

Maxwell Bodenheim and Other Greenwich Village Denizens

By Clement Wood

GREENWICH VILLAGE, the art colony and slummer's delight of New York City, lies roughly south of Fourteenth Street and north of Houston, west of the eastern edge of Washington Square, and east of Hudson Street. Every apartment is a studio; rents are appallingly high; every restaurant is a Pirates' Den, a Pig 'n' Whistle, a Purple Cow, a Cerise Dinosaur, or some similar madly named eatery; every inhabitant is either an artist, arrived or would-be, or an arrived bootlegger. It is also the Quartier Latin of Manhattan, the last fortress of nudity and unleashed happiness, in the Bab-bitted New World.

Enough goes on to justify its saturnalian reputation. If strip poker did not originate there, it thrives amazingly in its transplanted Washington Square home; if pleasant dalliance began under a fig tree in Eden, and thrived wherever Troy's Helen or Solomon, Cleopatra or the Borgias, Henry the Eighth or the French Louis, happened to be, it too has grown native to the smocked environs of the Pirates' Den. For instance. . . .

A New Sheik in the Village

ON the morning of July 20 last, the Village awoke drowsily at its usual hour, near noon, somewhat disgusted with life. Nothing happening . . . no new scandals . . . nothing to talk about, since Freud and sex had grown passe, and even companionate marriage was a stale tale. Then appeared the early editions of the afternoon papers and the village awoke with a whoop. Maxwell Bodenheim had gone and done it! See here—right on the front page. . . .

Thursday afternoon the body of a girl, young, lovely, and well dressed, was found floating midstream of the Hudson River, off 48th street. It was carried to the Morgue, and was identified the next day by the sorrowing parents as the body of Virginia Drew, an art student who had dreamed for two years of becoming a great writer. The major headlines of the papers ran:

NOVELIST BODENHEIM DISAPPEARS AS GIRL WRITER'S BODY IS FOUND IN THE RIVER
SEEK BODENHEIM, JAZZ NOVELIST, FOR CLUE TO GIRL PUPIL'S SUICIDE

GIRL PROTEGEE RIVER SUICIDE; NOVELIST GONE
BODENHEIM VANISHES AS WOMAN ENDS LIFE

Here was a story! Not since Louis Holliday died from an overdose of belladonna, jestingly slipped in his drink by a feminine villager; not since the fifth wife of a former sheik of the village had commenced his biography in one of the tabloids, a story killed, it is whispered, by a judicious price—had the village achieved such prominence. Every newsstand sold out at once, as the eager villagers absorbed every detail.

Much of Bodenheim's colorful past was blared forth by the press to its insistent readers. The story of the prosecution of his novel, "Replenishing Jessica," for alleged indecency by the Anti-Vice Society, was repeated. Six weeks before, a door was smashed open in a cheap lodging house at 144 Macdougall Street, and a girl was found unconscious on the floor, in a room filled with gas. She was revived, and found to be the nineteen-year-old daughter of a prominent New York surgeon. Bodenheim was questioned about this case, and explained: "She was my pupil. She had aspirations toward a literary career, and I was helping her. I don't know what was wrong, but I think she was depressed because she had not been able to sell any of her work." This cleared him; but the facts in the second case were less flattering.

The girl, Virginia Drew, had known the poet-novelist less than two weeks. She told a girl friend, a few days later, that his criticisms had "cut her to the heart." She told this friend further that the novelist believed in reincarnation, and that the two of them had made a suicide pact. The friend remonstrated; Virginia agreed to try to persuade the novelist to give up the plan, and to help her succeed with her writing.

The family were told by Virginia, on the night of her death, that she was going to visit the critic again.

"You ought not to visit that man's apartment alone."

The girl laughed, a little sadly. "Oh, these literary people would never think anything about a thing like that."

"You wouldn't, kid, but I'm not so sure they wouldn't," her mother remonstrated feebly.

The girl left, and did not return home. Her brother and father called at Bodenheim's address, and could not see him. When they called the next day, they were informed that he had moved. They called up the girl friend, and she said she was afraid something terrible had happened. The police were notified; and

the pitiful water-logged body discovered and identified.

When the girl left home, she carried with her two books, and all her writings. These have disappeared; there is no trace of them. In the empty novelist's apartment were found only a few books, including a volume by Robert Clairmont: "Quintillions," inscribed: "To Maxwell Bodenheim, Rouse of the first order: a dangerous rival in affairs of the heart." There was no evidence, the Chief Medical Inspector said, of criminal attack; and the elevator operator reported that he had carried the girl down from Bodenheim's apartment at half past one in the morning, and that she seemed all right then.

And Bodenheim had disappeared, with the police seeking him to question him about the matter. The Evening Graphic carried a dreadful composite picture, showing the girl hurling herself into the river. The News showed a picture of the smirking novelist, reading aloud one of his novels to a group of caressing girl admirers. Further evidence established that Bodenheim, when told of the visit of the girl's relatives, asked "Did they look angry?" and was very worried when told that they had looked excited. And so he slipped away; while the girl's mother charged murder against some one, and the police continued their search, although believing Bodenheim guiltless.

When Bodenheim was discovered, another girl appeared in the picture: a young lady evidently a high admirer of the poet, who refused to be separated from him, by her father, the law, or any other force. He explained that he had spent five hours, on the night of Virginia's death, with her in his apartment, urging her not to commit suicide, he said. After a few days the story dropped out of the paper; but it had succeeded in creating a wide taste for all of Bodenheim's writings. Can one wonder that the feminine heart is thrilled by such love songs as:

Your eyes are gossamer coquettes
Ringed with the sparkling breath of dead loves . . .
Pain flings buds of awakening desires
Upon the stately weddings in your heart. . . .
Trees probing the shrilly sensitive sunset
Like little laced nightmares leaning
Upon a scarlet breast. . . .
Your breast is the bridal-couch of our stillness

What if the critics raved that all this was unintelligible? What better proof that it must be great poetry? For so susceptible seventeen adjudges.

Bodenheim has drifted into my apartment on more than one occasion. He usually travels with a little blonde cutie, one of the most unmistakable blondes my eyes have ever dwelt upon. Her figure is opulent, suggesting a davenport covered with pillows: and says "I ain't got" and "Believe me!" Still another adorer of the poet was quite a friend of ours—Muriel Tooms (we shall call her), four feet six, weighing two hundred pounds, who taught school in Brooklyn in the day, and read Bodenheim at night.

Before she met the poet-novelist, she was living with the son of a rich upstate man. He had no income, and would not work; he had debts, and constantly proposed marriage to Muriel. "No," she told him firmly. "Wait till you get a job." And so—Muriel being as soft-headed a sap as ever tried to reduce by eating cream-puffs—she lent him all her savings to pay his debts, saw him secure a job, and traveled over to Newark one day, at his insistence, to meet him and marry him.

She found the room at the hotel; but the youth was missing. She got in touch with his father, and—as she told us delightedly—the father compromised the case by paying her an alimony, although she had never been married. The alimony was slow in arriving; and poor Muriel, broke, with a penniless summer looming before her, went uptown to answer an advertisement for help wanted in selling real estate.

She burst into our apartment about supper time, face radiant. "What do you think—I've bought a lot!"

"You've what?"
"Absolutely. The nicest lady in the world was in the office. They didn't need any help; but she had a little duck of a lot to sell. I had seventeen dollars left, and I paid it to her, and gave her a note for \$183, which I must raise by Monday!"

"Where is it? What kind of lot?"
Muriel waved these irrelevancies aside grandly. "What do I care? It's a wonderful bargain—the lady said so. She'll sell it next week for me, if I want her to, for twice the money—she said so!"

Well, we finally persuaded her to show some common sense; and she went up the next day, wept all over the real estate office, and succeeded in having the note torn up, and her seventeen returned to her. It was this bril-

The Moving Finger Writes

By Lloyd E. Smith

Bricks and Bouquets
George Currie, writing in the *Brooklyn Eagle* last month, under the heading "A First Glance at New Books," has some both pertinent and pertinent remarks to make about *The First Hundred Million*. Anyhow, the book is creating discussion and causing comment; it is a target for things thrown, whether bouquets or bricks. Here is the item, so you may read for yourself:

Mr. E. Haldeman-Julius, whose daughter was one of the first to give companionate marriage a trial, and who has become famous for his little blue books, of which he has sold over 100,000,000 at a nickel apiece, speaks in "The First Hun-

dred Million" of the reading tastes of the great American public. Because he speaks from the deep knowledge of his pocket-book, he may, indeed, know his public. At least, he is quite certain of his conclusions. He has the record there on his ledgers, and figures, they say, never lie.

