QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By E. Haldeman-Julius
Questions and Answers

I have read a number of times that the Negro slaves did nothing to free themselves, leaving the immense tasks of fighting for emancipation to the whites. Please comment.

I too have seen this point stressed again and again, but such alleged historians demonstrate prejudice and a talent for untruth, which rules them out as scientific historians. The facts show that the Negroes, slaves and freemen, rendered immense services to the Union cause. The one overwhelming fact that discredits such biased historians is the official record which shows that in the neighborhood of 200,000 Negroes joined the Union army and fought so bravely that Southern observers, including the Confederate, General P. R. Cleburne, suggested to the rebels that they enlist Negroes in the South's forces because they had proven their capacity as fighters. Of the 200,000 Negroes just mentioned, a little more than half came from slave territory, which gives the lie to the baseless charge that the Negro slaves were contented with their enforced servitude and would have remained in willing slavery if white "nieddiers" hadn't interfered. There are several other facts which prove the Negro's readiness to meet the Southern slave forces with violence. The first that comes to mind is the law, passed early in the Civil War by the Confederates, which decreed that one white overseer should be kept at home for each 20 slaves. When the South needed manpower it still permitted a great many able-bodied men to remain behind to keep the Negroes in line, which would indicate that the slaves were a constant menace to the slaveholders. Later, despite the South's still greater need of manpower, the law was changed—in 1864—to one white overseer for each 15 slaves. In addition many soldiers were kept at home to patrol the slave population. In the face of the South's vigilance, slaves escaped in great numbers to join the Northern army.

In 1860, Missouri had 114,931 slaves, but in 1863 only 74,000 slaves remained in the State, which shows immense leakage. The situation became so serious that in 1863 it was suggested that the South free the slaves in order to use the Negroes as rebel soldiers, since they had shown such willingness to fight and die for the Union. The suggestion at first was met with strong objections, but in time sentiment veered towards that solution, until, in March, 1865, such a law was passed, but nothing could be gained from it because the war ended a few weeks later.

A typical Fundamentalist, in a sparsely attended lecture, painted Evolution as a depressing, pessimistic, unidealistc philosophy of life, with its roots in the ugliest, most, swinish swamps of the jungle. Please comment.

One hesitates about putting aside important subjects to argue with a Fundamentalist who still rejects the amply established fact of Evolution. But, since the issue is put on my desk, I prefer to face it instead of throwing it into the wastebasket, where it properly belongs. To say that Evolution is unidealistic and pessimistic is to betray superficiality. To me, Evolution is one of the most optimistic facts in life—a beautiful, inspirational, uplifting philosophy. I say this because the Evolutionist holds—and the facts support him—that life developed from the simple to the complex because of the pressure of material circumstances, or, to use another word that expresses the same thought, environment. If the organism's environment is favorable, life evolves upward. If the material circumstances that surround life are of the right kind, life undergoes what we call progress. Since man, to a great degree, has it within his powers to control his environment, through the application of the benefits of science, it follows that intelligent beings have a substantial reason for being optimistic about the future of the race. Looked at that
way—and I believe it isn’t debatable—Evolution isn’t depressing or pessimistic, but hope-inspiring. Biologists know that living organisms react to environment in three ways. First, they can go onward and upward. That’s called Evolution. Or, secondly, they can be so adjusted to their environment—like alligators—that they remain at the same stage of physical development which they achieved perhaps millions of years ago. Then, thirdly, environmental conditions can so react on the living organisms that they are compelled to degenerate or decline. That’s known as devolution. We humans can take our choice of the three roads. We can be optimistic, intelligent adjuncts to the uplifting, progressive forces of Evolution. We can stay put in one place and condition from now on. Or, we can let our environment become so corrupt that we decline physically, intellectually, and culturally. If we remain steadfast in our decision to abide by the optimistic possibilities of Evolution our future is bright indeed. Our Fundamentalists don’t like this simple, reasonable philosophy because it leaves out what they feel impelled to support—the God-idea, or, if you prefer, the powers of a force outside man and nature which supposedly act on us for good or ill. The old religious hold to this notion, even though the facts of science expose it to be nothing but an empty superstition.

I have read many of the books on sexology written by the late Dr. William J. Robinson. I have found him to be an advanced, mind-liberating thinker on a score of subjects of great social interest. Was he a Freethinker in addition to being a great reformer and teacher?

Dr. Robinson, who frequently wrote informative letters to The Freeman, was a strong Freethinker, as the following quotation shows:

“Because religion stands in the way of human progress, because it does not permit men to think boldly and logically, because it gives a reactionary priesthood not only spiritual but also material power over the people, because it is necessary that man shall learn to stand on his own feet not expecting salvation from the outside, because, finally, there is no hope of otherwise establishing universal friend-

ship and brotherhood, it is necessary to eliminate dogmatic religion.”

There’s an old piece that’s been going the rounds for years that I would like to see you reprint. It’s the bill of an artist who was hired to retouch some paintings in a church.

The story has it that the artist demanded $100 for his work, but, the trustees insisting on an itemized statement, he presented the following:

Correcting the Ten Commandments.................. $ 7.10
Embellishing Pontius Pilate and putting a new ribbon on his bonnet.................. 3.00
Putting new tail on rooster of St. Peter.................. 4.18
Regilding left wing of guardian angel.................. 2.02
Washing the servant of the high priest and putting carmine on his cheek.................. 3.10
Renewing heaven........................................ 1.00
Adjusting stars.......................................... 2.06
Cleaning moon.......................................... .10
Restoring lost souls.................................... 25.00
Adjusting Hedor’s wig.................................... 1.43
Taking Stops off the son of Tobias.................. 1.00
Cleaning Baalam’s ass and putting new shoes on him...... 5.06
Putting earrings on Sarah................................ 30.00
Putting new stone in David’s sling........................ 1.10
Enlarging the head of Goliath.............................. 1.03
Extending Saul’s legs..................................... 2.05
Decorating Noah’s Ark................................... 6.50
Mending shirt of Prodigal Son............................. 6.35
Brightening the flames of hell............................ .60
Putting new tail on the Devil............................. 1.50
Putting a silver dollar over the poor box................ .80
Doing several odd jobs for the damned.................... 1.00

Total.......................................................... $100.00

Is an Indian eligible to become President of the U.S.?

Congress passed a law, in June, 1924, making Indians citizens, which means that all Indians born since the date that law was passed are natural-born citizens and therefore eligible to occupy the White House.

Which book most logically and scientifically refutes Astrology?

The best brief study I know of is Leo Markun’s “Facts to Know About Astrology,” Little Blue Book No. 707.

A religious enthusiast—the kind who goes around trying to convert people to his peculiar form of orthodoxy—advances the argument that Freethought
has only a destructive influence on men's character, that it doesn't encourage constructiveness. Please comment.

Thomas A. Edison was a Free-thinker, and who would deny his constructive contributions to civilization? The same goes for Charles P. Steinmetz, the electrical wizard.


And, for good measure, John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham, Buckle, Edward Gibbon, Kropotkin, Max Nordau, August Comte, Ernest Renan, Reclus, Nansen, Stephen Girard, Dr. William J. Robinson, Anatole France, Emile Zola, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, and many others. They were all Freethinkers. Were they all socially destructive and useless?

Is it true that the bald eagle is powerful enough to lift and carry away wild cats, goats and even children?

The lifting powers of the bald eagle have been greatly exaggerated. Authorities on this bird agree that they don't commit the acts charged against them. Even our leaders in the salmon industry insist that the great decline in their catch is to be blamed on the depredations of the bald eagle, who is supposed to destroy vast numbers of salmon. Careful inquiries show that the eagle doesn't bother the living salmon at all, preferring to consume decomposed fish carcasses that float ashore. The American Nature Association, Washington, D.C., gives out a statement written by N. R. Casillo who determined the lifting power of an eagle, as follows:

"I anchored a dead 4-pound pickerel to a 10-pound rock in 15 feet of water, the fish, of course, floating on the surface at the end of a stout line. One of the eagles grasped the fish and tried to make off with it. During the violent wing beating it succeeded in dragging the brick about 20 feet. Then it dropped the obstinate fish and winged off in disgust."

Do you really believe it's possible to teach the average person the mighty truths of science?

There are branches of science which can be grasped only by highly trained specialists because of the vast array of technical data which must be digested before the subject can be appreciated fully, but this doesn't alter the fact that it's within reason to expect the average person, through popularized scientific writing, to grasp the basic facts of biology, physics, zoology, botany, and the like. Zoology, for example, has a vast literature that requires a lifetime to absorb properly, but that shouldn't deter the layman from grasping this science's basic concepts, a feat that can be performed reasonably well with the aid of popularizers. We are all condemned to a certain measure of ignorance, but this is no excuse for our becoming, in Mark Twain's words, "miraculously ignorant." Dr. Samuel Johnson, it will be recalled, defined the word "pastern," in his famous dictionary, as "the knee of the horse," which brought an inquiry from a better-informed lady reader. Dr. Johnson replied: "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance." As Will Rogers aptly put it, "everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects." True, but the real malady is to be ignorant of one's ignorance. I'm reminded of a woman's appalling ignorance of zoology, a ludicrous condition which could have been remedied easily. The tale goes this way:

During an overnight stop in a small city an elephant escaped from a circus and was not missed until morning. Its keepers, of course, immediately started a search but were not at once successful in locating it. Before the news had gotten even to police headquarters an officer at that place who answered the telephone heard, at the other end of the wire, the voice of a very agitated housewife speaking from an address on the outskirts of the town:

"Please, send some men out here, quick; there's a terrible great animal in my garden!"

"What kind of an animal, madam?" asked the officer, somewhat mystified.

"Oh, sir, I really don't know, but it's a huge beast with fat legs and it's pulling up my cabbage with its long, swaying tail!"
Completely bewildered with such a description and entertaining a vision of a dinosaur or something, the man could only grope for more information, so he asked, “And what is this animal doing with the cabbages?”

“My good man,” came back the anguish voice, “if I were to tell you that, I know that you would never believe me!”

Is it a fact that only a small percentage of patients afflicted with mental disease recover?

Dr. Carney Landis, of the Columbia University school of medicine, supplies data that shows the plight of the mentally afflicted is by no means discouraging. According to this authority, 40 percent of the patients who were sent to state mental hospitals are discharged annually as cured or at least sufficiently recovered so they can be returned to their homes. The percentage is even higher among young patients or those suffering from certain diseases of the mind. More women than men recover, probably, says Dr. Landis, “because they are more susceptible to the particular mental ills that are more responsive to treatment.” He adds:

“Manic depressive insanity and involutional melancholia, mental ills to which women are more often subject, have a record respectively of 65 and 45 patients discharged from the hospital for each 100 admitted. Dementia praecox, the disease to which men are more susceptible, has a rate of 40 percent discharged. The rate is lower for hardening of the arteries in the brain, 15 percent, and for general paresis, 20 percent. Better prospects face those suffering from psychopathic personality, alcoholic insanity and psychoneurosis, of whom 65 percent to 75 percent recover or are greatly improved.”

What do you think of these promiscuous nude swimming parties that flourish everywhere on Summer evenings on secluded lake shores?

I suggest that you take me around to look over a few such affairs. Then I'll be able to discuss the matter from first-hand observation. From where I sit, the swimming parties you describe look very enticing. I'm almost tempted, though I confess I can't swim, which brings up something of a problem. Maybe I could just stand around and meet the crowd socially.

Can you name a sane person over 10 years old who is always entirely unprejudiced?

I can say in all sincerity that I have known quite a few individuals who were entirely unprejudiced in everything on which I was able to get any knowledge. They had rational, sane, reasonable, intelligent, sound reasons for their opinions. They didn't hate anyone because of race or nationality. They respected truth. They avoided preconceived judgments or opinions. They had no unreasonable prejudice against, or predilection for, any person, group, system of thought, ideas, modes of behavior, and the like. They were opposed to many things and persons, but such principles were based on intelligence and logic, not on bias and prejudice. Thus, they rejected all forms of racial antagonisms, including anti-Semitism, but this was the expression of their humanitarianism and Rationalism rather than an outburst of blind, unreasoning prejudice. They held no opinions without due investigation. If they didn't know, they said so. If they knew, they gave their reasons. I don't mean to infer the world is filled with such people, but they're here, and I hope to see their tribe increase, for the world needs more of them.

Can you tell me whether a car driver's time reaction is faster to sight than it is to sound?

Dr. Frank R. Elliot and Prof. C. M. Louttit, of the psychology department of the University of Indiana, made 700 tests and reported that the ear of a motor car driver is quicker than his eye in responding to a safety warning. They found that "a car horn, or a policeman's whistle, puts the driver's foot on the brake faster than the sight of a red light."

Each of the 700 drivers who were tested sat at the wheel with his foot on the accelerator, which was held half way down. The purpose of the tests was to learn the time required "to lift his foot to the brake and press the pedal all the way down." The signal to press the brake was a red light or a motor car horn. The tests were made with the cars standing still. "All groups, whether men or women," says the report, "responded more quickly to the horn than to the light."
The eye's average advantage over
the ear was one-hundredth of a sec-
tond. The fastest time for braking
against the red light was three-tenths
of a second; the faster braking
against the horn was slightly more
than two-fifths of a second.

"Men," says the report, "were a
little faster than women in respond-
ing to either light or horn. Persons
with the highest mental ratings were
quicker than any other class."

It was found that the young man
in the early twenties and with high
mental rating was the fastest in brak-
ing. The average driver can be ex-
pected to apply his brakes half a
second after receiving a warning, but
professional drivers could beat this
time.

* * *

How do the extras and bit players of
the motion pictures live between pic-
tures?

Hollywood extras, when they aren't
working, are much like the rest of us
—restless, listening for the ring of
the phone, and asking every person
in the know just what the prospects
are. Hollywood's extra players have
a hard time, because the field is so
crowded. I understand the average
income of recognized extras is less
than $20 per week.

* * *

I agree with you that your tale of the
butler and his testimonials brings out
the deep truth that education can be of
real help in a practical sense. You
should keep emphasizing this aspect
of an acute phase of mass education.

I'm always more than anxious to
help spread precise knowledge. As a
publisher I've long recognized this
great, fundamental need. There's
truth in the old saying that knowl-
dge is power. Here I'm reminded of
the yarn that tells of a customer who,
while awaiting his turn in a barber
shop, was watching a girl with a
lolly-pop who was getting her hair
cut. "Little girl," said the customer,
"do you know that you're getting hair
on your lolly-pop?" To which the
maid answered: "Sure, and ain't
that funny? Just to think; I'm only
thirteen!"

* * *

A Boston minister made this astonish-
ing statement in a sermon: "The duty
of the church is to interpret God to
the people." Please comment.

If this is true—and who would

dream of questioning anything that
comes from the sacred oral cavity
of a preacher?—we must infer that
God is a terribly bad author, because
the book which he went to great pains
to inspire, in order that it might be
his revelation to humanity, has brought
forth 10,000 different interpretations.
There are about 600 different Chris-
tian sects gently warring over God's
holy words, each interpreting his
spiritual messages differently and
contradictorily. The church, probably
misled by a God who's a careless writ-
er, has worked desperately to put
some sort of meaning into the Holy
Words, but has only succeeded in
making confusion worse confounded,
for each new seem brings forth
a new sect. The church's leaders
—especially Cardinal Magnificat
Shwantz, Archbishop Theodorus To-
kas, and Bishop Rizzo Pott—have a
mean job on their hands interpreting
a God who hasn't brains enough to
write down his ideas in a way that
ordinary people can understand what
he's driving at.

* * *

Can you quote one of the Rev. Jonathan
Edwards' realistic descriptions of what
God does to bad people?

One of the tenderest, most poeti-
cal, romantic and idealistic pictures
of God in action will be found in
Jonathan Edwards' sermon, "Sinners
in the Hands of an Angry God," from
which I quote a few of the milder
sentences:

"God holds sinners in his hands
over the month of hell as so many
snakes; and he is dreadfully pro-
voked, and he not only hates them,
but holds them in the utmost con-
tent, and he will trample them
beneath his feet with inexpressible
fierceness. he will crush their blood
out, and will make it fly so that it
will sprinkle his garments and stain
all his raiments."

That, I insist, is religious exhorta-
tion what am! You have to go down
to some hill-billy church to hear its
equal today, unless you can stand it
to spend an hour listening to a Cath-
olic priest on the torments of hell.
What a tragic thing it is that such
ideas are gradually going out of style,
along with the hats of Lady
Hosses Astor! Oh, for the good old
days when everybody believed such
things and shivered in their boots
everytime the preacher outlined the
proves of what a loving God holds in store for them should they fail to come across with the kale that the Church insists it must have.

If you think I exhausted Jonathan Edwards' beautiful visions of hell, let me pass on another paragraph from this great divine's printed works:

"The world will be converted into a great lake or liquid globe of fire, a vast ocean of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed, which will always be in tempest, in which they shall be tossed to and fro, having no rest day or night, vast waves or billows of fire continually rolling over their heads, of which they shall forever be full and fill all, quick sense within and without; their heads, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins, and their vitals shall forever be full of a flowing, melting fire, fierce enough to melt the very rocks and elements; and, also, they shall eternally be full of the most quick and lively sense to feel the torments: not for one minute, nor for a hundred ages, nor for ten thousands of millions of ages, one after another, but forever, without any end at all, and never, never be delivered."

Let that be a warning to you!

Are Christian Scientists always consistent about refusing to call in a medical doctor when need arises?

They're supposed to steer clear of such heresy, but I've noticed a tendency among the more intelligent members of that peculiar sect to avail themselves of doctors and dentists, though they do it sneakily. Protonius, who writes a readable column in The Literary Guide, London, England, tells of a letter he saw which gave a sidelight "on the quaint mentality of the Christian Scientist." The amusing incident is described as follows:

I think the following might amuse and interest you. It is vouched for as a personal experience by my father's doctor. He states that a day or two ago he was called in to see a child whose complaint he diagnosed as measles.

After giving instructions for treatment he concluded by saying that he would send along some medicine. "Oh, don't do that," said the mother; "we should not allow the child to take it. You see, we are Christian Scientists, and do not believe in medicine; we only believe in prayer." "But why did you call me in?" said the doctor. "Oh, merely to diagnose the complaint; we want to know what to tell God the child is suffering from."

Incredible as it may sound, the doctor guarantees the truth of the incident.

Please give the origin of the word "ostracize."

George W. Stimpson, in his book, "Uncommon Knowledge," writes:

"Ostracize, which now generally means to exclude from social privileges by common consent, is derived from Greek ostrakon, the name applied by the ancient Greeks to the potsherds, fragments of pottery, tiles of earthenware or tablets of burnt clay used in voting to banish citizens regarded as dangerous to the state or otherwise politically objectionable. Ostracism as an institution peculiar to Athens and several other Greek cities was introduced about the 6th Century B.C. It was a political device whereby those in authority might induce the populace to remove temporarily from the city persons whose influence was dreaded. A citizen could not be banished or ostracized for more than 10 years (later reduced to five), and at the end of that period he was permitted to return and enjoy his estates and civil privileges. During his exile his property was held in trust. Men were ostracized for what they might do rather than for what they had done. In Athens no citizen could be ostracized unless at least 6,000 duly qualified citizens took part in the proceedings, and an ostracized person could be recalled in the same manner. A general assembly of the citizens was held and the ballots were deposited in a place appointed for the purpose. Those favoring ostracism wrote the objectionable person's name on the potsherds. All ballots before casting it; those opposed cast the ballot without any inscription. If the vote was in the affirmative the ostracized citizen was given 10 days to settle his private affairs."

Can you give me the words that were written on a harlot's tombstone in Tombstone, Ariz.?

It happened in the days when Tombstone was rougher, livelier and more sinful than it is today. Gone are the days of fancy girls and gun fights, but the memory lingers on,
especially of Charlotte, the town’s ablest practitioner in the world’s oldest profession. There came a time when pestilence struck the community. Charlotte put aside her professional duties to serve humanity by tending the sick and caring for the dead. Worn to shreds, Charlotte herself succumbed. Tombstone decided she deserved a bang-up funeral, so no expense was spared. Flowers were piled on her casket. A band played at the head of the biggest crowd ever to head towards Tombstone’s cemetery. At the grave it was found that loving friends had already taken care of the epitaph on the saint’s tombstone. It read:

Here lies the remains of good old Charlotte. She was born a virgin, but died a harlot. For sixteen years she retained her virginity, which was a damn long time for this vicinity.

**✦✦✦**

What’s your opinion of swellheadedness?
Swellheadedness proves there’s little or nothing in the head. The more there’s in one’s head the less it’s inclined to swell. That’s one of the curiosities of human nature.

**✦✦✦**

Is a sense of humor dependent on intelligence?
Experiments reported to the National Council of Teachers of English, by Miss Winifred H. Nash, showed “high intelligence and a lively sense of humor generally go together.” Miss Nash, who is a teacher in Boston’s Roxbury Memorial high school, continued:

“Educating the student’s sense of humor is a social responsibility often ignored in the English curriculum. Much time is spent in teaching punctuation, grammar and sentence structure, but little time in helping students appreciate humor. Yet the cultivation of a student’s sense of humor contributes far more to his social education than do rules for the use of the comma.”

A feeling for humor is one of the highest attributes of intelligence. An education that misses this objective soon degenerates into pedantry. A pedant is always one who has been educated beyond his intelligence.

**✦✦✦**

Do you believe in revenge?
Just because one is bitten by a dog is no reason for biting the dog. Try to remedy your troubles, if they can be cured, but don’t do it in the spirit of revenge. If a dog bites you, run into the house and telephone the police.

**✦✦✦**

Is contentment a virtue?
I’ve never heard a man in rags preach contentment to other men in rags. Usually the one who does such preaching is fat, with a double-chin at the back of his neck, a good suit on his back, and an 18-ounce porter-house in his belly. A well-fed preacher of contentment aims only to fool others. If his clothes became frayed and his guts empty he’d have to be a fool to keep echoing the same empty philosophy, and such men, no matter how you look at them, never are fools. Contentment with poverty in a world of plenty is the most foolish vice man can be addicted to.

**✦✦✦**

I am a philologist, and before I can get my Ph.D. I must write an original book. Can you suggest something in my line? I want a personal reply.

If I were a Philologist I’d settle down to the immense job of writing a book under the following title: “The History and Meaning of Profanity.”

**✦✦✦**

Which of Mark Twain’s books do you admire most?
I consider his “The Mysterious Stranger” a masterpiece. It comes first with me. There’s very little by Mark Twain that I don’t care for. I consider him one of the authentic geniuses of literature.

**✦✦✦**

Please tell me some sort of a humorous anecdote that illustrates the virtue of caution. I need such a story to fit into a speech I’m to make at the next meeting of the Epworth League.

Two traveling men were seated together in a smoking car. One felt lonely and wanted to talk, so he turned to the other salesman and asked the time. The man took out his watch, looked at it, and returned it to his pocket, without telling what he saw.

“Pardon me, mister,” said the offended one, “would you mind letting me know why you refused to tell me the time?”

“Listen, stranger,” was the reply, “I didn’t answer you because I didn’t want to get into a conversation with you. If we had started to talk you would have dug into your bag and
brought out your pint of whisky, and after killing yours I would have gone into my bag and brought out my pint of whisky. And when that was killed we'd be pulling into St. Louis feeling plenty fine. You'd invite me to your hotel, but I would let you know I have a beautiful home, with a fine wife and a pretty 17-year-old daughter. I'd insist on taking you home with me, and later, when it came time to go to bed, I'd want to play the good host even though we have only two bedrooms. Naturally, I'd take one with my wife and you'd have to go into the room with my daughter. After that, if nature took its usual course, my daughter would be in the family way, so I'd have to hunt up my old shotgun to make you marry my daughter, and I don't want to do that because I don't want any son of a baboon in my family that ain't got a watch."

Let me say, after reading your works for 25 years, that I admire the consistency with which you avoid the misplaced negative.

The misplaced negative is terrible, from the viewpoint of readers who seek clarity and simplicity. Let me give a few examples, all of them confusing. Take the opinion handed down by the Supreme Court of one of the States: "The difficulty is . . . that all of the evidence was not documentary." How much better it would have been had it said that not all of the evidence was documentary. The same court, in another opinion, said: "Every amendment of a pleading which substantially changes a cause of action is not erroneous." Why didn't the writer say: "Not every amendment . . . is erroneous"? Only a poor, careless, sloppy writer would say "All of those present were not entitled to vote" when he has in mind "Not all of those present were entitled to vote."

How many meals does the CCC serve, and what do they cost?

The Civilian Conservation Corps provided 139,782,878 meals during the first six months of 1939, at a cost of $18,418,729.37, or at an average of 13.18 cents per meal. I visited a CCC camp North of Girard several times while several hundred young men were working on a huge artificial lake and had opportunities to check up on the quality and quantity of food served. I was amazed at its high quality, variety and abundance. How much meals could be served for less than 14c per man is hard for me to grasp, for the boys were served pure butter, rich milk, plenty of green vegetables, good cuts of meat, ice cream, and other desirable items of food.

What's your birth-stone?
Grind-stone.

I am considering a proposition made by a commercial aircraft training school, which offers me a course for $450. As you know, thousands of jobs will soon be offered young men like myself in the rapidly expanding airplane industry. Kindly comment.

As readers of my volumes of questions and answers know, I have, during the past eight years, written scores of articles on private vocational schools. In my numerous discussions I've taken up establishments by name. It happens that most of them were devoted to courses of instruction in air conditioning, motor car servicing, Diesel engineering, television, and the like. Only a few of my pieces touched on the aircraft schools because few inquiries were made regarding them. But the change in the national and international situations has brought an immense boom to the aircraft industry, and there's no doubting the fact that tens of thousands of jobs will be open for skilled young men during the next year or two. In my earlier comments I advised against these private schools, urging young men to try to get jobs with the manufacturers themselves, who run training departments. But there's no use in closing one's eyes to the fact that the situation in this field has changed sufficiently to permit me to suggest that students can enter these private commercial aircraft schools (even at their high tuition rates) under certain restricted conditions. The U.S. Civil Aeronautics Authority has investigated scores of the schools which offer vocational courses (in aircraft engines and mechanics) and has approved some of them, provided the students devote at least eight months to such training. Such private schools
are permitted to advertise that they have CAA approval. Now, if any young man is considering such work I advise him to make sure that he is enrolling in an institution that can prove it has the CAA’s formal approval of its facilities and methods of training. Schools approved by the CAA employ certified instructors and meet various requirements as to facilities, curriculum, tools, equipment, and the like. Furthermore, such establishments offer “a broad range of subjects, such as aircraft theory, mathematics and drafting, mechanics, repair and maintenance, instruments, metal work, assembling, radio equipment, etc.” Also, a school, to win CAA approval, must show that “eight out of ten students graduated from approved courses are able to pass the CAA examination for the airplane mechanic’s certificate.” In addition, airplanes must be examined or overhauled by a certificated mechanic before the CAA will make the annual inspection which is required of all airplanes. Under such conditions, it stands to reason that a student stands a chance of getting somewhere. However, let me warn prospective students that it isn’t enough to make sure that a certain school has CAA approval. You should see written evidence that the actual course you contemplate taking is endorsed or approved by the CAA, for it happens to be a fact that some schools have only some of their courses so endorsed. It would be well to urge students not to go to any California school under any circumstances, if they are living in another State, because the factories there are able to get plenty of skilled help from the available labor supply. Graduate students stand a better chance in other States, but let me warn prospective students against believing school salesmen who make glowing promises about the prospects of employment. Be suspicious if you’re promised too much, especially if you are assured (verbally, of course) that a job is waiting for you immediately after you graduate. George M. Husser, of the Kansas City Better Business Bureau, adds this comment: “Students inquiring about any commercial aircraft school are told that the benefits to be derived from the instruction they buy depend to a great extent upon the individual student, his background and aptitude for the work.” So much for the aircraft schools. Now let me dispose of several letters from readers who want my opinion regarding the International Correspondence Schools, of Scranton, Pa., the largest mail-order educational institutional in the world, with an enrollment of 180,000 students who take their choice of some 400 courses, ranging in price up to $475. The most costly course is engineering, which takes from four to six years. If readers will refer to my volumes of “Questions and Answers” they’ll find several articles dealing with the ICS. I have always been friendly to this organization, though it seems the prices are too high. ICS isn’t a racket, by any means. It tries sincerely to help its students, employing 300 instructors who are chosen with care. ICS diplomas are recognized and accepted for credit in some colleges, including Purdue and Southern California. Dr. Richard B. Kennan, in his recent book, “The Private Correspondence School Enrollee” (published by Columbia University’s Teachers College) questioned 2,500 ex-students and learned that “the average student completed less than one-third of his lessons, and only one in 20 graduated and won a diploma.” I don’t mean to give the impression that this condition is the fault of ICS’s management. After all, thousands of students in standard colleges quit because of dissatisfaction or discontent. Dr. Kennan adds that “23 percent of those who studied for vocational advancement (with ICS) actually did find better jobs.”

I am a small investor. Would you advise me to dabble in Scott-Tissue?

Get rid of what you have. You may be interested to know that Scott-Tissue touched a new bottom and thousands were wiped clean.

For the past six months I (a young man of 24) have been using a congestor, which a druggist suggested when I inquired how I could increase the size of that which is, in my opinion, smaller than it should be. The congestor’s a flop. I’m writing to you because I know you come in contact with all kinds of people, including medical scientists and
specialists in the different professions.
In one of my volumes of questions and answers I went into the problem of how to make big ones out of little ones, showing that science has absolutely nothing to offer. The gadgets now on the market are of no real value. My advice to the undersized is to stop worrying about proportions and give thought to technique. Experienced and informed people (especially in the medical profession) know that size isn't of basic importance. Rather is it a question of intelligent and skillful manipulation of what nature has given one.

In one of your articles about your Philadelphia boyhood, you mention (with a choked voice) Philadelphia scrapple. I bite. Whatinthell is it?
Good, old scrapple ain't much to look at, but it has a long history, dating from William Penn's days. The dish is a mixture of hominy and pork. It lacks sex appeal—or should I say oomph?—but it does right well by a guy's digestive equipment. I wouldn't be surprised to hear any day now that some super-salesman has decided to dress up the dish to make it look as bright as a portion of Jello, as fussy-looking an an angel cake, and as authoritative as an 18-ounce sirloin. And that'll mean a hike in price without compensating consumer values. After all, why does a plate of grub have to take on glamorous sex appeal? You don't eat sex—or am I getting out of line?

Is there a scientific explanation for the way frustrated Germans, when facing a crisis, think in terms of scuttling themselves, their ships, or what have you?
The most sensational act of self-destruction took place when Hitler ordered a pocket battleship scuttled off the South American coast. The whole subject should be studied by psychoanalysts and psychiatrists. As for laymen like ourselves, we can discuss only the more obvious and superficial aspects of this problem. Perhaps there's a hint of the line we should follow in a story about a German officer who appeared at one of the better cat-houses in Paris and asked the lady in charge to provide him with a German girl. Told there was only one German girl in the establishment and that she was busy for the moment, the Nazi bowed politely and withdrew, adding that he would return later. A few hours later he appeared again, only to be told that the German girl was again busy. "If you will let me introduce you to one of my French girls I'm sure you will be pleased," she suggested. "No, thanks, I want a German girl." "Then what about an English girl? We have an exceptionally attractive English blonde who ought to please you." But the Nazi was stubborn. "I'll come back later," he said, and walked out. Some hours later he was back again, and the Madame had to break the news that the German girl was again busy. In a burst of rage, the Nazi, after throwing his hat on the floor and stamping on it, shrieked: "If you don't get me a German girl I'll scuttle myself!"

Can you give me some of the difficulties Bible translators run into? For example, how does a translator go about the job of turning English into some African language?
To give you a look-see, imagine yourself loaded with the job of translating "whiter than snow" into the language of equatorial Africa, where snow's never seen and references to it mean nothing. Some of these problems are solved ingeniously. In Paraguay, for instance, is the Lengua tribe. The chief was called in to help the missionary-translator when that worthy got stuck for a word to mean "18." He finally settled for "schogemek-wakthla-mok-eminik-an-antahmal," which means "finished my hands, pass to my other foot, three." In New Guinea, a translator tussled with the phrase "far be it from me to do this thing," and finally, in despair, turned to the intelligent chief, who suggested "May I speak to my mother-in-law before I will do this thing." It isn't considered good Emily Post—in fact, an unpardonable sin—to speak to your wife's mother, if you happen to live in New Guinea.

In one of your volumes of questions and answers you make the statement that "FACETIOUS" is the only word in the English language which contains all the vowels in their correct order. Are you sure of this? Take a good look before answering.
You've got me where the hair's
short, so don’t yank. I should have included ABSTEMIOUS and ABSTENTIOUS. It’s nice to have my readers show such a willingness to do their share of the work, like the pretty French girl who told her green boy-friend: “You do zis and I do zat.”

1. What common word has a double “n”? 2. What common word has a double “w”? 3. What word has three double letters in a row?

