormous commentary on religion, what it is and is not, struck me most forcefully. This work is monumental in its scope. I endorse every line and word of Goldberg's admirably written article in *The American Freeman*, Aug. 17, just received, which review upon *The Story of Religious Controversy* should be inserted as a preface to this lucid portrayal of religion as it. "He is at work," as Goldberg says, most appropriately, "upon a surgical operation, and he cuts clean. Only this is an operation in which the anesthesia is removed, not applied. He writes with his gloves off."

A really fine review of Joseph McCabe's *Story of Religious Controversy*—considering the too often exerted censorship strictures of the press—appeared in the New York *Telegram*, Saturday, August 17, 1929, signed by Joseph Lilly. Mr. Lilly is to be complimented upon his intelligent and tolerant review. Under the bold headline, "RELIGION'S FOR BASTARDS ONLY," and the encouraging subheading, "McCabe's Magnum Opus Is Sound, Solid Exposition," appear the following significant excerpts from Mr. Lilly's commentary:

"This [*The Story of Religious Controversy*, clothbound, 613 pages]

is the magnum opus of Joseph McCabe, now a man of 62, who has spent the greater part of his life fighting religion in all its forms, and whose erudition and comprehension over a diversely broad and profound field is unmatched by anyone writing, as does he, for the general public.

"An Anglo-Irishman, brought up devoutly, he became a Franciscan novice at the age of 17, later was admitted to the Society of Jesus, and, after a schooling at Louvain and other universities, became himself a professor of scholastic philosophy in a Jesuit college, remaining one until his skepticism precluded conscientious fulfillment of his duties, and culminating in his withdrawal from the church on the threshold of a brilliant career.

"Predisposed to religion, educated by the most expert of theologians (if such, properly, there be), he inevitably turned to the study of its origin, and its latter-day concomitant morality, their mutations, joint and separate, and the wholly secular ramifications of religious development and growth.

"This book is much more than a justification of his life, for he has long since passed through that psychological stage. . . . It is a sound and solid exposition of the birth of religion and morality, and their development so far as Christianity is concerned, and the present disintegration of western religion from the impetus of scientific research and the impact of materialism.

"He gives us excellent chapters on Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Jesus, the Apocrypha and an excellent and brief study of what had happened, and hadn't, up to and including Constantine.

"The primary educational need of America," he says, "is to persuade believers to examine candidly the bases of their belief." And in this book he helps them to do it. For this alone the book meets a very urgent need."

Whatever the quality of your agnosticism or atheism, Joseph McCabe's *Story of Religious Controversy* certainly belongs in your library. Has your copy been ordered?

"UNPOPULAR OPINIONS"

John Langdon-Davies, who contributes the regular department "A Window on Europe" to the columns of *The American Freeman*, recently wrote the following comment to E. H.-J., anent the Jubilee Celebration of 1,500 different titles in the Little Blue Books:

The clothbound books by Mr. Fielding are also available, at the prices noted: *The Caveman Within Us* (\$3.15 postpaid); *Sex and the Love-Life* (\$2.65 postpaid); *Health and Self-Mastery Through Conscious Auto-Suggestion* (\$1.95 postpaid); *Sanity in Sex* (\$1.95 postpaid).

Behind the scenes, among the holders of power and their more deliberate representatives and courtiers, this has been the real deciding interest in the official attitude toward ideas. There is pretense of other fine motives, there is much appearance of concern for the truth and the protection or salvation of men by the authoritarian edicts of right, thinking so called, but actually certain powers and privileges are at stake and it is the role of the official philosophy to maintain them. Love of power, not love of truth, is the determining principle. Interpreting both their words and actions realistically, we can understand that the reply of the sharply conscious men in power to Voltaire and Rousseau and Diderot and others who expressed heretical ideas was: "We heartily fear your ideas—we realize that your ideas attack the foundations of our power—and we will

"The great adventure of the Little Blue Books appeals to me chiefly because it has made a commercial success out of 'unpopular opinions.' Anyone can make claptrap pay, anyone can publish advanced pamphlets at a loss—congratulations on having done something so different."

FIELDING-CAMERON

Readers of the Little Blue Books know who William J. Fielding is, for he has contributed 25 Little Blue Books to the series. Mr. Fielding informs us of his recent marriage, to a "Scotch lassie," as he describes her, by name Margaret Cameron. Mr. and Mrs. Fielding are at home in West Orange, N. J.

Mr. Fielding is at present writing a new Little Blue Book, to give the facts about the modern trend toward more skin exposed to more sunlight—how the sun's rays are aiding health and beauty.

For those interested in Mr. Fielding's Little Blue Books now in print, I add the following checklist (5c apiece postpaid when 20 or more books are ordered at one time; please order by numbers):

- 190 Psychoanalysis Explained
- 217 The Puzzle of Personality
- 401 Woman the Warrior
- 447 Auto-Suggestion: What It Is and How It Works
- 449 Auto-Suggestion and Health
- 529 Woman the Criminal
- 536 What Women Past Forty Should Know
- 653 What Every Boy Should Know
- 654 What Every Young Man Should Know
- 655 What Every Young Woman Should Know
- 656 What Every Married Man Should Know
- 657 What Every Married Woman Should Know
- 658 Tooth and Mouth Hygiene
- 659 Woman's Sexual Life
- 690 Man's Sexual Life
- 691 The Child's Sexual Life
- 692 Homosexual Life
- 901 Woman, the Eternal Primitive
- 904 Sexual Symbolism
- 907 Sex Obsessions of Saints and Mystics
- 950 Determination of Sex
- 996 Dual and Multiple Personality
- 1051 The Cause and Nature of Genius
- 1052 Our Instincts and Emotions
- 1353 Unconscious Love Elements in Psychoanalysis

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"PHYSIOLOGY"

Earl Steward, Irrigon, Ore., (what a euphonious address!), read the following sentence in Joseph McCabe's *Key to Culture* (Vol. 14, page 16): "Realizing that I must at least know what other and hostile psychologists were saying, I turned to their works and found that the most interesting statements in them were really borrowed from philosophy." I have italicized the last word because Mr. Steward took exception to it, and thinks that it should be *physiology*. You are right, Mr. Steward—it should! The error somehow got by everyone who read proof on the book—but it was caught later, I am happy to say, and it appears correctly as *physiology* in all the later editions of *The Key to Culture*. (Owners of early editions please note and correct their texts accordingly.)

MAYNARD SHIPLEY

Frank A. Gregory, San Francisco, Calif., likes the works of Maynard Shipley, and writes as follows:

It has been on my mind for some time to write to you complimenting you upon the excellent material that you are publishing by Mr. Maynard Shipley. As a matter of fact my own sympathies are not in the direction of the scientific point of view, but I find it all the more gratifying for that reason to discover such intelligent moderation and detachment in the work of an opponent. You are doing something really fine by making the writing of so distinguished an authority as Mr. Shipley available to a large public.

Mr. Shipley is at present at work on a comprehensive 240,000-word *Key to Evolution*—eight volumes in the same format as Joseph McCabe's *Key to Culture*. It will be ready sometime during the winter of 1929-1930. Watch for announcements.

MORE FAVORITES

Favorite Little Blue Books will ultimately include all the titles in the series, it seems! Allen Crandall, Beloit, Wis., writes a most interesting letter:

I have been reading the Little Blue Books since the very first numbers were printed and sold at twenty-five cents each, and I want to add my voice to the chorus of approval which greets the growth of the series to the fifteen-hundredth title. Well do I remember the days when, on various occasions, I sent five dollars for fifty books, and was so terribly impatient for their arrival that I would write in every few days to find out when I was going to get them. The thrill of those days is with me still, and I would not take a fortune for those early

booklets with their multi-colored covers. Many of them are no longer in the series, for people did not buy them in sufficient numbers to justify their continuance.

It seems impossible that anyone should be able to select any single Little Blue Book and proclaim it as his favorite above all others. I have so many favorites in the series! Several of Darrow's, several of Finger's, several of Goldberg's, many by the editor and his wife—oh, the number of my favorites in the series is almost limitless. Marcell's book on her husband, No. 809, has always been a ranking favorite of mine and ever since its appearance, I have turned first to her articles wherever they appeared. Whenever a number of *The Debunker* fails to carry a contribution from her pen I am keenly disappointed. Always I read the editor's writings, but I turn with pleasure from his dealings in abstract ideas to Marcell's warmly glowing lines which seem to be saturated with the very heart throbs of all animate life.

But, to get back to the Little Blue Books. Certainly it is indisputable that, since they gained general currency, they have been the greatest cultural influence in these United States. It is amazing to what obscure corners of the country they have penetrated. Upon their first appearance, a group of us, organized into a club grandiloquently called Abacadabra, used to read and discuss the Little Blue Books in the basement of the library at Idaho Falls, Idaho. I have seen migratory workers with stacks of them in the lumber camps of Washington; I remember an I. W. W. meeting in the city of Wenatchee, Wash., in which there was a heated discussion of them; I saw several ragged so-called bums reading them in a dingy little employment agency in Amarillo, Texas; I saw a red-headed cowboy with a goodly supply of them on a large cattle ranch in western Oklahoma; and, last winter in New York, I saw a young Irishman, in the employ of the Brooklyn Edison Company, bring the whole High School Educational Course of 60 books into a power station to peruse while on duty, though it would have cost him his job had he been found reading!

I have heard a few people sneer at mention of the Little Blue Books, but in every case the sneers were from superficial and supercilious snobs.

Yes, I have been a diligent and constant reader of the Little Blue Books, and I shall continue to be one. Only a week or so ago I checked off a list of exactly 91 titles which I must have as soon as I can spare, from the exigencies of a bread-and-butter existence, the necessary number of nickels.

