

Does Modern Science Suggest the "Spiritual" Interpretation of Life?

Kansas Governor in "Rubber Stamp" Statement on Capital Punishment, Haldeman-Julius' Reply

In reply to E. Haldeman-Julius' letter, as published in The Freeman of February 14, Governor Harry H. Woodring of Kansas wrote the following letter:

January 28, 1931.
Mr. E. Haldeman-Julius,
Girard, Kansas.

My Dear Mr. Haldeman-Julius:
I have your letter of January 24 in which you protest against the restoration of capital punishment in Kansas.

I have read your letter very carefully and note all the objections you make with reference to the proposed legislation. I thank you very much for writing me so fully your views on the subject; however, I have made up my mind not to veto this bill if it comes from the legislature with a decisive majority. If the bill is thus passed it will mean to me that the sentiment of the people is being reflected through their duly authorized representatives, and I do not feel that it is within my province to attempt to defeat their wishes under such circumstances.

With continued good wishes, I am,
Sincerely yours,
HARRY H. WOODRING,
Governor.

At once Mr. Haldeman-Julius wrote a second letter to Governor Woodring, which is herewith printed in full:

January 30, 1931.
Governor Harry H. Woodring,
State House,
Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Governor:
I am surprised by your letter in which you completely surrender and refuse, on the present issue of capital punishment and impliedly on future issues, your responsibility as governor. I do not mean this to be rude; I mean it precisely as a statement of what your letter means. You seem to forget that the authority of the legislature to pass laws is not the whole program of government. There is also the power of the governor to veto laws and the power of the courts to adjudge the constitutionality of laws. You, as well as the legislature, represent the people. It is one of the duties of your office to exercise your judgment and knowledge in passing upon all laws. Yet, in advance of the legislature's action, you announce that you will shirk this duty. Suppose a court were to announce that it would not pass upon the constitutionality of a law, provided that law were passed by a "decisive majority." Neither governors nor courts can, any more, than legislatures, properly abdicate their duties.

If I am to interpret your statement logically, it means that you will sign any law, regardless of its merits, which the legislature may pass by a "decisive majority." Let me say that this is really as great a betrayal of the people as it would be for the legislature to announce that it would pass any law recommended by the governor. In either case this would mean the nullification of an important branch and function of government. Your vote (veto or approval) as governor is, under our theory and practice of government, as representative in character as the vote of the legislature; and the law expressly confers upon you the power and the responsibility of casting that vote and, as certainly is presumed, casting it for or against a law as a result of your careful, unbiased, freely operating judgment. Your position, as surprisingly set forth in your letter, is the same as if the senate, for example, were to announce that it would pass any law which was passed by a "decisive majority" by the house of representatives.

You did not make the slightest remark upon the wisdom or foolishness, the soundness or unsoundness, the necessity or lack of necessity of the capital punishment law. You refuse indeed to

consider the facts and reasons involved in the discussion of the law. You say, in plain words as could be, that you as governor refuse to use your judgment, as directed by law and presumably as also directed by the people, in the consideration of this law. You say, in effect, that you will act as a "rubber stamp" governor. Is that fulfilling the duties of your office? Is that representing the people? Plainly it is not. It is a remarkable declaration of intentional failure to perform your duty as governor.

You resort to a fallacy, which is contradicted by reason and legislative history and the common sense of the people, when you say that you will regard a "decisive majority" in the legislature as an expression of the people's will. But the will of a legislature and the will of the people have often been in conflict. Surely you cannot mean to take the position that the people always, meekly and automatically, approve of the actions of legislatures and invariably say, "Yes, that is our will because the legislature which represents us has said so." On the contrary, on innumerable occasions the people have expressed themselves as in strong disagreement with the actions of legislatures; and this indeed is one conspicuous reason why legislatures change in membership. Your assertion about the representative character, which you amazingly assume is infallible and automatic, of the action of the legislature in the present instance is essentially discredited, in any case, by the fact (as I emphasized in my first letter to you) that the issue of capital punishment was not before the people in the recent election. This is a sudden and unauthorized issue, brought up by the members of the legislature without any mandate or any expression of sentiment from the people. There is not the least fact to indicate that the legislature, in the present instance, would be representing the wish of the people in passing a capital punishment law; there is every presumption against such a view.

What is of main importance, however—of direct importance so far as you are concerned—is that you in your office of governor are also a representative of the people. And I say that you should represent them by the real, independent exercise of your judgment and not refuse that responsibility of representation by abdicating, as it were, in advance and without actual consideration of the law proposed, to the legislature. It is especially unfitting and untrue to the responsibility of your office that you should express, in advance of the final passage of the law and your reading and weighing of the law, an intention of giving your approval to such a law if passed by a "decisive majority." You should in duty reserve your opinion and action until the law is placed before you in its proper order; and then you should really form an opinion and really act as governor and not merely let yourself be an echo of the legislature. My suggestion to you was reasonable and it was clearly within the rights and duties of your office. Am I to understand that you are not going to consider the capital punishment law from the standpoint of reasonableness, nor from the standpoint of scientific knowledge, nor from the standpoint of the responsible rights and duties of your office, but that you are not going to consider this law at all? But that in this instance (and, according to the logic of your letter, in all future instances) you are going to be not a governor but a "rubber stamp"? Your letter amazes and deeply disappoints me, but I am still,

Sincerely and respectfully yours,
E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS.
The capital punishment bill, which applies to murder and kid-

naping and robbery with firearms, was passed several weeks ago by the Kansas House of Representatives. It is now before a committee of the Kansas Senate and as we go to press no action has been taken in that body.

FREETHINKERS ORGANIZE ON THE PACIFIC COAST

A very interesting and worthwhile work of bringing freethinkers into closer contact for discussion and for more spirited cooperation in attacking religion is being directed in Oakland, Calif., by Martin S. Charles, general secretary of the Liberal Fellowship Forum in Oakland. The Forum is the center for a new organization known as the International League of the Militant Godless. It will direct propaganda activities throughout the Pacific coast region.

One attractive feature of the organization will be a Letter Club for Infidels, who can, through the aid of the Oakland headquarters, be brought into touch with one another for the purpose of exchanging ideas. It is the plan of Mr. Charles to build up a movement in Oakland, and in the Pacific coast section, so appealing and well-supported that a good meeting hall and circulating library can be regularly maintained in Oakland; and from that headquarters a lively fellowship, both in personal contact and through letters, can be maintained among freethinkers of the far west.

A first meeting is already announced for March, at which the discussion will be on the question: "Is Morality Possible Without Belief in God?" This meeting will be held in Scioto's Hall, 529 12th St., Oakland, Calif. Interest is being aroused and kindred minds brought together by a letter campaign, advertised in the Oakland and San Francisco newspapers, on this same question of morality and belief in God.

We are sure that readers of The Freeman who live in Oakland or San Francisco or in other cities of northern California will be glad to associate themselves with this high-minded plan of propaganda and fellowship. Mr. Charles can be addressed at P. O. Box 525, Oakland, Calif.

MAYNARD SHIPLEY SPEAKS

I am sure readers of The Freeman and The Debunker will be glad to know that Maynard Shipley now gives scientific talks every Sunday evening at 8:15 over the National Broadcasting system from radio station KGO. "Everything I say," he writes, "is from the evolutionary standpoint, and I believe and hope is educational as well as entertaining. The talks are under the general head of 'This Amazing Universe.' Perhaps some of your Pacific Coast readers might like to listen in." The time mentioned is, we presume, Pacific time. Those who have read Mr. Shipley's articles in The Freeman and The Debunker, his Little Blue Books and his *The Key to Evolution* will confidently expect very valuable talks and we are sure they will not be disappointed. It is good to know that, with all the trashy stuff that clutters the air via radio, a little time can be reserved for something of cultural value.

A BELIEF in God is an imperfect and doubtful consolation at best; and it is only a consolation to those who lack the courage of realism. It is obvious, however, that men cheat themselves and defeat the highest possibilities of life by turning for consolation to false beliefs instead of training themselves in the understanding and use of truth. It may be given as a safe and sensible generalization that error is always harmful and truth is always the highest aid and inspiration that men can have.

John Haynes Holmes vs. E. Haldeman-Julius

Letter from John Haynes Holmes

Dear Mr. Haldeman-Julius:

Thanks for sending me a copy of your long and vigorous discussion of Sir James Jeans' *The Mysterious Universe*. I think your article is a first-class piece of debating, but I don't see that it gets us anywhere. What impresses me in the present situation is the complete collapse of the mechanistic or materialistic interpretation of the universe. The cosmic structure reared by the science of the last two generations has simply disappeared. This leaves a void, and it seems to me that we should be ready to receive hospitably any constructive interpretation that the scientists of our time have to offer. There is no reason in the world why we should get excited if these interpretations take a trend toward the idealistic or religious. Indeed, I find such trend profoundly interesting and significant. At bottom, of course, as Professor Jeans is among the first to recognize, we know nothing. Our minds are simply trying desperately to understand and explain. At bottom we must all be agnostics. But as between the absurdities of the old mechanistic explanation, and the mysteries of the new spiritual explanation, I choose the latter as infinitely more reasonable.

