

Open the Factories! Hoover's Plain Duty!

America goes into the deeper months of winter with the crisis of unemployment and stark, dreadful poverty as bad as ever; indeed, these are precisely the months when the situation will be most severe in its effects. President Hoover persists in his disgraceful attitude of futility. No great, resolute, constructive measure looking to the real, extensive solution of this gigantic industrial problem has even been suggested by the paltry, incompetent, capitalistic fraud who sits in the White House. He repeats the foolish cry that the federal government can do nothing. Yet while an appropriation bill of \$45,000,000 for stock relief to agriculture has been supported by the Hoover administration followers in the national House of Representatives, these same Hoover followers (who are plainly acting under orders from the White House) oppose the suggestion of Senate progressive leaders that \$15,000,000 be added as food relief to the human beings on the farms. It is also objected by Representative LaGuardia (New York) that the proposed relief is confined unfairly to the farms and does not touch the bitter problem in the cities.

The answer of the Hoover congressmen is that private charity organizations and municipal government activities will have to take care of the suffering in the cities. We are confronted with the most distressing and ominous spectacle of acute suffering in the history of our country—and we are told that private charity must be the only hope of the people. The national government, strong and wealthy and ever too quick to serve the interests of great corporations, is helpless in this crisis: such is the attitude of Hoover: although we may add that what Hoover has really said, in plain enough words, is that he as head of the government is *unwilling* to do anything. His followers in the House take the absurd position that food relief to animals on farms is necessary but that food relief to the farmers would be a "dole." And in the cities bread lines and soup kitchens are left to

supply the bare needs of the starving people—a method that is crude and inadequate and insulting to millions who are out of work and in extreme want through no fault of their own.

Photographs of the bread lines, shown in the daily papers, reveal the fact that the men who are thus thrown upon the doubtful mercies of private charity are an extraordinary class of unemployed: they are not all from the ranks of the unskilled laborers whose position is always so precarious under "economic individualism"; rather the larger percentage of the unfortunate, as shown in these photographs, is from the ranks of skilled and clerical professions, men who have probably felt the blow of complete economic disaster for the first time in their lives. The present crisis has not hit only the lower ranks of the workers; it has hit the skilled workers and the "white collar" workers and the professional workers and middle classes: all classes of the population, save only those most exceptionally prosperous in their financial reserves, have been struck by the widespread depression.

We assert that the federal government—and this means President Hoover—is not *unable* but rather *unwilling* to remedy the situation. We need only glance back at the activities of wartime to realize a quick and bold remedy is possible. There is a plain suggestion in the regulation and commandeering of factories during wartime. It was entirely possible, for example, that the government could take over the railroads of the country for the object of moving troops and supplies. Government control of industry, in a degree never previously known, was applied for the purpose of facilitating the international slaughter in Europe. The conclusion is plain: Why cannot the federal government now take over the idle factories and put the unemployed millions to work and let them consume what they produce under this arrangement? Millions are eager to produce commodities. They want

to earn their living, not to depend upon the unpleasantness and uncertainty of private charity. It is simply a question of furnishing employment to millions who are extremely anxious to work.

The capitalistic owners of industry have shown their inability or unwillingness to run their factories normally and furnish work to the people. Very well—it becomes the serious duty of President Hoover to act in this emergency (certainly far more pressing than the emergency of wartime) and to inaugurate government control and management of industry at least for the period of this emergency. The only reason that President Hoover will not take such a step—admittedly radical but admittedly sensible and the one certain, immediate way to relieve the desperate needs of the people—is that he is the servant of the private capitalistic interests of America rather than the servant of the people of America. Hoover's failure to act in this crisis is proof that he would let the people starve in order to uphold completely the system of "economic individualism." In this greatest crisis of the century, Hoover has betrayed the American people.

We are often told that the people should support the government. But here we observe a situation of the utmost urgency and dire human need in which the President of the United States serves notice that the government will not support the people. We declare that the first duty of the government is to the people. The first duty of the President is to the people. We call upon the President of the United States to perform his plain duty by taking charge of the leading, vital industries of the United States during this crisis and putting the eight million unemployed to work and averting, by the only plain and patriotic course, a winter of grim and needless distress. And upon President Hoover we place the full responsibility for his failure to take this action in the interests—the critical and crying interests—of the American people.

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Is There Evidence of a Modern Return to Religious Faith?

G. K. Chesterton vs. E. Haldeman-Julius

"Rationalism Has Killed Itself"

By G. K. Chesterton

In the days when Huxley and Herbert Spencer and the Victorian agnostics were trumpeting as a final truth the famous hypothesis of Darwin, it seemed to thousands of simple people almost impossible that religion should survive. It is all the more ironic that it has not only survived them all, but is a perfect example (perhaps the only real example) of what they called the Survival of the Fittest.

It so happens that it does really and truly fit in with the theory offered by Darwin; which was something totally different from most of the theories accepted by Darwinians. This real original theory of Darwin has since very largely broken down in the general field of biology and botany; but it does actually apply to this particular argument in the field of religious history. The recent re-emergence of our religion is a survival of the fittest as Darwin meant it, and not as popular Darwinism meant it; so far as it meant anything.

Among the innumerable muddles which mere materialistic fashion made out of the famous theory, there was in many quarters a queer idea that the struggle for existence was of necessity an actual struggle between the candidates for survival; literally a cut-throat competition. There was a vague idea that the strongest creature violently crushed the others. And the notion that this was the one method of improvement came everywhere as good news to bad men; to bad rulers, to bad employers, to swindlers and sweaters and the rest. The brisk owner of a bucketshop compared himself modestly to a mammoth, trampling down other mammoths in the primeval jungle. The business man destroyed other business men, under the extraordinary delusion that the eolippic horse had devoured other eolippic horses. The rich man suddenly discovered that it was not only convenient but cosmic to starve or pillage the poor; because pterodactyls may have used their little hands to tear each other's eyes. Science, that nameless being, declared that the weakest must go to the wall; especially in Wall Street. There was a rapid decline and degradation in the sense of responsibility in the rich, from the merely rationalistic eighteenth century to the purely scientific nineteenth. The great Jefferson, when he reluctantly legalized sla-

very, said he trembled for his country, knowing that God is just. The profiteer of later times, when he legalized usury or financial trickery, was satisfied with himself, knowing that nature is unjust.

But, however that may be (and of course the moral malady has survived the scientific mistake), the people who talked thus of cannibal horses and competitive oysters, did not understand what Darwin's thesis was. If later biologists have condemned it, it should not be condemned without being understood; widely as it has been accepted without being understood. The point of Darwinism was not that a bird with a longer beak (let us say) thrust it into other birds, and had the advantage of a duelist with a longer sword. The point of Darwinism was that the bird with the longer beak could reach worms (let us say) at the bottom of a deeper hole; that the birds who could not do so would die; and he alone would remain to found a race of long-beaked birds. Darwinism suggested that if this happened a vast number of times in a vast series of ages it might account for the difference between the beaks of a sparrow and a stork. But the point was that the fittest did not need to struggle against the unfit. The survivor had nothing to do except to survive; when the others could not survive. He survived because he alone had the features and organs necessary for survival. And, whatever be the truth about mammoths or monkeys, that is the exact truth about the present survival of religion. It is surviving because nothing else can survive. Religion has returned because all the various forms of skepticism that tried to take its place and do its work have by this time tied themselves into such knots that they cannot do anything. That chain of causation of which they were fond of talking (a chain which the first physicist of the age has just burst into bits of scrap iron) seems really to have served them after the fashion of the proverbial rope; and when modern discussion gave them rope enough, they quite rapidly hanged themselves. For there is not a single one of the fashionable forms of scientific skepticism or determinism that does not end in stark paralysis, touching the practical conduct of human life.

TAKE any three of the normal and necessary ideas on which civ-

ilization and even society depend. First, let us say, a scientific man of the old normal nineteenth-century sort would remark: "We can at least have common sense, in its proper meaning of a sense of reality common to all; we can have common morals, for without them we cannot even have a community; a man must in the ordinary sense obey the law, and especially the moral law." But the newer skeptic, who is progressive and has gone further and fared worse, will immediately say: "Why should you worship the taboo of your particular tribe? Why should you accept prejudices that are the product of a blind herd instinct? Why is there any authority in the unanimity of a flock of frightened sheep?"

Suppose the normal man falls back on the deeper argument: "I am not terrorized by the tribe; I do keep my independent judgment; I have a conscience and a light of justice within which judged the world." And the stronger skeptic will answer: "If the light in your body be darkness—and it is darkness because it is only in your body—what are your judgments but the incurable twist and bias of your particular heredity and accidental environment? What can we know about judgments except that they must all be equally unjust? For they are all equally conditioned by defects and individual ignorances, all of them different and none of them distinguishable; for there exists no single man so sane and separate as to be able to distinguish them justly. Why should your conscience be any more reliable than your rotting teeth or your quite special defect of eyesight? God bless us all, one would think you believed in God!" Then perhaps the normal person will get annoyed and say rather snappishly: "At least I suppose we are men of science; there is science to appeal to and she will always answer; the evidential and experimental discovery of real things." And the other skeptic will answer, if he has any sense of humor: "Why, certainly. Sir Arthur Eddington is Science; and he will tell you that man really has free will and ought to hang on to religion for his life. Sir Bertram Windle is Science; and he would tell you that the scientific mind is completely satisfied in the Roman Catholic Church. For that matter, Sir Oliver Lodge is Science; and he has reached by purely experimental and evidential methods to a solid belief in ghosts. But I admit that there are men of science who cannot get to a solid belief in anything;

even in science, even in themselves. There is the crystallographer of Cambridge who writes in *The Spectator* the lucid sentence: 'We know that most of what we know is probably untrue.' Does that help you on a bit in founding your sane and solid society?"