What’s your theory about Prof. Haldane’s stomach ulcers?

Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, British scientist, writes that before he embraced Leninism he suffered from stomach ulcers; after his conversion his ulcers went with the wind. The moral: if you have stomach ulcers, become a Communist. But what if Haldane were to become a Trotskyite? Would the bellyache return? There’s room for a heartburn to heart talk here with the British biologist. Or, let’s suppose Haldane threw his Leninism overboard and became an outspoken Stalinite. Would that mean sexual rejuvenation? Haldane has started something. Can becoming a Hitlerite cure clap? Can becoming an appeaser cure pimples on the scrotum? I’ll be damned if I know. It happens I’m a fanatical believer in democracy and I haven’t a single disease (at this writing), so it seems safe (using the Haldane brand of logic) to assume that where Leninism can cure one’s stomach ulcers, democracy is a cure-all for everything in the Home Doctor Book, including B.O., piles, delayed menstruation, the menopause, halitosis, armpit odors, and prostate trouble.

Can you give me a sample of humor used by Weber and Fields?

Probably the most famous gag was used in the scene in which Weber, who played the part of a millionaire Jew, was dining with the great Lillian Russell. Lillian asked the waiter (Lew Fields) for a demitasse, whereupon Weber broke in with: “Bring me the same, and a cup of coffee.”

Is it a fact that Benjamin Franklin invented bifocal spectacles?

There’s no doubt that Franklin invented bifocals. The record is clear on this point. It may interest readers to know how he came on the sensible and convenient idea. Franklin, as is well known to students of his life, liked good food and beautiful women. If he couldn’t go to bed with a gorgeous blonde the next best thing was to be able to admire her long and hard. So, he said, he decided to invent bifocal spectacles so he could see the vittles on his plate and the hot number across the table from him. Good, old Ben Franklin—the more we know about him the more we love him.

I have looked through many lists of your books in the hope that I might run across what might be called a Treatise on Scientific Seduction. To date, no luck. Now, an old “sampler” like you should be able to come to the aid of poor devils like me who just do not have a “way with women.” Surely you could take a stroll down memory lane and pick up a little rule here and there that would be helpful to us poor stubblers. Why don’t you give us something on this fascinating subject? I think you’d get more consumer-acceptance than you suspect.

I’m afraid this is a field in which the rule is every man for himself. I doubt that the printed word could do a stumbler much good. Samplers do their best work by actual demonstration. Theory isn’t much account in this sphere of activity. However, if any of my reader-samplers have anything special on the ball and want to pass on the results of their experiments I believe it wouldn’t be at all unwise to appropriate some space for the purpose. And while we’re waiting for these scientific dissertations it wouldn’t be amiss to call attention to the age old fact that a mink coat, a case of champagne, excellent supper, a nifty sedan, and a swell apartment have been known to produce a high percentage of acceptances. Of course, if you’re on relief or WPA the problem becomes somewhat more complicated. This reminds me of a related form of seduction—scientific salesmanship. According to Business Week, a laboratory test of retail selling methods was made by the producers of Palm Beach suits, who set up a store in Miami Beach in order
to check for themselves their selling problems. Tests showed that the greatest effect was achieved by having a pretty girl receptionist who introduced the entering customer to the salesman. Fifty-six percent of sales resulted. Of course, Palm Beach suits aren't books that are sold by means of mail order, but there's an idea there. Would it help the cause of good reading if I were to send pretty girl receptionists into the field to call on stumblers and show them how to order books? Imagine one of these receptionists dropping in on the stumbler who wrote the above request—say at about 11 P.M. All that comes under the heading of scientific salesmanship.

* * *

Why is it you so rarely mention the Money Question?

Years ago I decided, after meditation and prayer, that there are three subjects I'd let alone—the Farm Problem, the Money Question, and the Dionne Quintuplets. The two big izzum themes I stay away from on the grounds of pure ignorance. The quint I let alone because every humorous angle (especially the sexual prowess of Papa Dionne) has been exhausted. In the matter of money, about 25 years ago I knew all about this subject after reading a book by an expert. So long as I stuck to that single authority I had the world by the tail. But one day I slipped and read a book by another expert—and then my troubles started. A third expert added to the confusion. The more I read about money the less I knew. So I quit. Now, when asked to fret about money, I ask if it's possible to go into a Woolworth store and get a roll of toilet paper for 5c. If the answer is Yes, I blandly assure the money-worrier that all's well, that money still buys important things, the country's safe, and to go cheerfully about one's business, while I return to my rendition of Bach's Fugue for Focorn in F-flat.

* * *

Can you tell me what kind of a success the guide escort bureau is in N.Y. The idea may be good for other cities.

The Guide Escort Service, founded in 1935, was suppressed by the N.Y. authorities, who found numerous objections to a service which offered paid squires for the women who had the price. Several letters from the files of the service give an amusing insight into the peculiar mental quirks of both the women who wanted escorts and men who wanted jobs taking care of the lonely, but moneyed, females. Here's one from a woman:

Do you think it would be possible for me to have three escorts, beautifully dressed, and please pick me out three of your tallest and the kind one would notice in a large crowd, for the sailing of the Rex to Bermuda next Thursday ... I want you to buy a huge bunch of flowers for each of them to give me. And is it possible for at least one of them to kiss me goodbye? Another woman, who was a little on the heavier side, wrote: I weigh about 210 pounds and am considered jolly. Please find me a heavy escort . . . give me the address of a good restaurant who provides second helpings without charge.

Another woman, who knew exactly what she was after, outlined her needs as follows:

I am coming to New York on Wednesday . . . I want an escort. His requirements must be as follows: 1. Over six feet, smooth looking (like Gilbert Roland). 2. One who can put it over the Westchester gang. Essentially a good mixer . . . 3. Broadminded. 4. A good fighter in case of a brawl.

Letters from men are just as revealing. Here are a few:

I have done my part in his majesty's service and am now ready to surrender myself to the women of America.

I am heir to a fifty-room castle without baths and want to meet an American woman willing to install modern plumbing.

My father tells me I must get a job this summer or starve . . . I am six-foot-two, hair the color of moonlight. I have tails and an opera hat.

I have been looking for a new occupation. I have many other requirements for your service which I will whisper to you when we meet.

One letter gives us an idea why the service looked suspicious. In short, such a set-up gave criminals oppor-
tunities for blackmail. One fellow, who wanted to join the organization, gave a hint of what was in his mind, thus:

I might also be invaluable to you in other fields. I have studied deduction methods of great detectives for many years. I could find out a great deal about your escorts and clients which might make your business more profitable.

Where does one find the highest divorce rate among professionals?

Physicians head the list, according to the Divorce Reform League, N.Y.C. Records studied over a 10-year period show that five out of 12 marriages of doctors ended in divorce, while the average in other professions is two divorces in 12 marriages. The survey says the reason is that "so many doctor's wives, suspicious of their husband's attention to female patients, bring on domestic difficulties which lead to divorce." Of course, we laymen who keep our eyes and ears open are inclined to believe that many physicians' wives have sound reasons for their suspicions. Doctors get plenty of chances to indulge in the deathless pantomime, pick the ones that please them, and have a whirl as a part of office routine. Not all, of course, but plenty. The little wife around the house, noticing that hubby isn't doing his duty, begins to get suspicious, for she knows he's good for only so much of that, and if he gives it to others she's going to be neglected, and that often creates no little dissatisfaction. Even a doctor's wife has to be satisfied. If she isn't suspicious about her husband's behavior with his patients she burns up whenever she thinks of that pretty red-haired nurse with the trim funny. Out in Hollywood that type of man is called huggum-buggum, meaning a big he-man who makes plenty of girls. They also talk about huggum-buggum-squeeze-em-weenem, which is their way of describing a sexual blitzkrieg. I don't have any doubts about Hollywood's huggum-buggum lads, but these movie glamour boys haven't anything on the male stars in crummy tent shows. I got acquainted with such a hero recently, visiting his establishment—a tent that looked as though the nation's moths had been supping on it, a line of amusement that suggested the 10-20-30 shows I used to see as a kid at the old Kensington Theater, in Philadelphia, and a public that included its quota of girls with enough imagination to consider a tent-show hero as being in every way as attractive as Hollywood's Gables, Taylors and Boyers. This particular ham had him a different girl whenever he wanted one, and the schedule usually ran from five to seven a week, which gives even a Hollywood lad something to shoot at. His pay, I understand, was $35 per week, so he couldn't spend much on the lassies. They didn't expect him to. All they wanted was him—just him—his own dear self. Who said all girls are mercenary? Not when they're after what they consider a desirable male.

What's your opinion of William Saroyan's "Time of Your Life"?

It's a pale imitation of Maxim Gorki's impressive and creative play. "Night's Lodging." I never got much excited about this Saroyan. He has a flashy style, but his firecrackers are all wet. I recall another false alarm, Jim Tully, who, a decade ago, was to remake literature and put Jack London in his place. Who pays any attention to that dimwit now? Saroyan will go the same way, because the stuff isn't there. He has plenty of will to be great, but it takes more than that to make a literary genius.

Please comment on the enclosed advertisement clipped from a Kansas City, Mo., newspaper.

The advertisement: "More for Your Money, 8 Slices to a Quart Instead of the Usual 6." This is a silly attempt to deceive the consumers. What difference does it make whether the customer gets 6 or 8 slices out of a quart, since he gets a quart either way? To say 8 slices will give the consumer "more for your money" is to assume he's dumber than usual.

Can you refer me to the most valuable piece of lumber in the world?

Charlie McCarthy.

How do you compare Canada Dry and White Rock Soda and ginger ale to other brands?
George Seldes, well-known journalist, reports that he saw a report issued by a consumers' organization which found, after laboratory tests, that much-advertised Canada Dry and White Rock soda and ginger ale "have not as much retention, carbonation, and other good features of unadvertised cheaper bottled waters and ginger ales." Such information can never be learned from the standard press because of the fact that Canada Dry is such a heavy advertiser. Mr. Seldes also calls attention to the interesting fact that the great *New York Times* ran an item headed "Meet FTC Objections. Gimbel Brothers agree on the names of certain rugs." That sounds as though the Gimbel firm (an immense advertiser in the *Times* and other metropolitan papers) had merely ironed out some insignificant routine matter. The truth was that the Federal Trade Commission had caught Gimbel Brothers red-handed, the stipulation signed by the vast department store admitting it had been sewing oriental labels on American-made rugs, thus robbing the consumers. The *Times* (like the others) was easy on the Gimbel store because its own columns had been used to mislead the consumers into paying good money for domestic rugs under the impression they were getting more valuable oriental pieces. The Gimbel item, which was first-page news from the consumers' viewpoint, was buried near the shipping news next to the want ads.

In one of your articles you mention Joe Miller's joke-books as the source material of many of the gags now being used in radio skits, comic publications and the stage. Can you mention any others?

Many of the mots, bon or otherwise, credited to Hierocles, Alexandrian neo-platonic philosopher, are still being used in one form or another. Hierocles lived in the 5th Century, A.D. He mastered the art of writing anecdotes intended to expose pedants as bores or boobys. This idea is still popular, giving the hearers an opportunity to laugh when the other fellow is placed in an embarrassing position. I don't guarantee that the samples below were really written by Hierocles, for many wisies credited to him didn't come into circulation until four or five centuries after his death. Here are the best of the crop, in my opinion:

A scholar, meeting a physician, apologized for not being sick, considering they had always been the best of friends.

A pedant, wishing to teach his horse to eat little, gave him no food at all, and when the horse died, cried, "How unlucky; as soon as I had taught him to live without food he died!"

A supposedly wise man, wishing to sell his house, carried a stone with him as a sample.

A scholar wishing to see if he looked handsome when asleep, shut both his eyes and went to the mirror.

A scholar sealed a wine barrel, but his servant bored a hole in the bottom. Astonished at the liquor's diminishing, though the seal was unbroken, he complained to another, who suggested, "Perhaps it is taken out at the bottom." "You fool," answered the scholar, "it is not the under part, but the upper that is deficient."

A scholar, meeting a person, said, "I heard you were dead." The other answered, "Don't you see I'm alive?" To which the scholar replied, "Perhaps so, but he who told me the contrary was a man of much more credit than you."

A scholar, hearing that crows lived 200 years, bought one in order to make the experiment.

A scholar, on board ship in a storm, saw the rest grab different articles to swim ashore on. He laid hold of the anchor.

A scholar, hearing one of two twins was dead, when he met the other, asked, "Which of you was it that died? You or your brother?"

A scholar, coming to a ferry, went into the boat on horseback, explaining "I am in great haste."

The above gags, which run to a formula, have helped comedians like Jack Benny fill in many programs.

I agree with you when you say there's no difference between any of the popular cigarettes. They all taste the same to me. What do you do when you buy a pack? Do you shut your eyes and grab the first that comes to hand?

For years, I've asked for Chesterfields, even though I can't tell a Chesterfield from a Lucky Strike or an Old Gold. I believe there are several
reasons for this odd quirk. First, I like the neat wrapper. Next, I like the sound of the name as it trips off my neat lips. And, finally, Chesterfield is one of my Little Blue Book authors. Many years ago I edited a volume of Chesterfield’s letters to his natural (bastard, to you vulgarians) son. I always feel loyal to my publication when I ask for Chesterfields on the rare occasions when I desert my pipes and cigars. In the back of my mind is the notion that increased sales for Chesterfields should in some way be reflected in greater distribution of my volume of Chesterfield’s worldly advice. The wish isn’t a conscious one; it’s in the back of my subconscious. However, a study of graphs checked by my staff of statisticians shows that while Chesterfields have been going to new records each year, my edition of the Englishman’s letters never was a commercial success and probably never will be. It stands somewhere between “The Trial and Death of Socrates” and “The Maxims of Napoleon.” The moral of all this is that man pays allegiance to his own economic interests in the most unexpected and devious ways.

Since it seems to be your hobby to jot down all kinds of odd signs for the amusement of your readers, maybe you can supply me with some of the fliver signs one sees on the broken-down jalopies driven by young fellows.

Fliver signs run to a formula. Here are the most popular ones:

Can you tell me why a cow must be milked from the right side only?
It’s considered outlandish and corny for anyone to milk a cow from the left side, but if you ask the milk er why he usually talks in wide, ample circles or dismisses the subject with an evasive, meaningless “because.” The fact is, it doesn’t make any difference which side one milks from. The cow doesn’t care. The milk comes just the same. And the milk er can’t point to anything in the process that’s easier or more efficient when done from the lady’s right side. Some milkers have said the cow doesn’t like to be milked from the left, but that’s plain bunk, for I’ve noticed (during more than 20 years of amateur farming done in my wife’s name) that calves nurse mamma from both sides. Surely, if the cow entertained real prejudices against being milked from the left she’d find a way to get the attitude over to the calf. The fact is, the cow doesn’t give a damn. Leftists and Rightists—all are equals in the eyes of Mrs. Moo.

Nostradamus, a 15th Century seer and Astrologer, predicted among many other prophecies the black plague, the fire of London, and the beheading of Louis XVI of France. He even predicted that a 20th Century conqueror (Hitler) would cross a bridge and occupy Vienna. So did I hear over the radio recently in a broadcast by Paul Nesbitt. Please comment.

The Paul Nesbitt who used the radio recently to give an astrologer a boost undoubtedly got his material from an article in The London Spectator, written by Mr. James Laver. To read the articles on Nostradamus one would imagine he wrote down a few prognostications which ultimately happened as foretold. The much-discussed Nostradamus prophecies were contained in a poem which consisted of 1,200 stanzas of four lines each. That’s quite a hefty poem. In it he told how the future would see much of the wars and disasters that afflicted his own generation. There would be big fires, plagues, invasions, beheadings, earthquakes, and the like. Not pleasant reading, but the sort of thing any student of history would expect. What Nesbitt and Laver forgot to do was to count all the Nostradamus prophecies and then figure out the percentage of hits. That’s a job for a mathematician. Then comparisons should be made with the
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average run of guesses. It’s a cinch that anyone who makes a thousand guesses is bound to hit the bull’s eye so many times, and that would go for a Nostradamus or any other person who sets out to look into the future. But these boosters for Astrology prefer to shut their eyes to the failures. They see only the good guesses, which they insist are sound refutations of Rationalism. Instead, they demonstrate the truth of Rationalism, for the logical, rational mind is always quick to catch the point that it would be something of an oddity if one were to list hundreds of “prophecies” and see all of them flop. The Laws of Chance apply here with the same force that they work in a well-run crap game. But Astrologers, who make millions of dollars from gullible jackasses, aren’t in business to hurt their racket. Since their gypsy butters their bread they’re careful to give it the best possible name, but those who practice candor and seek the truth don’t hesitate to brand them as a crew of chattering frauds. However, I don’t want my readers to conclude I’m against all attempts at prophecy. The late Jackie Osterman is my idea of a real prophet, as shown by the following: “Hitler will die on a Jewish holiday. If it doesn’t happen to be one, they’ll make it one.”

What do you think of the various systems that show how to beat the races?

I’ve studied all of them, and I can say in all sincerity that I’ve worked out the simplest and surest proposition to take the risk out of racing. Here it is: Take a $10 bill each morning out of your right side pocket, make your choice on a horse and put the $10 in your left side pocket and throw away your choice. You’ll be surprised how soon the left side pocket will become full of $10 bills.

What did Anthony say to Cleopatra when he discovered, after the first trick, there was no plumbing in the palace at Alexandria?

Anthony said: “Why, Cleo, this is plumb-uncanny.”

I often think how centrally located you are. What prompted you to set up shop in Girard, Kansas? Did you have invasion in mind?

Before coming to Girard, 25 years ago, I consulted my staff of five Astrologers and was told what the advent and development of Hitlerism and Fifth Columnism would mean to one of my intellectual propensities. After having my Astrologers checked by five expert crystal gazers, and after pounding away full tilt at my ouija board, I got a divine message telling me everything would be well anywhere in Southeastern Kansas.

After watching jitterbugs doing some hot rug-cutting I’m impelled to ask if you know what part of a dancer’s anatomy one shouldn’t move while dancing.

The bowels.

The employees in my office have the annoying habit of visiting the barber on the company’s time. I don’t think that’s right. What do you say?

As the hair grows on the company’s time there’s no reason why the men shouldn’t have it cut on the company’s time.

In one of your recent volumes of “Questions and Answers” you go into elaborate details and spread an amazing array of data to prove that most great composers were Freethinkers. I don’t see how anyone can take a materialistic view of Beethoven’s symphonies, especially his 9th. They are the speech of creatures higher than mere mortals. They speak the language of the divinely inspired.

Have it your own way. I don’t care to spoil my beautiful morning with another argument about the “spiritual” cavortings of composers. The point about Beethoven (I showed him to be a worldly man) is best answered by a paragraph from another great composer, Robert Schumann, thus:

“I shiver to the fingertips when I hear some people declaring that Beethoven gave himself up, while writing his symphonies, to the greatest sentiment—lofty thoughts of God, immortality, and the course of the sphere; the genial man certainly pointed to heaven . . . but his roots spread broadly over his beloved earth.”

But such sentiments won’t move Prof. Shinpants and the Rev. Emptykonk, who’ll go right on gabbing about the spirituality of the world’s great composers. It’s a mental disease that can never be cured by facts.
But that shouldn't stop those of us who still have control of a little reason to at least try to show a bit of respect for the record.

What would you say to the Fundamentalist who came back at you with the assertion that he considers the Bible the literal words of God?

Since Fundamentalists are bigots, fanatics and supernaturals it doesn't do much good to argue with them. As for myself, I run away at the first hint that a Fundamentalist is headed my way. That shows how little of the propagandist I am. If I had more of the messianic passion in my benighted soul I'd be glad to meet and discuss religious subjects with those Fundamentalists who always stand ready to believe anything, so long as it's found in the Bible. My attitude is simply this: I have no time or energy to waste on such intellectual trash. I'm willing to bawl them out in print, but I don't care to collar one and beg for his attention while I appeal to his reason, knowing there's no reason to appeal to. After all, I can give a poor lumber the facts, but Gawd never endowed me with the power to give such ignorant louts the brains with which to appreciate and understand facts. I can't make up for the failures of nature. But, no Fundamentalist is bothering me at this moment. My questioner is known to me as a steady and careful reader of Freethought literature, so I'll direct my answer to him for use as he sees fit. This simple and obvious answer to the Fundamentalist's claim is that a statement has value only to the extent in which it can be substantiated by facts. If you can't prove what you say then what you mouth is only empty assertion. But the Fundamentalist doesn't need to prove that Gawd wrote his Bible. He believes it—because! Now, I say that if the Bible is the word of God it would be so profoundly true, its assertions would be so undeniable, its light would be so evident that the more intelligent a reader is the easier it would be for him to recognize that he was looking into God's mind when he was reading the Bible. But can an intelligent person feel safe about the Bible's divine source? Of course not. He knows that no two authorities can agree on what the Bible means. Hundreds of sects have been organized, each fighting all the others because the others have failed to grasp the Lord's inner meaning. Millions of people have been tortured, persecuted and murdered because they had their own notions about what the Bible meant. Now, as a plain infidel, it seems logical that this situation offers evidence in itself that the Bible is nothing more than the word of a small number of men—men not as bright and as educated as hundreds of thousands of today's modest men who go about their jobs without mouthing the notion that they contain within themselves the germs of eternal and divine truth. If the Bible were God's own words then the words would be logical and clear, and would defy any attempts at honest disproof.

What do you think of Oscar Wilde's theories of esthetics?

I've never been much interested in anybody's theories of esthetics. It's a subject shot through with meaningless words, confused thinking, muffed ideas, and high-toned, expensive, snooty verbiage. Wilde, who was always more readable than the rest, devoted much time and labor to theories of beauty. Probably half of his lectures were given, directly or indirectly, to the reasons why he was an esthete. And yet, Wilde, in one of his epigrams, disposed of all his lectures and articles. His apothegm follows: "Beauty cannot be taught; only revealed." Wilde answered Wilde.

How do the Nazis go about the job of claiming Shakespeare as one of their own sons?

The N.Y. Nazi newspaper, the Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, disposes of the Herr Shakespeare issue with just one sentence:

Quite a number of people also describe the German classical author, Shakespeare, as belonging to English literature, because—quite accidentally born at Stratford-on-Avon—he was forced by the authorities of that country to write in English.

A few weeks ago I got me a peachy boy friend, and since then I've been bringing out all my tricks for him, one by one—now this one, now that one, and so on, and etc. Now I'm all out of tricks.
Knowing that your newclip filing system must have at least one folder devoted to this tricky business I am appealing to you to give me a new line so I can keep the boy friend satisfied.

You're doing as well as can be expected. Just get yourself a new boy friend and begin all over again.

* * *

In the second volume of your "Questions and Answers" (page 129, line 432) you use the Latin phrase "quid pro quo." What does it mean?

It means something for something. Webster's: "Act of substituting one thing for another; or an instance or the result of such act." I prefer the simple, plain, homely "tit for tat," especially if it's a pretty girl to whom I'm offering my tat.

* * *

How do you react to the use of the word "ain't"?

I haven't any prejudice against the word, but I don't use it myself, except for humorous effect. Sometimes the word is valuable when one seeks to create a mood of informality. But when it comes to using the word freely in speech and writing there's something in me that acts as censor. I'm reminded of young Dick and his cute little lassie. They went strolling in a cemetery, headed for the precious privacy needed for the best performance in the esoteric arts of love. After they had been on a flat tombstone for a while the cute little lassie said: "Ain't it gruesome?" To which Dick replied: "Don't say 'ain't'; say 'hasn't.'"

* * *

Kindly give the list of Presidents who were less than 50 years old when they were inducted into office.

Franklin Pierce, 49; U. S. Grant, 47; Grover Cleveland, 48; Garfield, 49; Theodore Roosevelt, 43. No one asked, but I thought it would be interesting to add the fact that the average age of death of the above five U.S. Presidents was 61.8 years, which means they survived, on the average, 7.4 years of the duties of the chief executive, according to a writer in "Pleasures of Publishing," issued by Columbia University Press.

* * *

While browsing through your volumes of questions and answers I came on numerous articles exposing and attacking movie censorship, but I couldn't find a single paragraph touching on radio censorship of songs. Have you any data on this subject?

A folder in my newclip filing system is devoted to this diverting theme, so I'm grabbing the chance to get the clippings out of the way. The radio idea of a song is that it must be as pure as the breath of an angel, and if it isn't it's either thrown into the musical concentration camp or sent to the laundry, which, by the way, is run for NBC by a Miss Edna Turner, God bless her virtuous and moral soul. She has put even Irving Berlin through the word-wringer—that gentlest of souls, that most pure-minded of song-writers. His "These Foolish Things Remind Me of You," contains the line, "Silk stocking thrown aside," which sent NBC's smut-hound sniffing for muck, and sure enough she found it, for the line doesn't say why the stocking was thrown aside and the circumstances. For all one can imagine, they might have been chucked on the floor while their owner joined another in a rendezvous on an inner-spring mattress, and that wouldn't do at all. So the line was rewritten, "A glove you threw aside." No protector of morals has ever been able to smell s-x in a pair of gloves, so far as I know. Another song that worried Miss Turner was "Billy," the last line of which reads, "And when I sleep, I always dream of Bill." This might suggest something perilously near a wet dream, so she turned it into, "I want you to know I love you so, I just want to be with Bill." It's by such magnificent efforts that chastity is protected and girls kept from a fate that's worse than death. Another line, "Gardenia perfume lingering on a pillow" came out of the laundry like this, "A seaplane rising from an ocean hillow." In another song, "Bearded Lady," the line, "No wonder I get passionate" was changed to, "The Kiss that has a dash in it." "Monkeys Have No Tails in Pago-Pago" had this forbidden line, "They haven't any 'it' where monkeys sit," which I thought rather cute, but Miss Turner rewrote it, "They look like you and me—and that's what makes them mad." No poetry there, but plenty of purity. When Miss Turner was asked to pass on "Sweetest Little Lassie" she said No, because the last
word mightn’t be pronounced exactly as written. All this leads me to the conclusion that some of my stories won’t ever be told over the airwaves—at least so long as Miss Turner’s there to do the Lord’s righteous work.

Editor: I have a friend in Victoria, Canada, who is an elderly shut-in, but his mind is free, and, as he gladly affirms, he envies no living person. I lent him my Key to Culture series, and his gratitude gave me great pleasure. Joseph McCabe comes first with him of all scholars. His modest home is a center of Freethought discussion, and it is a privilege to watch him guiding discussions with youthful friends.

B. P. JOHNSON
Milnes Landing, B.C., Canada.

* * *

What was the average age of Presidents of the U.S. at their deaths?
68.6 years.

* * *

Editor: It seems to me that the editor’s power of expression—his style, diction, or manner of expressing his ideas artistically and with force—is deteriorating. I recall some of E.H.J.’s earlier writings—for example, “Free Speech and Free Press in America,” which is a real classic in my opinion. It is different in those respects from much of his present literary output. This may be partly the natural result of overwork, smoking too many cigarettes, booze, too much sex—all of which are fine and dandy when used in moderation but the exact opposite when used to excess. I mention these matters not because I think they are any of my business but because they might throw some light on the deficit and perhaps other problems. Don’t get me wrong. I am 100 percent in favor of personal freedom in the things mentioned above.

San Gabriel, Calif.

CHAS. M. DYER
[Editor’s Note: I don’t smoke a pack of cigarettes in a month.]

Please give the average number of years Presidents live after leaving the White House?

7.8 years.

* * *

Editor: Most readers of The Freeman are intellectuals and don’t buy the paper just for the jokes. I enjoy all kinds of jokes, but I am a psychologist I would say that your writing is not quite the same as six months or a year ago. In your August, 1940, issue you devoted 70 inches to jokes and 32 1/2 inches to your ads. I looked up an old issue, November, 1937, and I measured three inches of jokes. Let’s have more questions and freethought, more political views, more Freethought, more oomph to your writing. Did the Norman Baker law suits and the U.S.S.R.-Nazi deal take something out of you?

Dr. E. HERBERT SEXTON
Westfield, N.J.

* * *

Editor: Men, like Stu (me), are what women marry. Generally speaking, they may be divided into three classes: husbands, bachelors, and widowers. An eligible bachelor is a mass of obstinacy entirely surrounded by suspicion. Husbands are of three varieties—prizes, surprises, and consolation prizes.

Making a husband out of a man is one of the highest plastic arts known to civilization. It requires science, sculpture, common sense, faith, hope and charity—especially charity.

It is remarkable—a psychological marvel—that a soft, fluffy, tender, violet-scented, sweet little thing like a woman could enjoy kissing a big, awkward, stubby-chinned, tobacco and bayrum-scented think like Stu.

If you flatter Stu it frightens him to death, and if you don’t you bore him to death. If you permit him to make love to you, Stu gets tired of you in the end, and if you don’t he gets tired of you in the beginning.

If you believe everything Stu tells you, you soon cease to interest him, and if you argue with him, you soon cease to charm him. If you believe all Stu tells you, he thinks you are a fool, and if you don’t he thinks you are a cynic.

If you wear gay clothes, rouge and a striking hat, Stu hesitates to take you out; and if you wear a brown turban and a tailored suit, Stu takes you out and stares all evening at the women in gay colors.

If you join in his gaieties and approve of his smoking and drinking, Stu swears that you are driving him to the devil, and if you want to spend a nice, quiet evening at home, he thinks you are a kill-joy.

If you are the clinging-vine type, Stu doubts whether you have a brain, and if you refrain from holding hands, he takes you home at 10 o’clock.

Atlantic City, N.J.

G. STUART ENGLE

* * *

I wish you’d do a little piece on loyalty and fidelity in your most uplifting and inspirational mood.

“Be thou faithful unto death,” says the New Testament. Theodore Roosevelt turned the sentiment this way: “It is better to be faithful than fa-
mous." Shakespeare had it that "my heart is true as steel," while Seneca thundered: "Loyalty is the holiest good in the human heart." Love, which rests on fidelity, is the salt of life. As Emerson put it, all the world loves a lover. The true lover is ready for the greatest self-sacrifice, even martyrdom, knowing perhaps only subconsciously that, in the words of Wendell Phillips, "every step of progress the world has made has been from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake." Let me dig down into our common people for an illustration of this noble theme, one which has attracted the admiration of our greatest poets and philosophers down the ages. I have in mind a modest, unsung, unknown hero—George, a bookkeeper in a pickle factory, who married Gracie, long the head tester in the vulcanizing department of a condom foundry. His father-in-law, anxious to start the couple in the direction of full and useful living, promised to give the young, ambitious groom $1,000 to apply on the mortgage on their home for each baby they had. The first year Gracie presented George with a baby boy, and pappy, true to his word, paid $1,000 on the mortgage. The second year Gracie had twins and the old man kicked in with $2,000. The third year they had triplets and George got $3,000 from his father-in-law toward the mortgage. The next year George died—killed himself trying to pay off the mortgage. Isn't there a lesson here?

I want to know the average age of Presidents at the time of taking the oath. 54.8 years.

What do you think of PM?

After reading all issues of PM since its fifth day of publication—beginning as a hardboiled and disappointed skeptic—I was soon won over, and now I'm ready to tell the world (if it'll listen, which it never does) that it's the greatest newspaper in the entire history of journalism. I don't think I exaggerate when I say I read at least 75 percent of each day's wordage. PM is exciting, breezy, informal, intelligent, human and friendly. My only objection is it's never gay. I'm a hot believer in mass education (look at my record of 200,000,000 books sold in 22 years) but I hold for intelligent entertainment, humor, gags, wisecracks, anecdotes, and occasional goofiness. Let PM's editors be world-savers, by all means, but let them learn to have a good time while they're doing the job.

Please tell how the following watchword came into use: "Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute."

The words were used for the first time in a toast offered in 1798 by Congressman Robert Goodloe Harper, of S. Car., at a dinner in honor of John Marshall on his return from France. Marshall brought the news that France was close to war with the U.S. unless Uncle Sam gave "money, a great deal of money."

I'm sick and tired of these endless debates in the Senate. They give the Nazis something to make fun of.

You're wrong there. Those "endless debates" are living proof we're still a democracy. You're also wrong when you refer to "endless debates." Some debates have been long, I grant you, but none ever has been endless. With Joseph Joubert I say, it's better to debate a question without settling it than to settle it without a debate.

Can you explain why social reforms always come as a result of pressure from below?

That's because no guy ever yells for a new deal when he's holding a royal flush.

How is the name Cicero pronounced?


You used to use business reply envelopes—the kind which require no postage to be affixed by the sender. But of late you've given them up. Please explain why.

I cut them out because they are an expensive luxury. About a tenth of these envelopes contained facetious wisecracks that didn't carry a smile in a carload, for they cost 4 cents each. Many were used by polite customers to let me know they had re-
ceived my circulars or catalogues but would buy at some other time. It struck me that I should no more pay for another person’s letter to me than I should pay for a customer’s taxi fare, should he decide to come to the plant in person. The customer should put a 3-cent stamp on his letter, the same way that I put 3-cent stamps on mine. That was a wonderful decision and I intend to abide by it as long as I’m in the mail order business. The objection to my action is quite familiar—I’m supposed to make it easy for the customer to order. True, but there’s no way in the world to make it easy for anyone to part with money, so we may as well adjust ourselves to the fact that it’s always hard to pay for goods, no matter how much the buying public wants them.