America, he finds, is at present engaged in educating itself. Thus we find his booklet, "Familiar Quotations," has sold 34,500 copies. "How to Write Business Letters" has reached 37,500 copies, and while no doubt Mr. Haldeman-Julius' booklet is a masterpiece of its kind, it is to be hoped that such business letters as this sanctum receives are written by those who have not availed themselves of a nickel's worth of knowledge on the subject. Rather let us pray that a million

copies of this sturdy work shall eventually find their way through the mails.

In a chapter entitled "Are Americans Afraid of Sex?" we discover the alarming fact that Oscar Wilde's "The Harlot's House and Other Poems" has sold 41,000 copies, far ahead of other passionate verse, none of which has risen above 14,500 copies. "Jokes About Married Life," alas, has totaled 45,500; "Love Letters of a Portuguese Nun," 46,500; "Secrets of a French Royal Mistress" (Domestic), 37,500; "Illicit Love, etc.," by Boccaccio, 81,000; Maeterlinck on "How to Know Women," 49,000; "Why I Believe in Companionate Marriage," by E. Haldeman-Julius, 64,000; "Prostitution in the Modern World," 129,500; "The Art of Kissing," 60,500; "What Married Women Should Know," 112,000. From this he concludes that Americans are not afraid of sex. It seems to this blind person that these figures prove they are. It is on their minds like a guilty conscience. They

seek knowledge, but hardly from "Secret Memoirs of a French Royal Mistress" or "Jokes About Married Life." Certainly, thus cheaply and in Little Blue Books, they don't seek the world's best literature, since "Hedda Gabler," by Ibsen, can muster only 12,000, against "The Art of Kissing," 60,500, if you please. The Little Blue Books can be slipped into pockets, out of sight. Perhaps that is the answer to the great popularity of the steam-heated titles.

Mr. Currie is a little ambiguous about the book on business letters. In one breath he says he hopes the letters he is destined to receive come from letter-writers who have availed themselves of more than a nickel's worth of information on the subject. Certainly that is what his words convey. And then: "Rather let us pray that a million copies of this sturdy work find their way through the mails." Or perhaps Mr. Currie means that the letters he gets are so bad that he hopes their writers may be excused on the ground that they have not availed themselves of a nickel's worth of—well, just what does he mean? These sentences must have been written near an open Manhattan window, on a rainy winter afternoon, while George, a cigarette hanging limply from his lips, gazed out over the somber cliff-dwellings of Noo Yawk.

Credit Where Credit Is Due
Leon Whipple, Associate Editor of *The Survey*, writing in *The Nation* of Feb. 13, 1929, discusses the book clubs in an article entitled "Books on the Belt"—Book of the Month Club, Literary Guild, Book League, etc. His conclusions are generally favorable.

In tracing the evolution of these clubs, he contends that they have had three godfathers, one of these being E. Haldeman-Julius. Mr. Whipple states:

The third progenitor was Haldeman-Julius of Little Blue Book fame. He put books on the belt a la Ford, and proved that they could be sold by the million with splurges of mail-order advertising. Confining himself to a single format—Model T—and with miraculous mechanical skill, he was able to sell a 64-page book at 5 cents and make a profit—provided each number sold 10,000 a year. If it did not, he sent it to "the hospital," for a change of title, or other engineering. The tale is in his own book, "The First Hundred Million"; the lesson is mass sales and mass production.

Again, nearly five months after its first publication, *The First Hundred Million* gets into the news. It does impress the memory; its facts are, though statistical, unforgettable in their startling revelations.

Catch Phrases, Love, and Sex
A chap by the name of Aaron Bernd (sounds like it's out of a book, eh, what?), writing in the *Columbus* (Ga.) *Enquirer-Sun*, under date of Feb. 10, 1929, has a great deal to say about *The First Hundred Million*. Every reviewer seems determined to get in a few words about this book. All of which is just as it should be, for the book is provocative of comment and discussion. Let's see if Mr. Bernd is for or against; his heading is "How Catch Phrases, Love and Sex Sold One Hundred Million Blue Books":

The American public is deeply interested in everything pertaining to sex and love life. The American public is constantly on the alert for means toward its own cultural advancement. The American public shows a surprising and healthy curiosity in free thought and radical doctrine. The American public loves fun and laughter. The American public will buy books whose titles begin with such phrases as "How to," "Life in," "Facts about" and "The Truth about."

All this revelation about the American public—and somehow I can't rise above suspicion that the A. P. is not greatly different from the British, French, Jugo-Slavian and Korean public—I glean from a

liant mentality, who fell desperately in love with Bodenheim's poetry, and with him, when she met him. But I suspect that two hundred pounds was too much for him; in any case, she told us sorrowfully a little while after that he had stopped calling her up.

One night, while she was away on a party, her house—two doors from ours—caught on fire, and the top story—where she lived—was burned out. She returned at two in the morning, reeling a trifle. The sober little accountant who owned the building sat waiting for her before his own apartment on the third floor. "Miss Tooms, you're going to spend the night in my apartment," he said.

Myrtle drew herself up, outraged virtue shining in each of her chins. "I'm a good girl, I'll have you know, and I couldn't think of it!—Absolutely!"

"But your place is burned out," he explained meekly. And she found that the accountant's kindly wife had provided a couch for her; and slept, virtue intact, in the Samaritan's dwelling until her own could be rebuilt.

Bodenheim is not the undisputed laureate of the village. There is Eli Siegel, who won the Nation Prize some years back with the horrendous "Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana"—Who cares?—and has earned fame since, by having the police stop his steam-siren rendition of Vachel Lindsay's "Congo." When Stephen Graham, the English novelist, visited us to see the sights of the village, we took him first of all to behold Eli's ear-splitting rendition. A great level voice shouting out, each syllable equal-toned and unaccented, Fat . . . black . . . bucks . . . in . . . a . . . wine . . . bar . . . rel . . . room . . .

Bar . . . rel . . . house . . . kings . . . with . . . feet . . . un . . . sta . . . ble . . .

Never an accent, never a spark of intelligence in the rendition. Siegel had added a line from a Negro spiritual,

Tain't my mother nor my father, but it's me, Oh, Lord, midway of Lindsay's poem. This he repeated, starting with a crescendo scream, and ending up in a simulated epileptic seizure on the floor—absolutely lying on the floor! Then he slowly recovered, for another blood-curdling Congo scream. I saw a man slip ten dollars to the orchestra leader to drown out the Siegel rendition at any cost; I was told that the police reserve hove in sight, soon after the recital commenced. I have never heard anything like it. I never need too. I adore Siegel for everything, including this priceless line:

Let flowers smile; smile may man.
No, it is not misprint: that is the line as he wrote it. What it means I leave to the Recording Angel to interpret. I pass the buck; I do not know, as Don Marquis has it.

Robert Clairmont has been mentioned: Robert Clairmont, with his unwritable punctuating exclamation in a poem, occurring again and again:

Nyah! Nyah! Nyah! Nyah!
John Russe Gildea is another major star, with even madder lines. E. E. Cummings is one of the gods, with his unforgettable portrait of a pianist:

to
pyra
f
too
hap
popot
stusus Back
gem
teel-ly
tug-
bri ous
eyes
LOOPTHELOOP
at
fathandabangrag

Translated, this says simply: "Tapping toe, hippopotamus back, genteelly lugubrious eyes loop the loop, as fat hands bang rag." Quite a poem, that.

They are exquisite sights to behold, these

poets. Bodenheim has an indescribable difficulty with his speech; Eli Siegel talks and looks somewhat like a steam-siren; Gildea has curly hair and a girlish smirk. As to the kind of poems they applaud, I have never written but one that merited their approbation. I read this in one of their Grub Street Club meetings, presided over by the indefatigable Henry Harrison, who divides with Lou Ney the honor of being the godfather of this type of poetry in the village. The poem was entitled "Coolidge in Hell," and it was written after spending several evenings listening to the Bodenheim-Gildea-Siegel-Clairmont type of verse, with the strains of these singers permeating it. This is what they heard:

i.
Before behind between beyond
twelve JOHN-THE-BAPTISTS in a pond
beYond beForth beHind beTween
caramels curried in kerosene
beTween beYond beForth beHind
the red hurricane of the mind
behind between beyond before
two and two twice more than four
Yankee twang . . . HNAH HNAH . . . before
Unanalactic thrift behind
A Runted Radish Gelid between
nothing beyond . . . HNAH HNAH . . .