John C. Rose, Pittsburgh, Pa., definitely chooses Henry George's *Cri-*

me of Poverty (Little Blue Book No. 638), for his favorite, for these reasons:

Henry George rightly points out that poverty is the greatest curse that can befall the individual or the nation. Poverty is the Hell that not only the Englishman, but every other mortal fears. It is the only real inferno that we know of. We have been able to dissolve into mythology the Hell which Theology teaches of, but this, the Hell of Poverty, no man can by logic dispute. It is only too real, like some hideous incubus. And the insidious feature about Poverty is that it does not have to be actual to affect us. The fear of Poverty lies imbedded in the subconscious mind of everyone, whether poor or rich, and develops into an unhealthy complex, that gives rise to all of those baser impulses, that oftentimes makes it questionable to designate man as "homo sapiens." Even the richest are influenced by the fear of Poverty; the secret of the desire for greater wealth is that the rich constantly strive to remove themselves as far as they can beyond the reach of the possibility of reverting to a state of poverty. The fear of Poverty is the subconscious basis of envy, malice, theft—even murder. Freud and others might well have placed the fear-of-poverty-complex among the chief ones which influence human action.

Henry George, moreover, points out the causes of poverty and explains why it is ever present with us amid our general prosperity. When private property in land is recognized, when the common man must beg his fellow man for the privilege of living upon the earth, when any amount of land can be held idle and out of use, then must poverty prevail. Land monopoly will, naturally result in a few men becoming millionaires, or even multimillionaires; but, unfortunately, they become so at the expense of the vast majority of their fellow men. We estimate, by statistics, the prosperity of a country, by the few millionaires it contains, and not by the masses of the poor. The greater part of the earnings of both labor and capital is absorbed in rent paid to landowners, so that the higher wages advance, etc., the greater the amount will be that is absorbed by rents, even to the limit at which the workingman will work and reproduce. Landlordism is virtually a gross kind of slavery, and the man who is unable to get access to land must accept what job and what wages are offered to him. But where the case is reversed, and he can go back to the land, he then becomes more of a free agent, and will not work for others for less than the amount that he can earn as his own "boss."

The process with which this can be effected is quite simple. All that is necessary is that the ground, or economic rent of land or site values be appropriated by the community for its use. This follows the dictates of equity, for the value of land is created, not by the individual alone, but, rather, is community created.

When all of this has been accomplished, ours will be an entirely different world. Man will then have liberty, without which he cannot hope to rise above a purely animal existence. Slavery will then have been abolished, whether of our minds, such as religion now possesses over them, or physical, that of Landlordism.

* SHOP TALK

The novel by Colette, entitled *Cheri*, recently mentioned in this department, is out and can be supplied for \$2.65 postpaid.

We frequently answer inquiries about Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness*; the price, if ordered through Haldeman-Julius Publications, is \$5.25 postpaid.

Infidels and Heretics, that admirable Agnostic's Anthology compiled by Clarence Darrow and Wallace Rice, is proving fair to be a best seller. It's the sort of book you'll want to have on your shelves for your children and your children's children. And to show recalcitrant acquaintances when they drop in with pious phrases on their lips. The price? Very reasonable, for such a fine book: \$2.98 postpaid.

And you'd better send in your subscription to *The Debunker*. The flood of subscriptions pouring in following the announcement of Joseph McCabe's twelve articles telling the truth about the Roman Catholic Church is overwhelming—almost. But it is a fact that the October number, in which the first of the twelve articles appears, will be sold out and you'll miss Number One—if you don't subscribe at once.

The September *Debunker* will be sold out early from present indications. It is now being mailed. Rush your subscription!

First copies of E. H.-J.'s new book, *The Big American Parade* (\$2.85 postpaid to H.-J. readers), have just arrived. It is a great book. More about it anon.

The Bughouse Rouser, by Joseph Francis O'Brien, is a fascinating inside story of what goes on among insane asylum employees—in the September *Debunker*.

Why I Believe in Freedom of Thought

E. Haldeman-Julius

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If we wish a leading line to emphasize in just the right way our attitude—the civilized attitude—toward free speech and toleration, we have it perfectly ready for us in certain words addressed to Rousseau by Voltaire. There were sharp differences of viewpoint between the two men and each took his ideas seriously, although Voltaire favored the apparently light but actually tremendous and smashing method of attack involved in satire. Voltaire was convinced that certain striking aspects of Rousseau's philosophy were pernicious and reactionary, yet he said: "I heartily detest your ideas, and I will defend with my life your right to utter them."

To be sure, there was good reason apart from pure principle why Voltaire should have been moved to this entire devotion in behalf of free speech. Voltaire himself fought a lifelong battle against the dark powers of suppression. Church and State in alliance had tried their worst to crush him by a policy of intolerance. All men who had ideas which conflicted with empowered tradition, so peculiarly forcible in an age when enlightenment was still in the dawn of its struggle, must have recognized as a matter of plain tactics the importance of demanding, for others as well as for themselves, the right of free speech.

But this was, too, a genuinely superior and unselfish principle with Voltaire. One cannot imagine him under any circumstances crying out that the ideas of any man should be combatted otherwise than in the open forum of discussion. He did not have the optimistic belief that truth had only to be stated for it to prevail as naturally and simply as the sun in its shining; he knew, at any rate, that it would be slow in prevailing and must suffer reverses and uncertainties; but chiefly he knew that ideas could not be truly triumphant by sheer force—"who is convinced against his will is of the same opinion still"—and, moreover,

that an idea which requires force to support it is a wrong idea, calling upon the police with no good motive. And Voltaire was so thoroughly civilized, his mind was so free and so broadly, searchingly active that he was interested in the exchange of opinions and in the stimulations of free discussion. It was the nature of the man—of his cultivated, reasonable mind—to deal with ideas on the fair terms of intellectual consideration and not with forcible and legal weapons. He appreciated fully the absurdity of thinking that mere strength of arm, whether in an individual or a State or a religion, could determine the truth of ideas. When one mentions toleration, one sees the historic figure of Voltaire as its ideal advocate.

The Voltairean point of view has, of course, main significance for those who are interested in the truth of ideas or those who, although they may be intolerant to a degree and possibly to an extreme degree, honestly claim to regard ideas in this light. It may be a narrow conception of truth; it may be a broad conception; but if truth is admitted to be the issue, free discussion is a mode of settlement against which any man will find it hard to argue plausibly. There is, however, another way of looking at ideas: namely, to regard them as signs and instruments of power or as affording justification for a scheme of rule by a religion or a government or a class.

Behind the scenes, among the holders of power and their more deliberate representatives and courtiers, this has been the real deciding interest in the official attitude toward ideas. There is pretense of other fine motives, there is much appearance of concern for the truth and the protection or salvation of men by the authoritarian edicts of right, thinking so called, but actually certain powers and privileges are at stake and it is the role of the official philosophy to maintain them. Love of power, not love of truth, is the determining principle. Interpreting both their words and actions realistically, we can understand that the reply of the sharply conscious men in power to Voltaire and Rousseau and Diderot and others who expressed heretical ideas was: "We heartily fear your ideas—we realize that your ideas attack the foundations of our power—and we will

fight to the death against your right to express them."

It is this strong motive of power, variously adapting itself to ruthless and suave methods, that throws a large illumination upon the question of free speech. It is not the sole factor. This motive is not knowingly at the heart of the ordinary man's attitude when he opposes the expression of certain opinions. Many factors—fear, tradition, sentiment, narrow-mindedness, the feeling of shock at an unfamiliar viewpoint, etc.—confuse the issue and supply an insidious mingling of motives, the true character of which is often concealed, for intolerance. It is the reasonable examination of these motives, the analysis of free speech as an intellectual principle—a candid and right principle—to guide us in learning the truth about things as well as in its guise of a social policy: it is this examination and approach, from the standpoint of truth rather than power, which we make in attempting to persuade the average man that toleration is wisdom, that it is justice, and that no argument can fairly be brought against it in the name of wisdom, justice, or truth. Those who believe in power can appeal to power—and they do, sometimes openly, sometimes by more deceptive courses; those who believe in truth or who claim it as their objective must, if they are consistent and fair, acknowledge that the only valid appeal is an appeal to the truth by way of a thorough showing in behalf of all opinions, as well as a thorough knowledge of the facts.

But we cannot ignore the power principle and the manner in which it has disastrously at times affected the right of men to say what they thought. As I have said, in eighteenth century France—one mentions that period as classically illuminating on this subject—Voltaire and other heroes of the enlightenment were oppressed and every blow and trick of suppression aimed against them because their views were threatening to the agents of entrenched power. There was very little question of discussing the reasonableness of those ideas. Priests depended on dogma—and the strong arm of the law. They used clubs rather than arguments. And that is of course characteristic of every period in which intolerance holds sway: force is decreed the arbiter of ideas, and a false intellectual

position is upheld by bullying methods. Now, both Church and State in Voltaire's time were the announcers, the beneficiaries of certain principles of authority: the Church had its holy doctrines (and its very real power, both "spiritual" and temporal) and the State had its assumptions of royal power. Principally the State was the monarch ("I am the State," said the Sun King, the dissolute and tyrannical Louis XIV).

There is no denying that some of the spokesmen for those principles had the most sincere belief in them. Training had deeply implanted such an attitude and critical thoughtfulness, even had such a faculty been latent, was kept in abeyance by self-interest. There were many priests, no doubt, who did not act, when they displayed fanatical suppressive zeal against signs of heresy, with a clear motive of maintaining the temporal power of the Church, who, in fact, were not thinking coolly and realistically in terms of power. Those men believed that it was morally necessary, spiritually a vital duty, to uphold the true faith and all its symbols, agents, and laws. The power of the Church meant to them only the successful championing of these sacred doctrines. Similarly, a great many (I am speaking now of the more active and articulate men, not of the dumbly obedient masses) believed that royalty in upholding royalty: and they doubtless believed that any other suggestion concerning human government was foolish. They did not tell themselves bluntly that their only concern was to keep the king on his throne as a matter of unjust power and to keep themselves in subordinate positions of power as a selfish game with nothing better to justify it. Obviously, neither Catholicism nor monarchy could have had the power they did have without a wide and firm belief in the principles to which they appealed as justifying their ruling interests.