One thing more. I can't for the life of me see why anybody should berate a great scientist merely because he expresses an honest opinion, nor doubt the greatness of the scientist in question because for any reason we don't like his opinion. The church has made a fool of itself for years for denouncing scientists just because their speculations didn't happen to agree with its dogmatic theology. Are the free thinkers and the rationalists now going to make fools of themselves in exactly the same way by denouncing the scientists because their speculations do not happen to agree with their materialistic dogmas? My conviction is that you and I ought to receive with grateful, reverent attention, whatever is said by honest men who know more about the cosmos in an hour than you and I will ever know in a lifetime, and use their testimony for whatever it is worth for the correction and enrichment of our own thought.

Very sincerely yours,
JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

E. Haldeman-Julius' Reply

How Mr. Holmes does love to repeat his large phrase about "the complete collapse of the mechanistic interpretation of the universe"! It is a large phrase, but the evidence to sustain it is meager to the point of imperceptibility. This evidence, if we may call it that, is only negative and it is not finally negative, not, that is to say, soundly nor certainly negative. Prof. Eddington finds that there is something about the behavior of the electrons that he does not understand. Sir James Jeans finds that he can work out a mathematical interpretation of the universe, but that a great deal of this interpretation assumes to be past the limits of knowledge and must be symbolic. Therefore, the materialistic interpretation of the universe is said to be in "complete collapse."

A similar argument might have been used at every stage of scientific investigation. Such arguments were indeed used. In the early days of the knowledge of evolution, when, for instance, the chromosomes that govern the characteristics of individual organisms were unknown, it might have been argued that evolution was in "complete collapse" because of this incompleteness in its explanation of heredity. But the fact simply was that more knowledge was required; and when science acquired that additional knowledge, the truth of evolution was strengthened.

There is absolutely nothing in the latest knowledge of physics, nothing in the reports by Prof. Eddington of his observations, to support the notion that the mate-

rialistic interpretation has broken down. In fact, the materialistic interpretation is secondary to the materialistic observation upon which necessarily it is based. Science still deals with material phenomena. It knows nothing of the "spiritual." If Eddington and Jeans give a spiritualistic explanation, they cannot do so in the name of science. Their pronouncements have no more authority in this field than a sermon by Mr. Holmes. And let me point out that the "spiritual explanation" is not new. Spiritualism and materialism have a long history of opposition in the philosophic field; and science, more realistic and patient than philosophy, has gone right ahead finding materialistic explanations for first one feature of life and then another and then others; this process is continuing today. Mr. Holmes is grossly misrepresenting science if he says that it is abandoning material researches and reasons and seeking a "new spiritual explanation."

I am surprised that Mr. Holmes charges me with having "berated" Sir James Jeans. I expressed my strongest disagreement with his ideas, which were not at all scientific but which Jeans himself offered as "frankly speculative"—being in the nature, that is to say, of abstract philosophy and not of science. There was nothing personal in my attack upon Jeans' ideas. I did not "berate" the man. I discussed his opinions.

Let me say that we free thinkers are not "denouncing the scientists because their speculations do not happen to agree with [our] materialistic dogmas." In the first place, as Mr. Holmes should know very well, only a few scientists hold the opinions which he calls a "spiritual explanation." This is not the view of modern science; and Jeans himself in his book, *The Mysterious Universe*, expressly declares that such speculations are not offered in the name of science. I regard this "spiritual explanation" as mystical, unexplanatory and supported by no real evidence; therefore I challenge it. I do not "denounce" it in a bitter or personal way, but I show in what respects I think it is illogical and baseless.

Another Letter from John Haynes Holmes

Dear Mr. Haldeman-Julius:

You certainly did a handsome thing in printing in full my sermon on Science and Religion, and another handsome thing in reviewing it so extensively. I enjoyed your review of my discourse, and have nothing particular to say in comment except that I think the difference between you and me is substantially a difference in emphasis. You refuse to recognize as religion what to me is the only religion worth having. Personally I am not at all concerned whether my religion is really religion in your sense of the word or anybody else's. I simply know that it is a working faith and is justified by the teachings of modern science.

I cannot refrain from adding that I was immensely amused to discover that your savage attack upon my division of history into "three main periods of religious belief," was not my division at all, but Einstein's. When you say, therefore, that I am "unfortunate" when I "deal with history," it happens in this case that it is Einstein who is unfortunate. All that you say, therefore, about me, from the bottom of the fifth column through the sixth, to the top of the seventh, please apply to the great scientist. I am not to blame. I simply accepted what Einstein gave me, and I am not ashamed of doing so. As for Nathaniel Schmidt's definition of religion, I am always proud to associate myself with this distinguished scholar. But why you should attack me and not Schmidt I do not understand. Again, he is the one to blame.

I realize that you old-time radicals are having a pretty hard time these days. Science is moving away from you so fast that I don't

wonder you are frightened and confused. It is never pleasant to have the earth slip out from under you, and that's just what's happening to the old mechanism of nineteenth century science. You have got to begin all over again, and it is a real test of your open-mindedness as to whether you are willing to do so. My own guess is that the rationalist is just as bigoted as the fundamentalist, and is no more willing to accept a sudden change of thought.

With hearty greetings, I am
Very sincerely yours,
JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

Mr. Haldeman-Julius' Reply

Again Mr. Holmes seeks an unwarranted appearance of importance for his views by saying that they are "justified by the teachings of modern science." I hereby challenge Mr. Holmes to show me where modern science actually asserts (much less pretends to prove) as a scientific fact that we must turn to a "spiritual explanation" of the universe. I challenge him to show where a belief in "spirit" is at all "justified by the teachings of modern science." Science is skeptical and cautious, that we know; it reaches the border line where knowledge thins into uncertainty and speculation; then science says that it has new problems to solve—that is all—and it goes on trying to solve them. How does it try to solve them? How else than by a continued and closer study of the material phenomena?

Take, for example, the doubt regarding the explanation of some behavior in electrons. Is Prof. Eddington and are other physicists going to continue studying the electrons to understand them? Of course. Are the electrons material? Of course. Meanwhile Prof. Eddington occupies a double role: in one role he is a man of science and as such he is not dogmatic and he sticks to material things; in the other role he talks sentimentally about the soul and God—yet what he says is very, very vague and he admits that no man can offer proof of such things to another man (in other words, they are not conveyable by reason and evidence)—and he speaks, not perhaps dogmatically, but mystically.

We "old-time radicals" (by which Mr. Holmes evidently means we materialists and free thinkers) are not having a hard time; on the contrary, we are finding our viewpoint vindicated at every step. Prof. Einstein himself, whom Mr. Holmes so joyed in quoting, said only the other day that what now seems to be indeterminism and "statistical law" is probably nothing more than lack of knowledge and will, with the advance of knowledge, resolve itself into determinism. As Joseph McCabe points out, thirty problems out of fifty have been solved by materialism; and it is reasonable to expect that the other twenty will be solved also by materialism; this holds especially true, inasmuch as there is no other explanation in sight nor even conceivable. Spiritualism is not an explanation; it is merely now, as always, a baseless dogma. If it pleases Mr. Holmes and inspires him to use spiritual terms, very well. But he has no evidence for what he calls a "spiritual explanation" of the universe.

Mr. Holmes' alibi regarding the "three main periods of religious belief" is not impressive. He used that historical argument without quotation and certainly it was an argument that he endorsed. If Einstein used that historical illustration, it is not the more true for that reason. Mr. Holmes knows well enough that Einstein is not a historian. He is a mathematical scientist, whose acquaintance with history is doubtless not all that it might be. Mathematicians and physicists are not, by virtue of their scientific expertness in these branches, also specialists in history. The description given of the "three main periods of religious belief," implying as it did that a religion of love and kind Providence and social feelings had been popular and widely recog-

nized for a long historical period, was quite unhistorical; and that criticism holds for Einstein or Holmes.

But Mr. Holmes seems to be in a very "blame-shifting" mood. "As for Nathaniel Schmidt's definition of religion," he says, "I am always proud to associate myself with this distinguished scholar. But why you should attack me and not Schmidt I do not understand. Again, he is the one to blame." Did Mr. Holmes then have no responsibility? I was well aware that he got that definition from Schmidt; he gave Schmidt credit, whereas the historical illustration he did not ascribe to Einstein. But the essential point, surely, is that Mr. Holmes quoted Schmidt's definition with approval. I was engaged at the moment in a controversy with Mr. Holmes; therefore I held him accountable for that definition and criticized it as Mr. Holmes' view. And it was his view, even though not his original view, as he repeats in this letter his approval and indeed his pride in associating himself with Schmidt. Why, then, should he try to dodge responsibility for an intellectual association of which he is proud?