Lilacs laylocks lilacs laylocks
Sappho lilacs Lesbia laylocks
Connecticut in winter is the seventh hell
New Hampshire is the eighth
Vermont the ninety-ninth
And there ain't nomore there ain't nomore
I believe in immaculate deception
how else would little Yanklets twang . . . HNAH
HNAH . . .

ii.
abd When i die . . . and I have
promises to keep . . . and miles to go
magotopies and choughs and rooks reveal
the secret'st man of iron whose itchy paw
quelled the coprising . . . O to be
or not to be in Vermont with Sheridan
forty miles away!

don't BURY me at all bartender!
stuff a pillow with myratty salt and pepper locks
not Yale locks Amherst locks
hide me for shoe soles . . . os in compost . . .
fat to fry doughnuts . . . do nots eternal donots
do not commit democracy do not
a crimbitteringish do not prithree my coz my minion
do not seigelbodenheimgildeacummingswew
do not seigilcum do not sbbsbs

just Pickle my bones a dillar a
dollar a new arrow collar
fifty seven varieties o i forgot the normal
have youheard the latest on grandma?
Come hero mine

in AlcOhOl shanth in my
little old sod shanth in the waste
eliot's five feet of books eliot's
five inch but women demand
horses horses horsilver stations

iii.
GNash GNash GNash on thy cold
gray Buick o Siegel Jack Dee and
Gildea went updee the hildee
but the morphodites! They are neither
man nor flapper theyare neither brute
nor papa they are morphodites

GNashlay HNashlay GNashlay GNash
nathalia nathalia yore bluff is a failure
taint my mother or my father ay there's
the rub taint my mother or my father taint my
elder or my deacon but it's . . . YUH!
hoodoo YUH eli siegel my only regret
is that i have only one hot afternoon
to give to my sweetie . . . tweet tweet . . .
GNational . . . GNashville . . . GNash . . .
GNashes to ashes and Gildea to
. . . ash . . . sh . . . shah h h h h h h h h h h h.

There was a silence, as the last line hushed itself to sleep. Then a wild salvo of applause. One by one the poets present got up, and threw out the right hand of fellowship. "I didn't think you had it in you!" "It's a masterpiece!" "—The best thing you ever did!" "It marks an epoch in American literature!"

Maybe. I pass the buck: I do not know.

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lively and informative book which recently came from the steaming typewriter of Emanuel Haldeman-Julius. The author's concern is not primarily with the popular reaction. But because he is head of a business enterprise which is preeminently fitted to measure and judge the common interests, his discussion of his own establishment becomes a dissertation upon the national psychology.

The First Hundred Million is even more than that. It is a sound and well documented treatise in economics, an expose of American ingenuity under commercial conditions which is entitled to a place alongside Mr. Paul Mazur's highly esteemed *American Prosperity*. Mr. Haldeman-Julius has turned out the only economic monograph I have ever read which has a shred of enthusiasm in its make-up. And, in spite of its readability, the book must be of enormous aid to future scholars of the dismal pseudo-sciences, economics and sociology.

Such an end, however, was far from the author's intent. *The First Hundred Million* is primarily a discussion of the Little Blue Books, that university in print, at five cents a unit, which has long issued from the presses of Girard, Kans.

And Haldeman-Julius bares all. The statistical interpretation of his experiences is a valid index of the national tastes because his books must be bought only to satisfy the intellectual curiosity of the purchaser. People do not order Little Blue Books as gifts for friends, or to leave ostentatiously upon the library table. The pocket classics are bought to be read, and for other purposes. No compulsion is exerted to make sales, no solicitors hawk them in business offices; advertising copy in national magazines and newspapers is the sole selling appeal.

The record of nine years proves that sex, self-education and free thought subjects are in greatest demand. The poorest sellers are "poetry, literary criticism, biographies of less than international figures and personalities that are known by people of special education or limited interests, compilations of any sort except fiction or humor and works of the better-known masters, and the large group of books usually called belles-lettres for want of a better name."

Mr. Haldeman-Julius has no reticences. He gives sales figures on his best sellers and his worst, admits mistakes he has made in judgment of popular taste, and, in his words, describes his methods of advertising and the results obtained from ads in various periodicals, confesses that he has juggled titles and classifications to get his wares before the public, even devotes a chapter to explaining why his announcements used to bear such distressing lines as "Price of Little Blue Books Goes Up After June 30. Order Now."

And his chronicle is sprinkled with engrossing information. There are about three times as many male purchasers of Blue Books as female. A classic entitled *How to Conquer Stupidity* sells at the rate of 17,500 copies a year. *The Rubiyat*, which was No. 1 in the series, still sells about 50,000 copies annually. De Maupassant's *Tallow Ball* used to be ordered by 15,000 Americans every twelve months; when its title was changed by the publisher to *A French Prostitute's Story*, the sale leaped to 54,700. Similarly Gantier's *Flower of Gold*, which reached 6,000 persons, was demanded by 50,000 when its name became *The Quest For a Blonde Mistress*. The only publication whose readers have shown sufficient interest in Dickens' *Christmas Carol* to order it in appreciable quantities is the *New York Times Book Review*.

And so on, and so on. As this book's title indicates, 100,000,000 copies of the Little Blue Books have been sold since the inauguration of the series. A book must move at the rate of 10,000 copies annually to remain on the active list. The present roster of 1,260 titles represents the remains of 2,000 that have been offered for sale at one time or another.

If you have ever been inclined to sneer at Mr. Haldeman-Julius' capsule learning, this book will cure you of the inclination. You arise from its perusal satisfied that the man has done a splendid, work-whole, educational work. And you resolve to order at once a host of titles which, somehow, you have overlooked in the clean-printed announcements of the publisher.

Thank you, Mr. Bernd. You leave us no room to start an argument.

Students to Read E. H. J.
(Prof. Roy A. Tower, of the Department of English, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind., liked the article by E. Haldeman-Julius entitled "Culture in America, etc.," so well (Weekly, Nov. 24, 1928) that he is having his students read it. Prof. Tower also has a fact to add, concerning a book that he contends preceded Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* as a realistic presentation of Civil War days. His letter follows:

I quite agree with the tenor of your remarks in your article "Culture in America, etc.," in the *Weekly* of Nov. 24, 1928; and perhaps it is only pedantic quibbling to object to the omission in (3) "Our Literary Renaissance" of Major Joseph Kirkland's novel of his Civil War experiences *The Captain of Company K* (Detroit Free-Press Competition, First-Prize Story, Chicago: Dible Publishing Company, 1891), four years before Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*.

The Major, by the way, was the son of Mrs. Caroline M. S. Kirkland, whose realistic novel *A New Home—Where'll I Follow?* in 1839 (as by "Mrs. Mary Clavers") created a

(Continued on page 8.)

Without a Background of Culture A True View of Life Is Impossible

By E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS

1. The Meaning of Culture

We have already seen how common sense, without an extraordinary equipment of scholasticism or any fine flourishes of reasoning, may enable one to understand fairly enough the essential, familiar truths of life. Actually, the many and widespread delusions which nowadays we identify by the generic name of bunk are directly in defiance of common sense. Just a straight view of life is—or should be—sufficient to dispel all bunkish notions.

However, it is precisely this direct and clear view of life which the average man does not have. Are his senses defective? No—it is not in any deficiency of the ordinary senses that we can find the main reason for his susceptibility to bunk. It is not so much his inability to see facts as it is his tendency to give them a wrong significance, to relate them incorrectly (or not relate them at all), and to escape from them or explain them away by various verbal dodges. He does not invent these verbal dodges for himself, but has them from a great variety of special pleaders, charlatans, and purveyors of more or less artfully contrived dogmas.

The average man is, when all is said, a victim mentally of words put together without true sense. For sophistry plays a great part not only in the thinking of the man whose mind is trained in false subtleties of reasoning but also in the mind of the average plain man who, less skillfully but satisfactorily to himself, performs (or is impressed by the performance of) mental feats of a like slippery nature.

It is a mistake to assume that common sense is the common possession of common men. Your simple fellow, without culture and without a free intellectual outlook and range, is likely to be most confused, most illogical and most weirdly erratic in his mental processes.

The truth is that a sound, convincing idea—an idea that has the simplicity and harmony of truth—is very rare. A clear reasoning about any subject requires a mental breadth, freedom and at the same time realistic directness which the ordinary person does not possess. (This is not to say that the ordinary person cannot develop such an ability to reason clearly.) He cannot really stick to a subject. He is led astray by irrelevancies. He sees facts confusedly. He is repeatedly tripped in his thinking by deceptive—often, indeed, meaningless—verbiage. In short, far from being clarified by common sense, the average man's mind is in a jumble of traditions, prejudices, emotions, ready-made formulas, and wordy arrangements of sophistry.

We may as well say at once that common sense—certainly as applied to important ideas or a general understanding of life—is not consistent with an uncultured condition of mind. Yokels, having the lowest culture, have also the least common sense. Intellectually, that is to say, they do not know the simplest meaning of reason. Their superstitions, their crude and limited ideas of life, are the very antithesis of common sense.

Culture is necessary to sound thinking. In other words, an empty and idle and untrained mind does not have ideas of sound sense or value. Like any other machine, the mind requires attention. It is culture that gives life and purpose to the mind.