May I inquire why The Freeman does not carry an index in and for each issue? Don’t you think this would be a rational and most helpful innovation?

I’m always hot for indexes, but in this case I don’t see eye to eye with my reader, because all material that appears in this paper is collected into book form, in which careful, comprehensive indexes are given considerable space.

I have lost the copy of “Life and Letters” containing the debate, between Scott Nearing and Bertrand Russell, on Russia. Is it possible to get another copy?

This interesting debate was reprinted in Little Blue Book form, where it’s available under No. 723.

Do you always assign expert authorities to write your books on science and other special subjects?

That’s always my first provision. I’m more than proud of the fact that I have never given an author an editorial assignment without first making sure he was competent to do the job. Only the other day my son, home for a short vacation from the University of Kansas, told me one of his science instructors advised him to “read your Old Man’s books—their soundness is unquestioned.” As the Old Man happens to be myself I felt proud that a professor of zoology went to some pains to tell one of his students to read works I had edited, though there’s fly in the ointment in the hint that my own son doesn’t read the products of my presses.

I’m reminded of one of my authors, Helinz Norden, who, according to the story that was told me by an informed, reliable witness, was looking for work in New York City. He trudged far and wide to find that elusive thing—a job—and finally landed in the office of the owner of a large printing plant, where he applied for a job as proofreader.

“What are some of your qualifications?” the manager asked Mr. Norden.

“I have done some writing for the Haldeman-Julius Publications.”

“Name one of the titles, please.”

“How to Get a Job.”

How many rooms are there in the Vatican at Rome?

About 1,100.

Please give me the Chinese poem entitled “An Apology for Drunkenness.”

This well-known piece of literature was written by T’ao Yuan-ming, who is better known in Western countries as T’ao Ch’ien. The translation below is by Arthur Waley.

White hair covers my temples,
I am wrinkled and seared beyond repair,
And though I have got five sons.
They all hate paper and brush.
A-shu is eighteen:
For laziness there is none like him.
A-hsuan does his best,
But really loafes the fine arts.
Yung-tuan is thirteen,
But does not know six from seven.
Tung-tzu in his ninth year
Is only concerned with things to eat.
If Heaven treats me like this,
What can I do but fill my cup?

Of every 100 students in West Point
How many will be graduated?

About 55 percent.

Can you suggest a mascot for a nudist colony?

A Mexican hairless dog.

Do German communiques tell the truth?
Rarely. That’s because they’re not interested in the truth but in the effect their words will have on their people and the world. For weeks the Nazis have been insisting they sent the airplane carrier, the Ark Royal, to the bottom. The British answered this lie early by letting an American naval officer visit the ship that’s sup-
posed to have been sunk. Consider how the Germans have refused to admit the loss of a single submarine after eight weeks of warfare. We have every reason to believe that about 25 submarines have been destroyed by the British and French, but to listen to the German reports one would have to conclude that their undersea fleet hasn’t even been touched. I wonder how many Germans are fooled by such silence.

I am holding stock in American Can Co., United Gas Co. and Consolidated Water Co. What do you advise me to do?

Because of market conditions, I advise you to sit tight on your Can, let your Gas go, and hold your Water.

Can you tell me why artists paint so many sunsets and so few sunrises?

If you knew the living habits of artists you wouldn’t ask such a question. The average artist never gets up early enough to paint a sunrise.

What is beauty?

It’s all in the eye of the beholder. I once heard a doctor describe a cancer as though it was a work of art.

What is morality?

Morality is a meeting of minds between sexually unattractive women and sexually incompetent men.

Now that so many people are having their social security numbers tattooed on their bodies, why wouldn’t it be a good idea for the persons of various professions to put their trade slogans on their arms, chests, etc.? What would you suggest for the practitioners of the world’s oldest profession?

Somewhere across an appropriate part of the anatomy could be tattooed: “No Credit.”

Is it possible for us to cease being the slaves of habit?

If habits are good, they should be cultivated. If bad, one can always try to switch over to good habits, but results can’t be guaranteed even by the most optimistic moralist. As Cicero put it: “Habit becomes a sort of second nature, which supplies a motive for many actions.” “Habit,” said the wise philosopher, Montaigne, “is second nature.” Aye, great is the power of habit. Man, as the old proverb has it, is a bundle of habits.

I’m reminded of a newlywed husband who was bemoaning, before an old friend, a terrible boner he had recently pulled in the presence of his wife.

“But what, precisely, was it that you did, Ed?”

“Well, John, you know what sort of a fellow I’ve been; the oat-fields you and I have both sown and all that sort of thing.”

“Yes, yes, sure. But what of it?”

“Well, you see it’s like this: the other night, from sheer force of habit I guess, I hauled out a five dollar bill and gave it to my wife.”

“Oh, forget it, Ed! She probably just thought you were feeling flush and generous and didn’t catch on at all.”

“Yes, that may be, John. But what’s got me worried is the fact that she gave me back four ones.”

Are American slang words the verbal inventions of the common people?

H. L. Mencen, who is an authority on the American language, says “slang is a deliberate invention by professional smart-alecks—college boys, reporters, newspapermen and other dubious characters.” Mencen adds that the word “rubberneck” is a “perfect word, a magnificent masterpiece.” He also praised the new word “gong-meet,” which means one who fails in an amateur show.

How’d you like “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”?

I liked Snow White pretty well, but felt that 85 minutes of an animated cartoon based on a fairy tale was a little too much for my more realistic, down-to-earth nature. I don’t care for Disney’s constant use of fairy tales and fables. He ought to give us more variety. For a change, I’d suggest a grand opera—one of the lively, colorful, exciting ones, like “Carmen,” for example.

What is the membership of the Communist Party of the U.S.?

Communist leaders claim 70,000 members, but I’m inclined to consider this figure something of an exaggeration. It’s my notion that half this figure comes nearer the truth.

What’s your opinion of Gertrude Stein?

I’ve already paid my respects to the literary insanities of Gertrude
Stein, H. L. Mencken's criticism of her pleases me. It describes her as a quack. "She has no ideas and she can't express 'em," he said.

If all the known stars of the universe were brought together into a cube how much space would the cube occupy? Sixty billion miles each way.

Can you quote Senator Ingall's characterization of William Jennings Bryan?

It runs this way: "They call him the Boy Orator of the Platte. He is that all right. The River Platte is a mile wide at the mouth and an inch deep."

In one of your volumes of questions and answers you mention the fact that The New Republic gets $200,000 yearly from a rich widow "who charges it off her income tax." You give me the impression that Mrs. Willard Straight, the woman who subsidizes the magazine just mentioned, actually saves money by giving it away. Can you explain this by a concrete example?

Let's suppose a man makes a net income of $1,000,000. He'd pay the U.S. $681,000 in income taxes. But if that man decided to give $100,000 to some pet charity, his income tax would be reduced by $76,000, which means it really cost him $24,000 to give away $100,000. All this would be legal, of course. By the way, let me mention, while I think of it, that I'm delighted over the way my readers pore over my volumes of questions and answers and blow up storms of controversy over what they find in those 19 mountains of wit, wisdom and piety. This convinces me my collected writings aren't dry and unreadable. Most owners of the tomes use them for reference, which is what I had in mind when I compiled them, but what flatters me into feeling like a ball of fire is the way so many readers read my thousands of pages and hundreds of thousands of words as though they were intended for light and entertaining reading. And while I'm at it, let me confess I haven't any conscience about stopping the show every other column or so to insert a plug for my modest set. I hope such permissible advertising will win new readers to my collection. I'd be a hypocrite if I pretended to stand by and act as though I didn't care a hoot whether or not my gang stuck their collective noses between its pages. I have the notion these plugs do some good, for the books sell right along. I've become almost a best-seller around these parts, which is something of a miracle, for it's a common saying in this establishment that the boss's own books usually are among the poorest sellers. In the light of these words of explanation I hope my more cynical, hardboiled readers will be patient with me while I go through the motions of throwing kisses to my dear public.

I was impressed by your statement, in a recent volume of your questions and answers, that "few Roman Catholics know they are permitted to eat up to two ounces of meat on Fridays without committing sin." Now, it happens I was in the Church for almost 40 years, and I never knew that to be a fact. Can you give me your authority for such an assertion?

The moral theologians of the Roman Catholic Church "decree damnation on a basis of the intricacies of law," in the words of Dr. L. H. Lehmann, for many years a Catholic priest. They are given to writing immense tomes in order to give a serious fact to their idiotic nonsense, and the one about fish on Friday has always been a favorite among these verbal magicians. They work out the most complicated legal specifications, and then upset the apple cart by insisting a limit must be set somewhere—and fish on Fridays is no exception, as I said. As many of my readers know, a Catholic must refrain from eating meat on Fridays on pain of eternal damnation of his blessed, Gawd-given soul. By obeying the law he stands (all things being equal) to win the valuable prize of eternal salvation. It's a mortal sin to eat meat on Fridays. So, what's to be done about otherwise good Catholics who knowingly eat small quantities of meat on that forbidden day? Here the moral theologians repeat the Latin maxim of the regular lawyers—De minimis non curat lex. That, in plain English, means "The law does not concern itself about small things." Dr. Lehmann, who has studied the original sources, says all authoritative moral theologians hold that, "in the matter of abstaining from meats, parvitas materiae (smallness of mat-
ter) must be considered." The authorities just referred to include Gury, Alphonsus Liguori, Sabetti, Barrett and Tanquerey. The consideration given to "smallness of matter" will be found on page 241, article 11, quae. 334, in the Sabetti-Barrett (Society of Jesus) "Compendium Theologiae Moralis." The same authority page 241, article 1, q. 12) takes up the question of how much food constitutes grave matter, and the answer is given thus: "It is certain that as much as two ounces is to be held as of slight amount." They quote other Catholic theologians who hold that a grave amount has to be more than four ounces. Tanquerey, in his "Synopsis Theologiae Moralis et Pastoralis," (tom., 2, page 661), closes the discussion with the assertion that it can be taught by any priest that communicants sin mortally "who, without sufficient reason, knowingly eat about two ounces." To quote further: "With regard to the eating of meat, grave matter is that amount which exceeds two ounces, or 60 grams." Dr. Lehmann calls attention to the fact that these theologians define meats as "all animals living and breathing on the earth . . . excepting frogs, turtles, etc." This includes "all parts of such animals: blood, intestines, brains, fats and the juice squeezed from meat." Thus do we see how the Church's greatest moral theologians play fast and loose with one of the most important prescriptions of their divinely established society. These word-spinners think up the most intricate systems for getting their customers into Hell, and then, by the same use of word-spinning, get them out because they know they've carried their nonsense too far. It's on such stupid and laughable foundations that the Roman Catholic Church rests. As I said before, I've met only two Catholics who knew they could eat up to two ounces of meat on Fridays without risking eternal tortures in the hottest chambers in Hell. The others will continue to be deceived because they refuse to see the shape of things. But the slogan, it's smart not to be fooled, is still good. Intelligent people like to look below the surface. This reminds me of what happened in the scene of a "fun-house" on the carnival grounds—one of those places where the customer pays 15c and enters into a maze of passage-ways, where he wanders about like a rat in a cage trying to find his way out. The gal had just emerged from one of these places and paused a second to get her bearings. At that moment, the old meanie who operated the concession let go the compressed air. Her dress went up higher'n a kite. A man, standing close by, saw it all and guffawed fit to kill himself. It made the gal hot and she turned upon him, savagely. "Well!" she snapped, "I can see enough to tell you're no gentleman!" "And," said he, "I can see enough to tell you're no blonde!" By the same token, a look into the books of the priests can give the old supernaturalism the horse laugh.

Please comment on the enclosed advertisement which I clipped from The Register, Denver, Colo., Catholic newspaper.

This two-inch display ad offers "300 masses annually" for an enrollment payment of only 25c. This offer, we're warned, "is never to be renewed." If you don't grab this bargain offer now you're practically condemning your deceased loved ones to eternal perdition. Knowing that many of these masses cost moneyed communicants as much as $200, I hope all prospects will appreciate this chance to cash in as a result of economies made possible through mass-production methods. Mass-production masses is the raw material of a pretty good pun, although I didn't intend it that way. Personally I don't see how the advertiser can break even on such a sensational offer, when you consider overhead, depreciation, insurance, heat, and other fixed expenses. This goes to prove that the Ford idea of straightline production is sound. After all, why should a priest try to get along with a few customers who haggle about the price of a custom-built mass when it's possible to put through a special, exclusive wire to Gawd and put in a good word for thousands each morning, at bargain rates. Mail-order masses aren't unsound articles of salesmanship. Now that I've given
the project this free boost, I hope the to promoting their enterprise in the good fathers will give serious thought columns of my classified advertisement department. I promise them good position at low rates—another mass-production idea. Gawd knows my readers need salvation—in this world and the next. And I know from experience that they're responsive to mail-order appeals. The old saying is true—if it can be sold at all it can be sold by mail.

* * *

What values are there in soaps that contain vitamins?

Slight, at the most. First, there can be only a small quantity in the soap solution, and, second, contact with the skin can be only of short duration, after which it is rinsed off. Sellers of soaps that contain vitamins insist that even during such a brief interval a residue remains on the skin, but common sense tells me the vitamins absorbed in such a short time can be only insignificant and the effect slight. Soaps and cosmetics sell better when advertised as containing vitamins, but from the consumer's viewpoint skepticism should prevail.

* * *

Rev. Francis E. Webster, vicar of the Old North Church, Boston, Mass., said in a recent sermon, according to the Boston Sunday Herald, that "We can't be saved by Eleanor Roosevelt with some new scheme for improved housing." Please comment.

If memory isn't playing a trick on me (I haven't been in Boston for more than 30 years), Man-of-Gawd Webster's church is located in the North End, near some of the city's worst slums, so he must know something about bad housing. Perhaps he knows that Mrs. Roosevelt's humanitarian work for slum clearance and decent housing is intended to make life on this planet livable and pleasant. The mansions in the sky are left to the Rev. Webster and his crew of sky-pilots. A child surely knows that pulling down louse-traps and building modern apartment houses for the poor isn't intended as a device to save souls but to establish a civilized environment for their bodies. I don't think Mrs. Roosevelt's "scheme for improved housing" will solve any problem except the one of bad housing. Isn't that enough? Man-of-

Gawd Webster's blast against Mrs. Roosevelt's noble activities reminds us of the long record of the church, in which every forward step was opposed or condemned, as may be seen by checking the indexes of my numerous volumes of questions and answers, for this has been one of my pet subjects for decades. The Men of Gawd seem to think it's sinful to make our temporary lives on this globe enjoyable. We should consider life here only a momentary stopping-off place, while the clergymen (at a price) get things ready for us in paradise, where the housing conditions are guaranteed to endure for all time, with no rents to pay and Gawd supplying all the costs of repairs, depreciation, upkeep, janitor and maid service, running water, inside toilets, self-filling douche bags, perfumed urinals, and all the other blessed luxuries of civilized living. When such heavenly gifts are awaiting us why waste time clearing away disease-breeding slums? After all, the quicker the slums kill us off the sooner we'll get a lease on one of the mansions beyond the clouds, where everything will be ordered so perfectly that even the fancy houses (inhabited by gorgeous, willing, money-baiting blondes) will have floor lamps, venetian blinds, air conditioning, latex mattresses, exquisitely embroidered love-towels, and heated toilet seats.

* * *

I've tried to solve a problem in paper folding, but I can't get it done. The trick is to fold a sheet of paper 38 times. Have you any ideas on the subject?

You were being ribbed, and didn't know it. That's an old one. It's impossible to fold a sheet of paper 38 times, though it doesn't sound hard when first proposed. "Fold" is meant in the ordinary sense. That is to say, folding the sheet in the center each time. Now let's do some figuring, and you'll soon see how impossible the thing is. When the sheet is folded once there are two thicknesses; on the second fold you get four; on the third fold you get eight. If it were possible to fold a sheet of paper 38 times there would be about 275,000,000 thicknesses. If the paper is .001 inch thick, the total thickness is equal to about 275,000,000 inches or
about 5,200 miles. And that, dear reader, is nearly twice as far as from San Francisco to N.Y.C. And you were going to fold a sheet of paper 38 times!

See how many times you can find the letter “F” in the enclosed sentence.

The reader who wrote the above sent me his test sentence, which reads as follows:

**FEDERAL FUSES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.**

My pious and devout readers are requested to go back and count—quickly—how many times the letter “F” appears. According to my readers, your intelligence is average if you counted three. Four makes you better than average; five gives you cause for pride. If you caught all six, you’re a genius. To which I add (as one who found six in his first reading) that a genius shouldn’t be wasting his time on such foolishness.

Can you give me the changes made in the rules of chess during the last century?

There haven’t been any. The last change was the one permitting casting, which dates from the middle of the 16th Century.

Did Colonel Lindbergh carry a candy bar when he made his famous flight to Paris?

According to my newsclip filing system, Lindbergh carried four sandwiches, but ate only half of one. He drank some water. I can’t find any mention of candy bars.

What’s a golden wedding?

The best way to answer you is to tell about the French girl, newly resident in Topeka, Kans., who was present at the golden wedding celebration of a bishop. She inquired, puzzled: “What ees zees golden wedding? We do not ’ave in France.” The bishop, putting his arm around his wife, smilingly replied: “It means that this lady and I have lived together for 50 years.” French girl: “Ah, zat is beautiful. And now so you get married, yes?”

You shouldn’t use so uncouth and undignified a term as “strip-tease.” Try to show a little refinement once in a while, instead of being a vulgarian devoid of the finer sensibilities.

From now on strip-tease will be called “delectronic divestusses.”

Can cats interbreed with rabbits?

No. Nor can they interbreed with raccoons, skunks, emus, wallabies, and pandas.

Can cats live 20 or 30 years?

With good food, care and luck, cats occasionally last 31 or 32 years, which is equivalent in man to an age of about 102 years.

Is a catgut string made from the gut of a cat?

I’ve exploded this notion before, as may be seen by referring to my volumes of questions and answers. Cats aren’t used at all. Sheep, hogs and cows can be used for violin strings. The word “catgut” is said to be a corruption of “kitgut,” “kit” being the term for a kind of violin.

What do you think of Colonel Stoopnagle’s “Daffyinitions”?

I don’t deny they’re daffy, but I insist they aren’t funny. Let me quote a sample: “Business is stuff that if enough people don’t give you some of their, you’ll soon be out of.”

What’s your painful reaction to the critics of modern morals who insist virtue’s decline got its real start when the closed motor car was made popular.

Obviously, these critics are wrong. I remember, from personal experience and observation, what went on in rubber-tired buggies.

Did you see “Pinocchio”?

Yes, naturally. And I liked it all right, for Walt Disney has always been one of my admirations in cinemaland, next to Charlie Chaplin, who always comes first. But I insist it’s asking too much of the public to expect it to sit through an hour and a half of a cartoon. My readers may recall that when I reviewed the first feature-length Disney opus (“Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”) I praised its artistry, wit, liveliness and superb technical skill, but at the same time I warned Mr. Disney (see my volumes of questions and answers for the precise text) that he shouldn’t do more than one feature-length picture each five or six years. I insist the
short eight- or nine-minute Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse reels are better showmanship right down the line, because they always carry the best that Disney has to offer and at the same time the audience isn’t made to feel physically tired. These long pictures are positively tiring. They’re too much of a good thing. Once in a long time we should be given a 20-minute cartoon, and once in a half decade we can be made to accept one that takes 90 minutes to grind out, but the mine run of this art form should consist of the shorts that rarely run more than 10 minutes. Mr. Disney is making a big mistake in going in for these hefty shows. In the end, I’m sure, he’ll hurt the medium and, eventually, put an awful kink in his purse. I can take a dab of angle-food cake and smack my lips over it, but I’d gag at the idea of making a meal on one.

May I suggest you appeal for funds to meet the deficit in The Freeman? The object of The Freeman is to disseminate essential information to Americans, So it seems to me perfectly proper to appeal for funds. I’m afraid you will never be able to raise a sufficient amount of money in any other way.

I’ve hesitated to use space in the paper for the deficit fund because such publicity means a certain number of editorial articles have to be omitted. However, I’m giving room for this little piece because the paper’s financial situation is serious. Those who have made contributions are urged to repeat their donations, while those who’ve never turned in a dollar to the deficit fund are requested to join in this important work. The Freeman depends on its readers for financial support. The big advertisers have no use for a free-spoken, independent, progressive organ like this paper. So none of their money is available. But that wouldn’t mean much if the readers took it on themselves to dispose of the deficit through the medium of direct contributions. Unless instructed otherwise, all contributions are acknowledged on the front page of The Freeman. That list is really a roll of honor. Your name should appear in it.

Throughout your 19 volumes of questions and answers you say that Hitler, in his “Mein Kampf,” justified lying. Can you give me the exact quotation?

I have, in several pieces, quoted from Hitler to show that he believed in the “greater lie,” which means he discounted petty lies but approved of immense lies. This point has been covered many times by other commentators. However, there’s another passage on the same point that I’ve never quoted before and which I want to repeat below:

Propaganda is only another weapon, if a truly fearful one, in the hands of an expert. . . . The slighter its scientific ballast, and the more exclusively it considers the emotions of the masses, the more complete its success. . . . It must not objectively explore any truth that favors the other side.

Even if Hitler had never written in support of “the greater lie” one would have his record of deeds to uphold the conclusion that he has always followed the policy that great lies are permissible if they meet the pragmatic test—in short, if they work.

I can’t quarrel with you because of the way you dismissed “Strange Cargo,” the reason being that I haven’t been able to see the picture here in Providence, R.I., because of “censor trouble.” Please comment on the enclosed clippings which give you the facts.

I didn’t like “Strange Cargo,” mainly because it’s poor art and poor entertainment. Its religious ideology impressed me as so much spookology. But that doesn’t mean I approve of any act that’s aimed at banning the picture. Even a bad picture, like a bad book, has the right to its audience, if it can get one. In Providence, the situation is even more serious, for the censorship is based on the grounds that the Catholic Church doesn’t approve of the movie’s religious slant. Since the characters in this dull picture are moved by religious impulses that aren’t in accord with the dogmas of the Catholic Church, it was suppressed. That’s going far in the direction of intellectual mediavalism. The picture, as many of my readers know, tells the story of a group of convicts who escaped from Devil’s Island, the notorious penal colony. One of the escaped criminals is a Christ-like character who looks and talks like Jesus, which in itself should be a
warning against expecting much from this pious trash. Our Christ-like character gets to work on these bad men (who are accompanied by a bad woman) and reforms them right down the line, turning the scoundrels into candidates for sainthood. That's the story, and I don't recall any equally pretentious picture that was quite as boring and uplifting in a do-good-for-all way. Since it's a bad, trite, tedious dish of tripe, the only thing an honest critic can do is to warn his readers that if they pay good money to see it they're letting themselves in for a performance that's almost certain to give them an acute pain in private parts of their anatomy. That's the correct and civilized way to react to a bad picture, a bad book, or the like. But in Providence, an entirely different approach was undertaken, and, I regret to report, with complete success from the viewpoint of the obscurantists and suppressionists. The Catholic Church put its curse on "Strange Cargo" not because it was bad religion. Captain George W. Cowan, the city's "inspector of amusements" was prevailed on by the Catholic Church's Legion of Decency to ban the picture, one complaint being the "lustful implications in dialogue and situation," but the other one (the real reason) being the following: "This picture, in which religion is the prominent issue, presents a naturalistic concept of religion contrary to the teachings of Christ. Irreverent use of Scripture." That's jumping off at the deep end. The people of one of our large cities (many of whom are Freethinkers, people indifferent to religion and the church, Jews, Unitarians, modernists, religious liberals, etc.) are denied the right to see a picture because its religious message doesn't jibe with the dogmas of the Catholic Church. If the Christ-like character in the picture had been a priest instead of a religious free-lance, there'd have been no squawk from the Church. Of course, Catholics have a right to stay away from "Strange Cargo" if it offends their religious notions, but they certainly have no right to impose their doctrines on non-Catholics.

What do you say to this, which is taken from a popular novelist in the Soviet Union, D. Bleiman: "The lark is exclusively a Soviet bird. The lark does not like the other countries."

This morning, while walking from my farm-home to the office I was charmed by several larks, whose lilting notes have always delighted me. The only way I can explain their presence in bourgeois Kansas is to suggest they may be Trotskyists or other deviators from the party line.

† † †

Does our government conscript pigeons in time of war?

There are no regulations permitting the government to take over pigeons, but during the World War the government received special cooperation from the homing-pigeon associations.

What do you think of Paul Muni's acting?

I've written several pieces in which Muni's artistry was praised, as you may see by looking into the pages of my volumes of questions and answers. He's an excellent character actor, but uneven, and inclined to take on unsuitable or indifferent roles. He was at his peak in "Pasteur." His work in "The Good Earth" was good, as far as it went, but it never went far enough to pour the juices of life into the part. It should have been played by a Chinese. I never got over the idea that Muni was a white man playing the part of a Chinese peasant. That shows he couldn't create an illusion, which means he was miscast, so far as I can see. It didn't jell. "The Life of Emile Zola" was a flawless job especially the court scenes. In "Juarez" he'd be the part for a while and then go haywire. Some of the scenes came off with a bang; others petered off. "We Are Not Alone" was Jane Bryan's picture, not Muni's. He was miscast again. In "the Woman I Love," with Miriam Hopkins, he was positively awful, but no one can blame him, because the story was rotten and the direction was bad. But that doesn't alter the fact that Muni should have had enough brains to have known he didn't belong in that piece of shwartz. I understand he's to do "Beethoven" next. Let's hope it'll be another "Pasteur." Muni is a hard, conscientious, intelligent worker, who always tries his best and throws everything he's got.
into a role, but he'll have to learn to say No once in a while or he'll let the studios ruin him with bad stories. And that would be an outrage, for the man's got plenty of shmalzt in him. He must learn to tell the difference between shmalzt and shwartz. There's a difference, you know.

Since you're not such a bad wordslinger, let me tell you how many times you can recast that line, "All that glitters is not gold," expressing the same thought with exactly the same words.

I don't know how many times it can be done, but here are 20:

All that glitters is not gold.
Glitters not all that is gold.
Is all that glitters not gold?
Gold is all that glitters not.
Not all that glitters not.
All that gold is glitters not.
Glitters not all that is gold.
All that gold is not glitters.
Is all that gold not glitters?
Not all that gold is.
All that is gold glitters not.
Is all that gold glitters not?
Not all that is gold.
Gold glitters; that is not all.
All that is gold glitters not.
Glitters all that is not gold?
Is all not gold that glitters?
Not all glitters that is gold.
Gold glitters not, that is all.
Glitters all that gold is not.
All that is not gold glitters.

Let some of my readers pick it up from here.

Editor: Hitler may have run all the red lights in the Code of Canon Law, but the fact still remains that he is a Catholic. No amount of buck passing, denials, and apologies from both clergy and laity can brush aside the cold facts. Nothing but a formal, bona fide, above board excommunication will break Hitler's ties with the Church; and there are no signs, as yet, of a big split-up between Hitler and the religion of his choice. A paranoic with five astrologers on tap is certainly not above running to a Catholic priest occasionally for a few religious shots in the arm.

It is plain to see the Catholic hierarchy isn't throwing up its hands in horror at the things Hitler has done and is doing, except as a fooling gesture. They approve of his actions wholeheartedly, secretly applauding him. They are not doing this openly, it is true, because they know this would be a mistake, and a serious one at that. Instead they are resorting to behind-the-scenes trickery at which they are so adept. Trial balloons are being sent up from Royal Oak, Mich. Before other Catholic leaders throw their weight behind Coughlin publicly, they must know, first, how Coughlin's poison is going to take with the people. If this man of Gawd continues to get by with his lies, his rabbles-rousing, hate-breeding, and race-baiting, other Catholics will take courage and raise up their voices. But as long as America remains a democracy and violently anti-Hitler, the Catholics will disown Hitler publicly and pass the buck on to the Atheists. The interesting subject of Hitler's religion must be soft-pedaled. If the world got published broadcast that Hitler is a vehicle which is over 90 percent water? It seems at least conceivable that other worlds and other beings actually interpenetrate this sphere. Certainly, there is nothing "absolute" about sense-testimony. I suspect if you had lived when the discovery was made that the world was round you would have been the first to have attacked it.

Your magazine is limited in circulation because you are so limited in thought. Why not include occasionally the ideas of men like Bergson, Poe, (Read his "Eureka") Kant, Berkeley, Troward, Lodge and others. (Personally, I am already fed-up with atheistic utterances, emanating from mediocre, limited minds.) Accept this suggestion and watch the paper grow. The name "Freeman" most certainly does not apply to a paper that refuses to remove its diapers. Intolerance is not freedom.

EDMUND K. GOLDSBOROUGH
Washington, D.C.
Catholic in good standing, even the most befuddled of medal-polishers, bead-counters, and prayerwheel-twirlers might catch on to something. That would be bad for the Catholic hierarchy.

One doesn't have to do any extensive reading in the capitalistic press or turn the dials of his radio very far to hear Hitler denounced as a godless man, a pagan, an Atheist. The reason for this is obvious. To a “Christian,” an Atheist is the lowest, most despicable of all living creatures. The mass of the people still is leaning toward the side of Christianity (in word, if not in deed) so, Eureka! Hitler becomes an Atheist. All good Christians know that only an Atheist would stir up such a bloody holocaust as Hitler is doing now and will continue to do until he comes to a violent end. Instead of shouting from the housetops that Hitler has embraced their own form of religious cesspool seepage, the hierarchy is piping down that disturbing fact, and is solemnly pointing to the Pope as the only hope for world peace.

Azel, Tex.

A. M. PASCHALL

Editor: I'd like to tell a story about "that much more fastidious animal," my cat, that C. A. Lang talks about. My cat is not only fastidious, but fussy. Each morning he would be waiting for me as I came downstairs and would immediately follow me to the bathroom, there to perch on my lap as I perched on the seat. After a while he caught on to what was going on each morning when I sat. Then one day I surprised him perched on the seat himself doing his duty. He seemed to look at me rather sheepishly, but I praised his efforts. From that day on he has persisted in using this accommodation to relieve himself. If the cover of the seat happens to be down when he receives the call, I become immediately aware of the situation by his persistent yells from the bathroom. Well, I don't know. It may be an old story to other cat-owners, but it was a new one on me. I am told no one would believe it unless I got a snapshot of it. But how would you like to have someone take a shot at you in the same predicament?

SCHOOLMARM

S. E. HANBERG

"C. A. Lang's comments on your choice of words prompts me to ask why you avoid using the word 'imply.' You invariably use 'infer' where a grammarian would insist on 'imply.'"—Dean Mumy, Kans.

"I am sorry to hear about your fine paper's growing deficit, because I know you have something worth while, a bulwark against superstition and a definite aid to clear thinking. I am enclosing two dollars to help in a small way."—Benjamin L. Grossman, Somerville, Mass.

"If the Pope ever gets around to doing a little excommunicating, it will at least be after he has seen which way the cat has jumped. If Hitlerism, and Hitler with it, falls in its own country; if Goering, Himmler, Hess, R'bbentrop, et al, as well as key men of the Gestapo and SS, are strung up to convenient lamp posts; if Mussolini's fat belly becomes a bayonet pin cushion; in short,
if Nazism, Fascism, and Totalitarianism are wiped from the face of the earth, the Pope, then, might do some excommunicating. But not before. Excommunicate Hitler when he MIGHT win! Never! If Hitler does win, he will be allowed to remain in the one and only church as he now is. [See Hitler's own biography for proof of his Catholicism.] The Pope will give him his holy blessings—and help divvy up the bloody swag. Need I point out that if the Pope could but rule the world as Hitler rules Germany, he would rule the world AS Hitler rules Germany? Popes have ruled before, and we know what happened."—A. M. Paschall, Azel, Tex.

"I once told a lawyer friend of mine one of your long-time-since gags—the one about the father who wanted to get his daughter married off to a young fellow and offered him $5,000 for carrying the gal, adding the remark, 'Of course she's a little bit pregnant.' My lawyer came back with one of his flashes: 'Oh, you mean on one side only.'"—George M. Richter, Evanston, Ill. (Editor's Note: That could be added without spoiling the story, but I like the version which has it that after the wedding the old man failed to come forward with the $5,000 he had promised to pay the young man. The girl's new husband hung around the house of his father-in-law that first night, refusing to budge until he received his money, finally rising to this dramatic outburst: "Unless you pay me the $5,000 now not one button will I unbutton.")

Editor: Uptown Chicago had a bad fire and The Uptown News reported the details as you'll see from this:

"Heavy black smoke could be seen from Devon avenue, and was so thick that Uptown Bank building was obscured from stores across the street. It rolled into the Riviera and Uptown theaters, whose frightened patrons evacuated." Scared? I'd say they were.