WE HAVE, of course, seen just lately the most dramatic part of great material scientists from the camp of materialism. It was Eddington, I think, who used the phrase that the universe seems to be rather like a great thought than a great machine; and Dr. Whitney has declared that there is no rational description of the ultimate cosmic motion except the will of God.

But it is the perishing of the other things, at least as much as the persistence of the one thing, that has left us at last face to face with the ancient religion of our fathers. The thing once called free thought has come finally to threaten everything that is free. It denies personal freedom in denying free will and the human power of choice. It threatens civic freedom with a plague of hygienic and psychological quackeries spreading over the land such a network of pseudo-scientific nonsense as free citizens have never yet endured in history. It is quite likely to reverse religious freedom in the name of some barbarous nostrum or other such as constituted the crude and ill-cultured creed of Russia. It is perfectly capable of imposing silence and impotence from without. But there is no doubt whatever that it imposes silence and impotence from within.

The whole trend of it, which began as a drive and has ended in a drift, is toward some form of the theory that a man cannot help himself; that a man cannot mend himself; above all, that a man cannot free himself. In all its novels and most of its newspaper articles it takes for granted that men are stamped and fixed in certain lines of abnormality or anarchical weakness; that they are pinned and labeled in a museum of mediocrity or immorality; or of that sort of immorality which is more priggish than the one and more hogish than the other.

We are practically told that we might as well ask a fossil to reform itself. We are told that we are asking a stuffed bird to repent. We are all dead; and the only comfort is that we are all classified. For by this philosophy, which is the same as the blackest of Britan heresies, we all died before we were born. But as it is Karma without Allah, so also it is Calvinism without God. The agnostics will be gratified

to learn that it is entirely due to their own energy and enterprise, to their own activity in pursuing their own antics, that the world has at last tired of their antics and told them so. We have done very little against them; *non nobis, Domine*; the glory of their final overthrow is all their own. We have done far less than we should have done, to explain all that balance of subtlety and sanity which is meant by a Christian civilization. Our thanks are due to those who have so generously helped us by giving a glimpse of what might be meant by a pagan civilization. And what is lost in that society is not so much religion as reason; the ordinary common daylight of intellectual instinct that has guided the children of men. A world in which men know that most of what they know is probably untrue cannot be dignified with the name of a skeptical world; it is simply an impotent and abject world, not attacking anything, but accepting everything while trusting nothing; accepting even its own incapacity to attack; accepting its lack of authority to doubt; doubting its right to doubt.

We are grateful for this public experiment and demonstration; it has taught us much. We did not believe that rationalists were so utterly mad until they made it quite clear to us. We did not ourselves think that the mere denial of our dogmas could end in such dehumanized and demented anarchy. It might have taken the world a long time to understand that what it had been taught to dismiss as medieval theology was often mere common sense; although the very term common sense or *communis sententia* was a medieval conception. But it took the world very little time to understand that the talk on the other side was most uncommon nonsense. It was nonsense that could not be made the basis of any common system, such as has been founded upon common sense.

To take one example out of many: the whole question of Marriage has been turned into a question of Mood. The enemies of marriage did not have the patience to remain in their relatively strong position: that marriage could not be proved to be sacramental, and that some exceptions must be treated as exceptions, so long as it was merely social.

THEY could not be content to say that it is not a sacrament but a contract; and that exceptional legal action might break a contract. They brought objections against it that would be quite as facile and quite as futile if brought against any other contract. They said that a man is

never in the same mood for ten minutes together; that he must not be asked to admire in a red daybreak what he admired in a yellow sunset; that no man can say he will even be the same man by the next month or the next minute; that new and nameless tortures may afflict him if his wife wears a different hat, or that he may plunge her into hell by putting on a pair of socks that does not harmonize with somebody else's carpet.

It is quite obvious that this sort of sensitive insanity applies as much to any other human relation as to this relation. A man cannot choose a profession; because, long before he has qualified as an architect he may have mystically changed into an aviator, or been convulsed in rapid succession by the emotions of a ticket collector, a trombone player and a professional harpioneer of whales. A man dare not buy a house, for fear a fatal stranger with the wrong sort of socks should come into it; or for fear his own mind should be utterly changed in the matter of carpets or cornices. A man may suddenly decline to do any business with his own business partner; because he also, like the cruel husband, wears the wrong necktie. And I saw a serious printed appeal for sympathy for a wife who deserted her family because her psychology was incompatible with an orange necktie. This is only one application, as I say; but it exactly illustrates how the skeptical principle is now applied, and how skepticism has recently changed from apparent sense to quite self-evident nonsense. The heresies not only decay, but destroy themselves; in any case they perish without a blow.

For the reply, not merely of religion but of reason and the rooted sanity of mankind, is obvious enough. "If you feel like that, why certainly you will not found families, or found anything else. You will not build houses; you will not make partnerships; you will not in any fashion do the business of the world. You will never plant a tree, lest you wish next week you had planted it somewhere else; you will never put a potato into a pot of stew, because it will be too late to take it out again; your whole mood is stricken and riddled with cowardice and sterility; your whole way of attacking any problem is to think of excuses for not attacking it at all.

"Very well; so be it; the Lord be with you. You may be respected for being sincere; you may be pitied for being sensitive; you may retain some of the corrective qualities which make it useful on occasion to be skeptical.

But if you are too skeptical to do these things, you must stand out of the way of those who can do them; you must hand over the world to those who believe that the world is workable; to those who believe that men can make houses, make partnerships, make appointments, make promises—and keep them. And if it is necessary to believe in God making Man, in God being made Man, or in God-made Man coming in the clouds in glory, in order to keep a promise or boil a potato or behave like a human being—well, then you must at least give a chance to these credulous fanatics who can believe the one and who can do the other."

THAT is what I mean by the spiritual Survival of the Fittest. That is why the old phrase, which is probably a mistake in natural history, is a truth in supernatural history. The organic thing called religion has in fact the organs that take hold on life. It can feed where the fastidious doubter finds no food; it can reproduce where the solitary skeptic boasts of being barren. It may be accepting miracles to believe in free will; but it is accepting madness, sooner or later, to disbelieve in it. It may be a wild risk to make a vow, but it is a quiet, crawling and inevitable ruin to refuse to make a vow. It may be incredible that one creed is the truth and the others are relatively false; but it is not only incredible but also intolerable that there is no truth either in or out of creeds, and all are equally false. For nobody can ever set anything right if everybody is equally wrong.

The intense interest of the moment is that the Man of Science, the hero of the modern world and the latest of the great servants of humanity, has suddenly and dramatically refused to have anything more to do with this dreary business of nibbling negation and blind scratching and scraping away of the very foundations of the mastery of man. For the work of the skeptic for the past hundred years has indeed been very like the fruitless fury of some primeval monster; eyeless, mindless, merely destructive and devouring; a giant worm wasting away a world that he could not even see; a benighted and bestial life unconscious of its own cause and of its own consequences. But Man has taken to himself again his own weapons, will and worship and reason and the vision of the plan in things, and we are once more in the morning of the world.

See Reply to This Article
on Page Two

The Age Belongs to Rationalism

By E. Haldeman-Julius

In all his efforts to be funny—and he has sometimes almost sweat blood in trying to crack forth the ponderous wheels of a labored paradox or witticism—Gilbert K. Chesterton has never appeared in such a humorous light as in his latest article, "The Return to Religious Faith," published in the New York Times magazine section. The humor of this article was not intended by Chesterton but it is stark and undisguisable humor nevertheless. For Chesterton has written an article of considerable length, wordy and pretentious and piously solemn, in which he has offered no evidence in justification of his title and subject: that is to say, there is nowhere in his effusion of irrational buffoonery the slightest important evidence given that there is a "return to religious faith." We are not introduced to the dozens or the thousands or the millions who are supposed to have returned to religious faith. The implications of the article are that the world generally has returned to faith in religion; but Chesterton does not tell us what proportion of the world has returned along the old trail of faith; he presents no figures; he cites no significant witnesses, who might prove his point; he merely says that the world has returned to religion—and are we to take his word for this remarkable change in sentiment?

Of course we do not take his word. Naturally we demand proof for such a large statement—and certainly, if the modern world is returning to religion, nothing could be of more dramatic and intriguing import, nothing could be more sensational and more needful to be checked severely by reference to solid and large evidences, and nothing could be more easily proved if it were true. It is Chesterton's contention that religion has survived all the scientific and philosophical attacks upon it; that religion is stronger than ever; that the world is returning to religious faith. Such a remarkable fact of social life, if it were a fact, should be attested by a great deal of forcible, clear evidence—evidence equally sensational with the assertion made—yet Chesterton brings no evidence whatever in support of his statement.