What is here meant is culture in the broadest, freest sense. It is not—far from it—the same thing as pedantry. It is not a matter merely of academic associations. One may be cultured without being perfectly and imposingly a scholar. Yet culture does imply a good deal more than an ordinary range of knowledge—both the knowledge which is obtained at first hand from life and that which, less directly but not less importantly, is obtained from books, and, too, from contact with lively and superior minds.

The man of culture, be the extent of his knowledge greater or less, has at any rate a significant background of familiarity with human nature and wisdom, a basis of sound and important thought, and with a lively habit of intelligence. He does not exist stupidly or incuriously within the narrow compass of the day. He has cultural roots in the past. His imagination, with the guidance of reason, deals with the future. Yesterday, today and tomorrow—

all three are linked intelligently in the cultured mind.

Culture means a fine regard for truth, a sensitiveness to beauty, and an inspired zest for life in its thoughtful as well as its merely physical aspects. There may be culture without erudition, without striking originality, without what we would readily call brilliance, but not without intelligence. Having culture, one may realize one's deficiencies in knowledge but not set up guesses and prejudices in place of knowledge. Culture implies a certain attitude toward things: a critical yet a receptive, indeed a curiously seeking, attitude and a tolerant attitude no less. It is after all, simply the attitude of a civilized person. Cultured—i. e., civilized—men and women have a genuine interest in ideas and they believe, first and last, in freedom of thought and speech. They welcome honest discussion, they are eager to know the why and wherefore of things, and they delight in the play of thought for its own sake. To be civilized is, of course, to be quite free from the prejudices and rude criteria of the vulgar. It is to have fine tastes, broad views, and intelligent aims in life. Inevitably, the civilized person finds himself at variance with the notions that rule the herd. Those notions have not been thoughtfully acquired nor submitted to careful, conscientious proof. They are not enlightened by any civilized idea of what life in human society should be. But the man of culture has a higher critical sense. He applies tests which are not familiar or acceptable to the herd. He looks at life from a loftier vantage ground. His conception of the objects that are worth while in life differs vitally from the conception of the average man.

The difference, however, is not that which the preachers insist upon with so much obscure rhetoric. It is not that the common man is materialistic in his views which the cultured man is "spiritual." It is, in fact, the unthinking crowd that is taken in by the patter about "spiritual" things while the thinker suspects if he does not flatly reject such a would-be mysterious viewpoint. The illustrative free man of whom I write is indeed materialistic in his philosophy of life, fundamentally and sanely materialistic, concerned with the real spectacle and the intelligible, actual interests of life. It is a rich, significant, humanly valuable and sensitive materialism that animates him. It is not gross, unimaginative, oxlike. It involves a far more discriminating sense of values, a far greater activity of the mind, a more subtle and intense feeling about life than is discoverable in the average man who accepts uncritically the dogmatism and mysticism of the "spiritual" ballyhoos, inspired by nothing more esoteric and oracular than the oil of bunk.

Culture, I should say, necessarily implies a tone of skepticism (the degree or the specific points of which may vary) which is foreign to the untrained, credulous mind. No man of culture can simply follow the crowd and meet, point for point, the popular mind on many subjects. It is possible, of course, for cultured persons to share this or that common prejudice; perfection of culture is an ideal and not a reality; yet any appreciable progress in the path of culture will carry a man away from the beliefs and standards of the crowd, so that variously he will be aware of differences and a fundamental tendency of conflict. In considerations of religion, history, literature, morals—in almost any subject of discussion—the cultured man will have a slant of interpretation or appreciation which is decidedly in contrast with the slant of the average, uncultured man. He is not awed by the traditional respect given to certain beliefs. He has a free self-respecting, self-reliant mental life. All ideas, as he sees them, are subject to the realistic unfettered judgment of the thinking man. He does indeed respect authority in scholarship—the kind of authority which arises from thorough, special knowledge of a subject—and that simply means that he goes to the most reliable sources for the facts upon which intelligently he bases his opinions. Nor does it escape his observation that real intellectual authority greatly conflicts with the popular conceptions of authority—in a word, dogma and scholarship are as far apart as the regions of pure fancy and precise fact. There

is a kind of so-called authority which has only power and respectability to support it, and by which the average man is excessively impressed; there is also a kind of authority, the authority of knowledge, which does not plead for blind allegiance but invites full investigation and criticism and, solidly entrenched with facts, holds itself secure; only a minority may recognize it but on its own high ground it cannot be shaken.

This authority—that is to say, this knowledge—is important to the cultured man. It furnishes the necessary background of his intellectual life. Far greater are its claims than that of any pseudo-authority of Church or State. The uncultured man, on the contrary, is impatient with (or, as it may be, indifferent toward) knowledge which conflicts with his common prejudices. He will hold stubbornly to an opinion in face of the most formidable body of facts which discredits that opinion. He is indeed the helpless victim of false teaching; and once thoroughly brought under sway of such teaching he has a strong, tenacious prejudice against lending ear (let alone thoughtful consideration) to any contradictory viewpoint.

This sort of prejudiced, falsely taught, man is more impressed by the opinion of an ignorant preacher or politician or leading citizen than by the opinion of the most eminent scientist who has devoted years of study to the subject under discussion. He regards John Roach Straton as a "smart" man, a holy man indeed, because this purveyor of ecclesiastical bunk preaches what he, the average man, likes to believe—what, in other words, he has been taught to believe in general pious and superstitious tone if not in specific instances of doctrine. But he has no conception of the intellectual importance of such a man as Joseph McCabe—a world scholar who has fully and fairly studied subjects of which the Stratons of bunkology are grossly ignorant—who has not merely opinions but a vast and sound equipment of knowledge.

The man of culture may not himself be a great scholar but he recognizes and appreciates scholarship. He can detect a charlatan instantly. It is not hard for him to distinguish between the man who has a superficial acquaintance with the matter under discussion and the man who has mastered the subject and brings to it the criteria of considerable, correct knowledge.

Perhaps it cannot be said that any man is entirely free from emotional and temperamental influences. It may indeed be said that the disposition to admit facts, regardless of all other considerations, is a happy manner of temperament. No doubt some people are naturally skeptical, while others are just as naturally credulous; some people throw emotional obstacles in the way of truth while others face truth directly and, far from feeling loss or sacrifice, are conscious of intellectual gain; some people reason ably, while others reason poorly or may scarcely be credited with reasoning at all.

Yet of the free man of culture such as I have in mind it may be said that he values knowledge and an intelligent, civilized attitude above all things. If the facts of life supported belief in religion, let us say, he would accept such belief as true. He is not really prejudiced against religion. He has simply judged it, tested it by the facts, submitted it to the processes of reflection and the light of knowledge, and thereby discovered it to be false. Once that intellectual task has been fully carried through, the free man has a sound and well-defined attitude toward religion. He does not need to go over the same ground again and again. New creeds or formulas of a religious nature do not demand a special effort of investigation or understanding, because the fundamentals of the controversy between materialism and mysticism have been mastered by him. He is able to recognize at once a certain style or trend of thought, and he naturally places it, historically and critically, in its correct relation.

What is called "new thought," for example, is identified readily—at least in its more popular manifestations and indeed in every aspect where it is mystical and religious—as a throwback to medievalism. Here the man of culture recognizes the will-o'-the-wisp which men pursued futilely and even ridiculously before the age of science. It is a conception, a style and object of thought, founded on ignorance. The history of mysticism is known and its utility, its actual repressive and misdirective

effect upon life, is clearly recognized by all thinkers. On the other hand, the triumphs of materialism are conspicuous and innumerable—they are the triumphs of the modern age, of the world we live in.

And culture, with the world's progress, has extended its influence and significance. Always, to be sure, in every age the cultured minority has been the inspiration and the hope of civilization. Our admiration of past ages, of different periods of society, is bestowed not upon the common life but rather upon the exceptional, cultured standards of life. Pagan culture was, after all, the culture of a few—or the best thinkers—of the finest men, although that culture was far more influential than would numerically seem possible. It is certain that in the Pagan world the cultured man had a freedom which we are only lately enjoying again in the modern world. For centuries that ideal of cultured freedom was lost to the world. Medievalism crushed all that was best in life and in thought. And, to be sure, there was no effective cultured minority during the darkest period of the Middle Ages.

It can be said, however, that culture means the sharing of the standards of the enlightened minority rather than the opinions of the blindly led, ignorantly influenced herd in any age. One man's opinion may be more valuable than the commonly held opinion of a million men—if that one man has knowledge while the million are ignorant. Opinions are not equal without regard to the foundation of the opinions. The man who knows a subject thoroughly is much better entitled to have an opinion than the man who has only glanced, prejudicially, at the subject. Undoubtedly the opinion which is derived from direct knowledge is far better than the opinion which depends only upon tenth-hand hearsay. And in culture, truly speaking, we have this discrimination of opinions. The cultured man seeks a sound intellectual basis for his philosophy of life and, in providing this basis, he turns to the sources of knowledge rather than to the shallow currents of popular belief. The standards of culture and the standards of popularity cannot be the same. There is a wide dif-

ference in knowledge, in criticism, and in aims.