I say it kindly, but I do say that Mr. Holmes is guilty of quibbling. He is a good man but he goes wrong now and then, now and then. It is difficult not to go wrong when one occupies even a humanist pulpit. Pulpits are insidious in giving their occupants a distorted viewpoint. Some pulpit men are affected worse than others, but it is seldom that one escapes entirely. If Mr. Holmes would stop looking for "spirit" or "spirits" and confine his attention to the phenomena of reality he might save himself these deplorable errors.

BEDLAM ECONOMICS

Alexander Legge, chairman of the federal farm board, says that the wheat crop in 1931 may be too little. Not many months ago, Mr. Legge was telling the farmers they had produced too much wheat, albeit in making that statement he omitted any reference to the poor victims of Hooverism who, in face of an alleged tremendous surplus of wheat, did not have enough bread.

Mr. Legge belongs to the school of bedlam economics, which means the economics of private profit and sale. This is proved again by his added remark that the predicted shortage for 1931 would be "as bad as a surplus." And a surplus, according to bedlam economics, is about as bad as bad can be. For the more we have, under the economic regime of profits, the less we really have. The greatest danger is that the workers will produce too much.

Of course a surplus, in Mr. Legge's bedlam-economics way of speaking, does not mean more wheat than the American people can naturally consume; more wheat than can be turned into bread and eaten; more wheat than is needed to supply our wants. A surplus is more wheat than can, under the market system of bedlam economics, be sold at a profit.

"As bad as a surplus"—this phrase ironically indicates the insanity of our economic system. There could be no reasonable surplus until every man, woman and child in America had had more bread and other wheat products than they could possibly consume; and then, under a socialized system, it may be presumed that science would find some good use for the extra wheat. If nothing else, we could afford to be generous and help out people in some other part of the world where the need of wheat was greater. But when economists and politicians and journalists talk about how bad it is to have too much—and when they speak of too much in a land where millions have shamefully too little—what else can this be called but bedlam economics?

THE TORONTO *Globe* says that the Canadian people should be protected from atheistic ideas. And, reading the *Globe*, we are sure that this paper has been protected from all modern ideas.

Labor Leaders' Betrayal in Mooney-Billings Case

Under the direction of Walter W. Liggett, nationally known newspaper man, the Tom Mooney Defense Committee is renewing vigorously its publicity about this terrible frameup. The newest angle of publicity is a summary of the treacherous and most harmful hostile attitude of certain conservative labor leaders in California toward the Money-Billings defense.

While the rank and file of labor, insofar as it has been permitted to know the facts, has been sympathetic to Mooney and Billings and has supported these victims of the frameup when given the opportunity to do so, this has not been true of the inner clique of leaders in San Francisco and California. These leaders, with one or two exceptions, have hampered continually the work of liberation in the Mooney-Billings case; they have at times been openly hostile; for the most part, however, they have by innuendo and by underhanded methods opposed the work on behalf of Mooney and Billings, while being compelled to appear at times as following a friendly course toward these victims, although disagreeing with them as to tactics of defense.

Thus these labor leaders have advocated a parole for Mooney and Billings, well knowing that this is profoundly unjust to men who deserve a full and fair pardon. They have been friendly to Governor Young, serving as his political appointees and supporting him in the state campaign after he had refused to pardon Mooney and Billings. Other startling disclosures are now finally made in the latest publication of the Mooney Defense Committee, a pamphlet entitled *Labor Leaders Betray Tom Mooney*. In an early issue of *The Freeman* the assistant editor, John W. Gunn, will review this amazing feature of the Mooney-Billings case in a series of articles specially written for this paper, based upon the material in the Mooney Defense Committee's pamphlet.

It should be explained here that Tom Mooney and Warren Billings have disagreed as to the line best taken in their future defense work. All along Mooney has felt and has repeatedly insisted that the betrayal of the San Francisco labor leaders (which has set the tone of indifference or positive unfriendliness adopted in the American Federation of Labor) should be made completely public in his defense literature. Others directing the defense activities, and now no longer connected therewith, have favored a policy of keeping silent concerning this phase of the situation, being persuaded that these labor leaders were perhaps friendly to a certain

extent or that, in any event, even a limited help or a superficial amity toward them would be tactically wise.

It appears that Billings himself is not of the same opinion as Mooney regarding the attitude of the labor leaders in California; that Billings has confidence in the friendly intentions of these leaders and refuses to associate himself with an exposure of their behavior in the Mooney-Billings case; and that, therefore, this latest pamphlet is circulated under Tom Mooney's name and authority alone, with Billings not having responsibility therein, although inevitably Billings' close association with the events makes it necessary and indeed right that his name should be mentioned at vital points.

It is understood that there is no personal ill-feeling between Mooney and Billings. In a personal letter to Billings, published in the pamphlet, Mooney says that he has the kindest feeling toward Billings and confidence in his loyalty and sincerity; but he adds that Billings does not realize as clearly as he, Mooney, realizes the actual betrayal of which they have been the victims in the very ranks of organized labor which should be solidly supporting these class-war prisoners.

Mary Gallagher no longer heads the Mooney Defense Committee; her retirement is said to be due to a difference in opinion as to future tactics; and Mooney says that, while her essential loyalty was unquestioned, she was being misled and unfavorably influenced by the San Francisco labor leaders who are reactionary and closely in political alliance with the bitter foes of Mooney and Billings in official and capitalistic circles. Walter W. Liggett has succeeded Mary Gallagher as director of the Mooney publicity work; while Billings, it is understood, will conduct a separate defense.

This is a substantial, though of course, for lack of space, an inadequate explanation of the changed status of the Mooney and Billings defense. The full story will be told in Mr. Gunn's series of articles in *The Freeman*.

BREEDING CRIME

What but a simpleton can we call a man, however distinguished and pompous, who imagines that by killing criminals it is possible to stop crime! It is one more of the many, many illustrations of a futile policy of dealing with effects rather than causes. Life imprisonment is more civilized than capital punishment, and it gives more opportunities for the education of criminals to right social action (these opportunities being strictly limited of course by the

degree of intelligence shown in administering our prisons), but neither this nor any other penalty will really solve the problem of crime.

Back of the criminal is the social condition that breeds crime. When the masses of men are made victims of bad social arrangements and are taught by stern, sordid necessity to look at the world as a farce—and indeed a very cruel farce—of dishonesty and exploitation, are we to be surprised when a great deal of crime results? High standards of individual conduct cannot come from such low standards of social organization. Exemplifying this condition, which is at the bottom of crime, we quote from an article by Neil Staebler in the February *Harper's*. Mr. Staebler is a business executive of Detroit who assumed the dress and manner of a workman and worked in the Chicago stockyards district. In his article ("The American System in Job-Land") he says among other sharp, true things:

Grafting is looked upon [by the workers] as the normal form of economic relationship for everyone in any position where graft is possible, whether in business, politics, religion or philanthropy. The Yards has a theory that everyone in the world grafts off somebody else: the employer grafts off the employee and the employee off the employer, the wife off the husband and the husband off the wife, the municipal employe off the city and the city off its citizens, the policeman off the street walker and the street walker off her client, the Church off its congregation and the priesthood off the Church. Mr. Hoover "gets" his, Congressmen "get" theirs, judges "get" theirs, business men "get" theirs, big-league ball players "get" theirs, racketeers "get" theirs. It is human nature to graft, the Yards concludes. Almost invariably when someone is discussing corruption in the Yards the remark pops up, "Why shouldn't he get his knock-down? I would, too, if I was in his place." Life is a universal racket.

Isn't that cynical version of "the Yards" in the main an accurate picture of our society? Corruption does abound, as "the Yards" knows. Presidents, congressmen, judges and business men are engaged in selfish use of their fellows to further their own fortunes and power and prestige, however respectably and legally this selfishness is disguised. Great is our civilization and most unscientific, selfish, and cruel is the social organization through which this civilization imperfectly functions.

Many of these cynics of "the Yards"—most of them when once habituated to their harsh slavery—remain stupid victims of exploitation. Others take one look at "the Yards" (i. e., at a life of exploited toil) and decide to try a life of crime; or, as is more frequently the case, they gradually form such a philosophy as they are reared amid such conditions and are bred criminals when, given fair conditions, they would be good workers and citizens. For Mr. Staebler says: "One of the keenest pangs of poverty in the Yards arises from the realization that one is impotent to prey upon others and is at that very lowest state of society where he is at the mercy of everyone else and is powerless to return degradation in kind."

That sentence is a biting rebuke to all who believe in capital punishment or who believe that mere punishment of any kind, mere attention to the individual products of crime-breeding social conditions, can ever abolish crime. We need a social conscience to wipe out the social crimes of ignorance and exploitation.

MAN HAS made gods in the image of his ignorance; and as his knowledge has increased, these images of deity have become more remote and confused. The less he knows, the more devoutly he believes in his gods. Today, with the increasing range of knowledge, the image of god or the images of the gods (for scarcely two persons have the same image in mind) recede farther and farther away into the darkness.