This does not invalidate the fact that at bottom motives of power, narrow and impetuous, inspired the resentment of Voltaire's ideas and of all that French agitation for the rights of man and that truth, after all, was the least concern of the agents of suppression. It was never the claim of the Catholic church that truth would be unaided by force or the threatening aspects of dogma, justify itself in the consciences of men and that by a spiritual strength

of appeal the Church could accomplish its aims of salvation. The Church was never the least willing to let its claims meet fairly the criticisms and objections of Voltaire and others who heretically studied the basis of religion. The Catholic assertion was dogmatic and admitted of no discussion, no individual judgment, no contrary point of view. It was the duty of the Church and the State forcibly to maintain the religious dogma and see that no man called them in question. Heretics were punishable by death. Torture was a fashionable mode of argument.

It was a religion of power and only in this light—or most realistically in this light—can we understand its intolerant activities. But in this light we can understand how naturally the popes and priests, and also how the kings and their ministers and courtiers, were interested in stamping out the beginnings of free critical discussion. They knew that such open treatment of ideas was menacing to their very enjoyable and proud powers and privileges. They would be kicked off their thrones and out of their seats of power and down from their high places of impressiveness and authority if Voltaire and his colleagues won in their campaign of enlightenment. They had the most obvious, selfish reasons for trying to prevent freedom of speech. They had as much reason as a criminal has to keep a witness from exposing him: free speech was dangerous for them, meant defeat and disaster for them.

In those two main historic struggles—against the dogmatic power of the Church and the monarchical power of the State (the king)—we see clearly the basic motive of intolerance in the desire to uphold an exceedingly valuable and attractive position of power. When honest men talk freely and begin to think aloud, rascals are fated for a fall; and when men begin to exercise the spirit of freedom in ideas they will soon follow by demanding freedom more fully and precisely in actual relations, to the discomfort and the final dislodging of rascals as well as men who honestly but mistakenly—with sincere though none the less intolerant bigotry—lay claim to authority. Every great campaign of free speech has seriously been a menacing thing to certain institutions that were powerfully in need of orthodoxy of thought.

We see it impressively, of course, in the event of war. Then a government limits the speech of its citizens, not in the interest of truth—although a good deal of moralizing sophistry is employed to hide the real motive of suppression—but in the interest of the governmental power, which could only naively be identified with the welfare of the citizens and with the larger interests of humanity.

It does not matter how just and truthful is the statement of a critic of the war policy. He may be expressing the loftiest, as well as the most sensibly realistic, principles of humanity; he may be stating indisputable and important facts; he may be laboring for the actual, common good of his country; but his attitude is unfriendly to the holding of power by the governmental class in charge of the war—therefore he must be silenced. Remembering the espionage laws of the late war, we ought to perceive that no concern for truth animated such legislation but that it was simply a question of forcing the opinions of men in power upon the rest of us; and fortunately for them, aided by inveterate traditions of patriotic subservience, they had only a minority of critics to suppress—generally their propaganda was simple and easy, required no overt tyranny, and glorified honorably and necessarily the tyranny that was employed. The average man believed the war propaganda; but the politicians who resorted to suppressive measures were not interested in upholding truth but in having their own way undisputed. Nor was it altogether, when one reflects, a real danger to their power; in America, for example, there could not sensibly have been pointed out in extenuation any danger of serious interference with the war by the minority of critics; but men in power are sensitive to criticism, their vanity is hurt, and of course on general principles suppression is a good policy for them insofar as they can manage it safely and effectively. Obviously the ideal situation for the tyrant or for any man in power is that in which no one disputes his power. Free speech serves men who wish to be free and who have no wish to enslave others; but it is unhealthy, to say the least, for tyrants and pretenders and charlatans and all those who wish to delude and dominate the masses.

Continuing the examination of the power principle, reflect how all criticism of slavery was suppressed in the American South. It was not an open question in that part of the country whether it was right to enslave the Negro race. Southern statesmen, for all their flow of gaudy and sentimental rhetoric, were not concerned with upholding the principles of truth and justice. They were interested in maintaining the status quo, in keeping a ruling class in power, in defending the institutions which were agreeable and, they thought, profitable to them, in which at any rate their more immediate self-interest was bound up. When the war came there were military limitations upon speech both in the North and in the South; neither combatant side would tolerate criticism of its aims or methods beyond a certain (or an uncertain, shifting) point. Did Lincoln, for example, punish anti-war agitators because they were wrong in their opinions? No, they were punished because they were to a degree threateners of his power or the power of the government and army that he had charge of.

Again, in the intolerance shown toward social radicals, we see a realistic, hypocritically pretentious, uncompromisingly severe exhibition of the motive of power. Socialists were treated with harsh injustice some years ago—and after the World War radicals of every shade, even the mildest, were dragged—because they were regarded as a menace to the holders of power. There was, in this unjust and reckless employment of power, a good deal of foolish panic. Leading citizens of the privileged classes were needlessly alarmed and saw ghosts and goblins around every corner. But if they exaggerated the situation, their animus was not the less plain. They may have used sounding phrases about the defense of social order and the essential advocacy of economic truth and wisdom; but plainly their fear was that their power would be undermined and that they would lose their attractive privileges. They were defending their property and, as it were, their property in ideas which were necessary to the defense of their other possessions and privileges. Ideas thus become weapons in the struggle for power. They become the expression of a point of view that is not at

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Continuing the examination of the power principle, reflect how all criticism of slavery was suppressed in the American South. It was not an open question in that part of the country whether it was right to enslave the Negro race. Southern statesmen, for all their flow of gaudy and sentimental rhetoric, were not concerned with upholding the principles of truth and justice. They were interested in maintaining the status quo, in keeping a ruling class in power, in defending the institutions which were agreeable and, they thought, profitable to them, in which at any rate their more immediate self-interest was bound up. When the war came there were military limitations upon speech both in the North and in the South; neither combatant side would tolerate criticism of its aims or methods beyond a certain (or an uncertain, shifting) point. Did Lincoln, for example, punish anti-war agitators because they were wrong in their opinions? No, they were punished because they were to a degree threateners of his power or the power of the government and army that he had charge of.

Again, in the intolerance shown toward social radicals, we see a realistic, hypocritically pretentious, uncompromisingly severe exhibition of the motive of power. Socialists were treated with harsh injustice some years ago—and after the World War radicals of every shade, even the mildest, were dragged—because they were regarded as a menace to the holders of power. There was, in this unjust and reckless employment of power, a good deal of foolish panic. Leading citizens of the privileged classes were needlessly alarmed and saw ghosts and goblins around every corner. But if they exaggerated the situation, their animus was not the less plain. They may have used sounding phrases about the defense of social order and the essential advocacy of economic truth and wisdom; but plainly their fear was that their power would be undermined and that they would lose their attractive privileges. They were defending their property and, as it were, their property in ideas which were necessary to the defense of their other possessions and privileges. Ideas thus become weapons in the struggle for power. They become the expression of a point of view that is not at

bottom intellectually sincere but that is selfishly animated.

It is not a bad rule to examine a man's ideas in the light of his own interests. When anyone defends an institution or a policy, observe closely to see what he gets out of it and what it means to him in the most selfish way. We can certainly see, for example, why a capitalist should speak eloquently in defense of the capitalistic system of economics. Politicians who cry out against liberty of speech and say that governmental policies should be above criticism are obviously thinking of their own positions. Preachers who insist that church ideas or church institutions should have certain powers and privileges have a plain motive of self-interest. Their attitude may be rationalized and they may be convinced that they are taking a stand which is right in the large and is superior to selfish considerations, but it is easy to perceive the basic factor of self-protection. "Silence" is the demand or the command of those who have good reason to fear plain speaking.

Those things were of course done more crudely in other times. Kings made, as we say, no bones of their motive: they were rulers by divine right and any man was a traitor who questioned their rule. Also the Church arrogantly professed to have the whole truth on its side but that all men must be made forcibly to obey. The world has changed since those days of more crafty, ruthless rule and more naive submission. Modernism came with its challenge of ancient pretensions. The free spirit flourished, demanding the right to have opinions openly at variance with orthodox or with the interests of the ruling classes (to become, under new conditions, the compromising classes) and asserting actual liberties consonant with the new viewpoint. Blunt assertions of dogmatism and tyranny could no longer be made with success or safety.

Yet the force of intolerance was not so easily—or not entirely and at once—removed as an obstacle to the civilized developments of life. Power still remained in different forms, and social institutions in which strong interests were wrapped up still felt the need of some suppressive measures. The policy of intolerance must be followed more cleverly—or with a more righteous seeming of highly pretended principle—and it could not be carried out to quite the extent that formerly it was. Various pretexts had to be invented. Rulers now spoke in behalf of the welfare of the nation and patriotism was alleged as the excuse for denying certain liberties of utterance. Preachers no longer openly claimed that the Church—that any church—should rule; or they sought more persuasively to identify that claim with an ostensible, yet thinly enough a fictitious, conception of social interests. Thus they talked about the sacred necessities of religion and represented skeptics as being enemies of the State. In law they did not, because they could not, go the old lengths but they created a public opinion which was favorable to their intolerant designs. Where the law did not deny unpopular and unorthodox speech, custom stepped in to forbid it effectually; to make its consequences unpleasant if not actually dangerous; and the masses were used to serve

the power interests of a minority. We have still to look for the power motive in any campaign against free speech. It is merely covered up more than it used to be. And the charge we lay against many opponents of free speech is that they are, sometimes unknowingly, serving not the interests of truth or virtue or society but standing defensively back of certain power interests. They cannot oppose free speech logically with the assertion, which is not for a moment defensible, that it will corrupt men or encourage falsehood or accustom the public perilously to a leniency for loose principles. If truth alone is honestly the aim, then it can only be found by looking at all sides of any question. Free speech is the only condition that is fairly to be maintained where the concern is really for truth and where ideas are considered as symbols of truth rather than as agencies of power. Thus the motive now as always for the suppression of ideas is that certain pretensions of power shall be protected. The privileges of a class, a form of government, a dominant scheme of management, a policy in which certain groups are interested are regarded as necessarily to be upheld and preserved uninjured from the criticisms of men who are curious about truth rather than narrowly desirous of holding up a certain position of power.