2. Books and Knowledge

There is a tendency among men to speak contemptuously or slightly of book learning. Such a contempt may be well founded when it is applied to one who has read books or who has gone through the forms of an academic education to little apparent purpose. It is also true that the pedant who knows books but does not know life directly and sensibly will fall into amusing blunders. Even so, his trouble is that he had not read the books with a sufficiently lively intelligence nor made himself aware of the true relation between books and life. Pedantry is no more an argument against the reading of books than is any other instance of the misuse of a good thing. All things have their place—and books have a very important place, an indispensable and even preeminent place, in the life of the man of culture.

For that matter, it is obvious enough, although not commonly admitted, that without books the limits of any man's knowledge must be narrow indeed. Left entirely to ourselves and to our direct observation of life, we can know little. It is true that, as I have formerly emphasized, common sense in our own circle of immediate living should correct many of the popular delusions; it is true that to know life even in a small round and sphere of activity is, or should be, to know better than the superstitions which are current in the popular forum and the marketplace; there are facts—there are broad truths—directly apparent to all of us which we do not sufficiently appreciate. By the simplest illustrations many features of bunk can be exposed and shown to be contrary to the facts of life.

But reflect how limited is the average man's sphere of living. And in this connection I mean every man, whether cultured or not. We do not directly come into contact with many opportunities of knowledge. So far as our natural senses go, we are confined to a narrow sphere of observation. We can only see so much, hear so much, feel so much, and do so much—in our own persons, our lives are necessarily confined to

our immediate environment. From this immediate contact with life the average man could or should learn a great deal more than he does. It should make him more realistic, and it would if it were not for the subtle yet tremendous pressure of false teaching. He has been taught, not exactly to disbelieve what he sees, but to give to it a foolish and incorrect meaning.

Yet no man can go very far on what he immediately sees and experiences. He requires more extensive information. Even the average man requires this, and in a blotched and unintelligent way (which is yet better than complete isolation) he gets some awareness of the world from the newspapers. Confine him utterly to his own little corner of the world and he would be as ignorant as the serf of the Middle Ages, who was similarly confined. And there are many yokels today who have quite as narrow a range of information and interest. Ignorance belongs to no special age, though it may flourish more boldly in one age than in another.

If knowledge is important—and on this we certainly can agree—our present purpose agree—how shall men acquire knowledge? As I say, there are simple facts of life which they should know without books, but which they commonly do not understand in their true significance. Let us say, however, that history is in the arena of discussion. Obviously, history is a branch of knowledge which has a leading importance. No matter what the subject in dispute—religion, morals, politics, economics, literature—it cannot be intelligently discussed except in the light of history. We must, for example, know the origin of religion; its influence upon the social life of mankind; its attitude in relation to such important things as liberty, education, sex, and happiness variously identified. And with regard to literature, that inestimable record of the thought and progress of mankind, who can have an intelligent opinion without reading the great books? We must have standards, and we can have them only by comparison and knowledge. We must read in order to know. Morals we may be able to judge more directly in our own lives, but for any broad consideration we must

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THE giant presses have just stopped vomiting forth their huge stacks of printed paper. The razor-sharp knives of the trimming machines have finished shearing off all rough edges. The new March DEBUNKER is ready to go out to its thousands upon thousands of friends who anxiously await its coming each month. And what a number it is, too! It contains an exceptional array of contributions that touch on the live and interesting subjects of the day. Just compare the contents printed at the left. Surely you will not want to miss the article on Hoover, the Quaker; on Frank Harris; on the two California labor martyrs; on the latest in swindling (this latter is alone worth more than the entire price of the magazine).

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

OUR contributors are men of importance in their fields. They write with authority. *George M. Huser* is Director of the Kansas City (Mo.) Better Business Bureau. *Roger N. Baldwin* is Director of the American Civil Liberties Union. *L. M. Birkhead* is pastor of All Souls' Unitarian Church at Kansas City, Mo. *Clay Folks* is the well-known Arkansas school teacher who was dismissed for his liberal convictions. *Harry Hibschman* is a prominent New York lawyer who now devotes his entire time to writing and lecturing. *George Sylvester Viereck* is a famous poet and excellent interviewer. *Arthur Wakefield Slaten* is the former pastor of the famous West Side Unitarian Church, New York City. *Mar-cet Haldeman-Julius* is the Editor's wife and a brilliant, perspicacious interviewer. *T. Swann Harding* is a prominent scientist. *Maynard Shipley* is President of the Science League of America. *Miriam Allen deFord* is his wife and has attracted much attention for her studies and her translations from the Latin classics. *Havelock Ellis* is the outstanding authority on Sex of our age. *Lloyd E. Smith* is Assistant Editor of the Haldeman-Julius Publications.

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be familiar with the moral ideas and practices of other periods; we must know what men have considered good and bad in other times, and also how their standards have been practically demonstrated. It is, finally, clear that scientific knowledge cannot be obtained directly, in a limited sphere of experience, by this or that individual; one must go to the books in order to acquire this knowledge; in a word, one must have evidence which is far beyond one's immediate reach.

The knowledge of mankind, which has been accumulated through the centuries, is preserved in books. This is indeed a truism which, however, the scorners of books have evidently not been made aware of: he thinks that the few things which he can know personally, immediately and directly comprise all of knowledge—at least of practical knowledge. Such a belief is fallaciously supported by an appearance of truth: i. e., a great deal can be learned by direct observation of life and, however limited, this observation enables one to act efficiently in the main course of living. Yet it is a mistake to think that this handy perception is enough or that it is in any way a substitute for wide book learning.

Books and culture are inseparable. The immense cultural heritage of mankind is available only to the man who will read the major books in which that heritage is contained. An indifference to books means an indifference to the past of the human race, an indifference to what men have learned in other times, and an indifference to the accumulated facts in any department of knowledge. The man who speaks contemptuously or lightly of books is in fact displaying the most extreme egotism because he is assuming that in his own individual field of observation he has seen and understood the whole of life—or, at any rate, that whatever of life is outside his immediate observation is unimportant.

Yet there can be no education, worthy of the name, without books. And with the increasing complexity of social life and with the progress of knowledge, there is a growing demand for books which will in a reliable way justify and continue this knowledge—which will provide a basis of facts and a steady influence of wisdom. It would indeed be impossible to exaggerate the importance of books in the intellectual life of mankind. It would seem that even the most stupid person could realize this significance of books, could appreciate the fact that without books the whole past of mankind would be entirely in the dark, and could understand that without the ideas, inventions and discoveries of great men in history our own immediate path would be darker and more difficult.

Of course the old cliché that we can judge the future by the past is not absolutely true; progress changes the attitude as it changes the conditions of man's life, so that, for instance, medieval judgments have no modern validity. Yet it still remains true that a knowledge of the past—yes, a thorough and unprejudiced knowledge, completely freed of all special pleading—is essential to modern intelligence. No man can adequately deal with the problems of his own time unless he has a background of historical knowledge. And he must also have scientific knowledge: not indeed necessarily the complete specific knowledge of the scholar but the general viewpoint which takes advantage of scholarship.

If one has a limited acquaintance with great books, there is always the opportunity to extend one's acquaintance. What is primarily important is the disposition to investigate the treasures of wisdom which are collected in libraries and the slant of judgment which places the emphasis upon culture. Given this fundamental viewpoint, one may go as far as one will, as the opportunities of knowledge are well-nigh of course, but at any rate more limitless—not limitless absolutely, than most men are willing to survey. There are not many men who possess and can conveniently flourish what may be called encyclopedic scholarship—yet, being cultured, they are guided by scholarship rather than by the popular winds of doctrine. Books, if they are sound books even though a few, convey to us the necessary materials of knowledge. Books enormously extend the scope of the individual's familiarity with and study of life.

It is, after all, a mark of ignorance to deny the cultural value of reading. It means that one is not familiar with the treasured wisdom of the race and in his

utter lack of such knowledge is foolishly proud to despise those things of which he has not the faintest conception. Obviously, to refer a yokel to the great books of science, to great literature, to the great movement of history, is to cast pearls before a pig: he stands far outside the influence of culture, and insofar as it is brought to his attention he hates it because its spirit and its conclusions are so absolutely alien to his own stupid views. Above the yokel yet below the plane on which culture is appreciated stand many who, whatever their practical merits, have knowledge—who certainly are unaware of the broad sweep of knowledge which is open to man's understanding—simply because they do not read good books.