UNEMPLOYMENT is not quite so bad as it has been, says the United States department of labor. Official statements must be regarded suspiciously; these statements have been falsely optimistic throughout the increasing severity of Hooverism. However, we may at least point out that unemployment can be not quite so bad as it has been and still be damnable bad.

WE SHOULD recognize frankly the contradictions in life and not try to explain them by involving ourselves in further contradictions. We need less speculation in meaningless words and a more patient search for knowledge, with meanwhile a rational understanding of the limitations of our knowledge.

Capitalist Press Refuses to Print News of Einstein's Views on Economic Crisis

BY UPTON SINCLAIR

Professor Albert Einstein is visiting Southern California, and everything he does is news; whether he discovers something new about the universe, or whether he visits a moving picture studio, or whether his wife cannot find any mags for household use. Thinking that the American people might be interested in the great scientist's opinions on economic questions, I wrote to ask him for a statement on the subject of militarism and the war danger; also of over-production and unemployment. He courteously replied; and thinking that I had a news item of importance, I telephoned the representatives of the Associated Press in Los Angeles. They requested me to wire the material to them, and I did so. A couple of hours later I called up, and learned that they had queried headquarters in New York about the matter, and had been instructed "not to touch it." I then wired the *New York Times*, which boasts of publishing "All the news that's fit to print"; but the *New York Times* did not want Einstein's views on militarism and the war danger, nor on over-production and unemployment. The *United Press* took the matter gladly, but cut from Einstein's first reply the crucial sentence referring to the Socialist parties.

The Questions and Einstein's Replies

Q. "What would you say is the duty of American workers in relation to the growing peril of armament and the war danger?"

A. "The United States of America is today the most powerful state on earth. On this account, the successful combating of militarism and the war danger depends very essentially upon the position taken by its citizens on these problems. This depends, in particular, upon the Socialist parties, whose interest in the active combating of the war-danger requires no especial proof."

Q. "Will you tell the American workers what you think about the spectacle of misery and starvation in a land which has such enormous powers of production as the United States? As you know, we are able to produce more food than we can market and we run our factories on only a small percentage of their capacity, and yet millions of people are in need of both food and other primary necessities."

A. "The present market crisis is, according to my opinion, positive proof that our economic organization, so far as one can speak of such a thing today, does not satisfy necessities. This assertion is not to be taken as an indictment, but as a motive to seek to regulate the economic life in such fashion that the existence of men shall no longer be threatened."

"ALBERT EINSTEIN."

EINSTEIN AND THE NEWS

The facts given elsewhere in this issue of *The Freeman* by Upton Sinclair, exposing the suppression by capitalistic press organizations of Prof. Einstein's opinions on economics, are a disgraceful and completely condemnatory comment on the bias of these great news-gathering agencies. It is a clear case of dishonesty in suppressing the opinions of the foremost scientist on two of the foremost subjects of modern thought.

There is no excuse in the circumstances. Einstein's opinions on other subjects have been published eagerly; especially have the newspapers been eager to give the widest publicity to any statement of Einstein's that might be twisted as favoring religion; although a little analysis reveals that the great scientist has said nothing definite in behalf of the Christian religion nor indeed in behalf of any specific creeds of theology; at most he has made the concession of calling his idealism, which is obviously non-theological and non-religious in the plain meaning of the term, by the name of religion. Einstein's personality, his opinions and his least actions have been accepted as good news. And unmistakably it is news that Einstein is a militant pacifist, that he looks to the Socialist parties for organized efforts for peace, and that he believes our economic system needs a fundamental revision and redirection for more social ends.

This is news, of course, but the *New York Times* decided that it was "not fit to print"; and that was the position taken by the Associated Press. These news organizations plainly show that they are not fair, unbiased, absolutely honest reporters of news and views in the modern world. They have branded themselves with the guilt of a dishonest censorship upon opinions. The *United Press* is less guilty, but it too did its bit of censoring. It was not willing to let its readers know that Einstein regards the Socialist parties as important organizations for peace and progress.

Yet, after all, what were these newspapers and press agencies requested to do? It was not suggested that they change their own editorial policies. It was not suggested that they approve Einstein's opinions; indeed they could have printed his opinions and at the same time have expressed their own disapproval, setting forth their own arguments on the other side of these questions. They were merely asked to quote Einstein; and they cannot deny that Einstein is eminently quotable.

We should be the last to argue, without more knowledge, of the man's study on this subject, that Einstein is an authority on economics or war. We do think, naturally, that he has the correct and the humane and the most brightly modern position; and it is beyond dispute, most interesting to know that this great scientist has such

views on our leading human problems, that he is not so wrapped up in abstract problems of time and space as to be indifferent to the sufferings and the hopes of humanity.

Yes, this is news—no doubt of it—but it is the kind which the capitalistic press is eager to suppress rather than publish. Here is another instance, and a most clear-cut and sensational instance, giving the lie to claims of these newspapers and press organizations that they are reliable, impartial news bureaus. And do not overlook the fact that there is an element of fear in this suppression—always this fear is revealed in such activities of censorship. The capitalistic press is afraid to let the people know what critics of capitalism are saying, and especially critics who have a great influence. It was afraid to print what Einstein thinks about capitalism and war.

Yet we believe that the suppressive tactics of the press will in the long run prove unavailing. These are ideas which are cumulatively in circulation among the people. There is nothing subtle nor isolated about Einstein's opinions, so that if his words are suppressed these ideas may thus be kept from the people. These ideas are too vital and familiar to be really suppressed. Instead the suppression of Einstein's opinions will rebound as a severe criticism against the capitalistic press; and his opinions will receive added emphasis. See that your fellow citizens are told about this suppression of Einstein's ideas; and ask them why the capitalistic press is afraid of such ideas. Capitalism is strong apparently; yet it is fundamentally weak; and so its critics are silenced as far as possible.

OF THE FATHERS

Appeals that we should be true to the "faith of the fathers" imply, of course, that there is a special, lasting virtue in such faith derived from its having been the possession of the fathers. The fact that the fathers of generations ago held such beliefs is given as a reason for continuing to regard these beliefs as true and important.

But, in good logic, the appeal cannot stop at this point. It is quite as valid to argue that we should believe in the astronomy of the fathers—let us say, the fathers who believed that the sun, moon and stars were merely minor lights, compared with the great earth, placed in the sky by Jehovah to light the paths of men. There is also the geography of the fathers who believed that the earth was flat: why not believe that also?

Again, we should—if the fathers conferred the virtue of enduring truth upon their beliefs—go back to the political theory of the fathers who submitted to the institution of royalty, adding, for good and logical measure, the correlative conviction of the fathers that

kings held their thrones by divine right.

Again logically, if we hold to the theory that the fathers were eternally right, we should extend this principle to an adoption of the fathers' ways of life as well as their habits of belief: that is, we should go back to the stage-coach and the candle and the semi-primitive equipment of an earlier age.

Following strictly the leading of this logic, it would also be incumbent upon us to cherish and try to perpetuate the diseases of the fathers, instead of using science to fight disease and constantly increase the health and longevity of the race.

These comparisons are just and are involved necessarily in the logic of the familiar appeal to the "faith of the fathers." The absurdity of these comparisons is derived, plainly enough, from the premises absurdity of the idea that a mode of faith is true because it was accepted by the fathers. The strong presumption is of course to the contrary: we should expect the fathers, having been guided by so much less knowledge of the world, to have been correspondingly wrong in their opinions. What is the use of progress, what is the use of modern knowledge, what is the use of a growing and strengthening culture if we are to hold ourselves down foolishly to the level of the "faith of the fathers"? Being intelligent, we naturally refuse to hold ourselves down to that level. We marvel, instead, that anyone can be so idiotic as to urge, in a serious tone, that appeal to the dear but dead old fathers.

BOB LYLE—THE RHYMING FISHERMAN

Of course E. H. J. and some of the rest of us old-timers around these offices and doubtless many of our readers remember Bob Lyle. Ages ago (it seems and then again it seems but yesterday) Bob Lyle was a frequent and familiar writer of letters to the editor, when we carried on those family discussions of everything under the sun and moon. Those discussions, we believe, served a very good purpose. They furnished a good deal of material to guide the future policies of this

great sham-smashing journal of free-minded opinion.

Now *The Freeman* has gone on to a different and, at this present writing, a more important work: that of crusading in a lively style against injustices, hypocrisies and falsehoods in the world about us. And it is pleasant to know that Bob Lyle, who dares to be a free-thinker and a civilized man in Mississippi, is with us still. Perhaps we ought to inform you, in case you have forgotten, that Bob runs a fishing camp at Bloxi, Miss. He writes amusing and sometimes satirical verse in his leisure hours. Thus our present reminder of him is in the shape of the following clever jingle, addressed to the Christian anti-evolutionists of Arkansas:

PROGRESSING BACKWARDS IN ARKANSAS
The Bible is the only book
So out of step with modern thought

That those who back to Moses look
Must pass a law to have it taught!
I wonder if, in Arkansas,
The Preacher keeps a Billy Goat
To take the Sins of Ma and Pa
To some wilderness remote?