Isn't that strange? Isn't it funny that there should be a world-wide return to religious faith, of which return there is absolutely no evidence? For let me point out emphatically that in mentioning Prof. Eddington and Sir Oliver Lodge and a couple of other scientific gentlemen, Chesterton is not proving a return to religious faith. These gentlemen have always been religious; they have but repeated their well-known confessions of faith; and Chesterton himself, whose opinions in any case could not be of leading importance, has always been a believer in religious bunk and indeed has persistently given one of the most shameless displays of intellectual bankruptcy and corruption—so his own statement of faith is nothing new and is precisely what we should have expected from a canting mountebank of Chesterton's caliber. One of Chesterton's "witnesses" was

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Sir Bertram Windle—a medical professor in a Catholic college.

But who, besides the trivial Chesterton and a few scientists who have always been sentimentally oozy with religious bunk, have shown signs of returning to religion? Have the world's scientists and leading thinkers, in any notable proportion, come back to religion? Have the masses hit the sawdust trail in vast numbers and shown a returning belief in a religion which they had abandoned? Have cultivated circles discovered rationalism to be a failure as an explanation of life or as an attitude toward life and have they returned to religion?

Nothing of the kind has happened. Chesterton does not produce evidence of such a thing having happened. He does not give us a peep at this alleged great revival. On the contrary, he has performed an old trick: he has attracted attention by the trick of saying something which is sensationally at the opposite extreme from the truth and which achieves its sensational quality by being sensationally untrue and in conflict with the widely known facts.

We know that the churches have more and more empty pews; and it is a familiar complaint of clergymen that the world is losing interest in religion; it is a lost world, say the preachers, because the modern temper is increasingly irreligious. The well-known tendency of education in the modern world is toward secularism; and not only a skeptical but an anti-religious tone is prevalent nowadays in our centers of higher learning and in our best literature and in our most important literature of thought.

IF HE HAD happened to read *Current History* (published by this same New York Times), Chesterton could have seen some evidence recently appearing in that magazine—but evidence contrary to his assertion about the new, revived, religious temper of the world. Rev. Charles Stelzle, who has been engaged in the business of preaching and in a long list of religious activities for many years, declared in *Current History* that Protestantism in America is losing its ground; this decline, he says has been going on since 1900. From 1900 to 1900, the churches in America gained at a lively rate, the population in the country multiplying twenty-two times and the churches multiplying eighty-one times. These figures of relative increase are for 1800-1925, but Rev. Stelzle points out that the gain of the churches was almost entirely within the period of 1800-1900.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the churches have had a hard fight trying to hold their own—and they have not held their own, in comparison with the growth in population nor with their probable rate of increase under conditions of popular religious faith. The United States census of religious bodies shows that from 1916 to 1926 the gain in Protestant church membership was only three-one-hundredths of one percent; and during the thirty years from 1900 to 1930, says Rev. Stelzle, the church has increased its ratio (according to the population) by less than one percent. In 1928 the churches, both Protestant and Catholic, reported a gain of 1,000,000. In 1929 the combined gain, Protestant and Catholic, had dropped to 300,000.

Remember also that gain in membership does not mean adults brought into the churches; it means children as well, and if all church families stuck to their religion through each generation one hundred percent, there would be a much greater increase than that which the churches have reported; such small apparent gains for the church, including as they do the admission of children of religious families, mean an actual and significant loss. It means that the churches are not holding their own people. It means that the young people, since 1900, have not joined nor taken an interest in the churches of their parents as previously they had done.

Two once popular churches, the Methodist and Presbyterian, showed an outright net loss in 1929. "It is a striking fact," says Rev. Stelzle, "that about one-third of the Protestant churches among the largest denominations did not add a single member to their rolls during 1929. Even the Roman Catholic Church fell from a gain of 360,153 in 1928 to one of 77,807 during 1929." The highest

estimate of church membership in this country today—which does not mean church attendance nor anything like a condition of genuine religious faith—is that "in places of less than 2,500, which also includes farms and sparsely settled areas, only 52 percent are church members, whereas in the larger cities 58 percent belong to the churches." Rev. Stelzle adds: "However, there are large areas in rural sections of this country in which less than 20 percent of the adult population are members of the church."

What I have said about the increase of church membership coming from the children, and that this rapidly declining rate of new members indicates that the growing generations are indifferent to the church, is borne out significantly by Rev. Stelzle. He says (and I have italicized the opening sentence): "The Protestant Church has always depended upon the Sunday school for added membership. But in recent years the Sunday schools have been declining, so that this source of supply is being steadily cut off. There were fewer Sunday schools in 1926 than there were in 1916, although the number of Sunday school scholars, as a whole, during this period increased 5.5 percent. But from 1906 to 1916—ten years previously—the increase in Sunday school enrollment was 35.7 percent. The increase during the last ten-year period was therefore less than one-sixth as much as it was during the earlier ten-year period."

These facts are of the first importance. They show that there is a decline of religious faith rather than a return to religious faith. These facts are deadly when set beside Chesterton's empty article.

IT IS A matter of commonplace knowledge that religion is far less interesting to the people, far less successful and impressive, far less capable of arousing belief or loyalty than it was at the beginning of the twentieth century. Where are the enormous crowds, the majority millions of mankind, who flock to the churches? Chesterton does not show us these crowds nor even refer to them; so far as his article indicates, he must believe that there can be a mass social phenomenon of a return to religion without crowds to do the returning. Nor does Chesterton identify for us the intellectual leaders who are returning to religion; he introduces only a few peculiar scientists who are repeating lessons of childish faith which they have mumbled over and over these many years.

Considerably more than half of the people in the modern world stay away from the churches, exhibit an effective disregard for religion except when they speak of it disrespectfully, and engage in secular concerns which are quite irreligious. Thirty years ago perhaps not twenty percent of the people would have said they were irreligious; today fifty percent of the people are frankly irreligious—and many more make respectable genuflections before religion without earnestly believing in the doctrines of religion—and there are many others who call themselves religious, with so many qualifications and reservations that we find upon examination that their religion is mostly minus.

And what has Chesterton to set beside this overwhelming testimony of the modern world against religion? He has nothing but his, Chesterton's, own unsupported statement that there is a return of religious faith; and Chesterton is not taken seriously as a true intellectual reporter or guide by any sensible and cultivated thinker; Chesterton is known to be an unprincipled, truth-deceiving, thought-contemptuous, partisan and perverse apologist for

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the very dregs and lees of abject Catholic medievalism. Indeed, Chesterton has won a kind of disgraceful reputation, a reputation for literary absurdity and asininity, by attacking modern civilization and advocating a return to the Middle Ages.

TIME AND AGAIN Chesterton has bitterly, and with feeble efforts at a vicious sort of humor, assailed the modern world and its culture and its works precisely because this modern world is irreligious. The modern world has not changed in this respect. Chesterton has not changed, but is now misrepresenting the facts with a different twist and with a brazen, yet contemptibly careless and unconvincing, dishonesty of statement. Chesterton is a poor liar. Yesterday he said modernism was bad because it was skeptical and atheistic; today he says modernism is returning to religion; and he is wrong both times.

The mountebank strain in Chesterton (which is so big a strain that it constitutes practically the whole man, leaving nothing genuine) reveals itself in the false and silly arguments he directs against science and rationalism. He devotes about a third of his article, for example, to building up a childish false version of Darwinism—a version in which nobody of intelligence ever believed—a version which, so far as I know, is entirely Chesterton's own concoction. And then he exhibits his foolishness in a heavily sportive correction of this error—a strange error indeed and a new one to me—which he has himself brought into being for the express purpose (and the intellectually humbugging purpose) of knocking it down.

And what, by the way, is the profound point of this buffoonery? We are entertained with the wonderfully enlightening conclusion that birds do not kill birds of their own species (at least that this is not usual nor necessary in the meaning of Darwinism) but that birds kill worms and eat them. After all his elephantine, misbegotten display of false erudition and pointless humor, Chesterton lands back in the old, familiar conclusion that life does live by feeding upon life.

More dishonesty—and less humor—is involved in Chesterton's statement that the "real original theory of Darwin has since very largely broken down in the general field of biology and botany." On the contrary, the basic thought of evolution, which Darwin did so much to put on a large foundation of carefully ascertained facts, is generally accepted today by the intelligence of the world and is stronger than it ever was, while religion is weaker than it ever was. Not only in biology and botany, but in geology and in anthropology and in all branches of scientific culture, evolution is today recognized as the master key that unlocks the secrets of nature and guides us to the truth about things.

AS FOR THE Darwinian recognition of the struggle for existence, the warfare of life against life, which is a fact palpable to all observers, it has never been put forward as the whole truth about evolution; but scientists have brought forth a vast mass of data showing that mutual aid has also been an important factor in evolution; and that, ironically enough, this mutual aid has been one of the necessary tactics of victory in the struggle for existence.