Chicago, Ill. O. W. BUCKLIN

"It is possible, though improbable, that some super-vibration, of which we know little, might shatter some of the ignorance and materialism in which your mind is well submerged. You don't know anything, Haldeman-Julius, and you don't know you don't know anything."—R. Chapman, Washington, D.C.

"You have good reasons to be proud of your daughter, Alice, for her work in compiling the International Freethought Annual. I hope she'll go ahead and make it really an annual publication. And I'm convinced that she is fully capable of carrying on from where the old man leaves off. Of course, that's a big assignment, for there is certainly a tremendous amount of work involved in your job; and, in addition, there's always that great 'occupational hazard' for women—marriage. However, your daughter's splendid efforts have given your readers (this one at least) renewed faith in the future of Freethought publishing."—Dean Mumy, Kans.

"I am sorry I cannot send more than the enclosed dollar to the deficit fund. It's disheartening to see so pitifully few contributions to this fund. When we see freedom of speech and press—or what was left of it—being slowly but surely strangled in this country, we can't help wishing that lovers of liberty were a little more willing to make sacrifices. Readers perhaps do not realize that your paper is more needed than ever. Other publications with two or three exceptions, are growing daily more frightened and conservative. They dare not print even so much of the truth as we could expect from them a mere four years ago. More power to your pen."—J. Matthews, Wilmington, Del.

"Am sending along a dollar for the deficit fund. However little they are worth they are still hard to get. Or am I telling you?"—Walter A. Parrish, Chicago, Ill.

"Enclosed herewith a small contribution to the deficit fund. I trust your difficulties may be overcome and hope we can continue to receive our Free-

Editor: Religion demands surrender of reason to the forces of superstition
and established authority. The Church inspires and imposes moral and intellectual slavery. Through its power as an organization, the Church dominates the mental life of believers and dictates false and socially harmful moral codes for the enforced guidance of society in general. Indeed, the influence of the modern day Church affects both believers and non-believers. It shackles the minds of the former and imposes personal and social handicaps upon those who have the mental stamina and moral courage to think.

Spokane, Wash. ROBERT SLOCUM

Wm. J. Fielding, N.Y.C.: “Herewith find a dollar, which I hope will help the deficit fund some.”

Editor: Miss Haldeman-Julius, I am sure, is capable of stepping into your unholy sex to carry on mass-education but who is to carry on the stories? How Henry’s sophisticated story aptitude? He is our only hope. We really shouldn’t worry about this minor item though, for you are good for another half century and then we shall be old and decrepit and not care a damn who’s dog done what on which water plug.

When can we expect your autobiography off the presses? There isn’t nearly enough material available to readers on your life. We’ve had to be content with the tantalizing occasional glimpses you’ve let slip into The Freeman and your other works, of your life and the circumstances that made you the amazing combination of Socrates, Confucius, Ben Franklin, Voltaire, Rabelais, Wang Hung Lo, and E. H. J. yourself. And though I know it won’t do any good I’d like to plug for a good portrait picture of you to be included as a frontispiece.

Springfield, Colo. RICHARD E. GREENE

“I know you’ll excuse this little outburst, but really I think you missed the bus on the story of the Parisian who claimed to be such an expert on wine. Instead of closing the story with the remark ‘Why, it’s just p---s!’ (notice how prissy I am about leaving out the two letters between ‘p’ and ‘s’), you should have added the remark of one of the members, ‘Yes, but WHOSE?’ I don’t agree. The point of the story is that this bluffer couldn’t tell the difference between wine and urine. To ask him to identify the person whose water was used is to change the whole drift of the yarn and attract sympathy to the windbag, for no one could be expected to know whose dew-drops were poured into his glass.

Do any preachers read after you?

Yes, of course, and some are right friendly. For example, let me quote the following from the Rev. E. Shurley Johnson, minister, Central Methodist Church, Woodward and Adams Ave., Detroit, Mich.: “I have, for years, been a long-distance admirer of yours and the work you do. I find it a tonic and help and have been a grateful beneficiary. I am enclosing $5 as a contribution to The Freeman’s Deficit Fund.” That’s the kind of help that counts. Friendly words along with friendly deeds—that’s my notion of a good setup. But fellows who talk big and do nothing strike me as being as exciting as going to a funeral in a hired car, running at second speed behind the hearse.

While wandering casually through your volumes of chastity, purity, reverence and piety (“Questions and Answers,” of course) I was struck by your comments on a laborer’s job. He was devoted, eight hours daily, to what he called “curve greasing.” This suggests an interesting line of research—to discover just how many types of jobs there are in the U.S. Can you give me the data?

Do you realize it would take hundreds of thousands of dollars for me to do such a job? However, I won’t, because the U.S. Labor Department has already done it. Recently, after five years’ research, the department issued a dictionary of jobs, in which it listed 17,452 types of occupations, running from cat Skinner to screen ape and strip-teaser. This large book was compiled from data gathered by 6,500 employees, plus labor union officials, trade associations and professional societies. In 1927 a similar dictionary was issued by the British ministry of labor.

What’s your opinion of Grade A milk?

This is a subject I’ve discussed in several volumes of my questions and answers, but I’m willing to repeat myself to this extent: The only difference between Grade A and B milk is about 3c. The quality is the same. Speaking of milk reminds me of a
young pre-medic who attended a party one night and got rather tight. The next morning he had to take an exam, though he was still rather woozy. One of the questions was: Why is mother's milk better for baby than other milk? The pre-medic thought it over and dashed off the following reasons: 1. It's fresh. 2. It's easy to take on picnics. 3. The cats can't get it. Proudly surveying his work, he added one other reason—a crowning achievement, a masterpiece, he thought: 4. It comes in such cute containers. . . . This student may have been in the co-educational college I now want to write about. Discipline in the chapel wasn't what it should be, so the Dean decided to segregate the sexes by moving the boys to the front and the girls to the rear. A near-riot was caused when the Dean, instead of saying, "All women now shall be made to take the back seats," inadvertently said, "All women shall now be taken to the back seats to be made."

How can we remedy the common fault of adding unwarranted syllables to many words?

Search me. That fault annoys me no end. The only cure is patient self-criticism and wide acceptance or the words of King Lear, "Mend your speech a little, lest you may mar your fortunes." It burns me to a crisp to hear "drown-ed," "ath-a-let-ic," "pre-vaen-ta-tive," "at-tack-ted," "umber-el-lar," "mis-chee-ve-oys," and "bar-bair-i-oys." It's true that many people actually go to immense pains to be wrong. That last one—"bar-bair-i-oys"—is especially painful. Charlie Chaplin, during several conversations I had with him, pulled that boner more than once. I've been guilty myself of "pre-vaen-ta-tive." As my contribution to the cause of popular education and better habits of speech, let me pass on the correct pronunciations of the above: "drownd," "ath-let-ic," "pre-vaen-tive," "at-tackt," "um-brel-luh," "mis-chi-vus," and "bar-buh-russ."

Since you're always ready to jump to the defense of victims of injustice, how come you never protest against the inadequate sex life of the amoeba? It's a delicate subject which I can't touch on without bursting into tears. Just why Mother Nature thought it best for the amoeba to procreate by fission or splitting is beyond the comprehension of my romantic temperament. But, just what can I do for the poor animal? A poet (I don't know his name) touches on the theme with this:
The guinea pig is not very big, The amoeba is very, very small. The guinea pig proceeds to copulation. With the greatest of elation, While the amoeba just sits And broods . . . and splits.

Where do you stand on education?
I stand with Mr. Newrich, who'd been asked to distribute prizes at the local school. During his speech he dwelt on the benefits of education, saying: "What a wonderful thing is education! Now, take arithmetic. If we are educated we know that two twos make four, that four fours make 16, that nine nines make—and then there's history. . . ."

Tough nut to crack from your July Freeman: "This movie ('Young Tom Edison') brought to mind a soft, hanging shwantz, so I turned my thoughts in the direction of another bumper of bock." This, I am sorry to say, is all over my head; I don't know what you mean. "Shwantz" is too much for my two-pound Webster's.

Shwantz means putz.

In at least half of your volumes of questions and answers I find glowing remarks about C. A. Lang, of Maplewood, Mo., whom you describe as your pet reader. Since you have tens of thousands of readers, please let me know how you go about picking a pet.

You've got me there, brother, but I'll stick to my story. Lang, who is an humble letter-carrier (take a second look at that, you highbrows), stands out for several reasons. First, it happens he's been here at my home and office several times, his wife even cooking me a couple of coking meals when I happened to be batching. Lang writes intelligent, informed, civilized letters, as may be seen by referring to almost any of my volumes of questions and answers, where they've been reprinted. But Lang goes beyond that. He not only writes, talks and thinks for freedom and
progress, but he backs up his words with deeds. I get an acute pain in a private part of my anatomy whenever I have to endure the company of people who are full of big words (bull excrement) but are short on deeds. Lang combines action with ideals. I've just referred to my Lang file and am able to report that since 1937 he has done 20 separate and distinct acts (backed by from $1 to $4 in each instance) for the good of the best of all causes—social progress and Freethought. He has drummed up many new readers (and boy, how I need a larger audience), he has made contributions, he has made valuable suggestions—and such behavior means something to an editor who's issuing a paper that can't get revenue from advertisers because of its intellectual independence. If the paper's to get anywhere it must command the support of an army of Langs.

Please poke your nose into that inexhaustible, newly compiled filing system of yours and bring forth a table showing percent that wages bear to the value of products of the major industries in the U.S.

The Congressional Record (Senate), February 21, 1938 (page 2995) gives official figures, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephonic</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal mining</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroads</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold mining</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipbuilding</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and business equip</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine tools</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traction</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead mining</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufactured gas</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk and raven goods</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boot and shoes</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper mining</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpets and rugs</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton goods</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locomotives</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural implements</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen and worsted goods</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radios and phonographs</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto bodies and parts</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron and steel</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical equipment</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bread and bakery products  20.1
Printing and publishing    19.1
Leather                    18.1
Electric light and power   18.0
Department stores           18.0
Rubber tires and tubes     17.5
Cement                     17.4

Do you recommend the invisible stockings described in the enclosed clipping?
I'm skeptical and will remain that way until I see those invisible stockings with my own eyes.

Your articles about Bertrand Russell are interesting because they show this great man's Freethought, but why are you so careful to ignore his pacifism? Not a word in any of your volumes of questions and answers, through which I looked thoroughly. How come? You're yelling for war. Is that the reason why you dislike this great philosopher's ideas of violence?

My reader seems oblivious of the fact that Bertrand Russell, like myself, has dropped pacifism. The British philosopher, who has been teaching at the University of California in Los Angeles and will soon join the lecture staff of Harvard University, wrote a letter which appeared in the June 7, 1940, issue of the London magazine, The New Statesman, in which he said: "Since the war began, I have felt that I could not go on being a pacifist. If I were young enough to fight I would do so, but it is difficult for me to urge others to do so." Mr. Russell, though a little late, is joining the company of the other great pacifist, Prof. Albert Einstein, who, by the force of circumstances, found it necessary to revise his ideas regarding ways of meeting the problem of Nazism and Fascism. Einstein tried for years to uphold the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, but when he came face to face with the realities of Hitlerism he learned there was only one answer to the savageries of the Fuehrer—bigger bombers and mightier tanks. It's blindness to think in any other terms when a gang of hoodlums are in control of engines of war and are out to destroy everything that's fine and decent in civilized institutions. Back in 1935, a few days after Hitler took power, I wrote an article for The Freeman in which I said that the advent of Hitlerism meant war. That came to pass. A few months
later I wrote that Nazism was organized gangsterism and that only organized force by the democracies will be able to cope with the threat Hitler was hurling at the world. I said at the time that it was pure folly to stand by and let this mass-murderer grow strong, for he would, in time, pile up enough armaments to impose his will on the world, unless stopped by violence on the part of the democratic enemies of Fascism. Never once during the growth of Hitlerism did I take a pacifist stand. Never once since his early acts of aggression did I suggest non-resistance. And today, with Hitler poised to crush France as I write these words, I feel more than during any period since 1933 that all democracies should join to destroy this beast. I still believe that the U.S. should give the Allies money, send all available supplies, make scores of thousands of bombers and combat planes for the Allies, put our navy to work fighting Fascism, and, if necessary, go the rest of the way and send our men to any place where totalitarianism is pushing its aims by force. Also, there's no sense in shutting our eyes to the fact that we must grow tremendously strong in a military sense if we are to preserve the kind of a world we want to live in. This means, to be consistent, that we'll have to accept universal military service for the duration of the crisis. There's no sense in trying to limit ourselves to half measures. Our man-power and wealth must be drawn on to end this orgy of destruction and barbarism. Pacifism in such a world is stark, raving madness. Let's get in and fight with both fists. I hope it won't be necessary to send our boys to Europe, but even if that's necessary I'm for doing it right now, before it's everlastingly too late. And, while we're setting the stage for this big push, let's see to it that there's no change in the White House. The country needs another four years of Roosevelt. His leadership is essential. He knows what the score is, he knows what's to be done in order to end Hitlerism, and he's able to lead the democratic world to victory. I've said all these things dozens of times in the past. I say them again, and will continue to repeat them, because I know they point the way to safety and security.

Have you been reading about the marital cavortings of your old palsy-walsy Nazi Winrod?

Some of my pious readers in Wichita, Kans., have been sending me fat batches of clippings from the Eagle and the Beacon, telling about the Rev. Gerald B. Winrod's court troubles with his anti-Nazi wife. The crusader and Fascist has been ordered by Judge Robert L. NeSmith to keep at least two blocks from his wife's home and to see to it that she gets $25 weekly for the support of herself and children. Winrod, she testified, once sat up all night on the couch in the living room, a shot-gun across his knees, waiting to defend himself against his anti-Nazi enemies, among whom I suppose the Jews must be the leading conspirators. She also said he was visited about five years ago by a couple of Nazi representatives who invited him to go to Germany for a look-see, with all expense paid by Dr. Goebbels. He took the trip, and from then on he's been using his magazine for Nazi propaganda and anti-Semitism. He was broke when he went over. Now he's worth $20,000 in cash, according to her testimony, and is the owner of a publishing plant worth many thousands of dollars. Where did the gold come from? The Lord sent him those blessings, as a reward for his crusading in the Cause of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mrs. Winrod said her husband is all set to become the head guy in our government once the Nazi revolution's put over in the U.S. He has a hideaway in Wyoming, to which he'll run when things begin warming up, but when the mob's ready for him he'll pull up stakes and begin his great march to Washington, along the lines of the Mussolini march to Rome. Mrs. Winrod said she was happy with him when he was a plain, simple evangelist, but she couldn't stand him when he turned Nazi propagandist. Almost every evening he would compel her and the children to listen to broadcasts from German propagandists and would insist they believe that everything done by Adolf ("Shock-Shucker") Hitler is right and proper. A few minutes ago Win-
rod's magazine came to my desk and I immediately took a quick look to learn what this Man of Gawd had to say about his troubles with the law. I could find only a little box on page 3, in which he said, over his signature:

PERSONAL

During the last few days, some of our friends out over the Country, have been disturbed at rumors and reports emanating from Jewish sources in Wichita. The facts, involving amazing intrigue and falsehood, will be made known at the proper time. Meanwhile let the great Defender Family push forward in its mission of Christian witnessing, with ever increasing devotion to the Cause of the Lord Jesus Christ.

GERALD B. WINROD

So, the Jews are to blame for everything that's been taking place in Judge NeSmith's court. The Jews have gone into cahoots with Mrs. Winrod and turned her into an anti-Nazi. The Jews brought Betty Weakland, pretty singing evangelist, into the case. Miss Weakland, beautiful brunette, was hired by the Jews to pray to the Lord in ways that might prove embarrassing to the Rev. Winrod. Oh, those terrible Jews. No wonder Hitler got after them. This Winrod is the guy who has been painting me as an enemy of the sacred, Christian home, an immoral advocate of easy divorce, a supporter of birth control, and a reprobate who believes in free love, along with free lunch, free beer, and free vulcanizing service for owners of ruptured condoms. As for the glamorous brunette who had an important place in the Winrod trial, let me say that I have no objections to Gawd's decision to jazz up the pulpit with a little oomph. Maybe Jehovah has decided to put aside the dowdy, frumpy, pork-complexioned prissy-prattis who have, until now, served as female defenders of the faith. Maybe the gorgeous brunettes (why does the Lawd pass up curvacious blondes with big blue eyes?) have received a call to put new pep into the Lawd's house. If Gawd's church is to compete with Satan's Hollywood maybe the best tool is something between a Minsky strip-teaser and a Billy Rose bathing beauty. The Lord of Hosts at last sees the need for hostesses.

Weren't you a bit out of the way when you said, in your December, 1933, issue that the U.S. would be in the war within 90 or 120 days? Regardless of what C. A. Lang and W. Matthew say, you are prejudiced and biased sometimes.

Notice, my dear reader, I didn't say we'd declare war within 90 or 120 days after December 31, the last day covered by The Freeman which contained by assertion. I said we'd be in the war, That gave me until about May 1 to get the U.S. in the war. Well, didn't we, during May and June, 1940, change our status from neutral to non-belligerent? We're as much in this war as Mussolini was before his formal declaration of war. We're not fighting with our men, but we certainly are fighting with our resources, as Roosevelt repeated during his thrilling Charlottesville, Va., address. We've been sending hundreds of bombers and pursuit planes to England, and before long we'll be sending thousands. If that isn't being "in the war" I'm crazy. We're in up to our necks—with munitions, food, planes, tanks, artillery, rifles, shells, and the other essentials of modern warfare. Only today, June 19, 1940, I heard the news that President Roosevelt had turned over to England 20 of our fast mosquito torpedo boats.

I'm sure that if Hitler were asked what he thought of our activity he wouldn't hesitate a moment before saying we're "in the war" against him. And here I agree with Hitler. My prediction may have missed by a few weeks, but I called the shot pretty well at that. As for being prejudiced against Hitler and Fascism, I plead guilty. I was prejudiced against Nazism from the beginning. I hated Hitler from the first moment I read about his career, many years before he took power in January, 1933. I am prejudiced against every manifestation of Brutalitarianism. But I fight with the weapons for fact and truth, not with lies. I use the tools of civilization, not savagery. But that doesn't mean I attack Hitlerism disinterestedly, objectively, and without prejudice. And when I said I expected the U.S. to be "in the war" in 90 or 120 days, I was guilty of a certain amount of wishful thinking.
because I was hoping we'd really get in to help the Allies. I've been for active belligerency ever since the Bruttalitarians started knocking out small nations. At that time I fought to lift the embargo, and when that was done I did my little bit in helping to move a tiny portion of our public in the direction of constructive, material aid to the Allies, though I've made clear that I don't favor stopping there, for I believe we should go in all the way. If we do this now, we'll save ourselves lots of hardship, expense and misery. If we wait too long, we may be engulfed in a wave of Totalitarianism. If we can't send men to Europe, we can at least send thousands of pilots to fly fighting planes. And we can speed up our production of the instruments of war—first to help the Allies, and next, to make ourselves strong. Also, I favor going into the war in an economic sense, using our tremendous material and financial resources to keep the Western Hemisphere from sending supplies to Germany, Inc., now or after the war ends. We're in an undeclared war now: let's cut the red tape and go in honestly and frankly. If we wait much longer it may be too late. And if it's too late to stop Hitler, it's plain to this observer that Uncle Sam will be in for the hardest time in his history.

Your remark that some of President Roosevelt's policies don't please you moves me to ask for more definite information.

My objections to the Roosevelt policies aren't of a serious nature. Here and there things were done that failed to satisfy me, but in the main his measures were fundamentally sound, especially those that established social reforms. A wagish reader joins me in my modest structure, basing his complaint on the six reasons Roosevelt is alleged to have given why ladies cannot become mail carriers, the snooty highlights being that ladies are liable to mis-carry, do not carry mail bags, are irregular in their monthly runouts, take nine months for deliveries, cause hard feelings when they handle mail bags, and are most likely to get mail matters mixed up in their drawers. But I still insist that these issues, after all, are superficial, especially in these days of Nazi and Fascist aggressors, economic royalists at home, and Fifth Columnists who conspire to undermine our strength and morale.

Well-meaning but simple-minded non-Catholics have protested to me against your claims that Hitler is a Catholic, using almost the identical words that A. M. Paschall represents them as using. Evidently the nitwits talk and think alike all over the country. "Why," said they, "he MUST be a godless man, an Atheist, or he wouldn't do such horrible things."

To call Hitler an Atheist is stupid. The record, as given in the most recent volumes of my Questions and Answers, shows clearly that Hitler was born a Catholic, was raised a Catholic, listed himself a Catholic in the German Who's Who only a few years ago, and has never been excommunicated by the Catholic hierarchy. Space won't permit me to reprint excerpts from documents now available in my books. However, let me call attention to a United Press dispatch from Berlin, June 17, 1940, which says, among other things: "Special meetings of the Roman Catholic bishops throughout Germany have resulted in a decision to hold thanksgiving masses for the German victory in Belgium, Holland, and now in France." The hierarchy in Germany certainly ought to know where Hitler stands with regard to religion and the Church, and it's inconceivable that it would order thanksgiving masses for an Atheist's victories. Incidentally, while the French government was secular, like our own, the Catholic Church has a large following throughout the country, especially in the rural districts. Thus, the Catholic hierarchy orders masses to celebrate a victory over a people that is largely Catholic, as it did in Catholic Spain only a few years ago.

The Daily Worker, official organ of the Communist Party of the U.S., says England, in giving Churchill sweeping powers over the manouver and economic resources of the country, has become a Fascist country. Please comment.

The best answer to such a wild, silly charge is to call attention to the fact that within 48 hours after the new measures were passed by the House of Commons, England's lead-
ing Fascists (including even a Conservative member of Commons) were put in jail. Fascist countries aren't given to arresting their Fascist leaders. Note that the British defense measures were passed by members of Parliament who speak for the nation because they have a mandate from the people. A parliament that delegates powers to individuals like Churchill, Attlee, Morrison, Greenwood, and other officials of the government, can recall those powers when the emergency has passed. Since the Nazis have ganged up all their powers to destroy the democracies, the democracies in turn must concentrate all resources of labor and capital to meet the crisis. The difference is that the Nazis are using their coordinated powers to destroy civilization while the Allies are using them to save freedom and decency. The English people haven't gone over to the bloody totalitarianism of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin. They have merely imposed self-restraint and self-discipline in order to save themselves from slavery. Men like Churchill, Attlee, Morrison, and the others responsible for the country's defense have shown, by their records, that they believe in the traditions of the Mother of Parliaments. As I've said dozens of times in my volumes of questions and answers, democracy has a right to defend itself. Democracy has a right to crush its internal enemies who would destroy freedom and democracy. American Communists are every whit as bad and dangerous as the British Fascist, Sir Oswald Mosley, who was arrested shortly after the Churchills administration was given its emergency powers. U.S. Communists are open, contemptible tools of that mass-murderer and enemy of democratic civilization, Stalin. They are sworn enemies of our free institutions. They are as bad as the most despicable Nazi. The Browder outfit seeks to strengthen Red Fascism in the U.S., whereas the Bundists strive for Brown Fascism. That's the only difference. We Americans who look on democracy as a way of life will never accept a world that's dominated by the firm of Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini. Down with Communism, Nazism and Fascism! Long live democracy, freedom and the simple dignity of man!

Is there such a thing as perfect propaganda?

Fortunately, no. If the art of propaganda could be turned into an exact science there'd be the possibility of the Germans converting all the Allies and the Allies converting all the Germans. And then what would you have?

Can you tell me why Milwaukee defeated Dan Hoan?

Daniel W. Hoan, the best mayor Milwaukee ever had, was one of the pioneers who set as their goal the immense task of destroying municipal graft, corruption and inefficiency. Later, for almost a quarter of a century, Hoan served as mayor and gave his community the country's cleanest government. My volumes of questions and answers give much data on this subject. The record, as I outlined it, proved that Hoan's administration was progressive, honest, competent and businesslike. But that didn't stop a young crooner from ousting Hoan. Space doesn't permit me to go into the numerous reasons for this calamitous event, but one of the mightiest clubs used against the Hoan forces was that of the Church. The Fundamentalists in the Lutheran Church and the Black Internationalists in the Catholic Church worked their reactionary magic, with dire results. Priests, in particular campaigned openly against the Milwaukee Socialists and are mainly responsible for the defeat of the ticket. Thus, the Catholic Church has remained true to its history—a firm, powerful supporter of municipal corruption in cities like Kansas City, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and, through Tammany Hall, in New York City. Tammany Hall and the Catholic Church have been buddies since long ago. I don't mean to insinuate that all municipal corruption is to be blamed on the priests. Protestant parsons have done their share, though never with the ruthless consistency of the Black Brotherhood. But, wherever there's municipal rottenness there you'll find the priests using their cathedrals as citadels against the forces of decency. And when a city
—like Milwaukee—shows a record of honesty and progressiveness, there you'll find the rotten Church—the world's most ancient and powerful Fifth Column—working cooperatively with the elements that grow fat on political swinishness.

What do we pay to feed our dogs?

At an average of 8c per pound, it's estimated we pay $534,000,000 annually to feed the dogs in this country.

Can you name a famous movie star who has never been in a divorce court?
The late Rin-Tin-Tin.

Can you give me some of Mae West's descriptive adjectives?
Here are a few: Old and Shakv—Fair and Warmer!—So long, Chills and Fever!—Fat and Forty!—Hello, Bread and Butter!—Hello, Dark and Handsome!—Small and Shaggy!—Small and Rancid!

How much does it cost to go through college?
The New York Life Insurance Company prepared the following chart giving the approximate costs, including everything, of attending representative colleges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College and Location</th>
<th>4-Year Cost</th>
<th>4-Year Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Alabama, University, Ala.</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
<td>$2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown University, Providence, R.I.</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.</td>
<td>3,800</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia University, New York City</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>4,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H.</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>5,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Ind.</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>3,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Calif.</td>
<td>3,720</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford University, Stanford University P.O., Calif.</td>
<td>3,960</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yale University, New Haven, Conn.</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What's our principal export from Cuba?
It used to be sugar, but of late it seems to be rhumba bands.

How do you like radio sopranos?
O.K.—off key.

I have what many may look on as a queer hobby. It's collecting bombastic speeches. I already have that popular old masterpiece, "The Harp of a Thousand Strings" (1855) and J. Proctor Knott's equally famous Duluth speech (1871). Can you add one or two masterpieces of bombast to my collection? I think you will agree that this is a neglected branch of literature.

I've long been interested in bombast. Some years ago I tackled a piece of bombast into my newscap filing system, and I'm glad of this chance to dig it up for the amusement of my humor-conscious readers. The speech quoted from below was discovered by Franklin J. Meine, bibliographer of American humor, who found it in the records of the Missouri house of representatives, where, on February 8, 1861, a certain General Riley busted loose with a bunch of sentences that established a record. Riley's paragraphs, says Meine, are native Missouri material current when Mark Twain was making up native elements. Here are General Riley's gems of eloquence and extravagant humor:

"Sir, we have lost our proper position. Our proper position is to the zenith and nadir—our head to the one, our heels to the other, our left and right to the horizon, spanned by the azure arc of the lustrous emblem, bright with the coruscations of innumerable constellations, and proud as a speckled stallion on county court day.

"Cheer!

"But how have the mighty fallen, in the words of the poet Silversmith. We have lost our proper position. We have assumed a sloshing, indiarubalocular position. And what is the cause? The people have been fed on buncome, while a lot of spavined, ringed, hamsprung, wind-called, swinney-eyed, split hoofed, destempered, polliwitted, pot-bellied politicians have had their noses in the public crib until there ain't fodder enough left to make gruel for a sick grasshopper."

When I read the above lines to several visitors, one insisted the selection isn't as fiery and eloquent as the
Senator's speech opposing the resolution to change the name of Arkansaw, but I can't go into that here because the piece contains several indecent and profane expressions, and you know how finicky I am about preserving a solemn and sober front for my pious and right-minded subscribers. One mustn't get the notion that these bombastic cockroaches are full-of-superior impulses. The noise frequently takes away one's attention from the orator's mousiness. I'm reminded of George Moore's confession, in his "Ave. Overture," that "within the oftentimes bombastic and truculent appearance that I present to the world, trembles a heart shy as a wren in the hedgerow or a mouse along the walls..."

Let's say two bills are passed by Congress, neither of which is signed by the President, yet one becomes a law and the other doesn't. How could this happen?

This question came up during an "Information Please" broadcast a few months ago, and was answered by Wendell Willkie, as follows:

"A bill passed in the midst of a session of Congress becomes a law at the end of 10 days if the President leaves it unsigned and if Congress does not adjourn in the meantime, but if Congress adjourns after the bill has passed and if within 10 days it is not signed it thereby is vetoed. This is called the 'pocket veto.'"

Did you read "If You Don't Weaken"?

I enjoyed many passages in Oscar Ameringer's autobiography, but I never had the feeling he was portraying the real man. This Oklahoma editor and agitator, as many of my readers know, built his reputation on a fund of funny stories, but the book ignores them almost completely. The one about the counterfeit quarter is there—and a mighty good one it is—but that's about all. Maybe the man isn't the humorist he's played up to be. He may have had sense enough to strike them from his manuscript. The editor of The Oklahoma Guardian devotes many pages to how he got the good comrades of his State to chip in $250,000 for a workers' printing plant in Oklahoma City, and the picture in the book shows a plant of impressive proportions. A quarter of a million dollars of the toilers' money ought to pay for a lot of floor space and machinery. And all that's down there, but who owns it? Ameringer, according to his own story, collected all the money, the plant lost money from the first day—but in the end, the establishment became the private property of the distinguished world-saver. How did all this happen, when, according to his own yarn, he was always two steps from the stalking wolf of hunger? The workers put up their money, the plant didn't work for them, but it's going full tilt today—and the common people aren't in on it, as I read this narrative. Some clever high-finance was resorted to, but what it was you'll never learn from the Ameringer pen. All we know is that he has a beautiful office—paid for by the Oklahoma hillbillies—plenty of linotynes, presses, and the like—and all of it now the private, capitalistic property of one of the most vociferous world-savers of the radical movement. I confess the mystery is too deep for me. Clever people, these brothers of the bleeding heart. Carl Sandburg, in his introduction, says Ameringer is a combination of Mark Twain, Artemus Ward and Petroleum V. Nasby. That's a smacking bill of goods, but there's little in this 465-page book to support such a reputation. He seems to have poured his squibs into his periodicals, leaving them there to die in sad obscurity. It's a wise man who knows when to let his wisecracks remain in their coffins. But, as I've said several times in my volumes of questions and answers (plug), the test of a gag is how it stands repetition. You can embalm a bad story in print and let it go at that, for usually there isn't even an echo to disturb the appalling silence, but take such a yarn and tell it to several free-smoked comrades (especially after fifth straight whisky) and you've got to have something or be prepared to stand several seconds of abuse and ridicule. Now, I don't nose as a Mark Twain or an Artemus Ward, but I do know that many of my little stories (all clean as the breath of an angel) have stood the tests of print and conversation. And, what's more, I don't act the hypocrite about my stories. Unlike the author of "If You Don't
Weaken," I have the courage of my imbecility, telling my pieces of pifle in gatherings of the clan, in my pious monthly organ of righteousness and virtue—and, finally, between the covers of my volumes of questions and answers (second plug in one paragraph). Some of these stories are my own rewrites, the usual idea being to take someone else's innocuous spoofing and muss it up a little with Rabelaisian roughness. I've done that several hundred times, as may be seen in my vol—but I mustn't descend to a third plug. Mr. Ameringer tells stories to miners and hillbillies, causing gales of laughter when he explains their problems of daily life. He has gags about the high cost of living, the empty larder, the discharged WPA worker, the man of 90 who couldn't get his pension because he still had sight in one eye, and so on. But nary a one does he put into print. That's cowardice. Mark Twain came right out with his yarns, and some of them were pretty down-to-earth. I, too, have written stories that depict the sad annals of the poor. Take, for example, the housewife who was having a hard time paying her iceman for his daily deliveries. The poor woman just couldn't raise the daily dime, so the bill kept mounting at the rate of 10¢ a piece. Finally the situation became serious. The bill reached $20. So the worried woman went to an older neighbor who had had experience in such problems. The advice she got was shocking, but it seemed to point the way to a remedy. In short, the neighbor woman advised her to make a pass at the ice man, and if she got any kind of a response she could figure her $20 ice bill was practically paid off. The next morning the financially embarrassed housewife did exactly as instructed, and to her delight she found the gentleman quick on the draw. After the fourth morning session the ice man announced that she could consider the bill paid in full. That, as you can figure, meant he was allowing her $5 for each conference. But the housewife had other notions. In a burst of anger, she cried: "Listen, you big, hairy baboon, you brought it in at ten cents a piece and by Gawd you're gonna take it out that way." Such an incident shows the need for money reform and the socialization of the large-scale industries. There's lots of work cut out for us heart bleeding world-savers.