Bob is referring to the ancient Hebrew ceremony, mentioned reverently in the Old Testament (see Leviticus xvi, 26), whereby the priest by a special rite transferred the sins of the followers of Jehovah into a goat, and sent the poor animal out into the wilderness. As Arkansas swears by the Bible, Bob is right enough in asking why it doesn't adopt that biblically sacred old custom.

Rhyme in again, Bob—you're a bright light in the state of Mississippi, which is on the whole so darkly lacking in culture and in a civilized sense of humor.

NOW AND THEN we see a newspaper rebuke to critics of the President's actions. But we have not been interested chiefly in condemning the President's actions. The greatest objection throughout the country has been leveled at the President's refusal to act for the national welfare in this crisis. Hoover has done nothing for the people and his talk has been a continual insult to the people.

"TOM MOONEY is the victim of one of the foulest conspiracies ever perpetrated in this country, and it was done because he was active in labor circles in California." *United States Senator Barton K. Wheeler.*

MANY so-called "great men" achieved their titles in popular esteem by conformity to petty standards.

What You Should Know About Venereal Diseases

A New and Startling Book—Just Issued—Giving a COMPLETE Survey of These Menacing Social Diseases

Even the intelligent layman, who is more than usually familiar with the subject of venereal diseases, will find a vast amount of new information in this book by T. Swann Harding, just published by the Haldeman-Julius Publications. Here is material about gonorrhea and syphilis—their medical, moral and social aspects—which has never before been made available to the general public. It is the most complete survey of the subject which has ever been written and published. Against a background of thorough enlightenment and social understanding, Mr. Harding recites explicitly, extensively, with constant reference to statistics and authoritative sources of information, the tragic story of the venereal diseases. It is an unrivaled account of death and disease caused by ignorance—ignorance which in its turn has been caused by an attitude of puritanism which has been socially most vicious in its effects.

This book is individually very useful and it is a smashing attack in the campaign to rid mankind of the major menace of venereal disease problems. The great importance of Mr. Harding's book is its clear, sane, convincing emphasis on the possibility of preventing this group of diseases. The book is divided into four lengthy chapters, each a thorough survey of one principal phase of this subject, which, as the author shows, has so many ramifications. Chapter I deals with *The Venereal Disease Problem—a General Survey*. Chapter II deals with *Venereal Disease in the Army and the Navy*. Chapter III deals with *Moral and Social Aspects of the Venereal Disease Problem*. Chapter IV deals with *Various Types of Venereal Diseases and Their Treatment*. Let us impress upon you that Mr. Harding, in this book, does not give mere theory and opinion. He presents the facts, completely and daringly. This is a large 64-page book, 5 1/2 by 8 1/2 inches in size, containing 30,000 words. It is carefully documented—Mr. Harding gives his source and authority for every fact. The book is offered at the extremely low price of 50 cents per single copy or 5 copies for \$2. You should order this book without delay. Use the following order blank.

Haldeman-Julius Publications, Girard, Kansas

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Haldeman-Julius Publications, Girard, Kansas
I am enclosing \$..... for copies of *What You Should Know About Venereal Diseases*. (50 cents a copy; 5 copies for \$2.)
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The Antichrist

A Popular Edition of Friedrich Nietzsche's Masterly Attack on Christianity

The Antichrist is the most fighting book ever written by a great scholar. Nietzsche put all his energy, all his thinking power, all his critical acumen, all his human idealism into the preparation of this magnificent attack upon Christianity. He took the most earnest pains to make this book strong, clear, incisive—to make it carry its message with mighty effectiveness. He said eloquently: "I have letters that will burn even upon the eyeballs of the blind."

Success crowned Nietzsche's great effort. He wrote a masterpiece of criticism and of cultural vision. In *The Antichrist* the reader will find the most vivid, impressive summing of what Christianity has meant to our western civilization. Nietzsche discusses the history of Christianity—the typical workings of the Christian mind—the antagonism of Christianity to the "noble values" for which Nietzsche fought with a mind and pen that have never been excelled for their strong, cutting clarity, slashing through the shams of Christianity with a swift sureness that is a rare delight.

An especially interesting portion of the book deals with the psychology of Jesus, with the atmosphere in which early Christianity came into being, and with the differences between the gospel of Jesus and the dogmas of Christianity.

Scholars have recognized the value of Nietzsche's superb anti-Christian masterpiece. But, curiously, this masterpiece has never been given the wide, popular circulation that it so richly deserves. At last, we offer a beautifully typed, inexpensive edition of *The Antichrist*—a book which every freethinker should own and which should make every man a freethinker. *The Antichrist*, printed on fine book paper, bound in beautiful stiff covers, set in large type, and with 80,000 words of text is priced at only 50 cents. Its size is 5 1/2 by 8 1/2.

Haldeman-Julius Publications, Girard, Kansas

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Enclosed is 50 cents, for which send me, postpaid, a copy of *The Antichrist*, by Friedrich Nietzsche.

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Why not remit 50 cents more and get an extra copy for a friend?

In the World of Books

Weekly Reviews and Other Literary Ruminations Isaac Goldberg

NEITHER JEW NOR LOVE

Four editions of Ben Hecht's new novel, A Jew in Love, were sold out before the date of publication. One reason was that Hecht had not been heard of for a considerable period—that is, fictionally speaking. Another was that it is impossible for the average reader to remain indifferent to a Hecht production. From the beginning he has been a sardonic, virtuosic word-juggler, and at times out of all this verbal combination an idea would strike fire. Hecht has majored; he is a master of innuendo; his chief danger, and he has not altogether avoided it in his latest opus, is that of drowning himself (and his readers) in his Niagara of words.

A Jew in Love (published by Covici, Friede at \$2.50) is said to have as its protagonist a certain well-known New York theatrical producer. This is a secondary matter, although everybody along the Rialto must by this time have solved the puzzle to his own satisfaction. In the figure of Jo Boshere, Hecht has drawn as mad a caricature as he did in Erik Dorn or Count Bruga. The phallic holiday would have been more successful if he had made more courageous use of the blue pencil. As it is, Jo Boshere does one certain thing too much because Mr. Hecht is so expert and so impatient an analyst.

Boshere is a passionate Narcissus. The women he meets are not at all so much his partners in the eternal dance of lust as they are mirrors in which he may contemplate the dance of his several selves. He loves to build new images of his precious personality, and if he pursues the ladies it is that he may—he is a millionaire publisher—forever be issuing new editions of himself.

There is nothing essentially Jewish about this type, and certainly this is not love. So that in a way the title is a misnomer. Reams upon reams of introspection—of analysis-within-analysis—of integral upon integral of soul-searching—all employed in the ironic unveiling of emptiness. Is there, in Ben Hecht's soul, a source of tenderness which he is concealing behind all this sneering commentary? He disrobes poor Boshere until the fellow is left shivering in the cold on a line-o-type.

This surely is a debunking of romantic love, and yet in the very plethora of Hecht's style, in the personalism of his attitude, there

is something just as romantic as that which it displaces.

EXCELLENT FOOLERY

The Treasurer's Report. And Other Aspects of Community Singing. By Robert Benchley. N. Y. Harper & Brothers. \$2.

The combination of Benchley's humor and the drawings by Gluyas Williams makes this book almost imperative for week-ending. And for the rest of the week too. Some of these hilarious chapters first appeared in The New Yorker, Chicago Tribune, The Bookman, and Liberty. They bear rereading. Like all good humor, Benchley's rests upon a firm foundation of fact. The paper after which the book is named has been immortalized already in audible celluloid, not to speak of the author's nine months' service in the first Music Box Revue where we heard him deliver it some years ago.

He roams—accompanied by forty-eight illustrations from the pen of Williams—through the Chinese drama, football rules, the King's English, sporting life in America, and what not else, always in quest of iridescent bubbles to prick. In these pages, in fact, there is the soft bombardment of punctured balloons.

A HANDY GUIDE

Prehistoric Man. An Introduction to Anthropology. By George S. Duncan, Ph.D. Boston. The Stratford Co. \$1.50.

Outside of a faint-hearted attempt to suggest a scientific basis—or at least a scientific symbolism—to the explanation of world origins in Genesis, this handbook by the professor of Egyptology and Assyriology in the American University, Washington, D. C., provides an easy entrance into its subject. Professor Duncan is generous with quotations from the various authorities; in fact, this is a feature of his manual. The little book may be read in an hour and a half, and well repays the time invested.

Some of his quotations, however, are not calculated to inspire one with excessive respect for our self-styled scientific leaders. For example, listen to the Columbia luminary, M. I. Pupin: "There is just one mystery in the electrical science and that is where, when and how the tiny electron and its fond partner, the proton, came into existence. The sensible man will say, God created them, and God only knows when and where." This, adds our author with unconvincing piety, is simply another way of saying: "In the beginning God, Genesis 1:1."