The charge that the idea of the struggle for existence lowered the moral tone of the race, that it degraded the customs and ideals of business or any other branch of human activity beyond what those customs and ideals were previous to Darwin's time, is simply not true. It is notoriously another one of Chesterton's weak and absurd lies. Since the beginning

of the breakup of the Middle Ages, which Chesterton professes so downheartedly to admire, there has been a steady development and civilizing of the customs and ideals of mankind: education, ethics, and social life have remarkably improved; and Chesterton, if he cared for the truth, could readily discover it, with vivid citations of facts and figures, in such a book as Joseph McCabe's *A Century of Stupendous Progress*; but indeed, if Chesterton had the least respect for the truth and desire to acknowledge it, he could find it calling aloud to him on all sides: since Darwinism, and throughout the modern scientific and irreligious period, the level of human life has been notably and hopelessly raised.

A due appreciation of this leading fact also disposes of Chesterton's childish train of pseudo-reasoning about the blighting and futilitarian aspects of modern skepticism and rationalism. During the past three decades, during which skepticism and rationalism have thrived with such forcefulness and significance that they have been repeatedly identified as the most profound and characteristic features of the modern world, the greatest constructive labors of mankind have been witnessed. It has been an age of remarkable inventions, of tremendous increase in productive power, of a growing dissemination of the comforts and pleasures of life (and of new means for the enjoyment of life), of the most humanizing spread of new and saner ideals of rational morality and social life, of solid and brilliant and wide-ranging conquests for culture, and of a greatly strengthened protest against the insanities of war and exploitation and superstition which survive from those medieval times which Chesterton says that he would like to call back (but then who can believe what the man says?) No doubt he would like to see heretics (i. e., those who disagree with him) punished—but he would quickly sigh for the lost comforts of the modern age, which he enjoys more sincerely than the sickly, canting fancy of a return to medievalism.

THE DISTINCTIVE new achievements of this modern age are splendid and progressive and finally on the side of humanism; its evils are those inherited from the past; and among those evils, which men are recognizing more and more clearly that we must rid ourselves of, is the attitude of religious faith. Far from returning or wanting to return to religious faith, the world, with steady and widening purpose, intends to kick religious faith into the oblivion of the medieval chamber of horrors.

Even in the various camps of the religionists, the most conspicuous effort being made is to throw away, item by item, the load of religious doctrines which has come down from the unscientific past; and even these religionists—contradicting Chesterton's crude and heavy misrepresentation of the modern age—are trying to see how little religious they can be and still indulge in the fading pretense of calling themselves religious.

Two main facts are of essential, celebrated, undeniable importance in the modern world. The first is that the majority of the people are not religious, are turning away from religion and the church, and are showing the greatest interest in a skeptical, rationalistic humanism. The second is that among the minority who still profess to believe, one way or another, in religion the constantly sharpening and advancing tendency is to doubt and reject the various doctrines of religion—so that most of the talk favorable to religion comes from those who are attacking religion in detail while they speak sentimentally and elusively about religion in general terms.

The evidence of these two facts, showing the irreligious temper of modern civilization, is immense and beyond dispute, thrusting itself upon our observation in every field of life. This vast amount of evidence is ignored by Chesterton. I will agree, readily enough, that Chesterton does not truly understand nor sympathize with modern life; that he is a mountebank to whom the medieval appeals as a literary line of shoddy goods which he can peddle with paradoxical buffoonery; but I know that he is well enough versed in the ways and in the temper of modern life to recognize that it is distinctively irreligious and that this irreligious

tendency was never stronger than it is today; and therefore I say that Chesterton has lied about modern life and that he has prostituted his pen to the purposes of clerical cant and humbug.

There is no return to religious faith—there is no such return on Chesterton's own showing. What we see is merely that Chesterton is wallowing in the intellectual gutters of medievalism, to which he returned a long time ago. Let him stay there. The world is going ahead, and it can well afford to leave Chesterton behind.

QUESTION FOR HOOVER

It has been dinned into our ears that Herbert Hoover is a great engineer and mathematical expert. Very well—but we should like to have some definite evidence of his ability in this respect. For example, it would be interesting to know exactly how many unemployed workers are walking the streets in America.

We have had a number of conflicting statements about this problem. One day a certain politician gives us the number of two million unemployed; the following day another politician says there are only one million and a half unemployed; and then up bobs another politician with the statement that there are three million unemployed.

Some months ago it was officially announced from Washington that two and a half million was the actual number of unemployed. Then immediately one of the long-standing officials in the census bureau resigned his position and declared that he could not be a party to such falsification of statistics. This official (Dr. Persons) said that there were at least eight million workmen in America who were jobless. It may be added that official Washington never explained this grave incident of misinformation.

What interests us at the present time, however, is the reputation of Mr. Hoover as an expert on statistics and scientific information. It looks very funny that an expert should be so entirely uninformative in a critical period. With all of his babble about dealing with the unemployment situation, Herbie hasn't even proved that he knows what the situation precisely is. He avoids definite statements. It is the unescapable conclusion that he doesn't want to know (or doesn't want the people to know) how really bad the industrial crisis is—and thus we have no official, definite, final statistics.

Hoover has failed completely. We suspect that "the Great Engineer" doesn't even know (or doesn't care) what it's all about.

HOOVER WAKES—BUT WHAT DOES HE SEE?

After the election, which was a resounding rebuke to him, Herbert Hoover talked more loudly than ever about what he was going to do in the way of relieving the unemployment situation. Even so, he repeated the old statement that the United States government could do nothing—that any action must be taken by the states or by the cities. Hoover's job (as he saw it) was to tell others to do something if they could. In fact, Hoover has made a perfect confession of futility.

Think again—what has Hoover done? He has done nothing. Recently the newspapers have been full of reports concerning the activities in Washington. If you look closely, you will perceive that these publicized activities imply no real action. There is nowhere any suggestion that President Hoover can or will remedy the unemployed situation nor that he can or will do the slightest thing to stimulate trade in this country or with other countries. All along he has admitted that he could do nothing. He has called publicly upon governors and mayors and Chambers of Commerce for the actual work. What does he think they can or will do?

Herbert Hoover's own personal, honest opinion of the situation has not been expressed. Perhaps this is just as well, because we don't think his opinion would be at all enlightening. He is profoundly convinced that the system of "economic individualism" is correct—and confronted, as he is, with the failure of this system, Hoover is helpless. He is undoubtedly the worst failure we ever had in the White House.

HOOPER tells us that we should beware of foreign menaces. But the worst menace is right here at home—the menace of "economic individualism." We need to be protected from Hooverism rather than from Bolshevism.

JUDGE LINDSEY RIGHT

"Good taste" is, an insidious ideal, often interfering with what is obviously proper candor and manliness. Thus we find *The Nation* and *The New Freeman* offering what we can only characterize as a stupid rebuke to Judge Ben B. Lindsey for his action in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Our readers will recall that, after a most unprincipled and disgraceful tirade of misrepresentation by Bishop Manning against Judge Lindsey's ideas of companionate marriage, Lindsey arose and quietly demanded the right to say a few words in true explanation of his ideas. At once he was set upon and brutally maltreated by the Christian congregation.

Every liberal—every man and woman, indeed, with a real feeling of fair play and decency—should have denounced the conduct of Bishop Manning and his Christian mob and should have been fully on the side of Judge Lindsey. Yet *The Nation* and *The New Freeman* complained that Lindsey had acted unbecomingly, that he had violated good taste, and that he had hurt his cause. And all that Lindsey did was to ask for the right to speak in his own defense. He made this request at the proper time and place; namely, in the church and before the congregation where the attack had been made upon him and immediately after that attack.

It is clear, too, that even though Judge Lindsey was given no opportunity to speak, the violent treatment he received at the hands of the Christian mob was in its way perhaps even a more effective reply than Judge Lindsey himself could have made, showing dramatically as it did how unfair and mean and intolerant a Christian mob can be. The violence which followed his tirade also placed in damning relief the spirit of vicious fanaticism which animated Bishop Manning.

Out of the whole disgraceful incident Judge Lindsey is the one man who emerges with clear credit as an honest and gentlemanly person; also as a gentleman who has the courage to defend his ideas and to insist upon the truth openly and immediately. The baboon of "good taste" has led *The Nation* and *The New Freeman* into a gesture of treachery against morality. Evidently in this instance at least, "good taste" meant more to these journals than did fair play.

A true view of the outbreak in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine is further clarified by a contrasting incident which occurred in the West Side Unitarian Church in New York City. Lon Ray Call, the pastor of this church, devoted his sermon to a criticism of Joseph Wheelock's new book, *Forgery in Christianity*. Mr. Wheelock was in the audience and, at the conclusion of his sermon, Mr. Call invited Mr. Wheelock to say a few words in reply. It was all very civilized, very good-tempered, very much in the style of what we recognize as real (distinguished from conventional) good taste. It emphasizes the point that those guilty of showing bad taste in the St. John Cathedral were Bishop Manning and his congregation—not Judge Lindsey, whose behavior was entirely correct and candid and courageous.

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In the World of Books

Weekly Reviews and Other Literary Reminiscences
Isaac Goldberg

A BLESSED ISLAND

Pantopia. By Frank Harris. The Beacon Press, 100 Fifth Ave., New York City. Limited edition, \$5.