I am enclosing a clipping which is impressing lots of people. They shake their heads and say this numerical digest of the world's three great dictators indicates that 1940 will see their finish regardless of current victories. The fateful figures follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mussolini</th>
<th>Stalin</th>
<th>Hitler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Came to power</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in power</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total .......... 3880 3880 3880
Divided by two . 1940 1940 1940

If the above means anything startling then a band of swingorillas are better musicians than Beethoven. What could you get but 1940 if you add a person's age to the year of his birth? And what could you get but 1940 if you add the number of years in power to the year a dictator came into power? Take your own age, add it to the year you were born, and what do you get? 1940, of course. Next year it'll be 1941. And so on, souchlepme. Likewise, the year you first got the piles and the number of years you've been enjoying the piles will total 1940, if you use the method illustrated above. That little trick of getting a total of 3880 and dividing it in two is just a ringer that's intended to make the obvious a little less obvious, but it shouldn't fool an intelligent seven-year-old child. It's going to take more than the above table to get rid of Hitler and the other aggressors.

I am grateful to you for the way you have exposed the Catholic Church's historic anti-Semitism. Millions of Americans, I'm sure, don't know the record as you explain it. They ought to know that Coughlinism is nothing more than age-old Catholicism. In your articles you tell about the anti-Semitism that prevails in Catholic countries like Italy, Hungary, and in what was Poland. How about Catholic Spain?

Spain persecutes the Jews with the same cruelty and fanaticism that prevails in other Catholic-Fascist countries. The Franco regime, taking its tip from the hierarchy, has completely throttled the Jews in their social, economic and religious rights. Ac-
According to Dr. Leo H. Lehmann, who was a priest for many years, conditions in Franco's Spain are awful. Says he: "Synagogues have been closed, Jewish worship prohibited, Jewish marriage, circumcision and burial banned, and Jewish children required to attend Catholic religious instruction in the schools or go without schooling." He adds that many Jews, driven by fear, "have become converts to Catholicism." I make bold to say that wherever Catholicism is strong enough to assert its will anti-Semitism thrives in all its horrors. It's always been that way. Hitler hasn't discovered any new ways to persecute the Jews. Everything he's done can be traced to countries in which the Catholic Church had sufficient power to carry its policies into reality. In this country the Catholic Church is still a minority force, which explains why it doesn't bring out its heavy artillery. But once let it gain control of the country and you'll see all the age-old horrors brought to full bloom. We already have samples through the propaganda of Father Coughlin, who is nothing less than a Fifth Columnist for the Black International. The Boston Evening American, June 3, 1940, contains a news story in which Cardinal O'Connell is quoted as saying, "No Fifth Column will be found among the Catholics of America." The same issue contains a report of the day's proceedings in the Brooklyn, N.Y. trial of 17 Christian Fronters—all young Catholics—who, at this writing, are being tried in a Federal Court for having conspired to steal arms and ammunition from a government arsenal and to participate in a violent effort to overthrow our democratic institutions. All of them are followers of Father Coughlin. All are Fascists and anti-Semitism. The fact is, as I've written before, the whole Roman Catholic Church is nothing more than an international Fifth Column, with the ultimate aim of destroying freedom and... democracy. The Black International is Fifth Columning in this country today with a view to establishing a totalitarian State—Fascism, in short.

All joking aside, concerning advertising of "mass-production masses," just what would you do if one of the black-frocked brethren did offer you such an ad?

I'd probably accept it. But I'd reserve the right to have my full editorial say about the ad. I'm afraid the net results wouldn't be so good from the viewpoint of the pious. My readers are a hard-boiled outfit, not a lot of monkeys. Speaking of monkeys reminds me of how a minister one day saw a monkey out on a limb and said, "You are a cunning, little fellow, and I admire your activity in the branches of the trees, but you are only an ignorant monkey. I thank Gawd I am an immortal soul and will go much higher some day, even beyond the stars." "Sounds nice," said the monkey, "but what is there beyond the stars for you to wrap your tail around?"

Can you tell me how many fears we have?

In one of my volumes of questions and answers I told about Dr. Watson's book on behaviorism, in which he told how he learned that the first emotion a new-born baby feels is that of fear. A loud noise is the first thing that'll strike fear into an infant's heart. The next fear is that of falling. And from then on the sky's the limit. I don't know how many phobias science will discover, but Dr. W. F. Gidley, dean of the University of Texas's college of pharmacy, who has made a special study of fears, says he has found 230 of them, ranging from simple ones like the two just mentioned to complicated ones with unpronounceable names. He says nearly every person has a pet phobia, including fear of drafts, of air, stars, cats, microbes, red, worms, pains, fish, drugs, mice, sinning, lice, cold, strangers. number "13"—and work. Dean Gidley's collection of phobias—in every case abnormal—includes:

"Aichmophobia, insane fear of sharp-pointed objects; anglophobia, dislike for the English; anthropophobia, dread of human society; bathophobia, fear of depths; and batrachophobia, dread of frogs; bibliophobia, fear of books; bogophilia, fear of specters and spooks; bronchophobia, fear of thunder; ceraunophobia, fear of lightning; claustrophobia, fear of being shut up in a closed place; and colorophobia, aversion to color."
I don't find my particular fear in Dr. Gidley's list—the fear of bores. Voltaire, who always refused to suffer bores, described them as people who tell everything—who, in short, leave nothing to the imagination. With Ben Jonson I say a bore is a "tedious person a man would leap a steeple from, gallop down any steep hill to avoid." In daily life I announce I have some letters to write, that I must rush to the postoffice to get my mail, or that 20 galleys of proof have to be read at once. And then I run. That makes enemies, but who cares? However, I don't make many such enemies because I can usually spot them before they get me into their clutches. No end of bores write me long, tedious, dull letters, but I have a special receptacle for such trash, which an employee dumps into the balker each morning, where human augurs naturally belong. "Fear not," warns the Old Testament, for, as others have said, fear kills more than disease. But the Old Testament, as usual, contradicts itself, for in another place it says (Proverbs, xxviii, 14), "happy is the man that feareth always." Speaking of fears reminds me that I get many letters from readers who tell me they admire my fearlessness, and that always puzzles me, for I can assure my most skeptical readers that when I write something that sounds brave to some of my readers I had no such feeling when I performed the little job of writing my notions. Hundreds of pieces have brought me letters telling me about my fearlessness, when I felt quite simple and tame when I pounded them out on my machine. Knowing myself to have the figure and nature of a lamb it surprises me to be mistaken for a lion. People are so unaccustomed to intellectual honesty that they jump to the conclusion the fellow who has a grain of it must be something of a hero. And it's an insult to praise a man for his honesty. I remember how angry I got with a fellow to whom I had just paid a small bill. He thanked me again and again, pumped my hand, slammed me on the back, and told me what a wonderful guy I was—just because I paid him what I owed him. I felt like telling him to go jump in the lake. He was being offensive, but too ignorant to know it. He belonged to what Mark Twain called the "miraculously ignorant." So much that we call bravery is nothing more than ignorance. Look at the millions of ignoramuses who are dying for the glory of Hitler. Many of his heroes are brave, fearless men, but see how their heroism is twisted and perverted by ignorance. As I write these lines many of Hitler's dupes are literally dying—and everything that Hitler stands for is based on ignorance. Yes, bravery is an exaggerated virtue. But when it's applied to true ends and for worthy things—we admire it, for "no legacy," said Shakespeare, "is so rich as honesty." If you want to get an amazing picture of man, look through his record down the ages and see the things he's died for by the millions—lies, prejudices, superstitions, errors, false ideals, empty glories, silly medals, false promises, gross stupidities—in short, like the things Adolf ("Shock-Shucker") Hitler's hordes are dying for, or killing for, in Europe today. I'm sure I could never equal their bravery, and yet I don't admire them, because I know they're wrong and that decent humanity will always condemn them for the horrible things they're doing with such appalling zealousness and fanaticism, much of it sincere. Mussolini shouts to his glory-drugged fools that it's better to live like a lion for a single day than to live like a lamb for a hundred days. Personally I'd rather live the hundred days, if I found life worth living that long. There's nothing to show that being an ignorant, cruel, brave lion is more virtuous than being a modest, inoffensive, kindly lamb. . . As I finish the above the ugly voice of Lion Mussolini comes over my office radio. It's June 10, 1940, and the lion has roared he's ready for honor and glory since it appears that France is reeling from Hitler's shattering blows. "Now," shouts the lion, "now we are ready to face all the risks and sacrifices of war." Lion? No, rather a jackal. The whiff of carrion has tickled his nostrils. . . A few hours later the same radio brings me the pleasant, ringing voice of our President, and I note approval as he cries against Lion Mussolini's cowardly act in waiting until now to
plunge a dagger into the back of his neighbor. Lion? Since Mussolini looks, thinks, acts and talks like a swine, he must be a swine.

I am enclosing a press clipping which quotes Assistant Attorney General O. John Rogge, in charge of the criminal division of the U.S. Department of Justice, as saying in Newark, N.J., that his department would punish persons "who flaunt our criminal laws as well as our ideals." In his use of "flaunt" correct?

Mr. Rogge misused the word. During the past few years I've noticed that many speakers and writers have become addicted to the habit of using "flaunt" for "flout." My dictionary says persons who flaunt are given to "displaying ostentatiously and obtrusively"; to "furnishing, parading, showing off." Naturally, Mr. Rogge doesn't mean this at all. I'm afraid it's going to be a hard job getting persons like Mr. Rogge to stop misusing "flaunt." These enemies of heterophony who flaunt "flaunt" are flouting our dear speech without regard for the finer sensibilities of amateur etymologists like myself. Another problem in philology was put up to me by a reader who enclosed a clipping quoting Henry L. Mencken as giving Sir Samuel Hoare the razzberry for misusing the word "jitterbug" in the House of Commons. Sir Samuel, writes Mencken, applied the Americanism, jitterbug, "to the sort of Londoner who was unduly alarmed about air raids. A thousand authorities informed him instantly that it meant nothing of the sort." I hate to get into an argument with an expert philologist, but here I must greet Mencken's comment with a wholesome Bronx cheer. Sir Samuel used the word accurately. It's true, as Mencken holds, that a jitterbug, not many years ago, was one addicted to a crazy and disgusting style of dancing (dry intercourse, some future Webster will call it) but the word has taken on new meanings. It has, as Burton Rascoe says, passed into metaphor, he adds, "It is currently used as a comically disparaging descriptive term for a person who is excitable and doesn't seem to know what he is doing half the time; one who makes appointments and forgets to keep them; an undependable, neu-

rotic person, not necessarily mean or malign." Many months ago, when jitterbug was still a new word, I used it several times in the sense given by Mr. Rascoe. Several times I called ideological enemies of mine "political jitterbugs," "religious jitterbugs," and the like. I remember having disposed of the California's Ham-and-Eggers ($30 every Thursday for everybody, if you recall) as a "freakish crew of economic jitterbugs." And that, mark you, was a couple of years ago. If Mencken had studied my writings he would have avoided his embarrassing error. I'm afraid if he keeps this up he'll get mienicked as a philological jitterbug. And then, if he goes from bad to worse, he may become constipated and we'll have to call in my lame joke about the sad state of the constipated jitterbug who couldn't j. My passion for accuracy and system compels me to go into these delicate subjects. I admire a systematic man, whether he's in the scholar's study or a public urinal. This reminds me of a type I've failed to describe before—the systematic man who consistently uses the end urinal, always takes the same number of steps and uses a standard approach. In addition, he's as dexterous with a button fly as the average man is with a zipper front. He's also what's known as the clever type, refraining from using his hands while he glances around proudly to see how many are admiring him. All this, with absolutely no reason or logic, reminds me of a piece I wrote several months ago in which I quoted excerpts from letters received by New York relief headquarters. I passed on what I thought were cracks that can pass as unconscious humor. Readers have supplied me with a few new ones, which I think best to add here in order to get the memo off my desk and out of my mind:

I cannot get sick pay. I have six children, can you tell me why?
I am glad to report that my husband who was reported missing, is now dead.

Sirs: I am forwarding my marriage certificate and my six children. I had seven, but one died which was baptized on a half sheet of paper.
I am writing to say my baby was born two years old. When do I get money?
Please find for certain if my husband is dead. The man I’m living with now can’t eat or do anything until he knows.

In answer to your letter, I have given birth to a boy weighing 10 pounds. I hope this is satisfactory.

Unless I get my husband’s money soon I will be forced to lead an immortal life.

You have changed my little boy to a girl. Will this make any difference?

Please send money at once as I have fallen in error with my landlord.

I have no children as yet as my husband is a bus driver and works day and night.

I want my money as quick as I can get it. I have been in bed with my doctor for two weeks and he doesn’t do me any good. If things don’t improve I will have to send for another doctor.

My husband has had his project cut off two weeks ago and I haven’t had any relief since.

What do you do when faced by obstacles?

I like to develop a passion for method and order, or, as Samuel Smiles said it, put everything in its place. Method, urged Jonathan Swift, is good in all things; order governs the world. To illustrate this little sermon let me tell you about the firm that had advertised for a stenographer. One of the executives was interviewing a glamorous gal who had applied for the job. Another executive came in, took a look at the girl, and called the other member aside, whispering, “I’d hire her, Mac. Look at those perfect ankles.” “Yes,” said Mac, nodding slowly, “and look at that exquisite mid-section.” “And,” continued the other, “those superb things up front there. Can she take dictation?” Mac answered, thoughtfully: “We’ll find that out later. I don’t want any obstacles to crop up.”

That, in my opinion, shows an orderly, logical approach to life’s problems.

Did you see “Lillian Russell” and “Edison the Man”?

Yes. I was bored by the first and pleased by the second. “Lillian Russell” is a long, tedious, corny, gooney, flatulent piece of crap. Alice Fay isn’t hard to look at, but she certainly doesn’t bring up memories of the great Lillian herself. Don Ameche acts like a hammy dummy, while poor Henry Fonda spends 40 years trailing the glamorous star without letting her know about his deep, deathless love. Lillian and Fonda look the same in late middle life as they did in late adolescence, which is an old trick of the 20th Century maestros. Edward Arnold plays his silly interpretation of Diamond Jim Brady, who, if we’re to believe the movies about him (I’ve seen two, at least), spent his whole life eating big dinners and pining for his unattainable ideal, the great Lillian Russell. The Brady I knew ate mountains of food and kept hundreds of fancy women. If he failed to “make” Miss Russell I’m sure he wasted no time worrying about the little slip.

But Spencer Tracy, in the Edison picture, did a different job. He poured life into the great character, and did it effortlessly. Tracy is a good actor who can make even complicated laboratory experiments dramatic and loaded with human interest. Of course, his final speech had to carry some pious invocations to the Great Designer and the Eternal Engineer, despite the fact that the genius of Menlo Park was a Freethinker who took his philosophical inspiration from figures like Tom Paine, Robert G. Ingersoll, and other low and immoral instruments of the devil. It wouldn’t do for the movies to let the public know that Tom Edison wasn’t in cahoots with the angels.

In a broadcast, Jack Benny pronounced “finale” this way: “fine-alley.” Was he right?

Jack Benny, like most other persons in show business, falls down when he tackles finale. The correct pronunciation is “fee-nah-lay,” with the accent on the second syllable.

After reading your pieces for almost 30 years I’ve come to the conclusion you are the most patient man in the world. You never become discouraged or impatient. How come?

It’s strength of character. With Cervantes, I say to myself, when I join in a game of cards or the game of life, “be patient, and shuffle the cards.” But the strongest slip from this virtue now and then. I’m reminded of Helga and Ole, who went to

William E. Riker, of Holy City, Calif., promoting himself for Governor, makes effective use of this challenge: "$25,000 reward if you can find a flaw and prove my Perfect System of Government will not successfully work." I've heard quite a few people say there must be something to his platform or he couldn't get away with such an offer. What do you think?

William E. Riker can continue to offer his political nonsense and near-Fascism to the citizens of California without the slightest fear that he'll have to pay out $25,000 to some disputatious Riker offers the reward, but he's the judge and jury. If you can convince him he's wrong, and if he's willing to part with $25,000 you—well, why go on with such speculation? It's an old trick of political and medical quacks to offer rewards. For 10 years. Norman Baker, the notorious cancer quack (now fortunately in the hosegow) offered a reward of $5,000 to anyone who could prove his cancer "cure" wouldn't work. He never had the least fear of being "called," because Prof. Baker was to be the judge of whether or not a real argument had been made against him. And it's such crap that impresses ignorant laymen. If the Hon. Baker had offered his reward and then arranged to have the arguments submitted to a committee of respected and recognized experts in the field of cancer there'd have been something to dig one's teeth into. But Baker or Riker know better than to depend on such judges. They prefer to play safe and do their own judging. And yet, as I said above, such silly stuff gets by with unthinking people. Quacks always place limitless reliance on the stupidity of their followers.

I enclose a press clipping which tells how three distributors of handbills were driven out of Del Rio, Tex., because they were "Nazi agents." Please comment.

As soon as I heard that the victims of a Del Rio mob were using phonograph records I knew they weren't Nazis at all but were innocent mem-
bers of Jehovah's Witnesses, a religious sect which has a moral and legal right to distribute literature and play records. Mayor J. S. Bradford of Del Rio, his policemen, and city officials are closer to Nazism than the three religious propagandists they persecuted. Mayor Bradford directed acts of lawlessness, for the U.S. Supreme Court has issued decisions protecting Jehovah's Witnesses in their right to free speech and free press. This is the sort of thing I've been warning my readers against, as may be seen by referring to various volumes of my questions and answers. We can't call ourselves supporters of democracy and freedom when we crack down on people who have a legal right to voice their sentiments. We must be careful to avoid hysteria and panic over Fifth Columnists, lest we embrace the very evils we seek to eradicate. Another clipping tells how a mob of 400 Texans took a group of Jehovah's Witnesses in hand and compelled them to kiss the flag. As my readers know, these followers of the Judge Rutherford sincerely believe they should salute only their God. Personally I salute the flag whenever the opportunity presents itself—for I look on it as the symbol of our country and our blood-bought, precious rights—but I don't feel called upon to use force against people who have religious scruples against saluting. I believe they're misguided, but at the same time I feel they should be protected in their right to freedom of conscience, especially when their acts don't jeopardize our free institutions. Such incidents serve to prove that we are becoming afflicted with a bad case of jitters. Many innocent people will suffer as a result of this wave of hysteria that is sweeping the country. I insist we can fight Fifth Columnists without resorting to such methods. The menace of totalitarianism is too real for us to permit ourselves an orgy of persecution against people who are planets removed from any form of Nazism, and Brown or Red Fascism. Another bad sign is the panic which has struck members of Congress. Anti-alien bills are being jammed through Congress which will do more harm than good because they are intended to curb the legal rights of
aliens. H.R. 4360, known as the Dempsey bill, was reported out favorably by the Senate Immigration Committee. This bill provides for deportation of the aliens who advocate the making of “any changes in the government of the United States.” The bill, which passed the House in 1939, opens the door to every kind of persecution, for such a law could be used against supporters of our democratic form of government. An alien who believed in republicanism and at the same time suggested, for example, that members of the Supreme Court should be elected by direct vote of the people, could be deported, and yet he would be suggesting a measure which is in complete harmony with the Constitution. Another bill contains a provision for registration and fingerprinting of aliens, which would be unfair and discriminatory. The Senate also passed two amendments to the LaFollette oppressive labor practices bill which would bar Communists and Bund members from employment on products moving in interstate commerce. Believers in old-fashioned Americanism certainly don’t approve of such methods in handling our aliens, most of whom aren’t Fifth Columnists and don’t oppose our democratic ideals. We can meet the problem of Fifth Columnists without injuring the legal rights of helpless aliens who will, like many of us, become good citizens’ in time.

What’s the difference between a recession, a depression and a panic?

During a recession you merely tighten up your belt. In a depression you have no belt to tighten. But when you’re in a panic you have no pants to hold up.

Like you, I prefer the company of the world’s great thinkers. Given my choice between Sinoza and Bishop Manning, it’s easy for me to turn to the former. But in matters of the emotions I’m not so discriminating, for here I reach out for the company of people who aren’t considered really topotypical. What do you do when pressed for a decision between the good and the bad?

Alfred Austin, in his “Fortunatus the Pessimist,” said that “Man, shackled to his shadow, cannot move without the base companionship of self.” Then why wonder that our base selves reach out gropingly and falteringly? This brings us to what Samuel Johnson called the “wild vicissitudes of taste.” And in the world of taste we can only make our little guesses and hope for the best. I am reminded here of the man who was asked which he preferred—wet dreams or normal intercourse—and his reply that he chose wet dreams because “you meet a better class of people that way.” Even he—half dust and half deity—was trying to make the best of a bad deal.

What is the mortality rate among our World War veterans?

According to estimates of the Veterans Administration, 730,000 veterans of the World War have already died, leaving 4,041,017 men still living, of whom more than 85 are dying daily. Deaths will increase to 171 a day by 1950, and reach a peak of 400 a day in 1970. The last man is expected to die in 1996. Most Legionnaires are between 45 and 49 years of age.

Why don’t you, who always like to tell stories, give us some of the jokes you say the G.O.P.’s are telling on F. D. R.7 I pass them up because most of are silly. The dirty ones have plenty of smut but no wit, and my readers know I haven’t any use for pointless sex stories. The only one that struck me as funny was the gag I told last month about the prostitute’s funeral and the anti-Roosevelt speech that was delivered before her body was shaved under the sod. I refuse to repeat other anti-Roosevelt stories because I don’t care to join our reactionaries in a stupid campaign of insults and smears. I don’t agree with everything Roosevelt’s done, but I’ve a lot of respect for him and don’t care to see him belittled by a lot of political cockroaches. At that, for each thing that I criticized I can point to 99 things in his program that were socially useful and motivated by humanitarian impulses. But, let it not be said I refused to supply information when requested by my cash customers. So here’s a typical anti-Roosevelt story which is heard often in the current GOP pattern: An industrialist (whose dividends were three times as large in 1939 as in 1929) called on the President at the White
House in order to land some fat contracts (you see, I'm putting my own propaganda into this yarn), and as the conference was breaking up the President said, "It has been a pleasure." The industrialist replied, "It's been my pleasure. As a matter of fact, Mr. President, you are my second choice for President." "That's interesting," said F. D. R. "And who is your first choice?" "Oh, anybody," his guest answered. (I warned you these anti-F. D. R. stories aren't any too bright.)

The paragraph you quote from Herman Rauschning's book to show how Hitler had planned his Trojan Horse tactics years before the second World War is eye-opening, of course, but if you'll refer to Shakespeare's "King Lear," act III, scene 1, you'll find that the bard anticipated the Nazis by centuries.

My reader's right. Here's Shakespeare's description of the tactics of the Trojan Horse and Fifth Columnist:

There is division
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, t'wixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have—as who have not, that their great stars
Throned and set high?—servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state;... who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner.

All we need now is a bunch of quotations from the Bible to show that one of the prophets, or Gawd himself, said the same thing. This reminds me that back in 1922 the British author, C. E. Montague, in his "Disenchantment," wrote ironically about the strategy of deceiving one's enemies, as follows:

"Suppose us again at war with a Power less strong at sea than ourselves. If we should want its fleet to come out and fight in the open, why not evoke, some fine morning, from every voice in our daily press, a sudden and seemingly irresistible cry of grief and rage over the unconceivable news that our Grand Fleet, while ranging the seas, had struck a whole school of drift mines and lost half its numbers?"

It's possible Hitler read the above and adapted it to his needs. At this point it wouldn't be out of line to recall that something like 40 years ago Admiral Fisher, of the British navy, asked the Cabinet to permit him to sink the growing German navy without warning. Germany was then the strongest land power in Europe and entering on its great naval race with England. Fisher's idea was to sneak up on the Germans and send them down while exchanging salutes, but the old-school members of the Cabinet said this wouldn't be sportsmanlike, would be in bad taste, would run counter to everything taught at Eton, and would show the British to be no gentlemen. It might entertain some of us to reflect on the course of world history the past half century had Fisher's advice been taken.

Isn't it a fact that Bryan made use of a great fund of clever stories?

I heard William Jennings Bryan make several speeches and interviewed him three or four times, especially during the famous Scopes anti-revolution trial in Dayton, Tenn., in 1925. I never was impressed with his sense of humor. True, he had some stories that he used again and again, but they weren't masterpieces of wit, by any means. The only yarn I can recall is the one about the storekeeper who had a handsome coat on a dummy in the doorway. A thief snatched the coat off, donned it and began galloping down the street. The storekeeper cried thief. An officer arrived, drew his gun, and aimed. "Shoot him in the pants!" the storekeeper yelled. "The coat belongs to me." He always got a big laugh with that rather feeble gag. The point of it, as I recall the incident, was that we should permit free trade. The way he got it in was by showing the tariff worked to the benefit of privileged groups of business interests. One group would want the law to hit some other commodity but insisted that the goods it was selling shouldn't be shot at. Just because Bryan told stories it doesn't follow he was a humorist, because it happens his wisecracks were pretty corny, even for those rather naive days. If he'd had a sense of humor he wouldn't have made such a jack-
ass of himself when he crossed lances with Clarence Darrow (a born humorist) during the famous monkey trial. Bryan was almost as humorless as Gandi, and that’s saying a lot.

Do you know what happened to the gal who backed into the propellor of an airplane?

Disaster.

How many bad teeth do we have?

Dr. Logan Clendening says it’s “estimated there are 830,000,000 cavity-pitted teeth in the U.S., or about 6.5 bad teeth per person.”

The enclosed clipping says the average woman has a vocabulary of only 500 words. I don’t see how such a small vocabulary could get such overwhelming results.

You must take into consideration the turnover.

[Editor’s Note: About two years ago, an Austrian Jew managed to get out of the country and come to the United States. He soon went to work in Chicago, where he is happy and grateful for his good fortune in being admitted to a free democratic country. Recently, as he shows in his letter below, Hans (for that’s his given name) managed through the best of luck to get his mother out of Hitler’s madhouse and bring her to his modest home in Chicago. His letter gives an unforgettable picture of this little, old woman:]

My mother arrived two weeks ago. Her hair is grayer, her lips thinner, yet in her eyes the same rather inconceivable spark of joy in resistance. I sometimes secretly watch the frail little woman, bustling herself in the kitchen, and something like awe comes over me if I just think of her life.

1870: with her small hometown occupied by the Prussians.
1914-1918: waiting in line for days to get a crust of bread; her husband storming before Verdun and Douamont.
1919: Red revolution with stabbed and shot corpses piled up near the lovely blue Danube river.
1934: Her opening the window and looking into the larynx of a gun which later crashed the building.
1938: when the “victorious” sons of a neighboring nation trampled down every spot of remaining decency.
1939: Another war, another orgy in tearing out each other’s guts.

1940: A trip, and what a trip, what a journey! She, who never saw the suburbs of Vienna, suddenly steps on a boat, passes Italy, Gibraltar, is examined by Tommies, vaccillates in an ocean ulcerated by mines and torpedoes.

And now, while she is fixing some stew in the kitchen, all of Europe tumbles into a slaughtering orgasm, and her conceptions of life and living which guided her for six decades—fading, fading—

Well, then I usually ask: “How do you feel, Mom?”

“Oh, okay,” she says, “but it worries me that the bread is so easily getting dry here in America.”

Chicago, Ill.

HANS

Editor: I want to quote part of a letter issued by Archbishop John G. Murray, of the St. Paul, Minn., diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, according to a recent issue of the journal, The Christian Century. What is quoted below was to be read by the priests to the faithful:

“Catholics may not be participants in the activities that imply profession of faith adopted by any religious or social organization that are not Catholic, such as the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., the Hi-Y, the Girl Reserves, the Salvation Army, the Volunteers of America, nor may they enroll in the De Molay, the Youth Congress, the Young Pioneers and a score of similar communist organizations designed to alienate them from religion or religions.”

The same wisdom-packed letter continues:

“Catholics must avoid public lecturers and public forum discussions, unless they are advised by their pastors of the safety of participation, nor may they take part in Bible reading, Bible interpretation, religious functions, devotional exercises, instructive ceremonies, chapel services, religious purpose programs, moral problem discussions under any auspices other than that of the Catholic Church.”

I wonder how many of our so-called liberal Catholics and their friends are able to swallow such tripe.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

JOHN ERBEN

Editor: In order to make this “democracy safe from the world” it isn’t enough that this nation alone be fortified against aggression. The countries to the South of us must come alive to the dangers that threaten, as well as ourselves. The enemy is a common one:
Nazi-Fascism. The infiltrations of the Nazis and Fascists into Mexico, Central and South America should be given serious thought by all freedom-loving people, whether they live at the top, middle, or the bottom of the Western Hemisphere. No one seems to doubt now that the countries South of us are hot-beds of Nazi-Fascist aggressors, and that the Nazi advance agents have been at work for years paving the way for Hitler and his Brutfatorialism. Hitler, the arch-enemy of democratic freedom, whose hobby is collecting countries like a stamp collector collects stamps, naturally hopes to add Mexico, Central and South America to his collection of unhappy nations. This he hopes to do with the aid of his already active Fifth Columnists and native Jews. He hopes to do this without going to the trouble and expenses of a war—not that he isn’t squeamish about slan-kering the citizens of unprotected nations. It just simply makes it easier for the Shuck-Shucker to get what he wants without having to put up a fight for it. A bank robber always hopes to loot without any shots being fired in his direction. Hitler, doubtless, would consider the U.S.A. a bigger prize than England or France, or both. Therefore, when he lays his plans for grabbing the countries adjacent to our Southern exposure, he is, in reality, only warming up for the Big Bout.

Azle, Texas

A. M. PASCHALL

Editor: The task of keeping democracy intact in Mexico, Central and South America is, of course, squarely up to those countries. The United States may cooperate by sending down ships and by building and maintaining air bases, but crushing the Fifth Columnists and other subversive elements is up to the citizens of those countries, primarily, and always. Uncle Sam may do the Western Hemisphere with air bases until they are as thick as poppy seeds on a loaf of French bread, but unless the people of each country round up the Trojan Horses while there is yet time, the air bases won’t be of any great use. If our next-door neighbors are caught napping, if they fall for the sirens son of Nazism, there will be little else the U.S. can do but bid a farewell to its air bases and make ready a military reception committee within its own borders.

READER

Editor: I think you are not quite correct, when, in your incursion into the field of semantics, you condemn the expression, “general consensus of opinion,” based on Webster’s, which defines “consensus” quite vaguely, simply because “general” has several acceptations. Funk and Wagnalls’ gives a better alternative, “consensus”—“a collective opinion.” Therefore, said expression may mean, not “the unanimous general consensus of opinion,” but “the wide-spread consensus of opinion” as opposed to the consensus of opinion of a mere group. Since “opinion” is hardly ever “unanimous,” it couldn’t mean that; and besides, “general” does not mean “unanimous” either, but “of majority,” etc.

Likewise, your depreciation of electric shavers shows that you do not realize their beneficial effects, in spite of the fact that this new device is still in course of necessary improvements. Your son seems to be the wiser.

Oakland, Calif.

L. CARBALLOSA

Editor: I got a number of chuckles out of that “Defense of Materialism,” by J. B. S. Haldane, in the June H-J News-Letter. I gathered that this was a piece that had overflowed from Alice’s compilation of the International Free-thought Annual. I haven’t finished my study of this estimable book as yet, but so far as I’ve gone I’m convinced that your “modest and shrinking violet” is a real chip off the old block. Or, what is probably more accurate, old blocks. For in daughter Alice’s writing I see a style that is yours and yet not yours; perhaps I could trace her peculiarities more easily if I knew her mother better than I can know her from her literary work alone. The next time I look in on you I’ll have to be when you are all together. Striver after perfection that I am, although this is nothing serious, tell Alice to look in Forbes’ “The Right Word” for what he says about “apt,” “likely” and “liable.” But tell her too that it looks to me as though she has a real liking for the jobs that you’ve given her and that, in addition to a high intelligence and a rare tact, she seems to have more energy than is usually found in young women of her age.

In your answer to the fellow who wanted your formula for finding “bad readers,” I smiled at your parenthetical admonition to the “highbrows” to “take a second look” because I wasn’t quite sure whether you wanted them to look at your “an humble” or at me as a letter carrier. Badinage aside, however, I’d like to say that this citation, in addition to the many others you’ve already given me, doesn’t particularly elate me. I would be much better satisfied if there were an “army of Langs” to give you support. Identification with such an army—instead of the frustration that
one feels at hitting it off indefinitely with only a meager, scattered band—would provide an exhilaration that would be something more than merely misery loving company. Being one who appreciates the things that are needed to make “the good life” really good, many of which I must forego, perforce. I nevertheless know that among the fore-most of these things must be at least one really free publication. When, then, folks look askance, as they sometimes do, and imply that in my generosity in behalf of such a publication I’m being taken for a ride by that old skalawag, E. H.-J., I too get a pain in the posterior. Assuming that some of your readers labor under suspicions (regarding finance) I’d like to add for their benefit that on my two visits to your home and office I saw no evidences of inordinate accumulations of wealth, nor of riotous, aban-doned and extravagant living. Just a modest and efficiently operated printing plant and, on the edge of the burg, a roomy but unostentatious home, obviously built with considerable thought for the occupant’s needs. Here, how-ever, I also saw those numerous tell-tale signs—badly worn and unpainted stairsteps, antiquated and outworn kitchen equipment, scaling paint on exterior, etc.—which, far more eloquently than elaborate financial statements of The Freeman’s years-long deficits, spoke of their owner’s almost continual financial embarrassments. I would not thus expose the intimacies of a gracious host’s private affairs, were it not that they are relevant and that he, himself, with all his frankness, will probably never allude to them. I do so with the sincere hope that more will join in helping to keep down that deficit—I dare hardly hope to eliminate it.