Mr. Pupin and I do not agree on what constitutes a sensible man. In the first place the use of such a word as partner, though obviously metaphorical, does not make for clear scientific vision. In the second, how does Mr. Pupin, who cannot answer his own question about electrons and protons,

Of Course They're Goofy! But Then Just Look at the High-Class Company They Have!

February 2, 1931.

Federal Trade Commission, Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen: I am interested in your complaint regarding the advertisement of a book entitled What Happens After Death, charging the circulators of this book "with making, circulating and publishing false and misleading statements concerning the commodities offered for sale and of thereby deceiving the public into buying their goods in preference to others that are offered for sale under truthful representations." I am informed by a special Washington dispatch in the New York Times that the advertisers of this book "are being called upon by the Federal Trade Commission to prove that they can back up their claims of revealing the truth about that much-debated subject."

What interests me especially is the sudden, unprecedented and isolated character of your complaint against this book. Why single out the authors and advertisers of this book and ignore the tremendously exaggerated claims which are made by the mass of religious literature? A principle should rule in all cases, not in a single case. It is scarcely fair or consistent to demand that the publishers of this one book shall be commanded to verify their statements about what happens after death and to permit countless volumes on religion, packed with evidently false and baseless (i. e., unprovable) statements about immortality and the soul and other religious dogmas, to circulate without question and to be advertised in quite as misleading a manner as this book which strangely you have, out of thousands and thousands, selected for your censure.

Do you not know that ninety percent (or it may be ninety-nine percent) of the books on religion, which are steadily advertised, are open to the very same objections which you allege against this book? The average volume about religion is characterized conspicuously by "false and misleading statements" and claims and promises and guarantees of truth, eternal life, "spiritual" salvation and the like—claims and promises which cannot possibly be made good by the authors and advertisers of such volumes. Certainly this book entitled What Happens After Death is not the only book which pretends, without the slightest basis in fact, to tell what happens after death. Its companions are legion. Such books are typical and strongly boosted items of religious literature, year after year.

For that matter, is not the Christian Bible a notorious and complete specimen of the kind of untruthful representation, false claims and misleading statements which you condemn in this one book? The Bible is advertised, openly and shamelessly, as the word of God: yet those who circulate this book—the Bible—under such false pretenses cannot possibly prove that a God exists nor that, even if a God did exist, the Bible is the word of God. The Bible is also flagrantly advertised as the key to eternal life, the promise and "proof" of immortality, and in short, the official Christian revelation of what happens after death.

It is plain that if you were to enforce gener-

ally, and honestly the rule which you announce with regard to this particular book, What Happens After Death, you would have to proceed against the advertising and circulating of the greater part of religious literature. Under this rule, only agnostic literature could be permitted, as being the only absolutely honest literature. Even atheistic literature, although every known fact supports atheism, would be forbidden on the ground that it states that nothing happens after death excepting the dissolution of the dead body and its return to the simpler elements of earth and that, therefore, in the view of your commission, statements are made that cannot be proved. Preachers and atheists alike would be forced to discontinue advertising their literature and lectures and the only honest man who could honestly and legally advertise his opinions would be Clarence Darrow.

Of course I do not believe that statements of opinion—even dogmatic and positive and most unreasonable statements of opinion which are given as statements of fact—should be thus subjected to the rigors of your commission. This would be to enforce a censorship upon ideas, which is offensive to the modern spirit of toleration and which opens the way dangerously to arbitrary definitions of what is true and what is false. In this instance the commission is correct enough, beyond a doubt, in saying that the advertisers of this book do not know what happens after death and are thus obviously circulating claims which are false. Yet observe how the prejudice of your commission operates, in that the mass of religious literature, equally guilty with this one book, escapes your censures and your demands for proof.

We cannot, you see, safely trust your commission to judge the true and the false. It is too plain that you play favorites in falsehood, condemning one purveyor of false claims and letting a thousand go un molested. I believe, too, that it is the only fair and practicable rule to let people be their own intellectual protectors and keep their own lookout for the devices of folly and falsehood—which seem to me so very, very obvious—and find their own way to wisdom. And in finding their way to wisdom, people have plenty of help if they will only choose intelligent literature instead of the frivolous, false literature of religion. Education is the real guardian and cultivator of truth, and not the unfair and unequal and the illogical and inconsistent censorship of your commission.

What happens after death? Nobody knows—so far you are right. But can we trust the judgment of knowledge and truth to a commission which tries to stop one little streamlet of lying and lets a vast and turbid stream of organized falsehood go dashing on to submerge the sanity of multitudes? Let us recognize that religion is falsehood and that only truth, only the free and progressive processes of education, can combat it with full honor and final effectiveness.

Sincerely, E. Haldean-Julius

SOCIETY AND CRIME

February 1, 1931.

Kansas State Senate, Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Sirs: If the Kansas legislature reintroduces the sad fallacy of capital punishment into its statutes, it will mean a distressing, reversion of that state to a distinctly less civilized attitude on the subject of crime. Kansas has a good example in its own humane procedure, which has been followed successfully for sixty-one years. During all these years Kansas has had a comparatively low murder rate. Its experience is among the strongest proofs that capital punishment is not needed for and is not efficacious in the suppression of crime. Should Kansas want a further example of the futility of capital punishment, it might glance at the state of Illinois and particularly Chicago; certainly the death sentence has not operated as a deterrent in this state and city, but special conditions, unaltered by the harshest law, have given Chicago an unenviable notoriety in professional crime, including murder.

This illustrates the truth about capital punishment and about crime, which is that social and economic conditions are of vastly more importance than mere statutes which take no proper account of such conditions. Commercialized gang activities are responsible for the murders that have made Chicago notorious; and the law of capital punishment has not the slightest effect in suppressing these activities. The scientific way of reducing and, so far as we may hope and strive, in abolishing crime is to improve social-economic conditions and to raise the level of education and general culture among the people. There is no such creature as a hereditary criminal. In years of very earnest and careful study of the problem of crime, I have never met with an hereditary criminal. I have only met men and women who have been unfortunately diverted from normal actions to criminal actions by the force of circumstances. Poverty, poor education, the insecurity and also the extremely commercialized temptations of our society, with its disorganized extremes of want and wealth, are the major contributing causes of crime. Weakness of character does not of itself cause crime. Many weak characters, who have had a decent environment and the opportunities of wholesome education and employment, are among our best citizens. Strong characters, on the other hand, are often shunted into criminal paths by the sinister forces of a hostile or degenerating environment.

The long history of criminal statutes and procedure (which not so long ago included many crimes which today we rightly consider as minor and deal with mildly) bears out the lesson that savagery in punishment is quite ineffective in lowering the crime rate. It has the positive bad effect of obscuring the humane, civilized methods of treating the crime problem. So long as men think that capital punishment will prevent crime or reduce crime, they will not turn their efforts sanely in the right direction of social amelioration, education and the scientific study and correction of criminals—at worst, the segregation of criminals who are perhaps incorrigible. I doubt if any criminal is

IN PRAISE OF FOLLY

Daring Wisdom and Dashing Wit in This Delightful Classic Now Published at Low Price—Only 50c—for the Masses

Following out our policy of publishing rare, cultural classics at a low price for popular reading, the Haldeman-Julius Publications have just issued, in an attractive, inexpensive form a masterpiece of wit and wisdom—In Praise of Folly, by Erasmus, greatest of sixteenth century humanists and freethinkers. Freethinkers will detect special flavors in this rare description and criticism of the follies of humanity; but every literate reader with average humor and intelligence should enjoy it heartily; it is indeed a book which the average reader will find irresistible because, while it is replete with the ripest wisdom of a man who knew this old world very well, the book is written easily in a light, amusing tone.

The book is supposed to be an address by Folly in her own behalf, setting forth the advantages which she, most useful among the gods and goddesses, confers upon the human race. There is a recital of the various traits in human nature which are owing to Folly. There is described a brilliant and amusing variety of types and classes among mankind who are devotees of Folly and whose lives can be interpreted only in the light of their allegiance to Folly. High and low are brought beneath gentle yet unfailingly effective strokes of Erasmus' lively criticism. It was a daring piece of literature in its day—when Catholic tyranny ruled Europe—and its daring quality is still remarkable even in our age of free criticism and thought. Princes and popes, priests and nobles, so-called good men and alleged bad men, are studied variously in this masterpiece which embraces all human nature in its survey.

It is now possible for every reader to own this masterpiece of Erasmus. It is issued for the first time in a low-priced edition by the Haldeman-Julius Publications. The price is only 50 cents (or 5 copies for \$2). The book is in size 6 1/2 by 8 1/2 inches and contains 80,000 words. Order your copy today.