This latest novel by Frank Harris came to me, as it will come to others, in the nature of a great surprise. We had long known that he was at work upon a romance of the new love. Many an episode in the Autobiography—it is now as rare as it is both famous and infamous—had prepared us for passion both exotic and outspoken. Yet the dominant quality of *Pantopia* is, in every sense of the word, its fresh-air cleanliness. The book was evidently written in a holiday spirit. It flows along—sometimes it purrs—like a brook that is crystal clear in the sunlight. There is not a trace of perversity in it. There is no offense, but rather exaltation, in its pages. There is something radiantly optimistic, youthful. . . . In it, he has aimed to retain the finer qualities of both Christianity and Paganism and to cast off the coarser elements of each.

Somehow, as I read it—and I read it at a single sitting—I thought of the classical romances of Voltaire—*Candide*, *Zadig*, and their literary companions. I thought, too, strangely enough, of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*. And of such glimpses into the future as William Morris' *News from Nowhere*. What the old Utopians tried to do for ethics and economics, Harris here tries to do for love, which is even more important.

The narrative is simple and is told in an easy, fluent style. The narrator, Phil Meredith, is the sole survivor of a ship that is wrecked mysteriously off the coast of this Isle of the Blessed. The language of the island is Spanish; through the application of electricity the inhabitants control the weather and the approach to their ocean-gift sanctuary. Meredith is saved for life by the compassion of Aura, the daughter of Saavedra. Saavedra, in turn, is one of the great men of this Utopia and teaches Phil much about their advanced civilization. Of course, Phil has a rival. He and Aura are forced to escape to England, where they live as happily ever after as any prince and princess of a fairy tale.

Interspersed in the tale are a number of manuscripts by Saavedra. There is a fine version, for example, of the last days of Jesus and of his resurrection. There are sharp little parables—a form that Harris, it would seem, desires to revive. And, finally, there are love passages and love letters of

a peculiarly intense chastity. Harris seems to have started out with the thesis that women are greater than men as lovers. By the time we have reached the end with him we are quite content to believe that the sexes, when they are capable of rising to the renunciation at the core of all great love, are equally capable.

Hardly a cloud sails across this blessed island of Pantopia. The tale is so optimistic, in the better sense of that word, that it leaves—and here, perhaps, I shall shock all the Harriists, pro or con—a sweet taste in the mouth and a pleasant flavor in the mind.

This, surely, will make a contrasting addition to the shelf of Harris' works. . . . It is printed, by the way, with the taste characteristic of all the books published by this press.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Sin and Such. By Jack Woodford. Privately printed by The Panurge Press, 100 Fifth Ave., New York City. \$5.

Evangelical Cockroach. By Jack Woodford. Louis Carrier. New York, Montreal, London. \$2.50.

Mr. Woodford, whose name is new to me, is plainly a strange figure in the literary world. He has written some two thousand stories, and what is more, he has had them printed in the best and in the worst of our magazines.

He makes no pretense at being orthodox; he is not even "nice"; often he carries a chip on his shoulder, and his dealings with editors have not inspired him with excessive veneration for the tribe. His preface to the inelegantly titled book, *Evangelical Cockroach*, makes this clear, as does such a story as "The Fourth Estate."

Sin and Such is a sardonic study of one male and the many females who alighted like flies upon his honeyed personality. The plot is not so important as the cynical treatment. There is nothing noble in the life of Arnold Godchaux, nor is there anything more than ironic accident in his death. He is a creature almost purely biological, for all the introspection with which he amused himself.

Life for Arnold is one woman after another, and all the women he meets are after him. Even his Victorian aunt, profiting by her self-deceived mission as the savior of his soul, makes love to him unsuccessfully.

The milieu of the tale is contemporary Chicago. The city, it would appear, has women as determined as any gunman of the racket, only that instead of booze—which comes in handy as an accessory—they seek sex. One woman alone, Alice, might have made a man of Arnold. Each was cursed with a destructive pride and Arnold especially was too arrogant to surrender to a love that might have redeemed them

both. To tell the truth, I was not sorry when this Narcissus was killed.

Woodford's short tales are in similar vein. Sometimes he lapses into the very lapses that he excoriates with such a flow of Latin. However, if you want something different, try this new name.

REPROB

Queer People. By Carroll and Garrett Graham. The Vanguard Press, New York. \$2.

As one who is always ready to believe the worst of Hollywood I recommend these alcoholic and carnal pages to anyone who wishes to form the same opinion. This is a plain-spoken novel that serves as a give-away of the celluloid racket. To paraphrase a famous saying, it may not be art but it is clever. . . .

A NEW PLAYWRIGHT

Samson Like Wings and A Lantern to See By. By Lynn Riggs. Samuel French, New York. \$2.

Roadside. By Lynn Riggs. Samuel French, New York. \$2.

It must have been a couple of years ago that I reviewed a play by Mr. Riggs entitled *Big Lake*. It was among other things a study in symbolism, written in terms of the Oklahoma peasantry. Riggs was born at Claremore, Okla., in 1895. As soon as he could, he abandoned his native heath, but in a sense it has never abandoned him. It haunts him. Every one of his plays, it would seem, is an attempt to exorcise the indwelling demon of Oklahoma.

During these two years, Riggs has been making slow progress toward a position among our more significant playwrights. Indeed, with his *Green Grow the Lilacs* (not yet published) he has achieved the distinction of performance by the Theater Guild.

Riggs writes largely in the Oklahoma dialect. He is attracted by one chief theme—the instinctive effort, often clumsily expressed, of the young Oklahoman to achieve release from the numbing, sterilizing monotony of life in the hinterlands. The unchanging routine works upon these children of the earth as a madness. Tragedy lurks if they remain, and tragedy threatens their unreasoned plans to escape.

Riggs seems to have a gift for simple dialogue. Very evidently, before he himself left Oklahoma behind he had given attentive ear to the folk speech of his characters, and had treasured up in memory their folk ways. His plays are repositories of Oklahoma idiom, Oklahoma song and the poetry beneath the prose of this monotone of living. As epigraph for his writings one might take the title of O'Neill's play, *Beyond the Horizon*. Riggs suggests, too, something of O'Neill's blend of realism and poetry, though he lacks the Irishman's rugged power.

He is as yet not a finished technician; the songs that he is fond of writing into his plays halt the action, even if, in compensation, they present a faithful picture of a little known region. Riggs might profit by the lesson of O'Neill's *The Fountain*, which, in production, was ruined by too many static speeches and grand-operatic interpolations.

The young man, however, is something more than a promise for our theater. Of mere realism we have a plenty. What we need, and what life itself needs today, is just that union of poetry and reality for which Riggs, not unsuccessfully, is striving.

Lovers of the drama will find all these plays interesting. They should appeal especially to drama groups who are on the lookout for non-commercial plays affording scope for experiment in acting and in production.

AN EXCELLENT SERIES

Among the latest monographs in the admirable series of cloth-bound 60c books issued by Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith are the following titles, each written by an authority in his field: *The English Language*, by Ernest Weekley. *Marriage*, by Edward Westermarck. *Heredity*, by F. A. E. Crew. *Great Philosophies of the World*, by C. E. M. Joad. *A History of Music*, by Percy C. Buck. *Psycho-Analysis*, by Ernest Jones.

The format, the paper, the general appearance and the binding of these books are all that could be desired. The price is very low, considering what other sim-

A Sensational Picture of Our Industrial Anarchy

By E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS

The other day I was in St. Louis and I saw in the morning papers an advertisement for "Help Wanted." There was a factory at the edge of the city that required an additional force of fifty workers. I went to that place and observed what I shall call our industrial anarchy in operation. This happened, mind you, under Hooverism. I am giving you a picture of an important event under the reign of "the Great Engineer."

At the gates of the factory in St. Louis there was a turbulent, uncertain crowd of five thousand men. This alone demonstrated the dire necessities of the economic problem. One small advertisement was enough to bring out a mob of five thousand to fill jobs which, as the advertisement itself plainly stated, were well supplied by fifty men. I need hardly say that it was a ragged, pathetic crowd. Every one of those five thousand men needed work badly. All were poor and desperate. Evidently, too, all were industrious; because lazy men do not awake at such an early hour and rush out to the call of a possible job. These men wore the most ugly, ill-fitting, laboring clothes. They were a ragged army.

I have called this by the name of industrial anarchy. Is it anything else? Let us suppose that this very same factory needed a supply of steel. Just imagine that this factory would send an advertisement to the newspapers asking all the steel companies to draw up in front of the factory at eight o'clock in the morning and display their samples of steel. Then the superintendent of the factory would step out and look over the hundred or more truckloads of steel and select, we will say, two truckloads out of the hundred.

Wouldn't that be silly? You know very well that no factory in America would be guilty of such a foolish policy. Yet in dealing with the most vital factor of industry—in dealing with the human factor—precisely such haphazard methods are used. No factory superintendent would think of ordering steel or any other inorganic commodity in the way I have described; but this is the way that human labor is ordered, without the least regard for economic efficiency and for the comfort or common self-respect of the workers.

If that is not industrial anarchy, what would you call it? This custom exhibits an extraordinary indifference to the welfare of the laboring class. I am moved to call it extraordinary, yet it is the ordinary way in which labor is employed; insanity here is the rule rather than the extreme exception. And you know that such a policy, if applied to every transaction of a factory, would lead to financial ruin.