Maplewood, Mo. C. A. LANG

Editor: Thanks for the unequivocal answer you wrote to my suggestion about “less ceremonious” disposition of quacks like Norman Baker. The way I had my question framed, your answer was undoubtedly wholly correct. I had in mind, however, something a little different, even if I didn’t succeed well in expressing it. Why, for instance, should not the several State’s codes be standardized so that it wouldn’t be possible in the place for crooks like him to find havens from whence to spread their operation networks? And I doubt that the strictest and most clearly defined of these codes is any too strict or any too clear, or lacking entirely the loopholes which unscrupulous ghouls have ways of finding. Again, if the Federal penalties against mail fraud were stiffer, would it be necessary to build up so imposing an array of separate counts in order to put a criminal away for a good long time? In a word, I’m all for “orderly processes” myself, but I have a feeling that they’re too inefficient. For, while $50,000 is certainly great enough an expense for cornering such a rat, that’s really only a fraction of the total: think of the expense and inconvenience to which you were put, for one thing, because of two libel suits against The Freeman. And think of the hundreds of thousands of dollars he swindled out of his victims, and of the ghastly toll of unnecessary misery that many of them suffered as a result of his misistrations.

READER

“In South America, the Goebbles hogwash is being dished up to little dupes in the closely organized German schools. The journals of ‘enlightenment’ which fall from the poisonous German presses keeps the grown-ups in tune with what is going on in the world of mass-murder and the killing off of human rights. The shout of ‘Hell, Hitler!’ mingles with the Spanish and Portuguese idioma. The Fifth Columnists are hard at work like termites at their business of undermining. The stage is set. Soon (the Brutalitarians hope) about all Shock-Shucker Ht'tler will need is to round up a quisling or two, and later on, perhaps, a King Loopehole or so, and then the wings of Nazi protection will fold gently about over the middle and the bottom part of the Western Hemisphere.”—A. M. Paschall, Texas.

“In Christ Jesus’ name, do you do everything? I’ve wondered about your indexes, but never for a moment did I suspect that you make them yourself. Of course I use them. And they’re reasonably good, although I must tell you that they’re not too good. But I’m not surprised at that for I can’t imagine how you find time for such uninspiring drudgery; why that’s almost as bad as a lettercarrier climbing steps with dog-feed circulars!”—C. A. Lang, Maplewood, Mo.

Editor: No doubt reader Edmund K. Goldsborough, with his recommendation that you give space to the mysticisms of Kant, Bergson, Lodge and others, will catch enough h—l from other readers, so I’ll refrain from castigating him for his characterization of you as an intolerant, dogmatic bigot. And then there’s that other one—from Washington, D.C. also, like Goldsborough, who adds to Goldsborough’s “other worlds” that “interpenetrate this sphere,” a little brotherly solicitude of his own for
“super-vibrations” to jar you out of your “ignorance and materialism.” As if these two were concomitant! I’ve heard that Washington is rife with soothsayers who ladle out such bilge to a receptive and prosperous clientele, statesmen and their bejeweled women among them, “great intellectuals” all! A trip to this city, the seat of our government as well as the Mecca of so many queer people, is one of those enriching things that go to make “the good life,” which I’ve had to forego.

EDITOR

In the jungles of central Africa one of the wives of a native black chief presented her lord with a perfectly white baby. Now, it so happened that a missionary had been living in this community for some years and the chief, being a man of simplicity and directness, was not long in reaching a definite decision as to the paternity of the child.

Being, however, not yet afflicted with “civilized” notions concerning the violation of his lordly prerogatives, he did not rage forth and kill this missionary. He merely called him before him and demanded a formal acknowledgement and some gift as a token to signify a measure of restitution for this offense to his dignity.

The missionary, however, saw with one glance at the child, something of which this unlearned barbarian had apparently never even heard: the child was one of those rare sports of nature, an albino. Of course, he tried hard to explain this phenomenon to the chief, but with no success. The chief, in fact, was adamant to all argument and explanation; his mind was made up.

To the missionary, however, then came a happy idea, one by which he hoped he could make the chief understand. Said he, “It’s something like this: yonder, as you may see, in my flock of sheep. They are all white. For many years, until this year, always at the season of the increase all of the lambs have been white. But now, as you may see, there, bleating at its mother’s side, is one black lamb.”

A gleam of comprehension then lighted the chief’s countenance and he summarily dismissed the missionary. But the next morning the missionary was startled by a great throng of natives gathering before his cottage. Presently a spokesman announced that they had come with many gifts. Great baskets of fruits and the best of native handwork in the form of mats, rugs and articles of clothing and adornment were then solemnly piled upon his porch. Finally the spokesman again came forward, this time with a note from the chief. Scanning it hastily, the missionary saw these words: “Chief say nothing more about white baby; missionary say nothing more about black sheep.”

READER

Editor: I see you have something to learn about “soap opera”: the only trouble with taking a shot of neck oil and then tuning in on one “some day” is that one shot will not suffice—you’ll have to arrange for a permanent drunk for the things don’t end; they go on and on and on for days and weeks. No, I don’t listen either, but I know people who live only for every succeeding installment. Sure, there’s “something in it,” as you say. It’s a dramatization of the escape yearnings of the mob; the mob that is so slow to realize that there is no escape and that if there were it wouldn’t even be desirable; that life, the real thing, if viewed with real perceptiveness is far more strange and fascinating than any puerile fictionalizing of it. The happy endings, for which these listeners palpitate through endless suspenses, never come to real people. As I see it this tripe is but another and more mundane way of pandering to that infantile wish-thinking with which religion has so long afflicted us and from which we are slowly creeping.

Maplewood, Mo.

C. A. LANG

“Speaking of Charlie Chaplin, what kind of an outdated mess is that dictator picture he is said to be working on going to be if he ever gets it done? I’m afraid Charlie is a fine personification of the tardiness and inefficiency of democratic procedures when it comes to both making and meeting disastrous— even if deliberately and criminally—foolish—crises. And it does no good, in trying to refute this, to cite stupendous figures on a Panama Canal or a Coulee Dam. We are faced with an appalling condition created by the efficiency and resourcefulness of fanatics wedded to a social outlook that we abhor. Worse, the rise of this thing can be traced to the stupidity, bungling and inefficiency that seems to be inherent in the democracy that we cherish. What remains now is to see whether these seemingly inherent faults can be overcome without sacrificing our privileges and in time to cope successfully with the peril. If that can’t be done, people like you and I had just as well get ready to make our exit; the world will soon be too little and hostile to contain us.”—Reader.

“Your story (‘first time embalmed in print’) about the little fellow and the
veterinary’s big pill reminds me of the one about the chap who was given some suppositories for a similar affliction. The prescription read, ‘to be administered by rectum.’ Not knowing a rectum from a wreck-bar, he gagged down the first two with water, chewed a few more and finally melted down the remainder and took them with a spoon. Then, unrelieved, he returned to the doctor who asked him how he’d gotten along. "No good, Doc," he said, in disgust, "in fact as far as them d— they big pills was concerned I might as well have shoved them up the well-known flu!"—Reader.

"Why does not Walt Disney, or someone else, recreate, in pictures that would appeal to the unimaginative masses, some of the gorgeous visions of the great musical masters? And set them to their glorious accompanying music, of course. Tschaikowsky’s “Nutcracker Suite” comes to mind, for instance, and some of his other work like ‘March Slav’ and ‘The Sleeping Beauty Waltz’ suggest short, whimsical sketches which could even be done by human actors. The field seems practically unlimited and I’m surprised that someone doesn’t break away from a moribund industry with some new ideas along this line. It wouldn’t cost much to experiment with a view to ascertaining the box office result, for most of the beginnings could be short pieces.”—C. A. L., Mo.

“What a lucky day it was for me, about three years ago, when I came on your Little Blue Books and The Freeman. If someone had only told me about the mind-liberating products of your press earlier in life, say 15 years ago, (I’m 30 now) how much richer, fuller and happier my life would have been. At least I can practice the golden rule and do all I can to acquaint others with your literature.”—Reader.

“I have learned that in conversation with my associates I must sometimes be, to say the least, tactful, on certain subjects. For instance, religion. About 10 years ago my mind, with no outside help (except a few revival meetings!) absolutely refused to give even standing room to that claptrap. But if I let myself go on religion, most of the people I know either get mad (especially the Catholics) or mentally damn me for an Atheist, that being their only name for one not believing as they do. Now, I wouldn’t mind their calling me an Atheist if they knew what the word meant, but when these religious addicts call anyone an Atheist they mean more than the word means. I don’t say there is no God, for that would be most presumptuous of me. Although I have a hunch there isn’t. I know that I know nothing about it, and what’s more I don’t care. I’m simply not interested, except that I would like to help these poor, deluded, credulous ones to wrench themselves away from that opiate to the intellect, called religion. But this is no easy task, for their first law seems to be: Thou shalt not think. If they could be taught to think they couldn’t swallow that stuff.”—Reader.

“One of the pleasant things, in your last issue was the notice of increase in donations for the deficit. I do not know the financial status of your readers, but it seems that if each one would send in a certain amount regularly, according to his or her ability, it would be of great benefit. Regularity is more important than the amount, although the latter is essential also. I enclose $5 for the fund to help The Freeman”—

Carl E. Toupain, Grand Junction, Colo.

Editor: Personally I dislike the term “Atheism,” because it sounds too dogmatic to suit me, although the term “Free thinker” appeals to me, as it denotes a mind free to find the truth wherever it exists. It seems that Atheists make a practice of stating what isn’t after death, while Theists make a practice of telling us what is, when as a matter of fact neither one will know until they pass on, assuming they are capable of knowing anything then.

CARL E. TOUPAIN
Grand Junction, Colo.

(Editor’s Note: Reader Toupain’s objection to the term “Atheism” isn’t surprising, even though he’s a Free thinker, because the word is so unpopular with the average uneducated person. The acceptance of the notion that Atheists say dogmatically they know there’s no such thing as Immortality is the result of long-continued propaganda at the hands of the obscurantistic Theocrats. In the matter of Immortality—and here I have a fair knowledge of the literature on the subject—Atheists, like Agnostics, say there isn’t a scrap of evidence to support the belief, that it’s based entirely on faith, not evidence, and that its acceptance is the result of wishful thinking instead of sound logic. The Atheist meets the Theist’s arguments in support of the God-idea with the assertion that he’s compelled to reject the assumptions of Theism. If there’s a God, the Theist must prove His existence, which can’t be done. The Atheist bases his case solely on the inadequacy of Theism, which means he doesn’t—nor does he
have to—indulge in wild rantings or mere negations. It’s dogmatic, of course, to arbitrarily deny something without evidence of a convincing nature, but it’s the opposite of dogmatism for that same person to reject the unsupported assumptions of those who propose the affirmative. I’ve told my readers a dozen times (see my volumes of questions and answers) not to worry about labels. If Atheist sounds too harsh, accept Agnostic, though I can’t, for the life of me, see any real, fundamental differences between the two. If you prefer, call yourself a Freethinker, a word which has a long and noble history. Or, if that’s still too strong, consider the word Rationalist, a term I’ve analyzed and discussed in several articles in the volumes just mentioned. Then there’s that good, old term, Skeptic, which carries a hint of mischievous and humorous inquiry. Finally, if you belong to this rougher, more hardboiled generation, call yourself a Debunker and go your way. And, let me add as an after-thought, if labels don’t appeal to you, reject them all and become a religious indifferentist. There are millions of enlightened people who prefer that exasperating approach to an annoying, destructive, combative, aggressive, presumptuous and bigoted school of supernatural thought.

On June 28, 1940, Judge L. M. Resler, of the Crawford County district court, cleared his docket of two long-pending cases for lack of prosecution. They were actions brought more than three years ago by Norman Baker, notorious cancer quack, against E. Haldeman-Julius, editor of The American Freeman, for statements printed in his paper regarding the fraud Baker was perpetrating on the public. Baker, since the actions were filed, was convicted in federal court and sentenced four years for using the mails to defraud in promoting his fake cure. He is in the Little Rock, Ark., jail pending appeal. Baker’s suits against Haldeman-Julius had asked for $600,000 damages. After the suits were filed the editor turned to his readers for financial support, which was given generously, making possible a vigorous counter-attack in the Girard court. This marks another victory for a free press. The credit for Baker’s ignominious defeat belongs with the paper’s readers who saw the controversy’s social implications and responded with moral and material support. The legal campaigns were expensive and annoying, but the objectives were worth the efforts and sacrifices. It’s good to see a blatant quack’s ears slapped back. Baker’s next stopping place will be a federal prison, where he belongs. After serving his four years he may be in the mood to return to society and try to make his living in an honest, decent way instead of growing rich on the sufferings of dying gullibles.

What do you think of the favorite argument of the Wee Wendell Willkieites to the effect that a third term for F. D. R. will mean our acceptance of a Roosevelt dictatorship?

I’m going to vote for Franklin Delano Roosevelt in November, and I hope he’ll get elected, because, as I’ve said before, the country needs his experience and leadership. Democracy will be safer instead of endangered, should Roosevelt get his third term—safer because F. D. R. has proven by deeds that he appreciates the international menace of Fascism and stands ready to do something about it. If Roosevelt is to be a dictator, why should he want to wait until the beginning of his ninth year as President? Why didn’t he take steps to destroy popular government, free press, democratic processes, legalized oppositions, and the right to free political controversy during his second term, or, for that matter, during his first term? A dictator doesn’t wait until his ninth year to get into action. He begins during the first nine weeks, if at all possible. The whole argument about a Rooseveltian dictatorship is the cheapest kind of political claptrap. I’m confident it won’t fool the American people. They are intelligent enough to know that dictatorship doesn’t form an integral part of a third term in the White House. They know the issue is being put up to them for acceptance or rejection. The subject will be disposed of in a free election, not a Hitleristic “election” in which only Hitler prevails, in which no opposition is tolerated. The American people can put the same man in office a half dozen times and still be democratic, if the authority is delegated by the people in free elections. Thus, a President can be in office for 15 years and still head a democratic State while another can be in office only 15 weeks and be a dictator if he rules without the consent of the people and holds power by means of terror, denial of free discussion, free assembly,
and the other precious provisions of the Bill of Rights. This whole third-term issue will be found discussed in my volumes of questions and answers, for it happens that I anticipated this spasm of political controversy by a couple of years. In my previous discussions I gave special attention to the pet argument of the anti-third termites, which is, as many of my readers know, that George Washington solemnly advised the nation to avoid this danger. And that's pratt-paining bunk. Washington didn't object to a third term. If the Founding Fathers had sensed anything wrong in the principle that the people have a right to decide how many years a man may serve the nation, doesn't it stand to reason they would have written such an objection into the Constitution? Washington retired at the end of his second term because of what he called "the increasing weight of years." In a letter to Lafayette, Washington wrote: "I confess I differ widely from Mr. Jefferson and you as to the necessity or expediency of rotation in that department [the Presidency]... I can see no propriety in precluding ourselves from the service of any man who, on great emergency, shall be deemed universally most capable of serving the public." In several other articles (also to be found in my volumes of questions and answers, if you'll pardon the plug) I took up another piece of bunk about the first President. I refer to his alleged warning against "entangling alliances." Space doesn't permit me to repeat the text of my lengthy articles (all of which are easily available) but let me sum up his position—make alliances with foreign governments temporary, never permanent.

Do you agree with our newspaper editors when they say the statesmen in the democracies got everything wrong, that their opinions were nothing more than wishful thinking?

It would be foolish to try to defend the statesmen of France, England, and several other unfortunate victims of blindness, but editors ought to pine down, for the record shows their grasp of the situation wasn't any too firm. Let me wander through my newsclip filing system for some quotations. *Life*, for September 25, 1939, said:

"Germany has mostly light tanks. France and Britain, with more big tanks, have clear superiority over Germany."

The famous military expert, Captain Liddell Hart, of The Times of London, wrote in *The New York Times*, March 31, 1940:

"The issue of this war is more likely to depend on a psychological than on a military initiative."

The London Spectator, on May 3, 1940, contained the following sentence, written by its Dutch correspondent:

"Holland has not allowed herself to be frightened. The natural defenses of the country have been exploited to such purpose that invasion is made extremely difficult."

As late as May 17, 1940, The Manchester Guardian said:

"Military men look for Marshal Gamelin's counter-stroke with confident expectation."

On the following day, the London Caucaledge, which describes itself as "The Journal That Keeps Thinking People Well Informed," said:

"The Man of the Hour is Generalissimo Gamelin. A philosopher of war with an ice-cold brain... he has the measure of the house-painter-turned-Napoleon."

Space doesn't permit me to continue this melancholy exhibition. Yes, the statesmen have been stupid, but no denser than the editors. As for myself, it would be embarrassing if some of my readers were to cull my early volumes of "questions and answers" and dig out my precious utterances on the glowing chances for an Ethiopian victory over Mussolini. As I recall the spectacle, I let myself be deceived by the fake sanctions imposed by the League of Nations, but when I saw that they omitted oil I knew at once that England and France really didn't want the Ethiopians to whip the Fascists. But it was too late. My earlier pieces were in print, and nothing I might say could erase the inked evidence of my gullibility. That's one of the few times in more than 30 years that I took a flyer in literary crystal-gazing. I usually let the future take care of itself, for I failed years ago to re-
new my prophet's license and therefore have to stick to the mundane present and the factual past. Last December I said, with deliberate aforethought, that the U.S. would be "in the war in 90 or 120 days." Dozens of my less pious readers marked their calendars, and at the stroke of midnight of the 120th day began bombarding me with letters loaded with insulting epithets, but here I had them down where the hair is short and curly, for I never said anything about a declaration of war. We certainly were "in the war" long before the 120 days were up. And when Hitler started smashing through Norway, Holland, Belgium and France we got "into the war" up to our necks.

* * *

Can you, in your infinite wisdom, tell a pious reader why the radio is becoming more religious?

The answer is that the business interests have come to the conclusion that what this country needs is more piety. Every noon, over WDAF, before I can get the mid-day newscast, I have to take in the tail-end of a 15-minute broadcast of hymns by a famous gospel singer. The sponsor is P&G Soap, of Cincinnati, O. I understand this broadcast is nationwide, as is that of General Mills, Inc., which puts on 6-day-a-week 15-minute Bible story dramatizations. There are many other manifestations of business' sudden zeal for the things of the soul while the hunt for profits goes on apace. Dividends and prayer make a good pair. Pious workers aren't the best kind of material for union agitators. Business wants a little of the spiritual (and economic) security that comes with a working class steeped in religious obscurantism and superstition. Supernaturalism doesn't cost much, but it pays generously in lower labor costs and lessened threats of social reform. Get a man to believe that Gawd has picked out for him a place beyond the pearly gates and he'll be satisfied with rags and short rations in this vale of tears. Business feels that what the masses need is a shot in the arm of the opium of religion. But I don't get much of a kick out of these broadcasts for Jehovah because they don't seem to carry punch. Just singing a few hymns and dramatizing some Bible stories won't send the masses back to the half-empty churches. It'll take much more than that. This is a rationalistic age in many ways, and the workers are taking to skepticism and indifferentism. They don't yell against religion, but they don't cry for it. They just let the ugly hag rest in her verminous, if sacred, robes. And when some leaders of capitalism decide to chuck in some money to boost supernaturalism the masses yawn and refuse to waste shoe leather making tracks to the nearest House of Gawd. And that's all to the good in a day when things that are good don't happen any too often.

* * *

Do you believe that advertising is as bad as it used to be?

No. Only a few decades ago advertising was mostly organized lying. I recall the mail order catalogues that used to be issued by Sears-Roebuck before the late Julius Rosenwald bought into the firm. It was shot through with misrepresentations, exaggerations and deception. He was considered a downright fanatic because he insisted that his copywriters new closer to the truth. In those days advertising trickery reached a high when a package of needles was advertised as "a complete sewing machine for 25c." This piece of information is taken from the files of my friend, George M. Husser, manager, Kansas City Better Business Bureau. Mr. Husser adds that he has a copy of an advertisement in which the consumers were offered "a steel engraving of General Grant," and which turned out to be a 2c postage stamp bearing the likeness of the former President. Any crook that tried to pull a stunt like that today would land in the hoosegow. In contrast, Mr. Husser quotes the following from a furrier's recent advertisement: "Not Very Good Coats for $25—Leftovers in Stock Which I Wouldn't Have Myself—But They're About What You'd Expect to Get for $25." Of course, the FTC has had a lot to do with today's improved advertising, but the job isn't finished, by any means. The obvious liars and thieves have been hit hard, but the clever, cunning, subtle deceivers are still hav-
ing things pretty well their own way. But there’s no reason for pessimism. In time, perhaps during the next decade or two, advertising will become as accurate as the circulars I write to advertise my books. Pardon the free plug, but I couldn’t think of a better example at the moment. I pride myself on the fact that my advertisements tell nothing but the strictest truth. Now and then I slip up, but when I see my mistakes I take immediate steps to correct them.

“May I comment on your answer to the question, ‘What does Q.E.D. stand for?’ in the August, 1940, issue of The Freeman, page 4. You say ‘It’s a Latin abbreviation, meaning ‘which is demonstrated.’ Quoting from memory, as I have not studied Latin for many years. Q.E.D. is an abbreviation of the phrase, ‘Quod erat demonstrandum;” meaning literally, ‘which was to be demonstrated.’”—Dr. J. J. Thomas, Cleveland, O. [Editor’s Note: Reader Thomas sure knows his Latin onions.]

Would you put Shaw among the religious-minded?

I have given considerable space to George Bernard Shaw’s ideas on religion (see my volumes of questions and answers) and the conclusion one must draw from the facts is that Shaw still carries a few vague deistic notions but that he has nothing but contempt for orthodox religion. Recently Shaw contributed an article to a British publication, St. Martin’s Review, in which he paid his respects to Prayer-Book revision. In it he gave expression to some frank and cutting comments on Christianity, thus proving that even in his old age he continues to reject orthodox ideology. One passage is so strong and clear that I want to quote it for my readers:

The book is so saturated with the ancient and to me quite infernal superstition of the atonement by blood sacrifice, which I believe Christianity must get completely rid of if it is to survive among thoughtful people, that I could not delete it without leaving the book an eviscerated corpse. I have no patience with it. I can keep my temper when I read of the Carthaginians flinging living persons into their sacred furnace to propitiate their deity; and I have climbed the altars on which the Mexicans, like our Druids, cut the throats of youth and maidens with the same object. But neither the Carthaginians nor the Mexicans, as far as I know, gave as a reason that “God so loved the world” that he had to be propitiated in this horrible way.

Our pious brethren aren’t able to squeeze much comfort out of paragraphs like the above. Shaw continues to stand in opposition to orthodoxy.

I am anxious to go into the mail order business on a modest scale. What would you suggest in the way of advertising?

This is an immense subject, so I’ll limit myself to the first step. After you have made a success of the initial campaign you can branch out to larger and more expensive methods. Begin, let me suggest, with small advertisements in the classified advertising department of publications that command national circulation. The circulation doesn’t have to be as large as that enjoyed by The Saturday Evening Post. Be satisfied with periodicals that reach 50,000 or more readers. Besides, these smaller papers will be easier on your treasury. But, don’t expect to burn up the world with an ad that costs you a dollar or two. Be satisfied with reasonable returns. But keep pounding away, issue after issue. That’s all I care to suggest for the present.

In one of your volumes of questions and answers you write about a “whipping boy,” which I wish you would explain.

The expression “whipping boy” means one person is being punished for the offenses of another. It came into circulation when princes (who were destined to rule the people because Gawd willed it so) were in need of punishment. But, said the royal court, it wouldn’t do to whip a prince, so a whipping boy was strapped to the prince and took the lashing that was intended to correct the prince’s behavior.

Please give me the scientific reason why paper occasionally curls.

I put this question up to a chemist in a paper mill and was told “it is due to differential expansion of the two sides of a sheet when atmospheric conditions change.”
I wish you would look into your news-clip filing system and bring out something that’ll tell how to keep peas from rolling off my knife.

This problem was solved by the Maharajah of Prividore, according to the memoirs of the illustrious Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt. I pass it on in walmasonized form: "I eat my peas with honey. I’ve done it all my life. It makes the peas taste funny, but it keeps them on my knife."

I was pleased to notice that almost all of your volumes of questions and answers contain articles advocating municipal ownership of electric light plants. I have been a strong supporter of municipal Socialism all my life. Now I want to suggest that you add to your arsenal of facts by showing a direct comparison of electric rates, the aim being to demonstrate to the public that municipal ownership saves money for the consumers.

The Federal Power Commission has issued a report which covers the above question with satisfactory thoroughness. However, you’ll never find the facts in the average newspaper, because our capitalistic editors aren’t in business to help further municipal Socialism. They prefer to toady to the power corporations, because they are rich sources of advertising revenue, subsidies, special favors, and plain graft. The U.S. figures referred to in my first sentence have been arranged in readily accessible form by the Burns and McDonnell Engineering Company, Kansas City, Mo. They offer a comparison of residential electric rates of all cities operating under private ownership and public ownership in the U.S., as of February, 1940:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES OF POPULATION 50,000 AND OVER</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Chg.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>183 Private Utilities ..................</td>
<td>$ .78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Municipal Plants ...................</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Municipal rates are lower by 24.4% |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION 25,000 TO 50,000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>170 Private Utilities ......</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Municipal Plants .......</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
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Municipal rates are lower by 6.0%

<table>
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<tr>
<th>POPULATIONS 15,000 TO 25,000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>234 Private Utilities ..........</td>
<td>$ .85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53 Municipal Plants ...........</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Municipal rates are lower by 8.2%

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<tr>
<th>POPULATION 7,500 TO 15,000</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>336 Private Utilities .......</td>
<td>$ .86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107 Municipal Plants .......</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Municipal rates are lower by 9.3%

Who did President Roosevelt, refer to when he said, in his radio speech to the Democratic convention, that only “one man” had rejected Uncle Sam’s invitation to cooperate in the national defense program?

Henry Ford.

“I’m glad to see that despite the fact that Bertrand Russell’s ‘lechery’ is keeping him out of a college teaching job in the pious, virtuous, seraphic city of New York, you, his prototype, are invited by the bibulous, wanton and irrevocent people of Kansas to help teach their young something about ‘the world situation’.” — Reader.

Smith, Jones, Brown and Johnson ran to catch a train. Smith reached the station five minutes after Jones did. Brown just missed the train. Johnson reached the station five minutes before Jones did. Smith arrived five minutes after Brown. Did Johnson catch the train?

Johnson caught the train. Jones and Brown were traveling together.

How much slower does the healing process work in older people than in the young?

Dr. E. V. Cowdry, Professor of Cytology, Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., reports that in a 60-year-old man a wound takes five times as long to heal as a wound of the same size in a 10-year-old child.

How much money do we spend on chiropractic?

About $70,000,000 a year, and it’s all wasted. There are 20,000 chiropractors who share in this “take,” in 44 States where the “science” is legal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>25 KWH.</th>
<th>40 KWH.</th>
<th>100 KWH.</th>
<th>250 KWH.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1.44</td>
<td>$2.11</td>
<td>$4.06</td>
<td>$7.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>23.7 pct.</td>
<td>22.7 pct.</td>
<td>21.4 pct.</td>
<td></td>
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| 1.59 | $2.32 | $4.37 | $7.34 |
| 1.43 | 2.10 | 3.85 | 7.00 |
| 10.1% | 9.5 pct. | 11.9 pct. | 4.6 pct. |

| 1.59 | $2.32 | $4.35 | $7.87 |
| 1.43 | 2.10 | 3.94 | 7.23 |
| 10.1% | 9.5 pct. | 9.4 pct. | 8.1 pct. |

| 1.63 | $2.38 | $4.44 | $7.90 |
| 1.48 | 2.13 | 4.18 | 7.68 |
| 9.2% | 10.5 pct. | 5.9 pct. | 2.8 pct. |
The above figures offer powerful support to the position of believers in
the principle of public ownership of utilities. At this point it would be
well to take up an argument which
the proponents of private ownership use frequently. They hold, in short,
that the private plants are handicapped because they must pay taxes.
This sounds impressive at first sight,
but an examination of the facts
proves beyond debate that there's
nothing to the point. In fact, it's
thoroughly dishonest in that it ig-
nores the facts that the U.S. Gov-ern-
ment has compiled. The truth is that
the municipally owned plants con-
tribute more to the community than
do the private companies. The official
figures offer the following compari-
son of taxes, donations, and free
services in percent of base revenue (re-
venue from ultimate consumers) for
all electric plants in the U.S.:

| Contributions in form of taxes, free services, and donations from Municipal Plants | 26.8% |
| Contributions in form of taxes from privately-owned plants | 14.4% |

Contributions by Municipal Plants in excess of contributed by Private Plants | 12.4%

The above figures can be better un-
derstood when it is explained that we
even have fair-sized cities (see my
volumes of questions and answers for
the full list) that don't collect any
common local taxes at all because
they not only keep the rates lower
than those collected by private cor-
porations but actually provide free
juice for lighting the city and pay all
other expenses of the community, in-
cluding the police, fire, street and
health departments. One neighboring
city, Chanute, Kans., with a popula-
tion of 13,000 hasn't collected local
taxes in years, because the power and
water plants produce the necessary
revenue. Municipal Socialism is
growing rapidly in this country. We
should lend the movement every sup-
port.

Are parachutists new factors in war?
As fighting arms, yes. But the idea is old. Benjamin Franklin, in
1784, suggested the use of parachut-
ists, as follows:
"Five thousand balloons, capable
of raising two men each, could not
cost more than five ships of the
line; and where is there a prince
who can afford so to cover his
country with troops for its defense
that 10,000 men descending from
the clouds might not in many places
do an indefinite deal of mischief
before a force could be brought to-
gether to repel them?"

The other night I heard a correct Eng-
lish quiz in which the radio announcer,
in a speech to the winner, said: "It
gives me pleasure to present you with
this . . . . . What's wrong?
The "with" could have been omitted
without injury to the dear old Eng-
lish language.

Some months ago a bunch of us boys
who belong to the union pulled a strike.
Now some of the brainer members con-
tend the company which we are fighting
secured "strike insurance." That is to
say, the company paid a certain premi-
um and is drawing insurance for the
duration of the strike. They contend
the company can take out insurance for
three months, four months, etc., and not
lose a cent, while the boys are standing
on the picket line.

The whole idea is screwy. No such
insurance policy is written.

Is it possible for a person to be a
citizen of two countries at one time?
The reason is the fact that the enclosed
clipping says Count Rene de Chambrun,
as a descendant of Lafayette, is a citi-
zen of the U.S. and France.

The Maryland General Assembly,
in 1784, passed an act conferring
Maryland citizenship on Lafayette
and all his male heirs. Our Constit-
tution holds that a citizen of one
State automatically becomes a citizen
of all our States.

Is it true that Decoration Day and the
Fourth of July always come on the
same day?
Yes.
Having just reached manhood I’m beginning to show a serious interest in women. For the present, my worst problem is trying to find out just what it is that women really want to be. Do they want to be good and nice or naughty and nice? I’ll be d—— if I know.

Most women prefer to at least appear naughty. They have come to the conclusion that a “good” woman is a doubtful commodity in this hardened age. Attractive women don’t seek goodness, in the sense that Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratts lives the life of a “good” woman. If you want to know the truth about today’s women don’t bother studying profound tomes on the subject. Just turn to the pages of advertising in any magazine, and you’ll get the low-down on what women are after. Underneath it all is the desire to be sexually attractive. And don’t let anyone kid you otherwise. Recently I was amused and enlightened by an advertisement released by Tattoo (free ad), because it approaches today’s women without hypocrisy or prudery. It got right down to the truth. Here’s Tattoo’s message, which I’m reprinting free of charge:

“NEW NAUGHTY LIPSTICK! A ‘naughty’ look... a ‘naughty’ texture... a ‘naughty’ scent—to give YOU more exciting romance!”