Unless one holds that truth is dangerous, that it is a kind of poison or diabolical explosive from which people must be saved by the forcible maintenance of falsehood, then there can be no objection to the free exchange of ideas and the unhampered pursuit of critical inquiries by which alone truth can be discovered and this field of civilized enlightenment enlarged. But if truth is dangerous, then to whom is it dangerous? Our first and correct reply would be that it is dangerous to those who profit from falsehood. It is a menace to groups whose power depends upon a certain orthodox point of view. Truth does not hold any possibility of hurt to men who wish to be free. Free speech cannot frighten those who have nothing to hide, no guilty pretenses to cover from the glare of criticism, no invidious positions to be kept up under the guise of sophistry.

The man who is really interested by life and wishes above all to know the most that he can about life—the man who loves ideas and whose guiding concern is for clear thinking and knowledge—certainly can have nothing to fear from the widest exercise of free speech. Let us rather recognize that the average man can only benefit, if he will, from free speech. He will be the more likely to acquire interesting and useful knowledge. If his attitude be intelligent, if he is convinced that he is looking mentally in the right direction, he can strengthen his views with a better foundation of culture. He will clarify his whole position if he really gives heed to a wide exchange of ideas. It is clear that for the man who is honestly interested in life and who has no ends of power or exploitation to serve everything points to the desirability of a free and extensive literature of knowledge and opinion. Thus only can he see largely the magnificent and speculat-

ing drama of life. Ideas can thus be placed in their true relation. Human motives and schemes can be evaluated in the light of comparison. The actors in the drama, whether it is religious or political or intellectual, and their actions can be judged by the aid of a clearer view and a study of impelling motives and a knowledge of the facts without which of course ideas are but guesses made vaguely in the dark.

Consider how little men knew in the darker periods when intolerance was supreme—when, in the first place, ignorance was supreme—and men were quite lacking in thought about the policies upon which their fortunes and their lives depended. Government, religion, all the schemes and courses of life were darkly at the mercy of events that were not understood; life was something dully, blindly to be endured by the masses and for the powerful few it was an adventure, violent and prejudiced, rather than a rational business. At its best knowledge, confined to a few scholars, was loose and superficial and distracted by wrong lines of baseless speculation. Ignorance of course provided the necessary atmosphere for intolerance. Consider how recklessly and how tragically the race has been sacrificed to schemes of power, to dogmas of religion, to great upheavals of passion and folly; and a scientific, free culture would have inspired a very different tale, as we can indeed now see that it is shaping along different ways the life of mankind—an incomplete, task, yet one whose spirit and direction are plain enough. For man, who has evolved the possibility of an intellectual planning and desire, it is clear that life is something to be conducted with wisdom at its best. What is really for the good of humanity is the fullest understanding of life, the widest discussion of all ideas and all rules of behavior, the utmost openness to all the winds of thought—this is the greatly desirable situation for mankind at large, regardless of how unfavorably it may affect certain narrow schemes of power.

Where power is the motive that moves men, we naturally expect to find that no such broad human considerations are held as valid. Such seekers after power are unscrupulous and, although the development of more humane and intelligent culture tends to check their activities, they will go as far as they possibly can in shutting off the free expression of the human mind in compelling men to obey their arrogant and selfish dictates—and if they cannot accomplish this in one way they will try another—by cultivating a general atmosphere of intolerance, let us say, and deluding the masses as to their reasons. Power inspires intolerance—fundamentally the inspiration is found in the love of power, in the maintenance of a social-political status quo, as the Church, for example, once insisted bloodily upon maintaining its religious position by which the championing of faith and the assertion of temporal control went hand in hand.

For the average man to display a habit of intolerance is for him to be used as a cat's paw for ulterior schemes of power, narrow in the group that really benefits, in which he can have no genuine interest. For this average man toleration is the sensible policy—sensible for the most selfish reasons even—if he could but know it. He has nothing to lose through free discussion; the truth can only enlighten and serve him; it can only enlarge his scope of awareness and opportunity in life.

Unfortunately tradition, the involved appeals in behalf of other symbols and falsely assumed interests, has obscured this general serviceableness of truth. The average man does not of course base his unfriendliness to strange or displeasing ideas upon the claim of power. He is quite honest in his belief that heresy will be destructive of the truth and of the best purposes in life. He would agree with us that ideas should not be upheld simply because they are useful to schemes of selfish power. He would deny sincerely enough that the motive of self-interest or exploitation is an excuse for suppression of speech. After explaining, then, the basic motive of love of power that resides aggressively at the heart of intolerance, one has to appeal to the average man in the spirit of fairness and truth which, theoretically at least, he will admit to be the right spirit in which the subject should be considered.

Why, for example, does he believe that it is well to suppress speech about certain things? Just what is there of peril or corruption in certain ideas which should make him look upon them fearfully? Surely the claim is not for a moment allowable that truth must be defended by these measures of suppression. What decides truth, anyway? We cannot agree that certain ideas are true and forever superior to criticism because they are declared officially to be the truth. What church, what government, what power, what individual has the authority to say what is true and what is false? It is, in fact, one of the first necessities in searching for truth to examine the basis of all claims to authority. That, we observe, is precisely what was done in opposing and smashing—for the undoubted good of humanity, we can now see—

the old, more crudely arrogant tyrannies of Church and State. There was no hope of progress or truthful culture so long as men tamely, unquestioningly submitted to the dictates of priests and kings as to what was the truth and what were the correct rules of life. To believe without questioning is obviously the sign of ignorance and of mental stagnation. Free inquiry, a lively contest and interacting challenge of thought, is the first sign of the civilized temper in a society.

And whatever reservations, awkwardly and sometimes dishonestly, they make—even those who advocate some limitations upon speech are bound to admit that it is the spirit of free inquiry that has inspired our modern progress. Without intellectual freedom we could not have enjoyed the social opportunities that we have today. When the human mind came to be more cultivated, more curious, looking more candidly and more broadly at life—when scholarship became something really emancipated and enlightened—then the hope of civilization was visible. It is a commonplace of historical wisdom that the best and most progressive periods have been those in which ideas were free and culture was unfettered by the narrow bonds of bigoted authority. Civilization is proved by freedom of speech; tyranny in such matters is the way of barbarism and stands sinisterly in the road of all real advancement.

It would seem that the lessons of history, showing how men have advanced from errors to an increasingly true view of life, how the burdens of old tyrannies and superstitions have been removed necessarily by the spirit of toleration, should disillusion men's minds of the notion that truth can be served by a policy of suppression. What indeed would be our position today if that view had been effective all the while and no light of free thought had come to man? Evidently we should still be under the domination of Catholic tyranny and under the crushing weight of kingly rule. We should never have had the enormously harmful fallacies of monarchy and dogmatic religion exposed, thus enabling us to live more sensibly in the light of broadly surveyed, humanized culture and ideas tested and clarified in the open forum.

As changing standards of truth have been officially proclaimed, one naturally inquires just at what time the absolute, unalterable truth may be supposed to have been announced. Was truth utterly in the hands of Church and State in the Middle Ages and did toleration and freely ranging scholarship have the effect, not of advancing the interests of truth, but of seducing men from those eternal verities? It seems that the man who defends suppression should be thorough, and that he should be bold enough to take the logical position that truth was shaken and its holy credit destroyed by the growth of a policy of toleration. If a man is a Catholic and a monarchist and an aristocrat, believing in medieval ways of life, then he may consistently declare his opposition to free speech. For he must, therefore believe that free speech has been an evil, truth-destroying influence from the first and that it has been the enemy rather than the servant of mankind. He simply condemns the whole trend of human progress, of which free thought has been an invaluable agency. But how can any man consistently contend that it is dangerous to let thought and speech be free and yet at the same time believe that in the past—until, say, the orthodoxy of our own recent period—free thought has served to destroy errors?

It is really very careless for a man to take a halfway position. He must believe in the usefulness and rightfulness of free thought or he must insist that official intolerance has always (and not just in the present hour) been the true policy. The Protestant, for example, believes that it was very necessary to have free speech so that the dogmas of Catholicism should be dislodged from power. He is bound to expect a certain allegiance to the principle of free speech and the right of a free conscience. Yet some Protestants take the contradictory view that free examination of religious ideas, once that freedom attained anti-Catholic ends, was a menace to righteousness. Some of them declare, for example, that anti-religious, atheistic literature should be sternly put down; and that while men may be allowed freedom of conscience in choosing some religion

they should not have the freedom openly to reject and expose the fallacy of all religion.

Actually, they are assuming just as indefensible a position as that taken by the Catholic Church in medieval times. They are asserting that dogmas—their dogmas, to be sure, as against any other dogmas—must be kept sacred and inviolate from all discussion. They are denying the rights of reason and assuming, too, that men can at this period finally agree upon the absolute truth and that further questioning will be only instrumental in lending power to falsehood and evil. Just how such an agreement about truth can have been reached is not made very clear. We are, after all, asked to accept it on faith. We are told in effect that beyond some point, not certainly disclosed, we shall cease to think—that then we can only echo the statements of certain alleged authorities, else we betray the cause of truth and righteousness. We can only reply that the cause of truth has never been served otherwise than by free discussion and that this freedom is progressively important as society advances to broader foundations and more wide-ranging activities.

It is indeed ridiculous on the face of it to argue that toleration was good social policy in one period but is not good social policy in another period; that there is a certain time when free speech, which has been useful, displays the altered character of a menace. It can, as we have sufficiently seen, only be considered a menace at any time from the point of view of the defenders of power and privilege. It is never injurious from the point of view of wider, humane, socially progressive interests.

What indeed can be the position, stated intelligibly and firmly, of those who oppose freedom of speech? Would any preacher, for instance, be so bold as to assert undisguisedly the preposterous claim that now all discussion of religion should be stopped and (let us imagine) some agreed collection of orthodox ideas should henceforth be binding upon all men, at least safe from criticism by any man? It would of course be impossible to reach such an agreed position of orthodoxy. The claims of truth with which we are besieged are so vague and conflicting. Yet if there is a belief that free thought is evil in its tendency, it can only be held logically that discussion should be stopped altogether: only thus could there be safety from the point of view which is emphasized (but which, I repeat, is not consistently developed) by the opponents of freethinking. Or, again, should we take the position that all questions of government and political tactics should be removed arbitrarily from the field of free discussion and that the interchange of ideas, the study of motives and comparison of policies, which has thus far been clearly of progressive use to mankind is to be regarded as henceforth a danger and an instrument of reaction rather than progress?