Haldeman-Julius Publications, Girard, Kansas

ORDER BLANK FOR "IN PRAISE OF FOLLY" Haldeman-Julius Publications, Girard, Kansas I want a copy of Erasmus' In Praise of Folly, sent to me postpaid, for which I am enclosing 50 cents. (5 copies for \$2). Name Address City State

WOMEN MODELS—BUT NOT ALL MODEL WOMEN

The Courtisan Olympia. An Intimate Survey of Artists and Their Mistress-Models. By C. J. Bulliet. N. Y. Covici-Friede. \$5.

Mr. Bulliet will be remembered as the author of that jazzy, yet fertile prospectus of modern art entitled Apes and Madonnas. He is not one to be deceived by high-flown terminology that covers with conscious or unconscious hypocrisy the unwillingness of man to admit the basically sensual origin and appeal of the arts.

In this eminently readable study he has traced the history of the models who have posed for the masters of the brush; he has shown, without burrs on his tongue, the intimate relation between flesh-and-blood and canvas-and-brush. His pages are replete with interesting anecdotes and healthy comment.

The book is an eminently lookable as it is readable. The thirty-three illustrations alone, mostly of beautiful femininity in scanty attire or no attire at all, are worth the price of admission. It is almost incredible that these portraits should at one time have been, as many of them still are today, considered immoral. Mr. Bulliet's tastefully printed volume is thus at once a vindication and an education. As long as society can consider, or even pretend to consider, the spectacle of artistic human nudity immoral, just so long will it be a sick society.

It will be sad for some to learn that Raphael's famous St. John the Baptist was posed for by his mis-

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incorrigible if properly, wisely, scientifically treated.

Of course the most important thing is to begin at the beginning and see that human beings have always the advantage of good conditions and fair economic and educational influences from infancy. It is illogical for society by its neglect to make criminals and then punish them blindly. Laws should be for the protection of society and not for revenge. The tendency during the past hundred years and more has been toward the humanizing of laws, although legal and judicial recognition lingers deplorably far behind the understanding of modern science and the vision of modern humanitarianism. We all want to see killings diminish and cease; we all want to see less and less violence and more and more fairness and beauty and humanity in life; but this intensely desirable goal cannot be reached by the state following a creed of violence and engaging in deliberate, official killings.

I most profoundly urge, as a matter of social wisdom no less than humanitarian feeling, that the Kansas senate manifest a calm resolution to abide by the policy which Kansas has so sanely and successfully followed for sixty-one years. I urge the Kansas senate to defeat the bill for the restoration of capital punishment.

E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS.

THE RELIGIOUS "SENSE"

A popular argument nowadays is that man has an innate religious "sense" which tells him there is a God, that his soul is immortal, and so on. This idea is brought forth by some clergymen as if it were something quite new. It is, of course, an old piece of bunk and it has been discredited these many years. It means really that if a man believes a thing, the very act of his believing it is to be considered a proof that his belief is true. Ideals and assumptions must, however, be judged in the light of solid evidences. We cannot simply take a man's word for it that what he believes is true because his religious "sense" tells him so.

This funny notion of a religious "sense" is debunked with simple effectiveness by Joseph McCabe in The Psychology of Religion (Little Blue Book No. 446). He says: A clergyman—whether acting through the government in the school, or through parents in the home, or through clerical influence in the press, or directly in church-plants in you from your earliest and most impressive days a conviction that there is a God. In children, obviously, such a conviction is a matter of authority. Most people remain children in that respect and never reflect on the ground of their conviction. Some may reflect on it, ask the reasons for belief, and consider them sound, but this "religious sense" is generally invoked in cases where there is some doubt about the soundness of the reasons. What it amounts to, therefore, is that the clergyman has implanted in you, directly or indirectly, a conviction that God exists, and he is now asking you to recognize this conviction itself as a proof of the existence of God! There is no other possible meaning in his appeal to your "inner voice" or "the whispers of your heart" or anything of that sort.

It is plain that this argument of a religious "sense" is a sort of desperate last resort for the believer who has been beaten in every trial of argument. He thinks that he is finally unassailable when he brings out this argument of which, the fancies, he alone can be the judge; that, in a word, he must be believed as speaking the truth. But he forgets that if only he can know this (that if his religious "sense" is something that speaks to him and him alone) then it follows that he cannot prove it to anybody else. Thus as an argument his religious "sense" is worthless.

It was slightly inaccurate to call Hoover the Great Engineer. He should have been called the Great Wrecker.

A POLITICIAN is a man who will promise anything and who will do anything except what he has promised.

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A Lively Lesson in History

Opponents of free speech would be advised to keep silent concerning history, for they can only bring bad history to their undoing. Persecutions for opinion in the past constitute one set of facts which reminds us powerfully of the difference between medievalism and modernism; and a bigot who in this day and age advocates that sort of tyranny will not win favor with people who have the slightest appreciation of what modern rights are and of the ancient wrongs which they displaced at the cost of much struggle and suffering. It is also true that the opponents of free speech, not having had the benefit of wide reading which comes from a belief in and practice of habits of intellectual freedom, are apt to get their history all jumbled and inaccurate and even grotesquely opposite from the truth.

What could be more extremely erroneous than for an American to oppose free speech on the ground of patriotic devotion to the American Constitution and the origins of the American government and the attitude of the founders of the American government? The error is aggravated still more when free speech about religion is opposed on this false patriotic ground—for if there was any one thing more than another concerning which the American revolutionary patriots and founders of the government believed in free speech and themselves spoke most freely and critically, it was the subject of religion.

This gross perversion of history, and indeed this direct contradiction of the American Constitution, is given by a reader of the *Kansas City Star*, Dr. Robert H. MacNair, in a letter to that paper. This man read my letter in the *Star* on the issue of free speech, based upon the furore of flamboyant bigotry in Toronto, Canada, and he wrote to the *Star* as follows:

It would seem ample space was given to E. Haldeman-Julius with his companion marriage fad a few years ago, but now he wants to know if freedom of thought and

speech is not believed in. And in the latter connection it is apparent that Haldeman-Julius may in his own way of thinking have an entirely false conception relative to what honestly constitutes "freedom of thought and speech" in the United States of America.

Although the Constitution is being assailed in many places by certain classes of so-called American citizens, we still have ample evidence that the framers of that Constitution had strongly in mind the upbuilding of a law-abiding Christian nation. Hence neither obscene, indecent literature nor atheism can be at all in harmony with the original, considerably perpetuated ideal of decent, progressive civilization in America.

It is such men as Dr. MacNair who have been assailing the Constitution—and it is the liberals who have been defending the Constitution—on the important and fundamental right of free speech and opinion. The Constitution plainly guarantees as inviolable the right of free speech and it also specifically declares that there shall be no law passed in this country with respect to belief in nor exercise of nor comment on religion. On the clear point at issue, Dr. MacNair is one hundred percent wrong and evidently is not familiar with the Constitution of the United States.

The man is also woefully ignorant of American history. He does not know, for instance, that the Constitution of the United States is the most secular (i. e., irreligious) document of its kind ever promulgated: it does not mention a God; it sets forth only political purposes and entirely omits mention of any such Christian purpose as Dr. MacNair erroneously ascribes to it. Isn't it strange that the makers of the Constitution, if they desired to establish a Christian government, did not mention God nor Christianity in the Constitution?

It would enlighten Dr. MacNair to read a bit more about the real opinions of the "founding fathers"—Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Monroe, Franklin, Hamilton. Not a single one of those original patriots was a Christian. All were skeptics, freethinkers and rationalists. Jefferson's anti-

Christian opinions were so well known to his contemporaries that when he was elected as President the rumor was spread that he would steal all the Bibles from the homes.

Washington was a disbeliever in Christianity—he was a deist, holding the same beliefs as Thomas Paine, the "terrible infidel"—and throughout his life, even while President, he refused to declare himself a Christian although on one occasion a group of preachers put the direct question to him concerning his attitude on religion; Washington ignored the matter. Furthermore, in negotiating a treaty with the Mohammedan government of Tripoli Washington assured the Mohammedans that "the government of the United States is not in any sense founded upon the Christian religion."

These and other facts bearing out the non-Christian attitude of the patriots who founded the American government can be found in Joseph McCabe's *Seven Infidel U. S. Presidents* (Little Blue Book No. 1203) and in Harry Elmer Barnes' *Were the Founding Fathers Pious Angels and Plaster Saints?* (Little Blue Book No. 1586). And lest Dr. MacNair say that McCabe's or Barnes' word is worthless to him, we add that both McCabe and Barnes carefully review the evidence from contemporary sources and cite their unquestionable authorities. It is, for that matter, accepted as undebatable and as a matter of common knowledge among serious students of history that the American revolutionary patriots were deists; that is to say, they did not believe in the Christian conception of God nor in the divinity of Jesus nor in the inspiration of the Bible nor in any of the Christian dogmas. They believed, moreover, most decidedly in complete religious freedom.