“Lick your lips... really wet them, see how ‘naughty’ this makes them look. Of course you can’t do this repeatedly... it would fade your lipstick. But there is a way... a way that’s ‘naughty’ but ‘nice’... the new de luxe Tattoo lipstick! Apply it... see how ‘naughty’ it makes your mouth look—how it glintens, how wet looking it is! Thrill again to its ‘naughty’ texture—endlessly yielding and clinging! Then—still another thrill! Note the ‘naughty’ scent! A new fragrance purposely, specially blended to quickly set hearts aflame!”

A hundred years from now, when this generation is being studied by scientific historians, the above appeal will be used as a key to the psychology of our age. The whole point of the above, in plainer speech, is that if woman will only spend a few dimes now and then for Tattoo she’ll have an easier time luring reluctant males to her boudoir. Am I being cynical? Not the least. What I’m saying is strictly factual, because (and here’s our era’s sternest test) the money-bags in control of Tattoo are spending real money broadcasting the above message to aching hearts. When people spend U.S. cash on a set of notions you can bet on their sincerity. Every word of the above message is from the heart. The guys who wrote it know their gals. And today’s gals know that men aren’t the pushovers the Prissy-Pratts think they are. Desirable male partners can’t be whistled into action just because some woman finds herself in the mood. She needs subtle helps. But this doesn’t mean I think the women are using the right methods right down the line to the bedroom. I’ve heard many men complain bitterly about the way the women are going to barbaric lengths in letting their finger nails grow to long, steel-like points. And the lurid lacquers they apply on those nails make many men sick and disgusted. Only the other day I heard a handsome man say he couldn’t stand a girl because of the way she browned her eyelids. It was done, he said, to provide a look of languor and depth—something akin to moony romance and mystery—but, he insisted, the brown places in her face made him think of something else that’s brown. And he didn’t mean Hitler’s brownskirts, either. The next time I see him I’ll ask his comments on the above Tattoo copy. He should be able to give me the reactions of today’s desirable males, for he happens to be tall, dark, rich, handsome, free of inhibitions, and hard to make.

I’ve been trying, for years to get a copy of “Little Willie,” but without success. I couldn’t spot this charming poem in his collected works. Can you fish it out of that inexhaustible newsclip filing system of yours?

I certainly can. Eugene Field’s “Little Willie” was written over 50 years ago. Back in the ’80s a cigarmaker in Lawrence, Kans., John H. Harding by name (maker of “Santa Bana,” the “best 5¢ cigar made”) printed Field’s creation for the amusement of his customers (and, of course, for the good of “Santa Bana” cigars) and it’s an old, frayed, worn copy of that circular which found a place in my newsclip filing system years ago, from which I now rescue it.
for the amusement and delight of harried men and women in desperate need of reading matter of genuine human appeal:

LITTLE WILLIE
When Willie was a little boy, not more than five or six,
Right constantly did he annoy his mother with his tricks;
Yet not a picayune cared I for what he did or said,
Unless, as happened frequently, the rascal wet the bed.

Closely he cuddled up to me, and put his hand in mine,
'Till all at once I seemed to be afloat in seas of brine;
Sabean odors clogged the air, and filled my soul with dread,
Yet I could only grin and bear when Willie wet the bed.'

'Tis many times that rascal has soaked all the bedclothes through,
Whereat I feebly light the gas and wonder what to do.
Yet there he lay so beautiful like—God bless his curly head,
I quite forgave the little tyke for wetting of the bed.

Ah! me, those happy days have flown,
My boy's a father, too,
And little Willies of his own do what he used to do;
And I, ah! all that's left for me are dreams of pleasure fled,
Our boys ain't what they used to be when Willie wet the bed.

Had I my choice, no shapely dame
Should share my couch with me,
No amorous jade of tarnish fame, nor wench of high degree;
But I would choose, and choose again,
The little curly head,
Who cuddled close beside me when he used to wet the bed.

In a note, Field said his wife took the boy away on a visit and he found in their absence he couldn't sleep 'till he had got up and poured hot water on his shirt.

What can a fellow do about his habit of worrying about everything?
In my own experience I've found that I face major misfortunes with fortitude, but little worries get me down. It seems this habit is almost conquered, though one can't tell what the reaction will be to the next little thing to worry about. But that shouldn't stop me from giving advice to others. The first thing to remember is that when you worry you're living in suspense, and that, according to Jonathan Swift, is the life of a spider. Plato, in his "Republic," wrote, "Nothing in the affairs of men is worthy of great anxiety." And Dean William Ralph Inge noticed that "Worry is interest paid on trouble before it becomes due." President Garfield once remarked: "I have had many troubles in my life, but the worst of them never came." Some years ago a salesman, who was a beaming Rotarian, left his card with me, and on its back I found a printed sentiment that looked sensible, so I put it away in my new filing system, from which I fished it out a few minutes ago for use below:

WHY WORRY?
There are only two reasons for worry; either you are successful or you are not successful. If you are successful there is nothing to worry about; if you are not successful there are two things to worry about. Your health is either good or you are sick. If your health is good there is nothing to worry about. If you are sick there are only two things to worry about. You are either going to get well or you are going to die. If you are going to get well there is nothing to worry about. If you are going to die there are only two things to worry about. You are either going to Heaven or you are not going to Heaven; and if you are going to Heaven there is nothing to worry about; if you are going to the other place you'll be so busy shaking hands with old friends you won't have time to worry. So, why worry?

Bertrand Russell, in his "Conquest of Happiness," edges up to the problem from another angle: "The wise man thinks about his troubles only when there is some purpose in doing so; at other times he thinks about other things." The other day a fellow came to me with a bellyache about his debts, which kept him walking the floor nights. I suggest that maybe his creditors were doing the same thing, and that it might be wiser to let them do the floor-walking while he got his sleep, thus putting away new energy for next day's struggle to take care of just such troubles. After getting that off my chest I felt like a Boy Scout who had
just done his first good deed. The great Chinese philosopher, Dr. Who Flung Dung, in one of his inspirational letters to Prof. Wang Hung Lo, suggests that the people you're dealing with are probably just as mean as you are and it's best to forgive them for it because that's another way of forgiving yourself.

In your attacks on superstition you pay particular attention to Astrology. There is hardly a volume of your questions and answers which is without at least one article attacking 'this ancient set of beliefs. Now, please don't misunderstand me, for I don't believe in Astrology, but it seems to me that you ought to lay off this superstition because it's the most harmless of all. Many people get comfort and peace of mind from their astrological charts and literature, and even though they're 100 percent wrong I don't see much gained by ridiculing them into abandoning their unfounded belief in the power of the stars to influence their future fortunes, health and emotional lives. I say three cheers to you when you blaze away at really dangerous superstitions like those peddled by the Roman Catholic Church but I can't work up much enthusiasm when you waste your time and energy on these minor manifestations of bunk. Save your debunking energies for more worthy targets.

I don't agree with my correspondent in any of his assumptions. Astrology is growing, after many decades in which it almost died of neglect. The first World War had a lot to do with this, when many sorrowing relatives turned to the planets for messages from their lost ones. Later, our cheaper newspapers (and they're in the vast majority) took on staff Astrologers, who conducted daily columns in which they answered the questions that poured in from thousands of subscribers. The tabloids, the Hearst press, and even many dignified newspapers in our smaller cities go in for this sort of slop. For years I've taken The State Journal, Topeka, Kans., because it covers the news of my State, and every issue that comes to me contains a little department given to Astrology. I know all these editors are too intelligent to believe in such rot. Whenever I ask them about this crap, they smile and say the department is printed because the circulation manager knows it's good business. So, in order to keep a lot of morons as steady readers the paper's intelligent, serious-minded public is insulted daily. Thousands of Astrologers literally steal millions of dollars from their dupes, many of whom pay as much as $200 for a 'reading' of the stars. Hollywood is lousy with these high-priced crooks who find it easy to take substantial amounts of money from the glamorous Oomph and It girls. Many celebrities—in Hollywood, in the world of business, and even among professionals—fall for this nonsense. In one of my volumes of questions and answers I commented on how the husband of the late Amelia Earheart, when she was missing several days somewhere in the South Pacific, paid several hundred dollars to an Astrologer in order to find out whether or not his wife was alive, and in this instance the crook guessed wrong (one chance out of two), saying she was alive and waiting to be rescued from some coral island. Millions of people are accepting Astrologers' services because of the prestige the bunk is getting through the advertising given it in supposedly reliable newspapers and from celebrities who certainly ought to know better. An honest editor is ethically obligated to warn his readers against such piffle, especially since it costs so many millions of dollars annually and influences people in making decisions that should be based on logic, intelligence and rationalism, instead of an old superstition that has been rejected by every real scientist and realistic thinker in the world. Hitler's acceptance of advice and warnings from his five Astrologers has caused millions of people throughout the world to ask themselves if there really isn't something to the stuff after all. To call Astrology a science is to indulge in arrant nonsense, for a scientist rests his conclusions on verifiable evidence and accurate experiments, while an Astrologer doesn't even pretend to make use of logic, experiments and data that can be checked. He says certain things will or won't happen because he knows, or pretend he knows, it'll happen the way he says. Usually, he's shrewd enough to word his statements in such a way that he can crawl out of an embarrassing situa-
tion should his customer fail to get what the stars promised him. As Prof. J. B. S. Haldane says, "it is as ridiculous to predict a person's fortune from the position of the sun as it would be to diagnose a disease by looking at a patient's tongue without taking his temperature or pulse-rate or making any other examination." Many intelligent people, like the writer of the statement at the head of this article, grant that Astrology is bunk but insist it's harmless and should be let alone, especially because it gives comfort to people when they're told the planets are pulling hard to increase their fortunes, give them better health, add years to their lives, or bring them the love-life their barren lives crave. But the problem isn't as simple as that. When millions of people rely on one form of bunk they're easy victims for others, and perhaps greater, forms of bunk. Little bunks grow into gigantic bunks. And, as I've shown, Astrology isn't by any means a harmless, trifling, petty foible. It influences millions of people in problems of an individual or social nature that cry for the services of the best that science can offer in the fields of economics, politics, medicine, business, government, and the like. We who believe in rationalistic methods know that man's future—if it's to be healthy, wholesome and sane—must be tied up with realistic, concrete science. Man is master of his future, if he uses the facilities of science. But man ceases to be master of his controllable environment when he surrenders his intelligence and rests his future in the hands of Astrologers who are out for only one thing—to exploit him. A person who believes the stars can solve his problem isn't likely to be of much service to humanity at a time when it's in desperate need of rationalistic science. How can the next generation live in a world of sanity and intelligence when this generation is wallowing in the intellectual muck of Astrology and other fake notions, including the greatest of all, religion? For that reason, I believe it's a crime against culture and civilization to let Astrology receive wide accentuance without even a protest against its encroachments on minds that could be more usefully engaged. As an editor and writer, I feel it's my ethical duty to ridicule such bunk with every ounce of energy I can throw into the task. One shouldn't hesitate for a moment in pouring ridicule on this brazen fake, Astrology. I see no reason for even ordinary politeness. They should be branded for what they are—frauds, fakes and charlatans. I believe such methods can win many victims to sanity and, in time, compel Astrology to retreat to the dark recesses from which it emerged. What an insult to our supposedly scientific age when such a set of ideas can attain popularity—and support from the cynical press—at a time when the world is menaced by dangers that can be solved only by the application of man's best and soundest powers of reason.

Surely all the people who write to you asking comments on certain subjects do not always enclose the dollar requested. I shall thank you for information on that point.

One thing I've learned after writing dozens of millions of words during the past 30 years is that it's hard to get many readers to understand the simplest words. I've said a hundred times that no charge is made for answering questions used in The Freeman. Only when a reader wants an answer by private letter do I expect the $1 fee. And yet numerous inquiries like the above continue to come in. But nothing's to be gained by impatience. That'll only make things worse. Some people aren't able to understand the first time, so a wise editor repeats his one-syllable verbiage in the hope that after he says the thing for the 10th time maybe the words will be understood. Many times I get letters from readers who ask me if it's true that a certain book I'm selling at 25c can be had for 25c. What is one to say to that? And yet many people insist on such assurance before permitting themselves the luxury of action.

How do you react to the fat salaries some labor leaders are getting?

Take, for example, the salary paid Jimmy Petrillo, president, American Federation of Musicians. He gets $46,000 a year—$26,000 a year for heading the Chicago organization and
$20,000 from the national body. If it's right for a union official to drag down a salary like that, then why squawk when some third-vice-president gets $460,000 from a public utility? I don't believe any labor leader—and here I speak of the top officials—should get more than $100 a week, plus their necessary expenses. Pettrillo, who used to blow a magnificent fartissimo when he tooted a horn at beer picnics, certainly doesn't earn that $46,000 salary. He's getting it because he has enough control over the organization to dictate terms. And that's against my purr-ins-a-pulls, especially in view of the fact that little me has to do all the heavy head work of editing this paper—in which I show myself to be a vulch for culcha—at no salary at all, and added to that I have to throw orgastic fits every month in order to get my subscribers to chip in a little to meet our dear old friend, the deficit. Maybe I should take a lesson from Pettrillo and organize some sort of a foundation or society to hand myself a little slice of $46,000 each year. As the Maharajah of Prividore said to the Maharajah of Ismyasore, "it boins me up."

You'd be surprised to know how many people arrange their schedules so they can be near the phone during the Pot o' Gold. They actually believe they have a chance to win. Of course, they have, but what kind of a shot is it?

It's an 11,000,000-to-1 shot, which makes it harder than the Irish Sweepstakes by about 7,000,000. The impulse to get a lot for little or nothing moves the average person to wild shots. Take, for example, the slot machine racket, which I've discussed several times in my volumes of questions and answers because gambling always has been one of my favorite subjects. A Cincinnati radio station went in for some pleasant debunking recently, putting on a program in which a slot machine served as the hero (or villain), and the idea being to show that even when a one-armed bandit is mechanically fair it's still against the sucker by long odds. For hours on end the radio carried the sounds of men, working in relays, putting nickles into the slot and pulling the lever, after which the results were recorded and tabulated. It was found that after 8,400 feedings, the machine took in $420 and gave up $168, or 40 percent of the public's money. The jack-pot was tapped once every 1,397 times, but that didn't mean a lot because it averaged only $3.50. There's only one sensible way to play a slot machine, and that's with your own slugs or someone else's nickels.

How do you pronounce "dictator"? I go in for "dik-tay-ter" (with the first syllable accented) even though I know that only one out of nine recognized English and American dictionaries says it's correct, and even then only as second choice. Merriam's Webster's New International gives me this reluctant O.K., and still I go right ahead saying it the way most of us prefer, thus proving how much I like to float downstream with the crowd. While I don't accent the second syllable, I insist on refraining from giving the -or ending the sound that rhymes with bore. That I simply refuse to do, for "dic-ta-tore" makes me squirm. I make the -or rhyme with her, per, which is the only correct sound. While on these -ator words, let me give a few which should be accented on the second syllable: creator (kree-ay-ter), curator (kew-ray-ter), equator (ee-kway-ter), spectator (spek-tay-ter) and testator (tess-tay-ter). For almost 40 years I've been wearing pants that buttoned, but I feel myself being tempted by zippers. Do you recommend them?

A reader asked me a question like the above some years ago, which I answered conscientiously, as may be seen by peering into my volumes of questions and answers. But, love of truth and advance of the cause of science impel me to touch on the theme again. Zippers on pants are excellent contraptions, provided the consumer is always careful to keep the steel from getting tangled up with the pork. The Journal of the American Medical Association, our foremost authority, reports several cases in which surgeons inserted numerous stitches in places that had been lacereated by zippers handled with reckless abandon. My studied advice
is: use them, but always be sure your zipper has right of way, for it can be as dangerous as a wild ping-pong ball.

Twenty years ago I entered this country illegally. Since then I have held down a job and raised a family. Now I must register, for I am an alien, and my illegal entry will be discovered, no doubt. Members of my family suggest that I refrain from registering. What do you suggest?

I advise you to go to your nearest postoffice on or shortly after September 1, 1940, and register, stating frankly that you entered the country illegally. I believe you are safe in doing this, because the law provides that no alien can be deported for illegal entry if he came into the country before July 1, 1924. You should establish the fact that you entered the country 20 years ago, and then apply for naturalization. You can prove the approximate date of your entry by bank books, rent receipts, affidavits from persons who knew you were here before the date just mentioned, letters, employment records, etc. This brings up another reader’s question, in which I am asked whether or not his father (who cannot read or write English) is eligible to take out his “first papers.” He can apply, even though he’s unable to read or write English.

You say there are many anti-Roosevelt stories going the rounds which you insist aren’t funny. Why not let the readers judge for themselves by giving a few samples?

That’s fair enough. Here are three stories, which I insist aren’t as funny as their tellers imagine:

A certain man appeared before a judge and requested that his name be changed. The judge asked his name and received this reply: “Franklin Delano Stink.” The judge asked: “Certainly, we will change it. What do you want it changed to?” The reply: “Just make it Joe Stink.”

Question: In what way are Roosevelt and a pregnant prostitute alike? Answer: Neither of them know their business.

Question: Is it true that Franklin D. Roosevelt is a greater man than Jesus Christ? Answer: Jesus Christ said, “Ask and you shall receive.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt said, “Sit down, boys, and I’ll bring it to you.”

There are many others, equally bad, most of them unprintable because they aren’t as pure as the breath of an angel.

Let me thank you for the informative article (in your 20th volume of “Questions and Answers”) on the Freudian idea that slips of the tongue expose our secret thoughts. Your list of lapses are to the point, although you didn’t show cases that have to do with our sexual lives, a phase which Freud emphasized. Students of human behavior know that slips of the tongue often betray one’s sexual defeatism. Can you go into this?

Emotional defeatism or frustration are often exposed unconsciously, sometimes humorously. This reminds me of the man who was engaged to marry but who expressed worry because he knew he was what down-to-earth poets like Robert Burns described as a “fumbler.” Asking hurriedly for advice, he was directed to several patent nostrums which are supposed to “restore lost manhood.” He bought several, which he gulped down as directed, but his nervousness continued. Later, at the ceremony, the preacher asked, “Wilt thou take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?” Nervously, the groom answered, “I wilt.”

I quote a sentence from an editorial: “The most debilitating of all human instincts is fear.” Do you agree?

I reject the opinion because it’s unscientific. Fear isn’t debilitating at all, for it stimulates the body to throw adrenaline into the blood, which has the effect of the direct opposite of debilitating. Any medical scientist who understands the functions of the ductless glands can produce much evidence to support the opinion just expressed. Some unwell organisms throw adrenaline into the bloodstream without using it, which can have debilitating consequences, but when the system functions normally the opposite takes place because the adrenaline is used. Nature had a wise end in giving us the tremendously powerful instinct of fear—the first instinct that asserts itself in infancy. Dr. James B. Watson, in his book on behavioristic psychology, showed two decades ago that fear is the first emotion felt
Questions and Answers

Lillian Russell’s four marriages had enough amusing material to grease a half dozen comedies. In the picture, her song-writing hubby is a dear, sentimental figure of devotion, but Lillian’s real husband who went in for song-writing was a bigamist who was taken from her side when he landed with her in London and thrown in the hoosegow. But that isn’t the husband that really mattered in the life of Lillian Russell. It’s the third one that was a ball of fire when it comes to supplying material for a master writer of comedy. His stage name was Signor Perugini, but he wasn’t a foreigner at all—just a perfumed American pansy named Jack Chatterton. He was a handsome tenor and looked all man while making love to Lillian before large and breathless audiences, but when he married her he let her know there was nothing doing in the sense of nawsy sex—"I wouldn’t dream of defiling so lovely a creature," and similar bunk—in short, a triumph of mind over mattress. Why did he marry this beautiful, luscious, emotional, sex-conscious woman? Because he thought it would help his artistic career. In short, as Lillian explained later, her problem was "to be a devoted wife to a man who showed that he had no right to marry any woman," which is putting it with plenty of tact. When Lillian let the public know she intended to divorce her Signor Perugini, a reporter found Jack Chatterton reaching for his smelling salts and crying like a disfigured virgin. Then came an interview that a reporter lands once in a lifetime. What a break! Do you know what Lillian did to Signor Perugini? Here are the exact words from the hysterical husband:

"Why, sir, when we had to share apartments, she took all the pillows; she used my rouge; she misplaced my manicure set; she used my special handkerchief perfume for her bath; she always wanted the best mirror when we were making our toilets, whether for the theater or street, and she usually got it. She’s a desperate character, for all her smile is sweet for the public. Once when I became excited because she had moved my bandoline, she threatened to spank me, and she..."
did, with a hairbrush, too. You can't expect a fellow to take a
spanking w.th equanimity, can you? That was the time she got scratch-
ed."

Later, the gobbler cried his de-
termination to sue Lillian for ali-
mony. And so on, for many scenes of
sexual inversion combined with im-
potence. One could take the same
material and turn out a tragedy, but
as for my malicious self, give it to
me in the mood of laughter. But,
even if I were wearing 3-cornered
pants I'd still know enough not to ex-
pect Hollywood to face the Facts of
Life. One mustn't ask the movies to
upset the conventional setup.

How do you feel about the claim of
certain scientists that grass has nutri-
tive value for humans?

I read the report with great enthus-
iasm, for it thrilled me to learn that
12 pounds of grass will equal the
nourishment found in 340 pounds of
fruit and vegetables. I glanced hur-
riedly out the window of my library
and saw acres of grass and a herd of
cows and denuded bulls grazing con-
tentedly. Good, thought I, we'll keep
those bovines clipping the grass—
and when they're through we'll eat
the grass ourselves in the form of
2-inch, juicy, sweet sirloins. That's
the best way I know to eat grass.
They say grass is really palatable
with vinegar, salt, pepper and olive
oil. Yes, but what's wrong with
Worcestershire sauce, ketchup, horse
radish, mushrooms, a couple of slivers
of fried onion and a hint of garlic
on a 14-ounce steak? So far as
health's concerned, I've already lived
longer than any cow in the world.
Yes, a grass diet is wonderful—for
steers. But don't forget to throw in
some corn now and then if you're
finicky about flavor. As for myself,
let me repeat I'll take my grass on
the hoof.

Now and then I come across a remark
credited to Voltaire, worded: "People
will continue to commit atrocities as
long as they continue to believe absurd-
ities." Can you give me its source?

It's a powerful sentence—and a
true one—but I'm afraid Voltaire
didn't write it. at least in the form
above. I'm reminded of how I join-
ed in a controversy some years ago
(see an early volume of my questions
and answers) over the still more fa-
mous line Voltaire is supposed to
have written: "I don't agree with a
word you say but I'll defend to the
death your right to say it." It was
shown that Voltaire's books and let-
ters don't contain the words, though
the great philosopher, wit and liber-
tarian wrote many pieces supporting
the right to free speech, free inquiry
and free thought. After thorough ex-
amination it was found that Vol-
taire's biographer, S. G. Tallentyre,
pol the words into Voltaire's mouth,
his excuse being that they were true
to the spirit of Voltaire. Yes, but
even that's no good reason for cre-
editing Voltaire with words written by
another, though they do, in some
ways, present his views. While it's
true Voltaire believed in free speech
and free press he certainly wasn't
the kind of character who would die
for someone else's right to express his
wrong notions. The Voltaire we know
wasn't willing to die for his own
ideas let alone those of another writer.
Whenever things got too hot for him
in Paris, he'd give the police the slip
by darning to his farm at Ferney,
part of which was in Switzerland.
When the French authorities threat-
ened him, he'd move over to the Swiss
art of his estate, where he remained
until the "heat" was taken off. Vol-
taire never had the desire to be a
martyr, which showed good sense.
Like Rabelais, he was willing to get
mighty close to the fire, but he didn't
care to get his hide scorched. That
doesn't sound heroic, but Voltaire was
that sort of a man—one who dis-
dained the meager, and melancholy
satisfaction of suicidal sacrifice. He
felt, with cause, that he could do
more for liberty if he retained a whole
skin. But to return to the line, "Peo-
ple will continue to commit atrocities
as long as they continue to believe absurdities." Recently, in a sketch of
Voltaire, entitled "A Hermit's Day,"
Desmond MacCarthy put the remark
into Voltaire's mouth. Later, when
asked for the source, Mr. MacCarthy
said he wasn't sure whether he found
it in "Candide" or invented it. He
manufactured it, of course. He insist-
ed that, if Voltaire didn't say the
exact words at least they expressed
his views, which is true. It happens
that Voltaire, in the seventh section of his pamphlet, "On the Miracles," 1767, expressed opinions that come pretty close to the sentence Mr. MacCarthy gave as Voltaire's. Here is the passage:

"Once your faith, Monsieur, persuades you to believe what your intelligence declares to be absurd, beware lest you likewise sacrifice your reason in the conduct of your life. In days gone by, there were people who said to us: 'You believe in incomprehensible, contradictory and impossible things because we have commanded you to; now, then, commit unjust things because we likewise order you to do so.' Nothing could be more convincing. CERTAINLY, ANY ONE WHO HAS THE POWER TO MAKE YOU BELIEVE ABSURDITIES HAS THE POWER TO MAKE YOU COMMIT INJUSTICES.... Once a single faculty of your soul has been tyrannized, all the other faculties will submit to the same fate...."

To be candid, Mr. MacCarthy's sentence is better than Voltaire's passage. It's too bad the great Frenchman didn't boil his long paragraph down to his commentator's brief and brilliant epigram.

Who invented the use of premiums in salesmanship?

Premiums were used sporadically pretty far back, but Elbert Hubbard was the first super-colossal salesman to put the premium plan in so important a place as to make it the foundation of a large business. I refer to the Larkin idea, which Hubbard invented and put over in Buffalo. This was before the great Elbert turned his hand to literature that was intended to dazzle the naive. Once I heard Elbert Hubbard deliver one of his famous lectures at the Academy of Music, in Philadelphia, when I was a boy in my 'teens. The immense theater wasn't more than a fifth full, and how many of the audience actually paid their way in I have no way of estimating. I know, however, that I got in on a pass that was handed out freely to passers-by. Naturally, I thought that a man who wore his hair long, tied a long, black ribbon to his glasses, and in other ways labored to look like a cross between an artist and a medicine hawker, ought to squirt a flood of wisdom, but here I was disappointed, for his lecture was dull, flat, uninspired, trite, and crudely moralistic. Inspirationism didn't appeal to me even in those tender years. Something about the verbiage always made me detect its inherent insincerity and hokum. But I recall one of his stories, which was shrewd. He was talking about the fickle goddess of luck, which he belittled, preferring to worship hard work, persistence, ambition, refusal to watch the clock, "give the boss more than he pays for," "get the job done with a minimum of chin-music," and so on. "Luck," said Hubbard, "reminds me of the farmer who came down the road and saw a horse-shoe before him. He picked it up, because he was sure it would bring him luck. A little down the road he came on another horse-shoe, which he grabbed because he still believed he was headed for good luck. Then the farmer found a third, which he threw into the back of his wagon with little comment. Then a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth, which went into the wagon without any comment at all. Finally he came on a big heap of horse-shoes, which he transferred to his wagon. Then he drove to town, where he sold the wagon-load of horse-shoes to a dealer in scrap metal. As the farmer started home, he reflected, one horse-shoe is lucky, but a wagon-load of horse-shoes is junk."

In her book, "Bowl of Heaven," the late Evangeline Adams, Astrologer, quoted a friend: "Why shouldn't I believe in Astrology? Everything in the universe influences everything else, so, naturally, the stars must influence man." Please comment.

Could anything be more sweetly reasonable and logical? The moon influences the tides. The sun influences the chemistry of the soil, making it possible to grow food. Therefore, send me $20 or $200 and I'll work out a chart that will show you what you have a right to expect tomorrow, next year or 50 years from now. Let me give an actual quotation from the March 15, 1940, horoscope that appeared in The State Journal, Topeka, Kans.:

If your birthday is today, you are promised much success and promotion in the next year in your business or employment. You should,
however, beware of sudden quarrels, particularly quarrels with relatives. The child born today will be charming—sympathetic, appreciative, artistic and refined. Much good fortune is predicted, especially if the child is born late in the day.

The logic runs like this: because we can verify and actually measure the influence of the moon on the tides it follows that it's possible to tell what's in store for people born on March 15, 1940, with special gifts for those who popped in later in the day. A child ought to see the weakness of such "logic." By the way, something like 10,000,000 people living in the world today were born on one or another March 15. Several million were born late in the day. So they have good fortune awaiting them, or already in their possession. What about those who were born in China and have been bombed by Japanese aircraft? What about the Jews who were born in Germany and Poland and who are being murdered or slowly starved to death by the Nazis? What about the Finns who were slaughtered by Stalin's fighters? Many of them were born on March 15, and yet the stars didn't save them from bad fortune. The point to bear in mind is that these charlatans arbitrarily decide that this star is all to the good and that star is a trouble-maker, that this star brings health and that star causes a blow-out which can overturn one's car. Pretty, but why not present a grain of authority for such powers? Who decided that the stars promise much success and promotion to those born on March 15? Why did they come to the conclusion that people born on March 15 can expect good business next year? These things must happen because an Astrologer says so. That's all. And some of the things they say do happen, of course, in the same way that I, a complete skeptic, could outline 100 guesses and have some of them hit the nail on the head. These guessers forget about their misses, but their hits are remembered and repeated. This reminds me that L. A. G. Strong, in the London Observer, reviewed a book entitled "Hitler's Last Year of Power." on the day Chamberlain announced over the radio that Britain was now at war with Germany. The review by Mr. Strong reported that the book "stated among other things that Britain would not be involved in war." Mr. Strong then observed:

"Any prophet must be judged by the accuracy of his prophecies. Astrology might give a glimpse of the future of the world in a way which could not be imitated by any other branch of knowledge, but here it was immediately disproved by the Prime Minister's speech announcing the momentous decision of the British Government. The fact that the Astrologers and other advocates of the newer superstitions have been asserting all through the past 12 months (indeed, ever since the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938) that there would be no war involving Great Britain for many years will not, one imagines, prevent them from exercising their powers in just the same way in the future—perhaps hopefully forecasting the sudden collapse of Germany. And, even if that prophecy should eventually prove correct, we should not allow it to be forgotten that the previous 'no war' prophecy has already been abundantly disproved."

However, no matter how many bad guesses Astrologers may make, there'll always be plenty of people to insist that the good guesses prove "there's something in it." If enough people took that view we'd cease approaching life's problems realistically and we'd enter a general period in which all questions of government, business, art, health, and the like, would be left to the dogmatists who cast horoscopes. That would mean the surrender of man's mind to superstition and intellectual decay. That condition isn't likely to prevail, because we've traveled too far in the direction of sound science and logical thinking to permit ourselves to be deflected by such nonsense, but the facts show clearly that the minority that accepts such idiotic drivel is growing, and, as a measure of social insurance, should be instructed and guided. That's why Rationalists have a duty to help their friends and acquaintances understand the faulty, worthless foundations of Astrology—a "science" which operates on the unsupported say-so of mystics and acquisitive muddleheads. In addition, Rationalists should write strong letters of protest to editors who insult intelligent readers by giving space to
the tripe of Astrologers. Such letters can do nothing but good. Lord Raglan, in an essay in a recent issue of Folk-Lore, shrewdly points out that magic (Astrology) isn't primitive science. "A scientist," he writes, "is a man who is trying to find out something. His methods, however crude they may be, involve logic, observation, or experiment. This magician (Astrologer) is not trying to find out anything. He has no use for logic, observation, or experiment because he knows, or thinks he knows, all about it."

Princess Kropotkin, in "Liberty," recommends a facial pack made of potato flour and hot water. This is used for erasing wrinkles. She says it should be thick, and as hot as you can stand comfortably. Leave it on half an hour, she says. But what do you say?

I say it’s the bunk. Science is yet to discover a means of removing wrinkles. The princess means well, but her preparation can’t do what she promises.

Please let me have the name of a good, honest, reasonable patent attorney in Washington as I want to hire one to take care of a device I invented.

I advise inventors always to try to arrange for their own patents. That isn’t hard to do. Just write to the U.S. Patent Office, Washington, D.C., asking for full instructions, which will be supplied free. Most inventors can do the job themselves, thereby saving from $200 to perhaps $500 in lawyer’s fees. My little blue book on how to get a patent will prove of assistance, but I suggest that inventors go even beyond my little volume and ask the Patent Office for the instructions which it gives out without cost.

I don’t like to see every gadgeteer proceed on the assumption that lawyers are necessary in order to get so simple a thing as a patent. Most inventions aren’t worth the fees demanded by the patent attorneys. Inventors are like authors, in that they think their creations must be worth millions. The chances are the discoveries are worth a few dimes. Only recently I told my readers how a woman writer paid a lawyer almost $100 in order to get her manuscript copyrighted, a service which she could have had from the Register of Copy-

writes for a mere $2 and the forwarding of a simple application blank. I always advise authors and inventors to get their own patents and copywrites. This hint has saved scores of individuals many thousands of dollars.

What is your reaction to the Duke tests to prove telepathy?