But the opponents of free speech do not offer for our inspection a program that is so final and so uncompromising. They have no clear map which shows to us authoritatively the precise bounds within which speech can be safely permitted. They are uncertain and disorganized, taking them as a whole, in their intolerance; and what actually happens is that mere prejudice guides them and they demand that the notions which are favorite with them shall be unassailed. Catholics and Protestants could not agree on the limits of free speech. Nor could men of varying political ideas agree in such a way. Nor could there be set forth any complete doctrine of orthodoxy on economic or moral principles, about which we know that men differ a good deal even when in a general way they are close together in spirit.

The only meaning that we can clearly give to the position of intolerant individuals or groups is to quote them as saying: "Our ideas—or the ideas of our particular church or party or interested group—are to be admitted by all as true and nothing contrary to these ideas is to be spoken or written." And how can the rest of us be expected to agree with this arrogant position, founded upon pure assumption and all too plainly the attitude of tyranny? It is but natural that our first, forcible question would be: Why are we to accept these ideas as true? What is their origin and nature and what are the reasons, which can be accepted only if they are convincing to us, for the insistence upon these ideas? Unless we surrender all pretense of being reasonable creatures and let others do our thinking for us, how can we enter into such an absurd understanding? Obviously, we have to decide in the first place as to the value of the various ideas that are presented to us. Free discussion is initially the necessary step in our thought. No man can simply accept another's viewpoint, without any sensible examination on his own part. Nobody, in a word, is in a position to say absolutely what the truth is and to force his viewpoint upon all others, denying them the role of intellectual free agents.

We have to convince our own reason, to satisfy our own conceptions of life, and for that matter we

know that not even the most impressive body of argument and evidence pointing in a certain direction of truth can convince every man. Men have defended errors most sincerely. Popular notions are familiarly in favor today which are condemned as unsound by intelligent people. Yet we must concede the right of men to advocate error. We are not compelled to believe in such error. We have always the right of free judgment and by an acquaintance with world culture we can guard ourselves at least from the more gross and common blunders of thought.

We must reasonably believe too that with the advancement of general education, with the growth of culture and the more active, vigilant spreading of the free spirit of inquiry and discussion, the truth will be placed in a clearer and more secure position—that, in short, the intelligence of man will progressively attain a mastery over life. It is surely not to be denied that the state of human intelligence—our knowledge, our general view of life, the body of sentiments that we generally agree to call civilized—is far better today than it was in medieval times. Modernism has undoubtedly brought with it the elevation and clarification of our ideas. We have had within a century an immense amount of actual knowledge added to the intellectual store of mankind. We have secured knowledge, too, indispensably through the measures of free criticism and investigation. It would have been impossible otherwise to advance human culture. Under the domination of Church and State, for instance, in the dark ages of absolute intolerance, no such unfolding of the human mind—no such unfolding of the facts and the broadening truth of life to the human mind—could have been possible. Intolerance serves ignorance and is always and everywhere, by its very nature and the very springs of motive that animate it, the enemy of learning and progress. Power inspires intolerance in the few who deliberately realize the basis of their power and the menace to them of intellectual activity unconfined by power-jealous interests. Other men, who have not clearly any motive of maintaining certain interests of power, are animated by reasons which are not intellectual and which are often not very clear to them.

In its simplest form, intolerance is an expression of sheer dislike; it is prejudice actively striking at what is displeasing to its view; and this too of course has something of the power motive behind it, for a man feels strengthened in his vanity and has a greater feeling of his own importance when ideas which he identifies with himself are imposed upon his fellow men. There are many, for example, who are decidedly uncomfortable when they observe the skeptical tone of thought that is becoming more popular in this age. They feel emotionally that this skepticism should be prevented; that its expression is undermining sacred truth which can only be destroyed to the dire peril, the collapse indeed, of society; that the young are corrupted by such ideas and the faithful attacked unjustifiably, viciously, in their most sensitive place.

Take the campaign of the Funda-

mentalists against evolution; partly, among a few knowing and calculating leaders, that campaign has been animated by the motive of power; certain churchmen love the consciousness of arrogant dictation over our schools. Yet probably the majority of the followers of these Fundamentalist power-seekers have honestly believed that the ideas of evolution should be kept out of the schools in the interest of sacred principles and truth that is oddly called "God's truth." Many find the mere thought of evolution—of man's springing from lower forms of life—extremely distasteful to them and they cry out that it is insulting to man, as if such exclamations were at all relevant to the truth of the matter.

The trouble is that most men fail to look at ideas carefully and impartially in the truth-seeking spirit, examining them for the means of intellectual guidance, their evidential force and reasonable value alone. They do not realize in the first place that the great, important question to be decided is that of truth. Sentimental considerations surround their minds in an erroneous clutter and prevent them from clearly and analytically looking at ideas. There is much talk of ideas as being "good" and "bad"—yet this, as we observe it in common usage, is only a sentimental position and we find that it really but reflects the likes and dislikes rather than the thoughtful attitude of people. Tradition rules very strongly and because this or that conception has long been customary and cherished it is supposed to be somehow inherently good and unchangeable and the criticism of it an indecent exhibition of bad taste or blasphemy.

Taking an illustration at random, yet a very important one, there is the legal suppression of birth-control literature—the legal interference with as well as the popular hostility toward much valuable literature about sex—which is simply a reflection of traditional prejudice. Indeed, with regard to sex the most narrow, bigoted notions still are forcibly asserted in the name of truth and virtue quite as if no progress had been made in our knowledge of this subject and as if no influences of modern enlightenment—no changes in our modern position with respect to the scientific management of life—had developed within the past century. On this subject of sex, as upon all other subjects when they are approached emotionally in the spirit of stubborn belief and intolerance, there is no careful, dispassionate method of reasoning indicated by those who advocate a narrow, repressive policy. These advocates of repression seek to confuse the issue with all manner of irrelevant appeals and assertions, which seldom have even the respectable appearance of sound intellectual value or any realistic application to the problems of life.

It is, after all, the most necessary point to emphasize that ideas should be considered solely from the point of view of their truthfulness—that, in a word, facts and a reasonable understanding of the facts should guide us rather than other considerations which are variously advanced from emotional, prejudiced, traditional motives. It is pointless to say of an idea that it is unpleasant or that it is offensive or

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that, it is shameful or that it is a betrayal of the faith of the fathers or that it is immoral or what-not; the only question that the intelligent man has to settle in his own mind is whether an idea is true or false. Nothing else matters, and all other considerations are quite beside the issue, misleading in their effect and serving insidiously the cause of falsehood.

It must also reasonably be understood that the truth is most advantageous and beneficent for men and that they cannot be well served by a false view of life; that the more thoroughly and realistically we know the facts of life, the more intelligent and well-reasoned are our ideas, the better we shall be able to manage every aspect of this business of life. Upon analysis, all ulterior appeals in behalf of illusions and a policy of withholding the truth and limiting the activities of the critical intelligence are discovered to be essentially unsound. There has, for example, been the effort to identify religion vitally with social-moral in-

terests, the claim that only by upholding the principles (yet what principles among so many?) of religion could the needs of morality be safely, basically assured; and thus fallaciously some maintain that, while they believe religion to be false, they regard it as useful. By history and reason and a realistic study of human nature—of the motives that are really effective among men and the workings of cause and effect—that position has been shown to be a fallacy; moral law, so called, can be sanctioned only by social need—no dogmas of religion have the slightest bearing really—and any conduct that is socially safe and tolerable cannot be condemned with right or reasonableness; practical rather than metaphysical explanations must be sought for the conduct of men—and indeed men have only suffered confusion by falling into the metaphysical attitude.

And, anyway, how could anyone have an intelligent position on this question of religion and morality (or on any other question) unless he

could examine freely all possible evidence that bears upon it? It is foolish to say that he must or that he could, if reason has a place in his life, take the word of somebody else that religion is essential to morality. That somebody else may believe it only because he wishes to believe it, without taking thought; the reasons that are sufficient to convince him may not convince another; his opinion may be the result of an imperfect survey of the facts.

The only fair and useful principle upon which we can pursue the interests of our intellectual life and upon which civilization is culturally conceivable is that all ideas shall be freely discussed; and that we shall have—informing our opinions and determining our course in life—access at all times to the most liberal and thorough materials of culture that the intelligence of men has been so industriously devoted to searching out and storing up for our use. A philosophy of intolerance in any form or degree may justly be

denounced as treason to the intellectual heritage of the race. Or it may be said that those who variously place themselves in opposition to freedom of thought and speech are seeking to preserve the errors that have been handed down from the past.

More seriously, the opponents of free thought and speech deny the value of human intelligence. They reject reason as a guide—and what can they offer in its stead but an uncritical acceptance of authority or tradition or superstition? History impressively shows us the dangers of authority and superstition. It is by observing and reasoning and building carefully upon the facts of life that man progresses in civilized aims. A ready access to knowledge and a free, open, challenging discussion of ideas—a culture that is realistic and that thoroughly envisages all the phases of life—is the fine and hopeful basis of our civilization. In free thought we have the proof of past progress and the promise of future progress.

History: Truth or Propaganda

Harry Elmer Barnes

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[Concluded from last week.]

2. *Religious Bias and Bigotry.* Religious prejudice has been one of the most persistent influences leading to the debasing of history from the days when Assyrian monarchs praised God that he had made it possible for them to serve him sweetly and humbly by gathering pyramids of heads of their slain rivals, when the Jewish scribes and prophets offered thanks for the wholesale slaughter of the enemies of Yahweh, when Orosius summarily dismissed all pagan culture as a product of diabolical instigation, to those of Schaff's eulogy of Luther and Denifle's biting slanders on his personality. The precedent for this simple-minded Christian sweetness towards our religious and political neighbors, so frequently asserted and exhibited during the late World War and its aftermath, is to be found in such samples from Holy Writ as the following from the tenth chapter of Joshua:

So Joshua smote all the land, the hill-country and the South, and the lowland, and the slopes, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but he utterly destroyed all that breathed, as Jehovah, the God of Israel commanded. And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon. And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because Jehovah, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

The spiritual ancestry of Newell Dwight Hillis is here very clearly indicated.