The truth is that intelligence is developed and kept alive by constant and wide reading. For as I have said, the man who has not an intelligently formed habit of reading is relying upon few and limited means of knowledge. He depends only upon what he himself can see and hear and know. He can have no considerable knowledge of history, nor of any branch of science, nor of the greater part of the world in his own time. And it follows that, being shut out from the knowledge which makes for intelligent judgment, having such narrow information and without a background of broad cultural understanding, his opinions are such as make the judicious grieve and his so-called thinking is a very poor excuse for the real activity of mind which deserves the name of thought.

It is not merely a question of good will, although good will, added to other things, is very important. With the best will (emotionally) in the world, no man can have very good opinions without culture, without information, without mental training. We know that the most ridiculous blunders are made by quite well-intentioned people; that follies not simply of an absurd but of a sinister kind are committed by good men who, unfortunately, do not have good minds; that terrible prejudices are most sincerely held. Good will is not enough; wisdom is required; and wisdom, if it does not reside exclusively in books nor is to be gained by the mere act of reading without reflection and the light of personal experience, is largely and significantly recorded in the solid and easily available form of print.

Men may not have an equal understanding of what they read. There are also examples of men who have dealt extensively in book lore yet are not very wise in their personal conduct of life. And of course there is the familiar discrepancy between what men know and what they practice—there are few indeed who consistently use all the knowledge they have. These are not, however, objections to that culture which is preserved variously, extensively, and impressively in books. Books are the most valuable repositories of knowledge and it is for us to make the very best use of them. We shall know infinitely more with their aid than we can possibly know without them.

It is, I repeat, only ignorance which suggests a depreciation of literary knowledge (using the term "literary" to include all written knowledge). No one who is very well acquainted with literature, no one who has made even the slightest discovery of what is to be learned from books, will agree for a moment with this depreciation. Even a little culture creates a desire for more and impresses one with the great value of a cultured background and equipment.

One suspects indeed that there is something lacking in the mind that does not have an active curiosity to open the books and learn what men have thought and done. A good mind, one would say, is bound to be inspired with a steady zeal for knowledge. Indifference argues the lack of a vital spark or, perhaps, a narrow capacity. No doubt many who scorn books would in any case derive little benefit from reading. But we should not carry this idea too far. There are many accidents of environment which prevent men from realizing what advantages are to be had from books. And, too, there are many who read a great deal but have never learned to discriminate in what they read. Others are so intensely devoted to a life of action that they have—or think they have—little or no time for reading and reflecting. Then we have the persons who read, not with the disinterested purpose of gaining knowledge, but merely to find support of a sort for their prejudices—those who are addicted to reading only on one side of a subject.

It is enough to say, finally, that it is the habit of the man of culture (and by this habit he can be recognized) to read constantly, widely, and with a curious interest in all the aspects of this many-sided life. It is impossible to dissociate culture from books. We must have, for the intelligent purposes of life, an equipment of learning which is far broader than our own immediate environment.

3. Without Benefit of Culture

What are the fruits of culture? They are a background of rich wisdom and sensitiveness, a tolerant outlook upon life, a habit of clear and fair reasoning, a lively interest in ideas, a highly developed and discriminating taste, a love of all things excellent and a conception of values that is free, intelligent, and unbehind to the vulgar prejudices of the crowd. These fruits of culture are not produced by any magic nor are they conferred without his own effort, spontaneously and inherently, upon any man. The disposition to acquire culture may be stronger in one man than another, a livelier curiosity may lead one may farther than another along the paths of culture, but the actual, final fruits of culture must be won by each man for himself.

If we have correctly stated the fruits of culture, then conversely a lack of culture means unwisdom, intolerance, poor reasoning, scant familiarity with or dull indifference to ideas, a lower level of taste and a set of values that is cheap and commonplace. Lack of culture certainly means that one does not have a free mind. It means that one is unintelligently controlled by custom and prejudice and is not capable of judging really for oneself on any question. It means, first and last, that one does not have the knowledge upon which, essentially, correct opinions must be formed. Few subjects are so simple that, without reading or study, any man can understand them and think correctly about them. There is indeed no subject which can be dealt with adequately in the absence of information, independently of other subjects, and indifferently to the general body of culture.

We can better understand, then why the average man (although this same average man is in a far better position than the average man in the Middle Ages) is so easily led astray by the busy ballyhoosers of bunk. He makes no use of the main, important sources of knowledge. He has no idea of what is soundly authoritative and what is not in any field of opinion. He has no real standards of comparison by which to judge men, measures and ideas. He is without light and guidance.

If (and the truth of this is undeniable) the overwhelming body of knowledge is contained in books—if culture is impossible without extensive and judicious reading—then we cannot expect the average unreading man to be very sound, enlightened, or tolerant in his opinions. Naturally he will fall in with the strongest prejudices of his time and place. His opinions will be much more the product of feeling than of thinking. He will be almost incorrigibly prone to error, because he has not the means (because he does not avail himself of the means) to test his ideas and to appreciate the broader and more carefully justified truth.

Common sense is important—but, unfortunately, it is not very common. It is, after all, only in the light of culture that common sense can be fully appreciated. The average man does not realize the significance even of the simplest facts of life in the way that these facts are realized by the free man of culture.

Books and culture—they are inseparable, and the man who neglects them (as the average man does neglect them) falls inevitably into every kind of error. There is really no use in discussing ideas without a background of knowledge; and while the average man has many opinions, he is lacking, first and last, in the essentials of knowledge.

The Moving Finger Writes

Continued from page two
flurry of excitement and called forth a neat little eulogy from Poe (in his *Literati*).
"You say, 'To the beginning of the present century,' etc., and 'Then came a few pioneers of realism,' etc. Stephen Crane, etc. Crane died in 1900, but of course his work was just beginning to have its effect; and so you are largely right."
Anyway, I'm having my students read your article.
Prof. Tower wishes to know if *Today's Poetry* (Little Blue Book No. 298) is still available. It is. A new edition has come fresh from the presses.

Was It Anti-Slavery?

Lloyd T. Everett, Box 808, DeLand, Fla., saw the advertisement of the High School Educational Course for \$2.98. He read the test questions, printed to show the value of this set of books; one of these questions read: "What chiefly caused the U. S. Civil War?" The question is answered in Leo Markun's *A Short History of the Civil War* (Little Blue Book No. 503).

But Mr. Everett is particularly interested in whether the answer given in this course is the moral one, of opposition to slavery because it is wrong. Mr. Everett wrote a prize essay, in 1916, on "The Causes That Led to the War Between the States," and in this essay, of which he sends a copy, he points out that the opposition to slavery in the North was not necessarily moral, but economic and political. His essay is entitled "Was It Anti-Slavery?" No doubt the causes of the war included strong anti-slavery agitation, and it was ultimately made the issue of the war; whether the causes of the agitation were moral or economic or political is beside that question, for it remains anti-slavery whatever caused it.

However, Mr. Everett need have no qualms. The history of the war as written by Leo Markun, though brief, will be found to have a sound historical basis. In one place Mr. Markun says:

Why did the Northerners oppose the extension of slavery? Some of them, as a matter of fact, did not. To a small extent, I suppose, the question was a moral one. There were people who thought it wrong to enslave the Negroes and abolition societies were in existence from the formation of the Union until the final emancipation of the slaves. What the workmen and farmers of the North chiefly cared about, however, was not free Negroes but free soil. The West for a nominal price, the wages of all free laborers were certain to remain high. Even those people who did not wish to take unquarter-sections for themselves would benefit by the existence of these great open areas. If the slave-owners established great plantations in the territories, there would be no place for the discontented workman to go and no guarantee that wages would remain at their high level.

The causes of the Civil War were many and various. That economics and politics both entered largely into these causes is a truism of history. Humanity fights for a moral cause, ostensibly, but the fight usually begins after long lingering conditions of bickering and strife have culminated in a heated encounter which precipitates war. Many a moral issue has been seized upon as an excuse for war; as a rule, however, the real cause has been much deeper and of much longer standing. Wars will be prevented, not by a lack of moral issues to fight for, but by a surge of human sentiment against the idea of war as a solution for international or domestic difficulties.

A Tour of Europe With a Poet
E. H.-J. received during the week an announcement of a proposed "Tour of Europe With Alfred Kreymborg," author of his autobiography *Troubadour*, and of several delightful volumes of poems, including *Mushrooms*, *Less Lonely*, *Lima Beans*, etc. Mr. Kreymborg stopped in Girard about two years ago, and gave an evening of his readings, accompanying himself on an instrument he called the mandolote.

The proposed tour starts June 20 from New York, and ends there August 19. (Full particulars may be secured from Alfred Kreymborg, 319 West 18th St., New York City; the cost is \$1,095, including all except personal expenses.)