Such is American industry under the blessed sovereignty of Hooverism. A system? No—an insane lack of system. And "the Great Engineer" does nothing, but merely looks at this crazy spectacle and calls it good. Evidently his idea of engineering is that of running us into a perpetual wreck. Hooverism means industrial anarchy.

lar series have charged for their titles. Best of all, however, the monographs themselves are written clearly, with authority, and condensed skillfully the latest information upon their respective subjects. I recommend them highly.

FIRE AND ICE

Swift. A Biography by Carl Van Doren. New York. The Viking Press. \$3.

It was a foregone conclusion that Mr. Van Doren, who has been working on the subject for twenty years, would write a book that, to scholars, presents a fascinating account of a fascinating character. It was not to be foreseen that the head of the Literary Guild would so distill his material as to leave a book that is a model of conciseness. In fact, this is one of the few books of which it may be truthfully said that it is too short rather than too long.

Van Doren lacks fortunately the mere prurience of most contemporary biographers. He is not interested in "dirt." He seeks first of all illumination and elucidation of character. Some of his paragraphs are like a bright light thrown through the darkness upon the brilliant colors of a canvas.

His very first page, indeed, sounds like the trumpet theme of a heroic symphony. Without any ceremonious bowing he launches at once into his subject with one of the finest opening paragraphs I have ever read. Listen to it—and I mean just that, for it should be read aloud.

"Jonathan Swift aimed at mankind the most venomous arrow that scorn has ever yet let loose. Mankind, bland abstraction, caught his arrow, laughed at it, and turned it over to children to play with. Children, inoculated with *Gulliver's Travels* at an age when it cannot harm them, are thereafter innocently immune. If they hear of Swift they recollect their toy, unaware that it was intended to be deadly or that it has still lost little of its furious poison. Mankind, by a stroke so bold that it must have been in different, haughty, protected itself. Swift remains a show, the story of his wild assault fades from the record. Touch the pages of the record, however, and it blazes, a story of fire in a language of ice."

WHAT SORT of a scandal would there be, if every preacher in America were to throw off his mask and set forth in the open pulpit what he really believes? Privately, many preachers admit that they do not believe the half of what they preach.

THE IDEAL intellectual temper is a civilized blend of the critical and the tolerant.

WHY do people to religion when religion is so impotent to truth?

Hoover Betrayed American Farmers

Herbert Hoover was born on a farm in Iowa. His natural roots go down into the soil. But if anything is clear in his past and present record, it is how completely he has severed those roots and how far his point of view and feelings are from the dirt farmer's.

During the World War, he asked the millers of the country not to pay more than the government's price for their purchases, he asked the boards of trade to cease trading in wheat altogether, he appointed men at the different grain exchanges to see that wheat was bought there only at the government price. It was all right for the Sugar Trust to charge anything they could squeeze out of the American public, but the farmers, like the boys at the front, were to be purely and nobly patriotic. They did not, like the men of the Sugar Trust, speak Hoover's language. Accusations that he was discriminating against the farmers—holding down the profits of this one class only—brought from him the reply: "We have stabilized the price of wheat." To which Senator James A. Reed, acting as chairman of the Senate sub-committee before which Hoover was appearing, retorted:

The Chairman. Yes; stabilized it; and that is to say that by stabilization you mean fixing, is it not?

Mr. Hoover. He can in his local markets obtain more or less.

The Chairman. Oh, more in the local market. Mr. Hoover, you are too smart a man, and as weak as I am, I hope you will not pay me the poor compliment of saying that you could for a moment convince me or anyone else that the local market that is left to the farmer leaves him a price that amounts to anything after you have taken away the great markets for his wheat. That is to say, the market of the grain merchant, the market of the board of trade, and the market of the miller.

Mr. Hoover. I do not wish to quibble with the position. I agree with you; the price of wheat has been stabilized. There is practically a limit to what the farmer can get for his wheat.

A limit for the farmers; no limit for the Sugar Trust!

Hoover's own justification for his treatment of the farmers was that they had agreed to the price and that it was from 45 cents to 55 cents a bushel more than they had ever received before for their wheat. Furthermore that by so doing he had reduced the price of flour to the consumer by \$3 a barrel. But listen to this:

The Chairman. We might enter upon that. Do you mean to tell us now that by this fixation of price you raised the price to the farmer above what he was getting before you fixed the price?

Mr. Hoover. We raised the price above what he really got for his previous harvest by the figure I have given.

The Chairman. For his previous

harvest, yes; and let us carry that on. You say that you reduced the price of flour \$3 below the previous year's flour. Do you say that?

Mr. Hoover. Three dollars below the price existing when we entered upon that stabilization.

The Chairman. Ah, exactly. When you come to say that you reduced the price of flour, you take the highest price that flour had reached as your basis; but when you say you advanced the price of wheat to the farmer, you do not take the highest price of wheat, but you take his average for the year.

And Senator Reed went on to point out tersely that wheat and flour had both sold very cheaply for a while during the same months and that then wheat had taken a sudden boom in the market with the result that flour followed. But that while the price of wheat at \$2 a bushel was higher on the average, than it had been the year before, it was very much lower than the high point, and that, on the other hand while the price of flour was lower than the high point it was very much higher than the average of the year before.

Of course, many a young farmer reading this will think, "I wish I were sure of \$2 a bushel for my wheat today!" But that is not the point. Reed let Hoover have it straight from the shoulder: "The savings of the American consumer ought not and should not be made by a sacrifice on the part of the producer. They should be made by the exclusion of speculative profits from the handling of our foodstuffs."

And right here, we repeat, you have not only the crux of the matter but a revelation of Hoover's whole attitude. For he did exactly this: permitted Big Business to make speculative profits from the handling of our food stuff, but effected the savings of the American consumer by a sacrifice on the part of the farmers.

To expect a man with Hoover's boyhood training in the Oregon land speculation and young manhood spent in dubious mining transactions to understand the feelings, the motivations and the problems of the man who earns his bread by manual labor is to expect the impossible. Yet most of the farmers who voted for him did expect just this. They expected it because they thought of him as a man who, like them-

self, had faced wind and sun as he worked at his "man-sized" job of engineering. They visualized him building great dams and wrestling with physical problems of mining. They saw him wading through snows and enduring hardships—as farmers themselves do in the cold winter. He caught hold of the farmers' imagination—and not only of the farmers' imagination, but the American public's. After the many men whose work had been entirely in offices, it was gratifying to think we were to have at the head of the nation a man who understood life in the open; that instead of a lawyer, newspaper man, or professional politician, we were to have an engineer. He would be different.

But we know now that Hoover is no more sympathetic to the farmer's real problems than the kind of stock with which he amassed his fortune is like the slick Holsteins and fat Poland Chinas through which—by milk stream and on hoof—the wise farmer markets his crop.

WE CAN NOW understand how it was that Herbert Hoover made promises as a candidate for President which he did not and could not keep as President. We know that he made his fortune by holding out promises to people which it was impossible for him to keep and which he did not intend to keep. He made his millions by the sale of promises—promises in the form of stock in ephemeral mining companies which "folded their tents like the Arabs and as silently stole away."

IS BETTER in progress an illusion? Not quite: the truth seems to be that some people progress and some people don't—and to the people who don't, progress seems an illusion.

IF CAPTAIN KIDD were alive today, he would agree perfectly with the kind of "economic individualism" which is illustrated by the career of Herbert Hoover.

"THE RACE is to the swiftest."—Herbert Hoover. He should have said that the race is to the trickiest. At least that's the way Herbert won his race.

A Great Conflict of Ideas

Theistic Propaganda Will Be Vigorously Attacked in The Joseph McCabe Special Edition

Theistic propagandists recently have been making another big display, relying upon the mysticism of a few scientists and, of course, finding the columns of the conservative majority press thrown open to them gladly. The case for theism is as weak as ever it was—but its defenders have the advantage of readily obtaining a wider hearing through the press. The New York Times, for example, printed a mendacious and absurd attack upon rationalism by Gilbert K. Chesterton. But it would not think of publishing an article on behalf of rationalism—an article fully analyzing religion and fully reporting the viewpoint of modern science—by the world's greatest scholar, Joseph McCabe.

It remains for The Freeman to meet this propaganda for theism and to keep steadily before the public the true position of religion and rationalism and modern science. The Freeman meets these challenges eagerly. It is inspired by the importance of this intellectual conflict. And we are fortunate in having with us in this conflict such a great thinker and encyclopedic surveyor of knowledge as Joseph McCabe. In view of the recent debates on theism (which you have been reading in The Freeman) we feel that the time is opportune for a Joseph McCabe Special Edition of The Freeman. We are preparing to issue this Special Edition on February 7—and we urge our readers to cooperate earnestly in making this Special Edition a success in its circulation. With such widespread misrepresentation of religion and science (coming from only a small group of vociferous propagandists but spread broadcast by a conventional, powerful press), it is important that additional thousands of Americans should be reached by The Freeman's messages of rationalism. There is no better method of conveying the messages of rationalism to the people than by circulating far and wide the Joseph McCabe Special Edition of The Freeman, which will be a lively summary of the ideas of McCabe on religion, science, history, philosophy, morals and all the questions which enter vitally into the theistic debate. Help circulate McCabe's clear, strong, scholarly, debunking ideas by making a huge success of the Joseph McCabe Special Edition. Use the three methods which are explained in the order blank below.