It is difficult for a typical youthful Protestant to comprehend that a Catholic playmate can actually be a member of the same biological species, even though the juvenile papist seems able to swear, swim and steal apples with almost Protestant zeal and efficiency. If his parents were pressed as to their reasons for holding the Catholic to be an inferior product of organic evolution, they would be hard put to it for anything beyond some vague innuendo concerning certain alleged idolatrous Catholic practices and a disloyal and hyphenated acquiescence in papal suzerainty. Any candid historian of European religion and theology could readily assure them that the points of difference between Catholics and Protestants are vastly outweighed by the resemblances, the controversial elements revolving about points which Christ would not have indignantly refused to accept as having any relation to his religious teachings, but this would have as little effect as it would to assure a middle-aged Georgian that William Tecumseh Sherman was a human being. It would, of course, be futile to expect those whose ancestors murdered thousands in the controversy over *Homoiouious* vs. *Homoiouious*, would be moved by any such considerations of obvious common sense and decency. But both Catholic and Protestant are willing to unite in a mutually savage pogrom against the Jews, from whom they both received a vast majority of their religious practices and beliefs, bigotry and illusions. And Catholic, Protestant and Jew will, when occasion arises, lock arms in a savage onslaught on Mohammedans, Buddhists or freethinkers. The futility of all this is evident to those educated and civilized persons who reflect that the orthodox of all of these groups resemble, as one writer has expressed it, "a blind man in a dark room searching out a black cat that isn't there." The present swarming of the Ku Kluxers, Fundamentalists and other fanatical groups indicates, however, that the end of heretic and infidel baiting is not in sight.

3. *The Myth of a Racial Hierarchy.* The most weird and vulgar of all the prejudices distorting the vision of the historian is that growing out of the alleged hierarchy of racial capacities. It can scarcely be shown that, even as between the three

major races into which the human race is divided, there is any proof of comprehensive superiority. The hierarchy of races is as yet incapable of demonstrations as hell-fire. The Chinese had a genial and urbane civilization of respectable antiquity when our "Nordic" ancestors were drinking the blood of their enemies out of human skulls, and the Negro exhibits a marked superiority over the white race in meeting the requirements of the environment in which he was differentiated and to which he is adjusted. But this is the least of our troubles with the racial mythology; we are asked, by various chauvinists, to believe that only the Nordic, the Celt, the Slav or the Iberic type within the white race is capable of civilization. The most offensive nonsense which has been recently adduced in this field is that which has spread from the initial virus of Madison Grant's *Passing of a Great Race*. This book, consciously or unconsciously but a doctrinal rehash of Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, is in its implications as flagrant a blast from Teutopdom as ever was issued under Potsdam auspices, and would have led to the deportation of this author if he had proved to be an East Side Jewish socialist instead of a rich New York lawyer. Progressively debased, this doctrine has been widely disseminated by William McDougall, Lothrop Stoddard, Clinton S. Burr and Charles W. Gould, until now we are asked by one Eckenrode to interpret the American Civil War as a struggle between the degenerate "Commercial Nordics" of the North, and the lordly "Tropical Nordics" south of Mason and Dixon's line. Perhaps the most atrocious expression of this racial prejudice and arrogance which has been recently divulged comes from the pen of a sweet-mannered follower of the lowly Nazarene and apostle of brotherly love, one Leonard Doughty, a member of the bar of the Lone Star State:

(After condemning all the worthwhile books which have appeared in the last generation, he says): It might have been thought of the Teuton, that he had reached earth's nadir of stupid badness and graceless shame in Hauptmann and Sudermann and their frowzy compeers. But the race that could produce Sudermann and Hauptmann, and their like, knows no nadir of mental sordidness or moral perversion; there are depths below all other depths for them. The actual, original scientific writings of Kraft-Ebing are less vile and perverted than the current "Literature" of the Germans of today. The stain of that yellow, bastard blood is upon much of the "authorship" of the United States. It is only a matter of procuring a grade school "education" under our free system, and Americanizing an ungainly name. Except for these modern "authorship" that makes these "books" upon our stalls, is of those dread middle races, Aryan, indeed, but interminably mixed and simmered in the devil's cauldron of middle Europe, and spewed out of Italy and France, and out of the dismal Slavic frontiers, and out of that more dismal and cankered East. Like a horde of chanote-laden rats they are brought to swarm down the gang-planks of a thousand ships upon our shores. It is the spawn of the abysmal fecundity of this seething mass, which now, with the mental and moral deficiency of a thousand generations of defective parentage and low breeding behind and within them, emits these "volumes," as the insane emit shrieks, or as a putrid corpse emits odor. Theirs are the little, the inexplicable minds, restless as maggots; void of outlook, void of culture or capacity for culture, or of any ancestral inheritance of dignity or of worth. They are manifestly the minds of those weak and wicked "Morons" of every generation, whose activities sometimes take the direction of overt and ghastly crime, sometimes of mere secret social sin, and again as now, the shameless and, indeed, unconscious "exhibitionism," as plainly seen in these "books" of "prose" and "verse," as in the unconscious and continuous action of the sexually insane who tear and rend all vesture placed upon them. By a strange and cruel malformation within them, evil appears to them good, and all things that are pure or true or of fair repute, come to them through the muddled haze of a bestial fancy, as objects of no worth, and as senseless and weak restrictions—"barbarous in the midst of civilization, heathen in the midst of Christianity."

The validity of this savage onslaught, directed in part against James Branch Cabell, is well commented upon by Mr. Mencken, who points out that by ancestry Cabell is as much whiter than Doughty as an albino is of fairer complexion than Jack Johnson.

The preposterous absurdities of this doctrine ought to be apparent to even one with an I. Q. of 60 or the historical knowledge normally possessed by the inspector of historical studies in a state education department. The plain facts of history are that the Nordics in relative purity have never built up a single high civilization save in Scandinavia in modern times, which singularly enough Mr. Grant repudiates. They seem, in general, to have been more gifted in war and physical prowess, but, whatever their innate intellectual and cultural capacity, they have so far fallen far short of the cultural achievements of the Celtic and Mediterranean types. Then it should not be forgotten that all of the great historic civilizations down to those of western Europe in modern times were, without exception, non-Nordic in their physical basis.

The worthless nature of such puerility as the Nordic nonsense becomes even more apparent when one critically examines the attempt to expound national culture on the basis of race. Granting, for the sake of argument, that France, for instance, has produced the highest civilization in the history of mankind, shall we interpret this as due to the Nordics of the northeast, the Celts of the central plain and the northwest, the Mediterraneans of the south, or the more numerous mongrels who are a mixture in varying degrees of all these types.

The most regrettable aspect of this comedy of errors is that its absurdities have tended to confuse or discredit the real significance of biological factors in history. The important element is not the indeterminate, and perhaps non-existent, differences in capacity between separate races or sub-races, but the very real and demonstrable differences in capacity between members of the same race. If it cannot be shown that the evolution of culture has been due to "Nordic" impulses, it can at least be demonstrated that all civilization has been the product of the labors of the able minority. As Professor Thorndike has phrased it, "The ability of a hundred of its most gifted representatives often accounts more for a nation's or race's welfare than the ability of a million of its mediocrities." The biological key to history, then, is to be found along the path pointed out by Galton, Pearson, Carr-Saunders, Schallmayer, Conklin and Holmes, rather than in the illusory labyrinth suggested by Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Madison Grant or Lothrop Stoddard.

4. *PATRIOTIC ARDOR* Nationalism and patriotism are sentiments not less barbarous and uncivilized than racial egotism and arrogance, to which they are so closely, if fallaciously, allied. To be sure, if one defines patriotism as the sense of civic obligation, such as was a common notion with the best philosophers of classical antiquity and the German and English idealists, then we may frankly admit that it is one of the highest and noblest of human emotions. We are not concerned with that here, for what passes for patriotism with the vast majority of the population of modern states is not this lofty sentiment, but that essentially savage type of attitude and behavior, the contemporary American manifestation of which is popularly known as "Hundred Percentism." The tribal instinct or behavior pattern, which has been unleashed in modern patriotism, now has a singular virulence and potency because of our new technical achievements in the art of slaughter.

The tribal hunting-pack ferocity towards neighbors and strangers endured but little impaired and diluted among the great mass of mankind down to the middle of the eighteenth century. The modern methods of communication embracing telegraph, cable, radio, telephone, associated press organization, cheap popular newspapers, city and rural free mail delivery were suddenly foisted upon these barbarians, who

still looked upon a stranger as an emissary of the devil or of strange gods. In this way a hundred million of these who still retain almost unimpaired the psychological behavior-patterns and attitudes of the Todas or Bantus towards their neighbors are able simultaneously to open their daily papers containing an Associated Press dispatch to the effect that the American consul in Timbuctoo has been slain by a native official while in the act of rape, murder or robbery, and be moved with almost perfect synchronism to righteous indignation and to the immediate demand that our country's honor be summarily avenged by the invasion of this dastardly land and the putting of its inhabitants to the sword. We need to have it adequately rammed home that to give full and complete cultural harmony, propriety and symmetry to the breakfast table equipment of the average Hundred Percenter, we should add to his coffee, roll, shredded wheat and morning paper a tomahawk and scalping knife, if there is any probability that a communication of international import is likely to appear in the press. However much one may long for international peace and world organization, he must indeed by a most naive optimism who expects much from such feeble organizations as the League of Nations taking by itself in the face of the realities of human group savagery and barbarism which have infinitely increased rather than declined since 1914.