The announcement prints a facsimile of a poem by Alfred Kreymborg, in his handwriting, signed by him:
And there are no more emperors in Rome,
Venetian dogs, dukes in Florence, dead
The Medicis and Borgias, less than loam,
Their treacheries and inquisitions fled?
But who is this who haunts the Coliseum
What specters persecute the Vecchio,
Whose ghosts are these infest each dark museum,
Whose presence makes old mirrors shudder so?

The First Attack

The first printed attack on *The Outline of Bunk*, the new book (just out, \$4) by E. Haldeman-Julius, comes to our attention all the way from Sylacauga, Ala. A reader, W. D. Clifton, has the kindness to send the clipping from the Birmingham News ("the South's greatest newspaper"). Mr. Clifton writes:

As a "near-illiterate" a la the *Argonaut* and a regular Haldeman-Julius fan, the enclosed criticism of your book, *The Outline of Bunk*, caught my eye as I was glancing over Sunday's (Feb. 17, 1929) issue

of the Birmingham News. . . . My regards to you and your staff, including Marcell Haldeman-Julius, the most charming writer of the day.

Since Mr. Clifton likes Marcell's writing so well, he should watch for her article on the new H.-J. St. Bernard dog, by name Ajax Simba, in the April *Debunker*, to be followed by other dog articles. There are pictures, too. Marcell also has her interview with Joseph McCabe in the same number. There will follow, probably in May, an interview with a British admiral, an account of John Langdon-Davies and his visit to Girard, and other enjoyable features from the pen of the editor's wife.

By the way—that admiral. He met everyone in the office here and his immediate question was: "Are you an agnostic, too?" On receiving an affirmative answer he would be perfectly amazed. It seemed to astound him beyond belief. Yet he did believe it, of course; he was a very charming gentleman, withal.

But let's get to this attack on *The Outline of Bunk*:

What is bunk? Who are bunk-shooters? Why is bunk? The geography, history, ethnography, etc., of bunk? Why is everything bunk?

I am bunk. You are bunk. The world is bunk. Bunk before, behind, above, below—everywhere!

History is bunk. Religion is bunk. Science is bunk. Education is bunk. Fundamentalism is bunk and modernism is also bunk. Politics, war, peace, freedom, progress, art—all is bunk.

And so Mr. Haldeman-Julius surveys everything from the beginning of the nebular hypothesis to Einstein, taking a half-thousand pages to do it, and finds little progress, no sincerity, and much bunk in every direction. Nearly every man who has made the front page of the world's press in this generation is rated a "bunk-shooter." With many of his prejudices we will agree. But his case would be stronger if he could find at least one man in the public eye to whom he could impute at least a slight bit of sincerity, other than himself, Eugene V. Debs (a magnificently sincere man, truly) and Joseph McCabe (how many know him?) who is in the lauded the greatest philosopher of all.

It's hard to have Prof. Millikan classed as a bunk-artist, and tarred with the same brush which rightly falls on Eddie Guest. And it's wearisome to have a man expend so many foot-pounds of brain exercise in compiling so huge a monument as Mr. Haldeman-Julius has done in dispraise of everything and everybody save only the genius "debunker," to which he proudly boasts kinship.

But if this feeble protest ever reaches the rarefied atmosphere of

Mr. Haldeman-Julius' attention, he will doubtless put it down for what it is—a lowbrow's feeble wail of dismay at the discovery that all in this mundane sphere is bunk, and we must now needs fall at the super-sophisticated altar of de-bunk, occupied at present by the high priest, E. Haldeman-Julius.

This is rather the sort of objections that are naturally to be expected. Mr. Mead (the review is signed "G. W. Mead") is willing to concede several of E. H.-J.'s points, though he is reluctant to be won over entirely. On the

whole, the review seems like a do the book more good than harm. There is something irresistible about this huge volume: even the reviewers seem to read it, whether they like it or no.

Except that Mr. Mead seems to have read only half of it, for he makes no mention of the second part, "The Admirations of a Debunker." There are more than "Debs, McCabe, and himself" in this section whom E. H.-J. has reason to admire. This portion of the book places it definitely among

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"DUST"

By E. and M. Haldeman-Julius
REVIEWS:

Boston Transcript—

"From beginning to end, *DUST* is a work of art, a searching probe into human souls brought together by an indifferent fate and parted by a caprice of nature."

New York Evening Post—
"*DUST* is a highly worthy addition to the best in our contemporary letters."

Chicago Tribune—

"*DUST* is a true work of art. It is a joy to find a first novel so brimming with promise."

New Jersey Leader—

"This gripping story is bound to take its place as one of the important first novels of the year—indeed one of the high water marks in a season that is rich in the production of notable literature."

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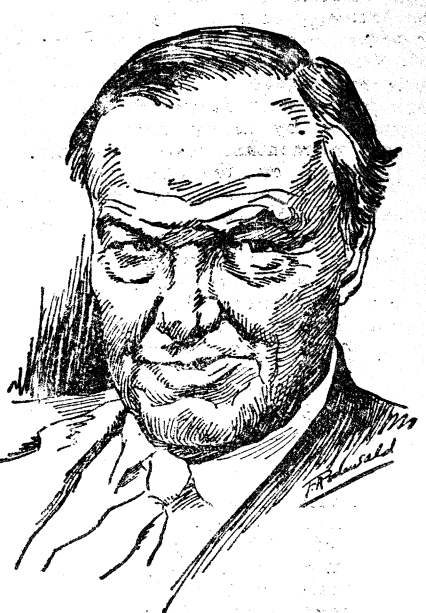
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Essay on Geo. Burman Foster.
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constructive works; Mr. Mead should take another look at his copy and see that all is not destruction which appears so at the first hasty glance.

Good Boosting

L. E. Ludwig, Attorney, Lima, Ohio, is, so far as we here in Girard know, the first admirer of Joseph McCabe to write to the publishers, Simon and Schuster, 37 West 57th St., New York City, urging a clothbound edition of *The Key to Culture*. Mr. Ludwig, incidentally, is the author of *The Debunking of a Midwestern Lawyer* (Little Blue Book No. 1315). Mr. Ludwig's letter is well worth printing here:

Simon & Schuster, Publishers, 37 West 57th St., New York City. Gentlemen:

I have a printed note from E. Haldeman-Julius, stating that you are debating as to the advisability of publishing Joseph McCabe's *The Key to Culture* in four or five clothbound volumes.

I fear I may be a bit partial to Joseph McCabe. Several months ago, when in London, Joseph McCabe dined with me at the First Avenue Hotel, as my guest. At that time I wrote an article entitled, "An Hour with Joseph McCabe," which was published in the Haldeman-Julius Monthly.

I do want to say a word about *The Key to Culture*. For the last few months I have read very carefully thirty-eight volumes of the set. I also read Clement Woods' *Outline of Man's Knowledge* and H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*. In my judgment, Joseph McCabe's *Key to Culture* is so far ahead of any other work of its kind that it is in a class by itself. His style is superb, his scholarship profound. Unquestionably, no man writing in the world today has at his finger tips such a vast digested organized mass of information as does Joseph McCabe. In reading the various subjects in *The Key to Culture*, I did some supplemental work, checking Dr. McCabe against the admitted authorities in a given field. Nowhere could I detect that his foot slipped in any particular.

I can think of no service you could render the American public greater than publishing *The Key to Culture* in four or five volumes. However, I have this thought in mind. So many moronic works have been published on the subject of culture that I fear the title is a bit misleading. It seems to me the work could be better named.

E. Haldeman-Julius further suggests that a statement of one's reason for reading *The Key to Culture* be given. Mine was a very specific one. Little Blue Book No. 1315 sets forth a profound psychological experience through which I passed. Following that, in order to get a better perspective of my own life experiences and the world, I took a trip into sixteen countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. Upon my return home, I read *The Key to Culture*, together with numerous supplemental works, with a view to broadening and deepening my intellectual life. I did it very earnestly and seriously. It is the best investment of time I have ever made.

One of the most interesting features of the work is the way in which Dr. McCabe deals with specialists in each field. Each specialist usually has his own pet theory, refusing in many instances recognition to others in the same line of work and ignoring the importance of other subjects except his own. Dr.

McCabe, dispassionately and with marvelous understanding, surveys the whole, estimating each specialist and his chosen field in connection with the whole scheme of things.

Dr. McCabe has no illusions. Never is the wish father to the thought, in his writing. He surveys man, the world and the universe from his pinnacle of scholarship, describing to his readers what he sees.

Very respectfully yours,

L. E. LUDWIG.

Shop Talk

Miss Joanna Zander, 1718 Thorndale Ave., Chicago, Ill., wishes to secure American newspaper classics to help her prepare her thesis for her master's degree in journalism. She explains: "By newspaper 'classic' I mean Editorials, News Stories, Features, Poems, Cartoons, etc., which have been reprinted often enough so that they have come to be regarded as old favorites. I am planning to subdivide them into two classes: First, those that have been reprinted by request of the readers; second, those that have been printed because they are printshop favorites. Please give me also a brief history of the classic—the author, when it was written, under what circumstances, and anything else of interest about it." Anyone knowing of such a "classic" should communicate with Miss Zander.