Jefferson was a materialist and spoke very disrespectfully of Christian beliefs. John Adams was a severe critic of Christianity and for proof of that Dr. MacNair need only read carefully the correspondence between Adams and Jefferson. It is well known that Franklin was a deist and quite opposed to the Christian view of life. His autobiography and his letters show his real opinions. And if Dr. MacNair isn't satisfied with McCabe's *Seven Infidel U. S. Presidents* he can, for example, consult a very respectable book, *The Many-Sided Franklin*, by Paul Leicester Ford. Hamilton was a skeptic and when the question of mentioning God in the Constitution was being debated in the Constitutional convention, Hamilton said sarcastically that the United States government "did not need foreign aid."

Does Dr. MacNair know that the question of admitting the name of God to the Constitution was frankly debated in the Constitutional convention and the decision was in the negative? That is a fact. Ignorance of facts is a handicap common to these opponents of free speech.

James Madison was a deist (that is, decidedly not a Christian), as was also James Monroe. Madison and Monroe, like the other revolutionary patriots, were firm believers in complete religious freedom. They opposed any connection of church and state. A bill in Virginia to endow teachers of the Christian religion was defeated principally through the efforts of Madison. These men were not atheists; but no one has ever asserted that the United States government was founded on atheism. The important point is that these men were not Christians and that the United States government was not and is not founded on Christianity. It was founded on secularism and left the matter of religion to the individual opinions of the citizens, with free speech for all, whether they be Christians or Mohammedans or deists or agnostics or atheists.

In dragging in the question of obscenity, Dr. MacNair is imitating the ignorant *Toronto Globe*. Obscenity and atheism are unrelated questions. To say that atheism is obscene is simply to display a most intolerant violation of the sensible meaning of words. In decency, we may add, is more or less a matter of definition. The notions of what is decent or indecent change from age to age. I venture to say that even Dr. MacNair has more liberal notions of what is decent than were held by Christian puritans of fifty years ago—when Susan B. Anthony, for instance, strongly protested against the use of the word "rape" in *The Century* magazine. But if Dr. MacNair cares to read the literature of that period (among other things, the unexpurgated

copy of *Poor Richard's Almanac* by Benjamin Franklin) he will discover that the "founding fathers" fully appreciated Rabelaisian humor. Dr. MacNair really should read the early history of his country. He will find it interesting and instructive, although he may conclude that some of the writings of Jefferson, Adams and Franklin should be suppressed.

"SOMETHING"—NOTHING

Preachers who talk about a Something hiding out behind the universe—a Something which they call God or the Universal Mind or This or That—are merely employing capital letters for commonplace words to cover their ignorance. When a scientist here and there drops his scientific methods and talks in similar language, he is just as foolish in spite of his academic degrees and his reputation in a special field of research which has nothing to do with his theological speculations.

Joseph McCabe points out in *The Triumph of Materialism* (Little Blue Book No. 1229) that Professor Millikan is quite unscientific, but is obviously talking nonsense, when Millikan says "there must be a Something; he thinks, behind the universe because we have searched for a hundred years and not found anything." The italics are ours. McCabe adds more subtly that "the logical force of the deduction does not seem to me to be entirely convincing" and "that it seems to me that our century of search has been in the universe and not behind it."

The strength of the case for materialism is explained by McCabe in the following paragraph:

We have learned how to explain thirty things out of fifty, and the explanation is purely mechanical. The remaining twenty are more complicated and at present evade explanation. Surely the common-sense conclusion is that the mechanical explanation of the thirty is a triumph for Materialism, and it gives us some confidence that we shall yet explain the other twenty. Professor Thomson argues that our research into the activity of almost every tissue in the body has brought us to a point where our mechanical explanation fails. If Vitalists think that they light up these obscurities by saying that a mysterious Vital Principle causes the movements, they are singularly easy to satisfy. A mere word explains nothing. They are imitating the medieval wisecracks who explained the properties of water by saying that they were due to something called "aquosity" or thought that the life of a cabbage is all explained when you say that it has a "vegetative soul." The plain truth is that, as we get near the limits of the range of our microscopes, obscurity is bound to begin in every field of research. Already we are developing a super-microscope, an instrument using ultra-violet rays and quartz lenses, and the line of darkness will be pushed back. What power of magnification will anatomists be using in 3000 A. D., not to speak of 3,000,000 A. D.?

The sensible suggestion of McCabe is that the remaining elements of mystery in the universe shall be studied in the same way that science has found so effective in the past; namely, the method of patient, realistic research. Vitalistic or spiritualistic or rhetorical speculations explain, as he says, exactly nothing at all. God by any other name is only another name for ignorance. Ignorance is no more attractive, to the soundly thinking mind, when it parades itself as mysticism. Theologians (and scientists who play at theology) love that "line of darkness" for in the darkness they can place their imaginary God. But, it is the business of scientists to push back that "line of darkness." When further light comes, they (the scientists) will be the light-bringers.

KANSAS CITY, MO., is trying to obtain home rule from the Missouri state legislature and opponents of the measure allege that it would mean gang rule. No doubt; but the choice, more accurately stated, would seem to be whether Kansas City will be ruled by the Democratic city gang or the Republican state gang.

FIVE of the eleven members of the Wickersham Commission recommended that Prohibition should have a further trial. This means, of course, that bootleg liquor will have a further trial—and the commission unanimously admits that this liquor is plentiful and pretty good and getting better.

PROGRESS, in its broadest and its accurate sense, means the advancement of mankind in knowledge and in the organized, honest application of knowledge.

TO SAY that one has a true sense of humor is to say that one is able quickly to perceive the absurdities and inconsistencies of bunk.

Great Report on Prohibition

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Sources

The Wickersham Commission had access to all official records concerning Prohibition. It studied all available statistics, which indicated the supplies of liquor produced within the borders of the country or smuggled in from Canada, the West Indies and even from Europe. A vast amount of testimony was also given before the Commission, by wet and dry leaders, by publicists and professors and newspaper men and public officials and business men and doctors and lawyers and social workers and labor representatives. This testimony was checked and rechecked by the Commission and out of it all came a convincing picture of Prohibition as it is.

The Commission was also able to consider this testimony in the light of the very impressive body of indisputable facts which it had at its command. The value of the report will be judged when it is known that the Commission work-

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All but one of the eleven Commissioners signed this main report—but they differed in their individual opinions, so each Commissioner wrote a separate statement. These statements differ little as to the facts included in the main report; they are interesting rather for their differences in viewpoint as to the principle of Prohibition and as to the future policy which should be followed by the government.

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Facts

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About speakeasies and home brewing—

About violations of the Constitution and corruption of enforcement agents—

OFFICIAL FACTS about every phase of Prohibition, which every citizen should know.

ed eighteen months on its investigation of liquor conditions. No effort was spared to get at the truth. The various members of the Commission have their own personal desires and opinions, which they express in separate statements appended to the report; but in the main report the purpose is to show realistically what conditions have been and are under Prohibition.

Facts and opinions are separated in this report as much as is humanly possible. The Commission was dealing with a dangerous subject. There is a sharp cleavage of views on Prohibition, and it is well known that this has taken front place as a political issue in the United States. This very diversity of opinion, as reflected in the separate statements of the Commissioners and as shown in their review of public sentiment throughout the country, is one of the most significant facts regarding Prohibition.

But it can be said confidently

that the Commission's report is honest, careful and on the whole remarkably successful in drawing an authentic and complete picture of Prohibition during the first decade of its trial in this country. H. L. Mencken said that this report is "almost brilliant." Fully illustrated with definite facts and figures, the report is never dull nor slow but reads quickly and interestingly. It reminds us of the old saying that truth is stranger—and a good deal more absorbing—than fiction.

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The Wickersham Commission's report on Prohibition may well be called the story of America under the reign of Volstead—or Volsteadism. It is a story illuminated and impressively supported by facts and figures, but it is also a tremendous drama of this unprecedented experiment of trying to compel a sweeping transformation in the habits of millions of people. The reader will be gripped by the elements of titanic struggle—really a three-angled struggle, with the law on one side and on the other side the bootleggers and the law-defying citizens who have not submitted to the government's dictate as to their drinking tastes.

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There is, again, a significant study of the local and sectional differences in the attitude toward the Eighteenth Amendment. The Commission's report explains quite clearly the various attitudes that have prevailed in different states, out of which have grown the most serious problems of enforcement. There is also striking information about the extent of enforcement in states such as Kansas and Virginia which have sincerely and fully cooperated (as far as politics and human nature would allow) in the observance of the national law.

What is the extent of enforcement under the best conditions, under average conditions and under the worst conditions? This is told in the Commission's report and no citizen can discuss Prohibition with full effectiveness without a knowledge of these facts. Even if all smuggling from abroad were prevented, can the illicit liquor industry within the country supply the demand? What are the advantages on the side of violation of the law and what are the difficulties in the way of enforcement of the law? Has sentiment about Prohibition changed within the past ten years? What parts respectively do the states and the federal government have in the problem of enforcement? What is the prospect of future enforcement and what are the ideal, or what are the minimum, conditions under which (hypothetically) a satisfactory standard of enforcement might be attained?

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