It is for this reason that the Bok Plan and other pacifist panaceas seem like clutching at a straw in a hurricane. The manner in which this patriotic psychosis affects historical writing is easy to understand. The most scholarly historian is something of a group-conditioned savage even in times of peace, and may be entirely so in times of war, as was evidenced in 1917-19 by the words and behavior of many American historians who had shown remarkable poise and judgment in treating of their country's earlier international involvements, including even the sanctified Revolutionary period itself. As if the historian's own weakness were not enough, the mob camps on his trail, seats itself resolutely on the library steps awaiting his exit, and clamors for his head if he has the courage and honesty to exhibit intelligence and candor in his utilization of the sources of information at his disposal, which are themselves likely to be very largely the product of an earlier barbaric interpretation of the relations between states. While there are in some cases relatively good approximations, it may safely be said that there is not in existence a single complete and candidly impartial history of the foreign relations of any modern state.

Yet it cannot be held that this defeat is especially significant, because of the lust of the herd for what it desires to believe—what it likes to think is true. This is well brought out by the present state of affairs with respect to the prevailing attitude towards the origins of the World War in the United States at the close of 1928. Due to revolutionary overturn in several of the major states which were at war, particularly Russia, Austria and Germany, the heinous activities of the various politicians and diplomats from 1908-1914 have been revealed to their own generation—something hitherto unique in the history of war and diplomacy. These newly-opened archives have completely upset all of the hypocritical mythology upon which the Allies and Wilson built their high-sounding appeals to the idealism of the World. Not only is this material available in great collections of documents, most of them translated into French and English, but it has been analyzed, sifted and clearly condensed by Demartial, Morhardt, Fabre-Luce, Ewot, Pevet, Fay, Gooch, Beard, Montgelas and others.

Nevertheless this revolutionary information has not affected by an iota the thinking of the French, English or American world. Not only have all the criminals who brought on the war escaped the gallows, in spite of the fact of perfectly demonstrable guilt, but Poincaré, probably the most culpable of

[Please turn to page four]

Joseph McCabe's Indictment of the Roman Catholic Church

[From Joseph McCabe's Introduction to *The True Story of the Roman Catholic Church*.]

This work which I here commence is the history of the most successful imposture of the whole period of civilization. It is the story of a Church which pretends to have enkindled in the heart of the race new sentiments of tenderness, brotherly love, and humanity, yet imposed itself upon a reluctant world by violence and has in the maintenance of its power slain more millions of men and women than all the other religions of the civilized era put together. It is the story of a Church that still tells the world that it brought with it a revelation of purity and holiness, yet its authorities have supinely surveyed, and have shared during long periods, a sexual and sensual license in their holiest institutions to which you will find not even a remote parallel in the history of any other civilized religion. It is the story of a Church that professes to have been founded by the Jesus of the Gospels, who scorned ritual religion, yet it became and remains the most weirdly ceremonious religion the world has ever seen. It is the story of a Church that claims to have been instructed from the first to take the side of the poor and the weak, yet it has until our democratic age allied itself unflinchingly with those who despoiled the poor and laid their feudal tyranny upon the weak. It is the story of a Church that is supremely arrogant in its claim to have the exclusive possession of truth; yet it has attained power by an unparalleled series of forgeries, kept ninety percent of the people of the world illiterate for more than a thousand years that they might not discover its fraud, smote with its blood-stained croziers the mouths of millions who sought to utter the truth, impeded for ages the progress of science and culture, and is today of a cultural poverty out of all proportion to its mighty wealth and jealously confines its members to a literature which is saturated with untruth.

Every phrase of this indictment has been deeply and coldly considered and will be fully vindicated in the twelve parts of this work. For the men and women of the Catholic Church, who have from infancy been educated in its mendacious literature, I have entirely friendly and sympathetic feelings. It is one of the most welcome symptoms of our time that they at last perceive or suspect the real purpose of the priest-made law that they shall not read criticisms of their Church. But they must not expect me to write with courtesy of that system. It will be a sufficient justification of my irony and disdain if I prove to the letter the justice of this indictment of it; and at every critical or contested point I shall appeal to the original as well as the best modern authorities and give thousands of explicit references to these. The non-Catholic reader will find here the complete answer to every untruth and an exposure of every fallacy in the great controversy of our time. And I repeat that this grave charge will be substantiated, not by a pretense of making discoveries or by strained personal interpretation of evidence, but by a properly balanced and complete presentation of historical facts which you can verify in the expert authorities on each of the periods I successively review.

Joseph McCabe shows that the Roman Catholic Church fears history as much as Fundamentalism fears science.

Joseph McCabe has been in the Catholic Church. He was for twelve years a monk in a monastery (read his "My Twelve Years in a Monastery," Little Blue Book No. 439). Since leaving the church, he has spent years in investigation and research. McCabe KNOWS the *inside facts* about the Roman Catholic Church. He does not have to *imagine* data; he does not need to *fabricate*; there is no necessity to hurl philosophical innuendos or metaphysical arguments at Roman Catholicism. Joseph McCabe simply takes the historical record, down to and including the present day, and gives you the FACTS. You can draw your own conclusions. You cannot blink your eyes to TRUTH—supported by Catholic authorities. These articles are truly devastating in their exposure of this astounding religious machine. Send your subscription today—be sure to start with the first of these dozen sensational articles.

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History: Truth or Propaganda

Harry Elmer Barnes

(continued from page three)

the lot, has been allowed to do more injury to Europe in the last five years than was caused by the war itself. Perhaps the most impressive example in history of the irrelevancy of distasteful historic truth upon personal beliefs and actions is afforded by the fact that President Wilson could formulate much of his compensatory idealism after he was well aware of the atrocious Secret Treaties. More serious, then, than the difficulty of getting truth upon foreign relations is the fact that, even if we did have it, we should still continue to be unaffected by it and would direct our thoughts and actions according to the content of the criminal propaganda ground out in the public press at the command and behest of the politicians in power. It may not be an insoluble problem, but it will certainly require centuries of concerted effort to educate out of man the psychology of the hunting-pack in his attitude towards neighboring nations and peoples.

5. THE ILLUSION OF PARTY

Not less foolish, but also no less human and natural than religious, racial and patriotic bias is the myopia due to partisan affiliations and obsessions. As is well stated in a paragraph cited by Professor Schlesinger from the *London Chronicle* of over a century and a half ago: "Party is a fever that robs the wretch under its influence of common sense, common decency, and sometimes of common honesty; it subjects reason to the caprice of fancy and misrepresents objects; we blame and pity bigotry and enthusiasm in religion; are party principles less reprehensible, that, in a worse cause, are apt to intoxicate and disorder the brain, and pervert the understanding?" This type of distortion of history has, like the others mentioned above, operated over most of the period since the Father of History showed how God's pleasure was manifested in the discomfiture of the Persian hosts. While parties, in their contemporary development and thorough-going organization are a relatively modern product, parties in one sense or another have existed from the origins of civil government.

Aristotle seems to have left Athens at the end of his days more as a result of party intrigue than because of intellectual intolerance. Since that day republican and imperial historian, supporter of pope and emperor, protagonist of Whig and Tory have slanderously assaulted the deeds, motives and policies of their opponents and recommended their own brand of thievery and imbecility to the body politic. Partisan zeal has corrupted the history of our own country from Colonial days. An almost Persian cosmic dualism appears in the strictures of John Church Hamilton on Jefferson and his party, while in Randall's genial apology Jefferson appears as in daily communion with the Almighty. The following comment of Theodore Dwight, an eminent publicist of the Jeffersonian period, upon the objects of the followers of the Sage of Monticello reminds one of some of the hysterics of the Lusk Report dealing with the fatal and dastardly menace of American "Bolshevists."

The Jeffersonians, Dwight contended, "aim to destroy every trace of civilization in the world, and force mankind back into a savage state. . . . We have a country governed by block-heads and knaves; the ties of marriage with all its felicities are severed and destroyed; our wives are cast into the stews; our children are cast into the world from the breast and are forgotten. . . . Can the imagination point anything more dreadful this side of hell?" Yet it was a little more than a decade later when we find George Bancroft passing a eulogy upon Jeffersonian democracy and preparing the way for the egalitarian orgy of Jacksonianism by declaring that "the popular voice is all powerful with us; this is our oracle; this, we acknowledge, is the voice of God." And again, "true political science venerates the masses. Listen reverently to the voice of lowly humanity!" This sort of burlesque and buffoonery continued in the interpretation of American party history through the Abolitionist-Slavery controversy, the Civil War and Reconstruction, to Bryan and our own day. The New York *Tribune* said of the "Silver-Tongued Orator of the Platte" in 1896, "Its nominal head was worthy of the cause. Nominal, because the wretched, rattle-pated boy, posing in rapid vanity and mouthing resounding rotteness, was not the real leader of that league of hell. He was only a puppet in the blood-imbed hands of Algeld, the anarchist, and Debs, the revolutionist, and other desperadoes of that stripe." And twenty-four years later it proved that it had lost none of its virility of expression when it upheld the apostle of "Normalcy" by speaking thus of his amiable adversary, "In the manufacture of buncombe Candidate Cox, in his remarks to the Ohio state convention, exceeded his previous high mark. In the attainment of

new levels of pietistic demagoguery he may be called the Landon of politics. . . . It is not strange that Candidate Cox is accumulating the repute of being the smallest and cheapest politician who ever secured a presidential nomination from one of the major American parties. His mock morality, his jumping from side to side, his choice of arguments that he apparently thinks have popular appeal constitute about the greatest hypocrisy our national annals show." It may, of course, be conceded that James Ford Rhodes and Professor Dunning had ere this eliminated much of the diabolism and eschatology from the history of the Civil War and Reconstruction periods, and that Professor Hart had secured a group of scholars who told the whole story of American political life with reasonable freedom from partisan distortion, but the majority of American citizens still view their party opponents and their past in the temper of Dwight and the editorials of the *Tribune*. The writer remembers that, as an exuberant youthful Republican, he was perplexed by the possession of an unusually talented and genial relative who had, by the vicissitudes of conjugal mesalliance, been born under the astral auspices and party crest of the donkey. He impressed me as possessing most of the physical stigmata of *homo sapiens*, but it was apparent by definition that he thereby presented a biological illusion.