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(Feb. 7, 1931)

The American Freeman, Girard, Kansas

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English Commission Proposes Abolition of Death Penalty

It is good news that the death penalty may be abolished in England. There is a serious prospect of its abolition in the recently published report of the Select Committee on Capital Punishment, recommending to Parliament that the death penalty be set aside for a period of five years. At the conclusion of the five-year period, the question would be again considered in the light of this intelligent, practical experiment.

Although conservative members of the committee removed themselves from its deliberations, disapproving of what they thought a radical proposal, the labor and liberal majority have submitted a report which is said to be very extensive and to be grounded in a most careful scrutiny of the whole problem. Twenty-seven sittings were held by the committee, and forty-four witnesses were heard, including legal and penological experts from America and other countries. The committee says: "Our prolonged examination of the situation in foreign countries has increasingly confirmed us in the assurance that capital punishment may be abolished in this country without endangering life or property."

And that is really the issue. Capital punishment is not an immutable moral law, representing the only right attitude which can be taken toward the crime of murder. It can be justified only as a preventive, not as a punitive measure; and a great deal of evidence—sufficient to convince this English investigating committee—has been amassed to show that this extreme method of dealing with the murder problem (which is a social and not an individual problem) does not reduce the hazards of the taking of life. On humanitarian considerations, the death penalty is revolting. Few, even among those who defend it as a necessity, profess to regard it as ideal. Even these defenders feel that they must apologize for this severe, barbaric form of punishment.

The death penalty is of course, as a matter of historical fact, a survival of barbaric times. It was a few hundred years ago applied to a long list of offenders; but it has been steadily restricted in its use; it is rarely resorted to nowadays, in peace time, except in murder cases; and some countries and a number of American states do not permit capital punishment even for the crime of murder. In studying the situation, the English committee reached the conclusion that in countries or states where capital punishment is not applied the murder rate is not higher than in communities which impose this

terrible penalty. In Denmark and Holland, for example, there is no capital punishment and there is at the same time no extraordinary murder rate. Expressing its hope that the committee's report will result in the passing of a bill to abolish the death sentence, The Manchester (England) *Guardian* remarks: "If we find at the end of five years that we dare not abolish the death sentence we shall have to confess to being less civilized than countries like Holland and Denmark."

The main proposal of the English committee is made in a scientific, as well as a humane, spirit. A five-year experiment will supply far better materials for reaching a final decision than can be afforded by any amount of mere argument. If during those five years the murder problem is not seriously worsened—if, in other words, it is demonstrated that England can protect the lives of its citizens as well without capital punishment as with it—then only an appallingly narrow and bitter mental attitude would urge the restoration of this penalty.

We strongly hope that, as seems probable, England will make this humane experiment. It is also a scientific experiment, for we have learned a great deal about the medical and social aspects of crime since the death penalty was, in a darker age, applied with little question to many crimes besides murder. Science and humanism work together for a more enlightened, a more farseeing and a more remedial attitude toward crime, as toward all other problems.

The English committee also states that prison reform is badly needed and that it must follow—and, it is hoped, be stimulated—by the abolition of the death sentence. We need to drop altogether the old idea of punishment and study the conditions of crime—not merely individual instances, but social causes and consequences—with a modern view to prevention.

It is worthy of note, finally, that whereas defenders of capital punishment have been in the habit of citing England and its relatively low murder rate as an argument for the death sentence, the Englishmen composing this special committee of Parliament are convinced that England's low murder rate has not been due to its retention of a barbaric penalty but that this penalty has been a serious reflection upon the state of civilization in England. The proposal to abolish the "life for a life" law is made in a desire to be more civilized.

Motto of a perfectly good conscience: "Whatever I do is right."

What Can a Free Man Believe?

A Realistic Philosophy of Life Is Given in This Latest Book by E. Haldeman-Julius—A Big Book for Only \$1

There is no tone of regret in disillusionment—a tone that is sentimentally stressed by some writers—in this latest volume of free-minded discussion by E. Haldeman-Julius. The picture of our age as lost and hopeless and empty-handed because it has found out the unsatisfactory character of the old "certainties" of religion and moralism does not apply to persons who have really emancipated their minds and who have the mental courage that goes with free thought—this is shown by Mr. Haldeman-Julius in these daring and withal wholesome chapters on religion, morals, philosophy, social ideals and man's attitude toward nature.

The old "certainties"? They were the old uncertainties, says Mr. Haldeman-Julius; they represented shifting ground; upon them could be raised no enduring foundation of intellectual and realistic life. Science and rationalism have destroyed the old faith in the old mis-called "certainties" for anyone who has the mental quickening of a critical attitude. There is only one course for the man or woman who begins to think and that is the course of simple, persistent, unafraid realism. What is there to be afraid of? We can't change life by foolish dogmas and sentimentalities of faith. Man can make the best of his life only by facing life with a clear mind and with a resolution to see and deal with things as they are. False philosophies and theologies are not consolations for men—they are traps for men and women.

This latest book by E. Haldeman-Julius covers a lot of territory. Among other very interesting features, it discusses carefully and sanely the true approach to ideas, the nature and the purposes of thought, the values that are involved in the observation of life and in reflection about life. Free thinkers will enjoy this book and all readers will find it intellectually stimulating and clarifying. This is a big book of 177 pages, 5½ by 8½ inches in size, bound in stiff card covers, and priced at only \$1.

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Hoover Remembers Harding--At Last!

Piquancy is in the news that President Hoover has at last consented to dedicate the Harding memorial in Marion, Ohio. We might even derive a little satisfaction of a sardonic kind from the announcement, inasmuch as we have persistently called attention in *The Freeman* and *The Debunker* to the inconsistency, cowardice and hypocrisy involved in the President's refusal to assist in honoring his onetime chief.

We realized, to be sure, the dilemma in which Herbie found himself. He was embarrassed if he did and embarrassed if he didn't. An address of dedication at the Harding memorial must be a trick of skating on pretty thin ice: for must not Hoover be very reticent and evasive about the very portion, the climactic portion, of Harding's career which was conspicuous and important? On the other hand, not to make the address of dedication was equivalent to an admission that Hoover wished to dismiss Harding's memory without so much as a statement about Harding one way or another.

We said in *The Freeman* and *The Debunker* that Hoover should step up, even though awkwardly, and do his best at dedicating the memorial or issue a satisfactory statement to the American people telling why he refused the role which custom thrusts upon him as a conventional obligation. Of course we were not so much concerned whether the memorial was ever dedicated or not. Our concern was simply with the weak and dishonest attitude of Hoover in the matter.

Normally, Hoover would have dedicated the memorial soon after taking office. It would have been a grand opportunity to show off. There would have been a splashy ceremony and a eulogy of Harding which would have been excellent advertising for Hoover. Those same considerations would normally have applied to Coolidge, who likewise refused to dedicate the memorial while he was President.

For both Coolidge and Hoover thus significantly to have refused their traditional responsibility (that a memorial to a dead President must be dedicated by a living President) indicates that the memory of Harding was bad medicine. But neither Coolidge nor Hoover had said a word to intimate that they felt the least criticism of Harding and his administration. One guess was enough as to why they dodged the role. That was no secret to anyone who knew the facts of the Harding administration—in which both Coolidge and Hoover were associates. They didn't want to mention the oil scandal nor the Nan Britton affair nor little Elizabeth Ann, the President's illegitimate daughter; they didn't want to condemn Harding and they didn't want to eulogize him; they wanted to do what is always cowardly for a public man to do, namely, ignore a situation vital to their records. Now it seems that Hoover has been persuaded that it will be the lesser of two evils for him to dedicate the memorial and have it over with; that the criticism of his refusal would prove in the long run more embarrassing.

Characteristically of Hoover, the first announcement that he would dedicate the memorial was made in dishonest terms. He was quoted as saying that he would do so if invited. Yet Hoover knew, better than anyone else, that he had not only been invited but that insistent requests had been made by the Harding memorial association that he should dedicate the \$800,000 memorial. The secretary of the Harding memorial association issued a statement

in which he said that Hoover had been invited, that he had refused and that he would not be invited again; the secretary added that the association would probably wait for Governor Roosevelt to dedicate the memorial after the latter succeeded Hoover in the White House in 1933.

Apparently that was the last straw for Herbie and he yielded, the latest announcement being that Hoover will deliver the dedicatory speech and that Coolidge will preside at the ceremonies. It is evident that somebody has been most frantically busy trying to patch up the very much frayed and strained harmony in the Republican party.

What Hoover will or can say on that occasion—well, that is a puzzle. He will have to ignore the most notorious events in Harding's life: or can it possibly be that he will attempt to place Harding alongside our great and good Presidents? We don't know what else he can talk about, but we venture to predict that he will make no mention of the oil scandal nor of the Ohio gang nor of Nan Britton nor of little Elizabeth Ann. Yet shouldn't those closest to Harding in life be present and conspicuously present at the dedication of his memorial? Nan should be there and Elizabeth Ann and Gaston B. Means and Daugherty and Fall. Old pals—

"BUY NOW"—WHAT?