A. H. Sutton, Independence, Kans., wants to get information about the growth of science and its conflict with religion. The Little Blue Books by Joseph McCabe are the best source for facts along this line. In particular: *Science vs. Religion* (Little Blue Book No. 1211); *Beliefs of Scientists* (No. 1237) *Truth About Galileo and Medieval Science* (No. 1142); and *Is Evolution True?* (No. 1262). By other authors there are the following: *Evolution vs. Dogma*, by Maynard Shipley (No. 191); *Sex and the Garden of Eden Myth*, by Shipley (No. 1188); *Sources of Bible Myths and Legends*, by Shipley (No.

851); and *Great Fighters for Freedom*, by J. V. Nash (No. 1266).

Whispered in the editorial sanctum; rumored through the front office; hinted about the plant—boldly boasted by E. Haldeman-Julius (who knows!): *Clarence Darrow is coming to Girard soon!* He is bringing a portfolio with him, containing—well, no one seems to know exactly what it contains. But the contents are to be set in type, printed, and sold to avid readers everywhere. *Darrow*. It's a name to conjure with. There will be some new books bearing this name anon.

The wife of William J. Fielding, popular Little Blue Book author, recently died after an illness of two years. Mr. Fielding writes that before long he will be back at work for Haldeman-Julius Publications. Readers can confidently expect many worth-while books from the workshop of Mr. Fielding: they know from past experience!

Arne Anderson, 607 West Walnut St., Centralia, Wash., suggests educational study courses in the Little Blue Books, plus a certificate to be awarded those students who complete such courses. No doubt Mr. Anderson is familiar with the High School Educational Course at \$2.98 which has been so overwhelmingly popular this winter of 1928-1929. A certificate was at one time considered, but when it was offered so few people seemed interested enough to obtain it that the plan was dropped. People seem to like these mail-order courses to study at their leisure—to learn as they read. We appreciate Mr. Anderson's letter however, and the interest he shows in the Little Blue Books. One of these days we hope to issue a catalog of reading courses, specially designed for those who wish to read along constructively definite lines.

A Great Biographer

Elizabeth and Essex. By Lytton Strachey. New York. Harcourt and Brace. \$3.75.

Very often, in discussions upon art, you will hear the phrase, "subject matter does not count." The idea behind this ambiguous statement is this: painting should not try to tell a story; it is a matter of color, form, composition, line, design—in a word, of the effective placing of paint upon canvas. Leave story telling to the novelist. So, too, in music, the depiction of events lies outside of the composer's province. His material is sound, as the artist's material is color. In a deep sense, we may say that in any art the real subject-matter is the artist. And it is such masterpieces as Strachey's new book that bring home this truth even for the writer. I am ready to say, for example, that anything by Strachey is important. His subjects are merely the torches that touch him to flame. Whether he deals with Queen Victoria, or with The Virgin Queen, or with personalities of the Victorian era, he speaks with an artistry that confers importance upon whatsoever it approaches.

Strachey is a master of calm understatement; his humors are subacid; his style is no mere manner imposed upon an alien matter. He is not under the necessity of being informative; he takes one's knowledge of history, for example, quite for granted. His rhythms are unhurried. He can deal with so ticklish a subject as Queen Elizabeth's virtue without appealing to mere prudence and, on the other hand, extracting without effort all the humor there is in the situation. He can be Freudian without being clinical. And the first part of the book well justifies the mistake of the elderly lady who entered the bookshop and timidly asked for "Elizabeth and Sex." What a bundle of contradictions was the virago on the throne! She wanted what she wanted when she wanted it. And she got it.

A book like this, exciting in a sense that no detective story could rival, is at the same time worth a library of current fiction. Here the motives of men and women in quest of power or passion stand revealed in a beauty of prose that confers permanence alike upon the exponents and the expositor. At times, so superlative is the writing, the very figures of Elizabeth and Essex recede into the distance; the name of the book should be, indeed, Elizabeth and Essex and Strachey.

My advice would be, throw away half a dozen novels and put "Elizabeth and Essex" in their place. Beside a book such as this, most writing is exposed for the mere journalism that it is. These pages are a very music of thought, a very artistry of composition.

"The Command to Love"

I spoke, the other day, about "Mary Dugan" and its preposterous legal logic. "The Command to Love," an imported farce with a number of very naughty scenes, is preposterous in another way. To see two diplomats made into cuckolds by the very attaché whom they are trying to instruct in the wiles of diplomacy; to watch them trying to teach this young blade how to use women in the service of state secrecy; to discover him as the lover of their wives—of course they know nothing of this; to follow the youth, as it were, from battlefield to boudoir, where he must make love by order of his country—these things are all very amusing. But why was it necessary to have one of the diplomat's wives—a hot tamale whose temperature is known to everybody but her husband—awarded the International Medal for Virtue? And what an impossible tale the attaché uses to get out of the hands of the other diplomat certain incriminating letters which his jealous wife has deposited on his desk! They are bills from the wife's creditors, and the diplomat must not ruffle his temper by opening them on the day when he is to be presented to the king! What poppycock for a diplomat to swallow, even if he does not know that his wife has been unfaithful!

What pleasure is there in deceiving so gullible a diplomat? An author with cleverness enough to have constructed the central situation should have had enough wit left to pull him out of this hole, too.

The play, with an excellent and realistic seduction scene, was not bothered by Boston's censors. Why? The old, old answer must suffice: Serious treatment of sex is the great taboo. Laugh over sex, and the world laughs with you; weep, and the censors find you lewd.

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Winter's end is near: the spring of 1929 approaches! March 21st is commonly regarded as the first day of spring. We are going to give you a few days more than this to grab up these clothbound best-seller book bargains. We must reorganize our clothbound book department; shelves must be rearranged; spring cleaning faces us! So, until April 9, 1929, you can get these excellent books, every one new, at these prices, postpaid to your address. Just be sure your order is mailed and postmarked before midnight of April 9, 1929. After that date the regular prices on these titles will again prevail. And bear in mind that this 30-Day Sale offers you the pick of our list of Best Sellers! Not a "plug" in the lot—all fast movers—all books that we have sold by the tens of thousands at the regular price. So grab this chance!

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Sex and the Love-Life, by Wm. J. Fielding, is acclaimed as the best single volume ever to be published giving reliable information on this most vital of all subjects. Everyone should own a copy of this book, man or woman, young or old. Thoroughly authoritative and comprehensive. 322 pages. \$2.49 postpaid.

Elmer Gantry, by Sinclair Lewis, is the famous "preacher" novel which has been a sensation for almost two years. Discussion, pro and con, has raged incessantly; a novel that captivates even when it antagonizes. Could such a man live and be a preacher? Now available to everyone. 432 pages. 99c postpaid.

99c

\$1.35

Dust, by Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius, is a first novel, but a novel that will not die. People everywhere still clamor to read this book. "Only a man and a woman together could have written so honestly," said the critics. You can now get a handsome clothbound copy, 251 pages, for \$1.35 postpaid.

Boston, by Upton Sinclair, is a historical novel. It deals, as you probably know, with the notorious Sacco-Vanzetti case. Such a novel has rarely been written in America. Two volumes, boxed. Belongs in every library. 1,129 pages. \$4.85 postpaid.

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The Story of a Terrible Life, by Basil Tozer, is a volume unlike any you have ever read anywhere before. It is about the White Slave Traffic, so called, but it is more complete, more terrible, and more horribly impressive than any other account has ever dared to be. The author has the facts, and such facts! 242 pages. \$2.48 postpaid.

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Laws of Sex

The Laws of Sex, by Edith Hooker, is exceptionally outspoken in its treatment of what has too often been a taboo subject. Here hypocrisy never masks the facts. You will be gratifyingly amazed at such lack of reserve, for once! 373 pages. \$2.72 postpaid (was \$5).

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The Jesus Myth, by Georg Brandes, places Jesus in the same class with William Tell and other heroic but imaginary figures. A book that provokes discussion. 190 pages. \$1.36 postpaid (was \$2).

Cleopatra's Private Diary, by Henry Thomas, is a satirical novel, supposed to be written in the form of a diary by Cleopatra, notorious Queen of Egypt. The scenes are ancient; the wit and the follies at which it is aimed are modern. A book both amusing and enlightening. 306 pages. \$1.89 postpaid.

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The Goose-Step, by Upton Sinclair, is an exposure of the propaganda that U. S. colleges and universities are obliged to teach because of the influence and control exerted over them by capital (wealth). 486 pages. \$1.68 postpaid (was \$2).

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The more pity, then, when the artist tries to turn Messiah.