The nonsense in this partisan psychosis should be disconcertingly clear to any superior moron who has attained a grade of D minus in a sophomore course in American history. Granting the existence of some fundamental differences in aims and principles in some of the periods from 1796 to 1840, and in the campaigns of 1860 and 1896, it is, in general, true that party shifts in American history have been little more than an exchange of one group of illiterate and grafting nonentities for another. The candid historian will admit but one difference in the last fifty years, namely, that the Republicans have looted the public treasury with rather greater finesse and dignity than the Democrats, albeit much more thoroughly. One may choose his American party affiliations, then, largely on the basis of whether he prefers to be black-jacked by a thug and relieved of \$10 or courteously waylaid by a gentleman in full evening dress and dispossessed of \$100. Yet it avails nothing to indulge in even the most appropriate epithets with respect to party larceny, imbecilities and fatalities. (The indictment is not pertinent against parties as such, which seem to be the highest achievement to date in the way of the machinery of civil government; it is rather a challenge to the political capacity of mankind.)

6. CASTE, CLASS AND HISTORY.

Scarcely less disconcerting than partisan travesty is the interpretation of history in terms of the alliance of God with a particular economic class. From the time of Cato and the Gracchi we have had interpretations of history representing all culture and civilized decency as the sole product of the landlords, *bourgeoisie* or laborers. The landlords held sway until the seventeenth century, when the *bourgeoisie* epic began to make its appearance, culminating in the dihyrambic poems of Macaulay, Guizot, James Mill, Say, Bastiat and John Fiske. Then, beginning with Marx, we discover the appearance of the proletarian apology and the critique of capitalism, though the panegyrics and prostrations to *bourgeoisie* benevolence and omniscience have not ceased, as is evidenced by the ratings of Chancellor Day, Walker, Hillis, Eddy, Francis and Bruce Barton. The honest and fair-minded historian will find much to accept and more to reject in all of these warped claims for the possession of a monopoly of divine aid and wisdom by any of these classes. He will freely admit the remarkable contributions to culture and civilization contributed by landlord, merchant and manufacturer, and will also accept much of the proletarian claim that, without the lowly laborer, and efforts of agrarian and two classes, would have been futile and immaterial.

In the present stage of this controversial discussion—that between the capitalist and socialist—the historian who has an eye for the facts of history and the realities of human nature will be skeptical of wholesale whitewashings and condemnations. He will frankly admit the fact that what separates us from the material barbarism of the Middle Ages has been chiefly a product of various phases of *bourgeoisie* effort and achievement, yet he can obtain from the most evidently *bourgeoisie* sources ample evidence of the "decay of capitalist civilization" with its indescribable wastes and injustices. At the same time, the most elementary of differential biology and psychology would seem to indicate that we would but pass from the frying-pan into the fire to exchange capitalism, with all its deficiencies, for egalitarian socialism and democracy. In short, it is difficult to understand how either a capitalist or a socialist could feel like showing his face again publicly after having read Marx's works; the capitalist from shame over the waste and cruelties which his system has perpetrated, and the socialist from mortification over the

naivete and simple-mindedness of the Marxian proposals for a substitute. One point is, however, worth making here, inasmuch as it is rarely called to the attention of the contemporary reader of history, namely, that whereas we are adequately warned against the biases of the socialistically inclined historians, we are never cautioned against those of the infinitely greater number of professional historians who assume that the capitalistic system is as permanent and faultless as the wisdom of God. No honest and educated person can well maintain that we need less to be put on our guard in reading the last two volumes of Rhodes' History than in preparing for the perusal of Gustavus Myer's *History of Great American Fortunes*.

7. THE SPONTANEOUS GENERATION OF THE HISTORICAL EPIC.

Another bitter source of discouragement to the optimists who expect an interest in truth on the part of the human race is the tendency of the human intellect to collapse when confronted with an antique exhibit from the museum of the past follies of mankind. We tend immediately to lose our critical spirit and to fall into a reverential and credulous mood whenever we are asked to contemplate ancient myths and institutions, and we almost identify good and evil with the old and the new respectively, much as the ancient Persians symbolized good by light and evil by darkness. This tendency is probably in part a vestige of the primitive myth-making proclivity and the worship of ancestors and ancient taboos. In part it may also be a neurotic flight from reality, seeking compensation for the inadequacy of the present in the illusion of a better past.

This particular variety of human mental frailty leads to what may be described as the spontaneous generation of the historical epic. An institution which was originally approved and adopted only after a bitter struggle, and which at the time was admitted by its most ardent protagonists to be but a working approximation to adequacy becomes, after several generations, a colossal product of collaboration between God and supermen. Likewise an ordinary mortal who may have attained to some position of importance through a lucky combination of fortunate ancestry and accident, and who exhibited during his lifetime every symptom of human qualities will, after a few generations, be transformed into a giant of unimpeachable virtue and unparalleled omniscience. The American Constitution and its framers is a case in point. Even Hamilton and Madison admitted that the Constitution was far from their ideal of a perfect instrument of government, and Patrick Henry and Luther Martin were as favorably impressed with it as William D. Guthrie or Solomon S. Mencken are with the political system of Soviet Russia. Yet our Hundred Percent organizations would foist upon us a psychology of mystical taboo with respect to it, more absurd than that which the primitive Hebrews threw about the Ark of the Covenant.

The same situation applies to the framers of the constitution, most of whom McMaster, Beard and Smith have shown to be well fitted, from the standpoint of political morality, for the office of mayor in a contemporary American municipality or for state committeemen in a modern party organization. We may accept the verdict of Jefferson that they averaged well for their generation, but could be matched for ability and vastly excelled as to political knowledge by any subsequent generation in American History. There seems no doubt whatever that any one of a half dozen state constitutional conventions assembled within the last decade or any annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, provided more first-rate political intelligence and expert political knowledge than was exhibited by the group that consorted and consulted with God in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787. It is this fact of the spontaneous generation of the historical epic which, more than anything else, vindicates the "Sneer Method," with all its admitted defects, as an infinitely more salutary and healthy approach to history than the atti-

tude fostered by the "Dröol Method."

8. THE HERD AND THE TEACHER.

The above minor qualifications upon the usual assumption of the lust of man for the whole truth and nothing but the truth will probably make it reasonably clear that the majority of mankind, and even a majority of the teachers of history will have little regard for the majesty of truth. Even those who have been able to emancipate themselves from the more vulgar types of national and racial prejudice are rarely able to keep an open mind on all subjects. An historian, for example, who can preserve a nice balance of impartiality in regard to the question of Celt versus Teuton in the Middle Ages or of Democrat versus Whig may develop a moral fervor surpassing that of Tacitus when confronted with a case of sex-delication. The writer once remembers sending a Freudian analysis of the character of Abraham Lincoln to a distinguished historian who had triumphed over both partisan and sectional bias. His enthusiasm for this document, which was based wholly upon repugnance to the sex issue involved, was comparable to that which might be exhibited by a Southern Baptist Kleagle for a plate of Irish stew.

But the immunity of society from the ravages of truth is further safeguarded by the obstacles interposed in the path of the rare bird of the historical plumage who has a real urge to disseminate the truth and possesses enough intelligence to acquire some slight modicum of his stock in trade. He will be viewed with suspicion by trustees of colleges, denounced in the columns of newspapers, who will also send his books for review to notoriously unfavorable critics, excluded from respectable periodicals, rallied against by ministers of the gospel, ostracized from the favor of school committees who select text-books, persecuted privately and publicly by innumerable Hundred Percent organizations, and regarded as queer and unstable by his closest neighbors and intimate circle of friends. He may even be driven from the academic field to fall back into the professions of life insurance agent or plumber, which may enable him to acquire a competence and enjoy an old age of contemplative leisure. The pressure upon secondary school teachers to induce them to refrain from any ogling, to say nothing of wooing, truth is even more direct and effective.

Yet, while we may well bewail the fate of the exceptional historian who meets disaster as a result of professional candor, we are in danger of unnecessary and misplaced grief concerning the alleged "repression" of a vast host of teachers who, we tend to assume, would carry the flaming torch of truth with ecstatic enthusiasm but for their fear of dismissal. As a matter of fact, the majority of history teachers swallow with real gusto the great collection of bunk which constitutes the mental equipment of the man on the street, assimilate what is true to what is "proper," and approve heartily the martyrdom of their few intelligent and courageous colleagues. Mr. Pierce has drawn the following admirable picture of the mental content and attitude of the majority of secondary school teachers, which would probably apply equally well to the most of the teachers in the smaller and more stereotyped colleges:

Knowing nothing thoroughly, unable to take pride in his skill or to feel a sense of mastery, the high school teacher cannot be a real scholar. He cannot achieve a critical intelligence. He thinks as he teaches, without depth. One need never fear, when he is invited to meet a group of his colleagues socially that he will have to exert himself mentally. Nowhere on Main Street is a critical discussion or a serious conversation more taboo than among the high school teachers. The weather, the children, a show, a concert, school politics and a few empty platitudes comprise our subjects of conversation. . . . Indeed, for intellectual stimulation, the last place to go is to a group of teachers. Discussions about capital and labor, foreign events, local civic affairs or even important movements in education itself, are limited to the barest and most elementary observations. If one were to mention Bryan and evolution, or the Rev. Dr. Grant and Bishop Manning, or the higher criticism, our conferees would stand aghast and the subject of conversation would be hastily changed. . . . In his social life the high school teacher has not emancipated himself from the mores of the small town. . . . Physicians, lawyers and engineers do not permit the most conservative elements to dictate their social life. Teachers do. They tamely submit when an ignorant village parson raves at dancing and the sin of an occasional game of bridge.

In the midst of his early enthusiasm Christ is said not only to have believed in the possible attainment of truth, but also to have held that it would emancipate man from his fetters of superstition and bondage. At the close of his ministry, when he could boast of more contact with human material, he had become so disillusioned in this respect that he declined to accept the invitation of the representative of the majesty of the Roman Empire to open a discussion of the matter. Most thoughtful and seasoned historians can make a valid claim to an *imitatio Christi* in this respect if in no other.

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