In all of the newspapers you see the slogan, "Buy now." The common people are urged to buy anything and everything, from toilet paper to automobiles, just so that trade is stimulated. There is evidently not so much thought given to the capacity of buying which the ordinary workingman possesses in this period of industrial depression. Certainly the millions who are jobless can't buy anything. And the workers who are on short time, working only four or five days a week, don't feel especially spendthrift. There are, too, the workers who have a feeling of uncertainty and do not know whether they will have a job tomorrow or next week; they don't feel in a recklessly buying mood.

But there is one suggestion that isn't made. Amid all the clamor of economic optimism and of urging the common people to buy this and that and the other, nothing has been said about employers buying labor. Yet obviously this is the most important thing that should be purchased. Until labor is generally employed under normal conditions, it is clear that no great renewal of buying can be expected. Unemployed men are not buyers. Wages must precede sales.

If the business men of America really have confidence in our economic system (as they so eloquently assure us in the newspapers), then logically they should express that confidence by investing in a big supply of labor. They should keep their factories running full time. They should ignore all signs or statements of financial distress. They should be active rather than passive during this crisis.

Buy now? Surely—but buy what? Until labor is bought, nothing else can be bought.

THE CHRISTIAN MIND

The Christian mind—that is to say, the mind of one who really believes in Christianity as a doctrinal system—is filled with a weird jumble of inconsistencies, illogical propositions, contradictory notions and incredible fables. Is this strong language? Let us then quote Francis (Lord) Bacon, who defined the Christian mind with classic succinctness and irony:

A Christian is one that believes things his reason cannot comprehend, and hopes for things which neither he nor any man alive ever saw; he believes three to be one and one to be three; a father not to be older than his son and a son equal with his father; he believes himself to be precious in God's sight and loathes himself in his own; he is so ashamed that he dares not open his mouth before God, and yet comes with boldness to God; and asks him anything he needs; he hath within him both flesh and spirit, and yet he is not a double-minded man; he cannot sin, yet can do nothing without sin; he is so humble as to acknowledge himself to deserve nothing but evil, and yet he believes that God means all good.

There is Christian theology for you—and isn't it a fine intellectual display! Yet preachers still talk about Christianity having brought a new light into the world! If this were light, who would not prefer darkness!

A THEORY may be interesting, but a fact is always instructive.

In Praise of Folly

This Great Masterpiece of Irony and Wisdom by Erasmus, Sixteenth Century Freethinker, Is Now

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One of the most notable and important classics in the literature of sixteenth century humanism is that masterpiece of irony and wisdom, *In Praise of Folly*, by Erasmus—a charming rationalist and the greatest humanist scholar of his century. Throughout the whole range of literature you will not find a more delightful, provocative, amusing, ripely and soundly intelligent work on that perennially interesting subject, Human Nature.

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It is the policy of Haldeman-Julius Publications to offer the best and most intellectually important and most artistically free-minded literature to the masses at a price which is within the reach of all. We do not believe that *In Praise of Folly* is an esoteric masterpiece which only an elect few can appreciate. Anybody who can read and who is interested or intrigued by the funny contradictions and the seductive depths and difficulties of human nature can enjoy this masterpiece by Erasmus. We shall go further and declare and that nobody can help enjoying it. This book is so lovably, tolerantly human; it is so wise in an artful, insinuating way; it is so universal in the range of human traits and emotions and contrasts which it includes in the fascinating sweep of its kindly yet pungent criticism; it is a droll book, a barbed book and an unguent book—yes, it has all three qualities, contradictory as the statement may seem—and almost every sentence is a stimulating surprise.

In Praise of Folly is a title which has a double meaning. In ostensible form, the book is an address given by Folly to her host of admirers (i. e., the human race) and pointing out the many blessings which Folly confers upon her devotees. This pretense is gravely maintained throughout the book,

which conceals its rich humor only just below the surface of a well-simulated gravity. Between the lines, of course—or under the lines—the reader is given many lessons of wisdom, lessons indeed which seem to cover practically the whole of common life.

In praising folly, Erasmus, by a subtle yet not obscure inference, really praises wisdom in many an instance. And in many another instance we understand that Erasmus is disputing the world's estimate of folly: that, in a word, he defines as a kindly sort of wisdom what the sterner moralists define as folly. He has a good deal to say, for example, about the follies of the enjoyment of life in diverse ways that are often condemned as too self-indulgent, licentious or what-not. But it is clear that Erasmus, a thorough humanist, believed in the enjoyment of life and was at the opposite pole from the punitive philosophy of asceticism. His message, not only in this masterpiece but in his entire life's work and writing, was eloquently opposed to the orthodox Christian gospel of renunciation of the world and worship of ideas and images said to belong to another world.

"Life is to be lived," said Erasmus, and he believed that it was to be lived according to rational but merry human standards. Even today we have much criticism by moral leaders directed at the philosophy—the simple, sensible philosophy—that the essential thing about life is the living of it. And in Erasmus' day, how much more revolutionary was his message! Then the minds of men were positively overwhelmed and inundated by dark, somber, superstitious nonsense about the sinfulness and triviality of life and the importance of holy works and thoughts about heaven and hell.

Erasmus did the work of an intellectual and moral revolutionist. His humanistic message, as given at its best in this masterpiece, *In Praise of Folly*, was simply bubbling over with blithe yet ironical and profound heresy. But he wrote this book, in defiance of all consorship, which sheds light and joy to this day—a book which will always make men think, with the finest combination of sportive, jocular characterization and smiling wisdom fresh from contact with the common contrasts of life.

Erasmus—a Light in the Medieval Darkness

Medieval scholars, at their best, like Erasmus, were unavoidably deficient in a knowledge of natural science. But they knew human nature.

We know that science was not developed in Erasmus' day. It was scarcely making its tentative beginnings. The specialty of Erasmus, apart from certain theological discussions into which he entered with other and lesser scholars, was a humanistic appreciation of the older Greek and Roman civilization and its literature; and a study, most tolerant and perspicacious, of that vast subject of human nature which is always interesting. After reading his *Praise of Folly*, you will agree that Erasmus knew mankind—not only the lowliest of mankind, not only ordinary folk, but kings and popes, nobles and priests, all classes and companies. And he spared none in this bold, ironical masterpiece. As a satire (with its salutary lessons) on human nature, *In Praise of Folly* ranks probably as the highest ever written; probably more effective, because at once more gentle and more unmistakable in its criticism, than *Gulliver's Travels*. Every freethinker—every student of human nature and its foibles—should have this book.

We are bringing this rare classic—*In Praise of Folly*—out of its seclusion of centuries into the hands of the masses. We know that Haldeman-Julius readers will appreciate this charming work. Previously sold in expensive editions, the book is now published in a popular form at only 50 cents a copy. This is a large book, bound in stiff card covers, containing 30,000 words, and 5½ by 8½ inches in size. It is printed in large, clear type and bound in neat, attractive style. We are hoping for a big circulation of the *Praise of Folly*, because it will further encourage us in our wish to bring the great classics of humanism and rationalism to the masses of the people. The circulation of such works as this masterpiece by Erasmus will have a fine civilizing influence. They are valuable additions to the popular culture; works that should be enjoyed by the many, not by the few only. 50 cents a copy—5 copies for \$2. Use the accompanying order blank today.

LIFE OF ERASMUS

Erasmus was born in Rotterdam, Holland, in 1466 and died in 1536. As a young man he became a monk, but the monkish way of life was not pleasing to him. In fact, the greater part of his life was spent in traveling over the continent of Europe and in England, studying at various universities—that is to say, studying and reading and writing according to free plans of his own—and from time to time issuing writings which, even when they were most devout in theme and purpose, were looked upon suspiciously by the Catholic hierarchy. He had this and that patron among the wealthy free-thinkers; and he managed cleverly to escape the worst treatment from Rome. He was never fully at home in the Catholic church. He could not embrace the main body of Catholic superstition. On the other hand, he could not follow the fanaticism of Luther and the Protestants. At heart he was a genuine rationalist. This rationalism is exhibited at its best and brightest in his masterpiece, *In Praise of Folly*. He was, in the limits of the world of his day, what we should call a cosmopolitan scholar. Representing the highest humanity of the Middle Ages, he put the essence of that humanity into his *Praise of Folly*.

In the dark superstition and cruelty of the Middle Ages, the mind of Erasmus shone as a kindly, wisely illuminating prophecy of modernism.

He was not entirely modern in his views—that could hardly be expected. But he did stand forth in defense of the fundamental rights of humanity. He denied the doctrine that man was a "worm of the dust" and should prostrate himself in fear and prayer before the throne of an imaginary, remote God. He was not an atheist, but he was, first and last, a humanist.

It was the work of such men as Erasmus which prepared the way for the modern age. And his work demanded a daring, a willingness to endure misfortune and hardship, which we moderns can realize only in imagination; although, for that matter, we have our own forms of persecution today which are not so light nor so unfamiliar. Yet the fact remains that, in many essential views, Erasmus went boldly against the ruling orthodoxy of his age.

Ironically he praised folly—and he sent brilliant gleams of wisdom in a revealing message that touched almost every corner of life. He was one of the world's wise men. He was one of the world's great teachers. He was one of the world's great humanists.

Order Blank for "In Praise of Folly"

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I am enclosing 50c, for which please send me, postpaid, *In Praise of Folly* by Erasmus. (5 copies for \$2.)

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