About five years ago, Upton Sinclair (who’s always ready to hop onto any new mystical circus-wagon) got into a hot, violent argument with me over the Duke University ‘scientist’s’ experiments to prove what he called “extra-sensory” powers. I made a careful study of all the evidence, and for several months (during which I spilled many words) I sailed into Sinclair with both fists, sometimes hitting below the belt, which is a failing of mine when I get my literary bowels in an uproar. When I got through with Sinclair (and he’s a friend I’ve always admired and loved) he curled up and he’s been a good, little boy ever since. The whole debate will be found in the early volumes of my questions and answers. It’s the most complete and exciting exposure of the Duke University “tests” ever written. If I do say so myself, and the case I presented was so clear and convincing that on couldn’t escape the impulse to call that idiotic professor a jackass or an intellectual crook. I think jackass comes closer to the truth. Only the other day, while reading The Scientific Monthly (one of my favorite publications) I came on a valuable article by Prof. Sumner B. Ely, of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, in which my charge that the Duke tests for telepathy weren’t collected impartially was repeated, this time with high professional authority. Prof. Ely’s well-taken point is that the tests “are not complete; they are not representative.” He adds:

“The method used was to continue a person testing as long as he made a good score, but when his good scoring fell off he was sa’d to have lost his telepathic receptivity and his testing was discontinued. That is, they collected the good trials and threw out the bad ones. Such procedure is merely ‘loading’ the data and of course will give favorable results.”
What pleases me is that a recognized scientist, writing in our greatest scientific journal, substantiates exactly what I said years ago when the extra-sensory crapology was making such an immense to-do. The record shows that I, a mere, scribbling layman, was the first critic to go after the Duke piffle in a thorough way, laying it out with several well-aimed haymakers, as my early volumes of questions and answers clearly show. I was plenty rough, but that's my way when I have to go after super bunk-shooters. My rough words and Dr. Ely's polite language both meet on common ground when the professor ends his discussion with this paragraph:

"The final conclusion regarding telepathy is clear. It can be positively and definitely stated that there has never been any evidence produced which would warrant the belief that there is any such thing as telepathy. The most careful and reliable tests show no indication whatsoever of it. While of course this is a negative proof, yet after all, it is a proof that no such thing as telepathy exists. We can positively say that no mind has ever yet communicated with another mind other than through ordinary sensory channels."

Now and then I get letters from readers who ask me about these vaudeville telepaths who say they perform "miracles," but their stunts are all based on trickery, some of it clever. When I was a boy in Philadelphia, more than 30 years ago, I was fascinated by the mind-reading done by Anna Eva Fay, who did her stuff several times at what was then a beautiful vaudeville house on Chestnut Street, a few blocks East of Broad Street. Later I learned, as Dr. Ely says in his paper, that questions were asked her in writing by the audience, but the pads on which the questions were written were collected, the impressions made by the pencil on the second sheet of the pad were examined and the answers were secretly telephoned to her by a small telephone receiver concealed in her hair close to the ear. That little trick enabled the great Fay to make scores of thousands of dollars and mystify hundreds of thousands of people.

My readers also ask me why it is that mediums can name a particular card or number that a person is thinking of. On this point Dr. Ely writes:

"A person asked to choose one card in a pack of cards is influenced by many things, his reactions to the colors red and black, his preference for high or low numbers, etc.; so that his chance of naming any particular card is by no means one in 52. It has been found that the queen of spades is a favorite with many persons.

"If anyone is curious enough to try, he will find that when persons are asked to give a figure between 1 and 10, the answer 7 will predominate. Among geometrical figures, the triangle seems to be the most common device."

It's a good idea to be eternally suspicious about anyone who claims to have extra-sensory perception, for, while we're not all alike in our capabilities, we aren't able to free ourselves of fundamental restrictions placed upon us by our biological equipment. We know that an old wreck of a motor car, made 20 years ago and ready for the junk-yard, isn't able to keep up with a new, peppy, handsome car, but we also know that that powerful and swift machine is in turn limited by its mechanical equipment, and that it can't, for example, run up a telegraph pole without even denting a fender. Some of us can see better than others, or hear better than others, or think faster than others, but none of us can do things that suggest supernaturalism, that hint at miracles, that point somehow to the suspension of natural law. The debunker always keeps skepticism handy as a part of his standard equipment. It comes in handy when someone tries to put over the hoax that he or she possesses powers that aren't within the range of the average person. The debunker doesn't like to be kidded. He's from Missouri.

What is your opinion of Holbach's "The System of Nature"?

John Morley says, Baron de Holbach (1723-89) taught that "the universe is only matter in spontaneous movement; and . . . that what men call their souls die with the death of the body, as music dies when the strings
are broken." Holbach was the author of "The System of Nature," one of the greatest Freethought books ever written, a masterpiece I hope to publish before I kick off, if I can get the financial side taken care of, for it will surely raise a thumping throbbing deficit. His friend, Diderot, wrote as follows about the author of this book (published in Paris in 1770): "I am disgusted with the modern fashion of mixing up incredulity and superstition. What I like is a philosophy that is clear, definite, and frank, such as you have in the 'System of Nature.' The author is not an atheist in one page, and a deist in another. His philosophy is all of one piece." As Morley said: "No book has ever produced a more widespread shock. Everybody insisted on reading it, and almost everybody was terrified." If you live near a good public library, by all means try to borrow a copy of this gigantic masterpiece. It's terrific, or, as they murmur in Hollywood, it's super-colossal in a quiet, scholarly way, but it has always been depended on to put the bowels of Bishop Beerebelch in an uproar. Voltaire, ever ready to compromise, thought Holbach went too far, that he should have limited himself to a polite, urbane, witty skepticism that wouldn't offend the king and court, who, after all, were always able to scatter rewards and punishments in a real world, even if God wouldn't or couldn't. Voltaire was working with Holbach and Diderot on the French encyclopedia, and it was his theory that this forthright atheistic book would hurt them with the police, that, in short, Holbach had let his friends down. But the encyclopedia's editor, Diderot, didn't think so. In fact, Morley claims Diderot wrote pages of Holbach's book and submitted numerous ideas. Diderot was accused of having written the book (it didn't have Holbach's name on it when first issued) and he got so scared over the police that he went to some border town (I can't recall its name) to be in a position to hop across to safety once the suppressors got after him. One had to be wary of these piss-ants, and Diderot was no fool. Morley says Voltaire, when present one day "at a discussion as to the existence of a deity, in which the negative was being defended with much vivacity, astonished the company by ordering the servants to leave the room, and then proceeding to lock the door. 'Gentlemen,' he explained, 'I do not wish my valet to cut my throat tomorrow morning.' It was not the truth of the theistic belief that Voltaire prized, but its supposed utility as an assistant to the police." Clarence Darrow, in his Little Blue Book, "How Voltaire Fooled Priest and King," entertainingly shows how Voltaire went about the job of going as far as he dared in an age when the king, the court and the church were ready to punish anyone who dared spread heretical ideas in the fields of religion, history, politics and government. As I've said before, Voltaire, like Rabelais, had no itch in his pants to be a martyr. My volumes of questions and answers contain many short discussions on these characters who did so much to advance truth and progressive ideas in what we've come to call the period of French Enlightenment. It was a glorious period, and the world will always be indebted to its leaders, among whom we must include the rich, cosmopolitan, learned, witty fine-living Holbach.

If a young couple do have premarital relations with each other, does anything necessarily result from this intercourse? Being around young men as a teacher I have often been asked this. I would like to know the correct answer, which I shall pass on to my pupils.

So, you're a teacher. What a break for the young men in your class, for it's plain that you have a scientific, inquiring, alert mind. This means you have the makings of a great master of research. In order to answer your question I restudied all the works of Lydia Pinkham, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, Henry L. Mencken's suppressed book, "The Mighty Itch and What to Do About it," the books of Gaud's own inspired writers (the Holy Bible, if you must know), the love-letters (in 20 large volumes) of Brigham Young, the memoirs of Barnum, the epigrams of William Jennings Bryan, the secret confessions of Father Coughlin (with foreword by Bishop Beerebelch), the annotations of the great Chinese phi-
osopher, Who Flung Dung; and, of course, the immortal epistles of Dung's collaborator, Wang Hung Lo, the last party assisted by his pretty, little wife, Yu Hop Me. Backed by such authorities, I am able to pass on information that has been checked and verified. So, go to your students and tell them that if anything is to result from premarital relations it's first necessary to get a Man of Gawd (priest, preacher or rabbi) to say his magic words, which are sent by spiritual wireless to Heaven, where Gawd sets the biological equipment in motion and makes possible the creation of what Winchell so aptly calls "a bundle from Heaven." If no Man of Gawd intercedes the results will be appalling. For example, it's known to all students of eugenics that if the wedding ceremony is conducted by a justice of the peace, the child is automatically branded illegitimate, thus accounting for our large annual crop of bastards. That's Gawd's way of showing his displeasure. This brings up the question of venereal diseases. Here again Gawd works in strange ways his wonders to perform. He has fixed it so that couples not tied by Men of Gawd automatically become sterile, which soon turns the sinners sour and brings on inflammations known as clap, and similar afflictions. With the above arsenal of facts you should be equipped to do great deeds for morality and spiritual enlightenment.

Can you give me some examples of palindromes beside the one you quoted in a volume of your questions and answers (Madam, I'm Adam)?

Here are a few more palindromes —sentences which read the same forward and backward:

Able was I ere I saw Elba (Napoleon Iq.)

Name no one man.
Red root put up to order.
Draw pupil's lip upward.
No, it is opposition.
No, it is opposed; art sees trade's opposition.

How many kinds of Baptists are there? A church yearbook lists 20, the first being "Duck River and Kindred Association of Baptists." Another denomination which I'd never heard of before is called "Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptist." Regardless of whether the name's scrappy or poetical, eccentric or dignified, breezy or placid, the dogmas are all on a par—hashes of cultural hogwash, sacred tripe, stupid supernaturalism, intellectual primitiveness, and idiotic dogmatism. But, just because the notions are childish is no reason for expecting them to be abandoned. The kind of people who fall for these religions—in the main—are immune to the appeals of logic and good sense. As Mrs. Priscilla Prissyp-Pratt said, she believes everything she's told at church—because.

As it is my ambition to become a journalist I was interested in your articles in some volumes of your questions and answers telling about your experiences on newspapers in New York City, Milwaukee, Chicago and Los Angeles. Did you learn the profession in a school of journalism?

There were one or two departments of journalism connected with universities in this country when I barged into my first paper, but any worker who took enough trouble to talk about the establishments was certain to dismiss the subject with the sweeping remark that journalism is one profession that can't be taught in schoolrooms. The first day I worked on a paper I was put on the copy desk and told to edit copy and write headlines. I got one lesson from another fellow on the desk. It was this: "Every headline should contain a verb." From that moment I was on my own. When I was sent out to report a story for the first time, my city editor said to be sure to tell the most important facts in the first paragraph, to get all names and addresses right, and to make it snappy. And from then on I was on my own again. But I don't recommend this method to others, if they can afford to go to a good school of journalism. It worked with me, but that doesn't make it good.

Mr. A wanted to buy half a barrel of hard cider from Mr. B, so he ambled back to B's barn, where he found the farmer busily removing manure. "Hey, you turd-tumbler," cried Mr. A. "the barrel is less than half full." Mr. B insisted it was more than half full. They decided which was right by tipping the barrel, without spilling any of the cider
and without using any measuring device. How did they do it?
That was a favorite brainteaser when I was a kid. Of course, they
tipped the barrel until the cider reached the top rim on one side. If
the bottom of the barrel was visible, it was less than half full; and, if the
bottom of the barrel was not visible, it was more than half full.

Editor: If God is perfect, why did He
create an imperfect man in His image?
How can proponents and victims of re-
ligious belief hold to the idea of God's
"perfection" when His imperfect crea-
tion provides such an obvious contradic-
tion? These questions may seem dif-
cult to answer, but "inspired" defend-
ers of religious superstition argue
(with the greatest of ease) that man,
in the beginning," was perfectly con-
structed—with the privilege of choosing
between "good" and "evil." They insist
that man's choice of evil was no re-
sponsibility of God's. (But it was God
who created evil to accommodate man's
preference for the filthy staff).
Spokane, Wash. ROBERT SLOCUM

Editor: It's not of world-jarring im-
portance, but— I have never been able to
understand your raves about Charlie
Chaplin. Having seen most of the Chap-
lin pictures over a period of years, I
have many times wondered why so
many people thought him funny. His
jerky antics are good, with me, for a
feeble grin occasionally, but a good
helly-shaking laugh—never. Chaplin
manages to haul in a certain amount of
pathos in each performance; little of
that, but certainly more than real
funny-man stuff. I've heard that Chaplin
is a riot at private parties when he
really gets going, but having never seen
him putting on an act at a private
party, I wouldn't know. Chaplin went
over with a bang in the days of the si-
lent flickers when he, Mary, Doug, Wal-
lace Reid, and Harold Lloyd were at
the top of the heap, but it seems to
me that Chaplin does not fit into the
present-day scheme of things. I think
the time for his permanent retirement
from the screen is 15 years overdue. As
to screen comedians, don't you think
W. C. Fields just about tops 'em all?
The funniest scene I ever saw in the
movies was in "My Little Chickadee,
" when Fields was getting in bed with
the goat. He kept up a running-fire
stream of words. The goat said
"Ma-a-ama-a-a." Fields said, "Ah, the
little girl wants her mama." The whole
scene was charged with laughs, but
when Fields said "the little girl wants
her mama"—well, how can mere words
describe it?
Aze, Tex. A. M. PASCHALL

Six months after my marriage I dis-
covered my bride has a wooden leg.
What should I do?
Break it off.

Editor: Robert G. Ingersoll said:
"Fear is the dungeon of the mind." He
realized that in breaking the shackles
of superstition imprisoned thoughts
were liberated... Ingersoll's enemies
sought to crucify him and he was bit-
terly assailed by press and pulpit.
He would have met the fate of Bruno if
he had lived in earlier centuries. He nev-
ertheless was a great humanitarian and
was forever interceding for the under-
privileged. He said, "I plead for light,
for air, for opportunity, for individual
independence. I plead for the rights of
labor and of thought. I plead for a
chainless future. Let the ghosts go
... justice remains. Humanity is the
sky and dogmas, creeds and theories
are but the mists and clouds continually
changing, destined to melt away."
Like Voltaire, Ingersoll recognized
that growth is attained when enslaved minds
are liberated and rank intolerance
routed.

EDMUND K. GOLDBOROUGH
Washington, D.C.

Do you think a man other than Shake-
speare wrote the immortal plays attrib-
uted to the Bard of Aven?
The deathless Baconian controversy
adds up to this: There isn't a shred
of real evidence to support the Ba-
conians. In this debate I echo Mark
Twain's remark that Shakespeare's
plays weren't written by Shakespeare
but by another man with a similar
name.

A writer speaks of the "third lung.
"What does he mean?
The skin.

How many men would it take to pull
a modern locomotive's load?
About 25,000.

How many cooks are needed in the U. S.
army to prepare food for 1,000 soldiers?
Fourteen.

How did the Atlantic Ocean get its
name?
The Roman historian Herodotus
gave the Atlantic its name. The name
generated from the Latin Atlanticum
Mare, which means "Sea of Atlas."
I pulled a Sherlock Holmes recently when I was in a man's apartment and he told me he was expecting a woman visitor. After he challenged me to describe her, I said she most likely wasn't young and probably was very good. When he asked me how I knew this, I pointed out that he had just finished gathering various bottles and putting them away. Why, he asked, can't bottles be put away from a young and good woman? My guess here was that he'd let at least a few bottles remain in view in the hope that the pretty woman would show some willingness to surrender at least a part of her goodness. It was all so jolly, but I never learned how good my guess was.

Good waiters have long memories.

Ugly things can be useful—frying pans, for example.

I'm yet to see an ugly bird.

Cat: poor man's tiger.

While getting my hair cut the other day a fellow walked into the shop and showed the barber a letter. "What's this all about?" he asked. The hair-snipper read the epistle and replied: "You've been appointed bindweed exterminator at $135 a month." The small-time politician, who'd never held even a $60 job in his whole career, stammered: "What's that bindweed mean?" "It's a weed," said the barber, "and you're to teach the farmers of this county how to get rid of it." "Do you know anyone who can show me some of the weed?" "Oh, ask any farmer." So the man went out and hunted up a farmer, who took him into a field and showed him some bindweed. Then came the problem of how to exterminate it. He asked the farmer what he did when he wanted to get rid of the pest, and with this information he returned to town, put his hat on his desk in the county farm agent's office and let it be known he was ready for business. And that's politics. I'm reminded of the story about the agriculturist-management expert who said to a farmer: "Those hogs of yours could get their meal a lot quicker if you'd put the feed in one pile instead of scattering it all over the lot and making them root for it." The farmer replied: "Aw, shucks! What's time to a hog?"

Farmer's lament: "I'm still paying installments on the car I swapped for the car I traded in as part payment on the car I own now."

I'm not for or against the false fingernails some girls are wearing, but I believe their wearer should be more careful than the girl who lost one of them and later had it turn up when her boy friend's mother found it while laundering her son's shorts.

"In future wars," said an acquaintance to Bernard Shaw, "microbes will replace gas, and obviously the general of the future will be a doctor." "Quite," Shaw agreed, "and prescriptions will replace conscription."

The Norwegian novelist, Knut Hamsun, has long been a willing tool of the Mahatma Propagandhi. A few days before Hitler invaded his country, Hamsun wrote in an Oslo newspaper: "We Norwegians do not wish to fall under the domination of a foreign power. Thus, more and more, our hopes turn toward Germany." Well, there's one man who knew what he wanted—and got it.

He: "Let's get married—or something." She: "We'll get married—or nothing."

Each morning I have to come back to the same job—face a blank page and see to it that it loses its emptiness.

Toscanini, who likes the radio, happened to tune in on the middle of a symphony. "Not at all bad," he exclaimed. "That fellow has a feeling for tempo, and the phrasing is better than average. He seems to have a fair inkling of what Beethoven was trying to express. Whoever he is, he deserves watching, for in time he should develop into a first-rate conductor." At the end, the announcer said, "You have been listening to a recording of the Eroica Symphony, conducted by the great Arturo Toscanini."

The literal-minded professors of geometry are still puzzled by Mae West's crack that "A curved line is the loveliest distance between two points."

Father Coughlin—the Trojan Horse's rear.

Uncle Crey, by himself over in a corner near the fireplace in his Ozark
cabin, was working hard with a stub of a pencil and a piece of paper. Suddenly he look up happily. "Goddamme if I ain't learned to write," he exclaimed. Maw got up and looked over the scrawled lines across the paper. "You flea-bit piss-ant, what do it say?" she asked, as she knocked the ashes from her corn cob. "Jesus Christ," replied Uncle Ezry, "how in hell should I know? I ain't learned to read yit."

The spiritual diet must be heavy with calories, which explains why most priests are fat.

The late Dr. Sigmund Freud studied various forms of wit and humor as parts of his theory of psycho-analysis. One story he cited as a good example of Jewish humor: A schnorrer (professional beggar) was a regular Sunday-dinner guest at the table of the charitable Mr. Eostein. One Sunday the beggar came with a young stranger, who took his seat at the table together with the others. Asked the host: "May I ask who is this young man?" Answered the schnorrer: "He married my daughter last week and I've agreed to support him the first year."

Wisdom from a reader, Darwin S. Russell, Flint, Mich.: "The last thought hasn't been thunk and the last book hasn't been wrote."

A few months ago I wrote a hefty piece on my reasons for using exclamation marks sparingly, showing that I rarely use one to less than 25,000 words. As I recall the essay, I gave no thought at all to the fact that there's no ready-made exclamation point on my typewriter key-board. It takes double labor to make a mark, and maybe I've been rationalizing my laziness.

"I always wuz agin Franklin D. Roose-velt," croaked Uncle Ezra. "Why, Ezra, don't you know that behind this great leader is an uncontrovertible power which controls and influences him, which guides and sustains him, which inspires and encourages him, which lifts to loftiest levels, which beckons him to ever greater conquests?" "I'm agin Eleanor Roosevelt, too."

Customer to clerk: "I want my statement atomized."

Note to Hitler: We're all ready for your parachutists out here in Kansas.

When I was a kid I came on a sentence that stuck to me even though I didn't know its exact meaning. It spoke about an orator whose "meaning is buried beneath the exuberance of his own verbosity."

A press agent who has made a close study of the public's reactions to Sally Rand's skin-airing routines, says the audiences respond in two ways. The men, when Sally finishes, mutter "Nuts!" The women argue: "What's that gal got that I haven't got?"

From a motor car adv.: Room for the more abundant wife.

Frank Presbrey's history of advertising devotes considerable space to old-time advertisers, showing they weren't so slow when it comes to thinking up what copy-writers call "stoppers." Presbrey's book says one of the earliest bathtub advertisements opened with these attention-arresting words: "Ask your wife if she would not like to bathe in a China dish like her canary does."

"We all have something to fall back on," says an inscrutable phony. There's no doubt he'll land on it eventually.

Walter Winchell says a sign in a Chicago show window proclaims the Jewish owner of the establishment would rather deal with a hundred Nazis than with one Jew. It happens the place is an undertaker's parlor.

The British sure are paying for giving ear to too many bedtime Tories.

As a student of human behavior I like to check up on the things people do to please or entertain themselves. Forty years ago I turned to man's sexual life—and I haven't learned half the story yet. Recently I learned from a famous chef that there are better ways to put down a bottle of champagne than to drink it. It seems that drinking one's champagne is just a crude, bourgeois, unimaginative habit indulged in by fatheads and persons lacking in esthetic sensibilities. His favorite way of nibbling champagne interested me, although I'm pretty sure my financial circumstances will compel me to continue on a liquid diet of 15c bottled beer and Canadian Club chased down with a sip of coke. Here's the way a great cook prefers to serve the sparkling wine that symbolizes care-free times, pink-silk pillows, bouncy mattresses, aristocratic heartburn and pepped-up, expanded sexual capacities: "Champagne is superior to still white wine for combining with watermelon. The best method of doing it is this: Plug a good-sized watermelon and trickle into it as much champagne as it will hold—perhaps a full bottle. Replace plug tightly and store in a cold refrigerator for several hours before serving. Cut slices across the melon, trim off rind, and serve. The crispness of the champagne, plus the combined flavors of wine and melon, make the dish a superb one for warm after-
noonas." Yes, people really do things like that—and if they have the money I don't blame them. Here I'm reminded of a sentence in John Ganther's chapter on Joseph Stalin, who, he says, is quite naive about sexual matters. Once Stalin was in Radek's apartment, where he happened to pick up a huge volume filled with pictures showing hundreds of ways of performing the eternal pantomime. "Do people really do such things?" asked Stalin.

Rob Wagner asks: "If a walking policeman is a flatfoot, what is a motor cop?" I have a peachy answer, but I'm afraid it's a little too rough for that portion of my public which prefers verbiage that's as pure as the breath of an angel.

A cobbler put pictures of Hitler and Mussolini in his front window, under which he printed this sign: "I can't fix heels like these."

I offered our housemaid some cider. In which she spied floating a spider. She drew back with a shriek. But her thirst made her weak, so she now has the spider inside her!

A Kansas editor, after looking over the field, decided he'd be a bee if ever given the chance to revisit this world after he croaks. Maybe he wants to be busy all the time, but what's wonderful about the bee's eternal hustling? In a whole lifetime a bee puts up about a half ounce of honey, while I can go to the nearest grocery and pick up a pound for less than 25c.

Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, who holds it's vulgar to say toothpicks, always asks for "wooden skewers."

A Japanese official, discussing his government's undeclared war, said the aim was to spank China, to which a foreign diplomat answered: "Spank China? You may as well try to spank a featherbed."

Clarence Darrow once said: "No man is all black or all white; we're all freckled."

Recently a Kansas reporter told about the way a couple of robbers held up a local bank, killed the cashier and dashed away in a motor car. After leaving the scene of the crime, wrote the reporter, "the bandits rushed by all stop signs without the slightest regard for the community's traffic ordinance." As I didn't see the look in the reporter's eye when he wrote this, it may be I'm not ketchin' on to a swift piece of sarcasm. If it was intended to be humorous I can draw on my knowledge of English literature and show that Thomas De Quincey (Little Blue Book author of "The Confessions of an Opium Eater") anticipated his gag more than a century ago, this way: "If once a man indulges himself in murder, very soon he comes to think little of robbing; and from robbing he next comes to drinking and Sabbath-breaking, and from that to incivility and procrastination."

Radio preacher goes modern: "I shall outline a course of conduct which will provide stream-lined transportation to an air-conditioned eternity."

Popular with tourist camp double-dates, after the fourth drink and the approach of beddy time: "There was an old woman who lived in a shoe. She had so many children she didn't know what to do—evidently!"

Vernon Earl Kilgour words it this way: "Mary had a little lamb—the doctor fainted!"

Suggested for immediate use after a serious soul has read some goopy poetry: "I shot an arrow into the air; it fell to earth, I know not where—that's how I lose all my arrows!"

Mark Twain tells of an ominous looking fellow who approached a man one dark night and opened with this request: "Say, mister, what time is it by your watch and chain?"

The pastor and his bishop (Dr. Beerbelch) had quarrelled, and the preacher was requested to find some other congregation to minister to. He therefore preached his farewell sermon, and the parishioners came in crowds to hear him. "My text," he said, "is taken from the moving story of Abraham: 'Tarry ye here with the ass, while I go yonder.'"

Hollywood came through several crises while making the movie based on Brigham Young's life. The main problem was how to handle the great Mormon's polygamy, for the good, old female had wives scattered all over the Utah landscape. It wouldn't do to give the Hon. Young just one wife—even Hollywood has to draw the line somewhere—so it was decided to treat Brigham's polygamy matter-of-factly. When the scenario was presented to the higher-ups in the tabernacle in Salt Lake City only one objection was raised. The unofficial censors suggested that a change be made in a scene which "indicated that Brigham Young had not visited one of his wives for six months." The Mormons succeeded in having this changed to two months "because they felt the scene was a slur on their forefather's matrimonial enthusiasm." Morality is relative, changing with times, moods and places. Since Brigham Young was practicing polygamy it was considered proper that he do his job con-
scantily, and being away from one of his wives for as long as six months might give the world the impression that something was amiss. When we come to the question of the number of wives collected by the great organizer and colonizer, we begin to get into a little trouble. The picture shows six wives, all of them attractive, according to statistics gathered for me by my private accountants. As I recall Mormon history, Brigham Young had 27 wives. Here again we're impressed with the vagaries of the moralists, for it seems that a polygymist with six wives is all right while one with 27 isn't quite acceptable in the best circles.

It's reported from Boston that the huge Shell gasoline sign over the Charles River, which flashed in immense electric letters that could be seen for miles around, went on the blink in a way that amused many. The first letter remained dark.

Prof. Shinypants: "A dictator is a guy who keeps the fates of his country in the hollow of his head."

"Will you lend me five dollars?"
"Glady. Here's the money. When will you pay it back?" "Stop hounding me; you'll get your money."

Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt: "In her latest picture, that terrible Dorothy Lamour plays with her monkey while in a sarong."

Hildegarde, after years of gold-digging along Broadway, sighed for the peace, comfort and simplicity of retirement in the country. When asked how she'd go about it, she explained: "First, somehow, I'd get me a good, substantial gent, marry him and settle down in the country. In a nice, little cottage with flowers, cows, and a grape arbor. Come dinner time, I'd walk down to the station to meet my mate and we'd stroll home, hand in hand. At the door he'd kiss me, then press something into my hand. I'd look at it—and there, sparkling like crazy, would be the gawdawndest biggest diamond you ever saw!"

She: "Stop! I'm not that kind of a girl. Stop, I say!" He: "I won't!" She (with a sigh): "All right, I've done my duty."

Back in the early days of the century it was almost trite to describe a lady as being "gorgeously upholstered." In the last decade of the 19th Century the weight of clothing that the average woman wore on the street was between 25 and 30 pounds. They were literally upholstered in those days, as I remember them, but you couldn't use the phrase today. Even when it's below zero the women still refuse to upholster themselves, which is all to the good, for they're healthier today than ever before—and much better looking, if I'm a judge. In the first decade the women usually needed a trunk, at least, when traveling, but in these days it's common for a woman to carry enough for a week-end journey in her handbag, with room to spare for the usual accessories. The men, at last, are beginning to catch up. But they have far to go before they can show themselves to be sensible about what they put on their bodies. A 1940 man, according to a doctor, is 10 degrees warmer than a woman, which shows that men continue to wear too much. I don't know what it was 40 years ago—perhaps nip and tuck.

The late Jackie Osterman said, shortly before he died, that he once saw a picket walking up and down Broadway with a blank sign, looking for a sponsor.

When hubby had his prostate removed the wife settled down to a marriage in name only. That sterile relationship lasted for years, which kept the woman somewhat jittery. At last, when the old man died, the widow wrote on the funeral notice: "Gone to join his prostate and a fuller life, I hope, I hope, I hope."

When Uncle Earwax reached his 100th birthday a reporter interviewed him on how he felt. "I'm feelin' fine," said the old man, "except for the terrible pain I get every mornin' when I bend over and put my hands down to my knees and pull them up again."
"Why do you do it then?" the reporter asked. "Jesus Christ," shouted Uncle Earwax, "do you want me to go around without my pants on?"

Professor: "The entire vaginal region of this patient is inflamed by gonococci. What would you do in such a case?"
Medical student: "I'd hunt up another date."

When a woodpecker wants a meal he uses his head. Ubangis, as all circus fans know, stick wooden disks in their lips. They claim this gives them oomph, which most of us undisksed ones consider debatable. However, I'm not looking for an argument but for an opening to bring in the gag which makes one Ubangi woman say to another: "Peter piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." Then she says to her friend: "Now you fan me a while."

If you happen to be one of my new readers (there are a few) you may care to know that I've had occasional freight on to 30 years jotting down amusing signs. If you like the hobby let me refer you to my volumes of questions
and answers (plug) where you'll find hundreds of specimens, many of them cute and a few of them funny. The latest to come to my attention was used by a delicatessen owner whose store was next door to a movie theater that was showing "All This, and Heaven Too." Piling his window with gorgeous samples of smoked whitefish, salami, pastrami, liverwurst, pickled cucumbers, bolognas, frankfurters, etc., he put this sign in front of his delicious display: "All This and Herring, Too."

Bishop Boerbelch, learning that one of the preachers under him had just become a widower, thought it'd be nice to relieve him of his duties for the week-end, so he wrote: "I am sorry to learn that your wife has just died. Would you care to have me send you a substitute for the week-end?"

I have documentary evidence that the N.Y. Central has a chair car named "Pansy." So, the fairies have their own car. This is a good opening to repeat my lame joke about the stranger, asking a fairy the way to San Francisco's famous ferry building, was answered: "Goodness gracious, do we have our own building in this city?" It isn't a good gag, but it seems that any kind of a joke about a fairy gets hilarious consumer-acceptance.

The other evening, while driving out of Joplin, headed for home, I saw a revival meeting going full blast in a tent on a corner lot. On the platform were three reasonably personable gals who were dressed in white and who were pulling hard for the great Aimee's Four-Square Gospel. Being a keen student of behavior I drew up and got out, intending to take in some of the show. It being a hot night, the tent's side was up, so I could take in the audience and speakers from my hidden position under a tree, where I must have fazed into the scenery, because my presence wasn't detected by a young couple in a car parked nearby. While the girls on the platform were screeching for Jesus, the girl in the car was being propositioned by the young and hot feller—and, boy, oh boy, did he tear off a line. It was hard to concentrate on the sermon while listening to that chap get over his stuff. He was a big success, and soon he and his girl were busy at the very thing that got Adam and Eve into such a heap of trouble. Many thoughts flashed through my mind, but the most pregnant was to the effect that this girl in the parked car was surely an efficient person, for she was getting love from Jesus and her boy-friend at one and the same time. This is a scientific age we're living in.

During the past few years I've received numerous letters from a zealous reader who insists on my giving time and space to a fierce attack on a Florida sect that holds the world is the inside of a ball. He regularly forwards their literature and wonders why I don't debunk the outfit. It happens that I had a little fun with these freaks some 12 or 15 years ago, as may be seen by referring to one of my books. As the subject isn't worth the effort, I refuse to spend the necessary minutes to learn which of my books happens to contain the spoofing piece. As for a complete refutation of the queer beliefs of these Florida eccentrics, let me tell my outraged reader that I agree with Jane Austen when she said about someone, that they are "not worth the compliment of rational opposition." Some ideas are so fantastic it's wiser to ignore them. Lots of people still believe the world's flat, but their holding that notion doesn't interfere with my right to say my little piece about things scientific, religious or philosophical, so I prefer to let those deluded mortals go their way. The same goes for the odd creatures who see this footstool as the inside of a vast thunder-mug.

Clemenceau held that success in politics depended in great measure on the ability to refrain from quarrelling with one's friends.

When a man's dead, he's dead.

A little girl, asked to write an essay on the life of Benjamin Franklin, wrote: "He was born in Boston, traveled to Philadelphia to be a printer, met a woman on the street, she laughed at him, he married her, and the next thing he discovered electricity."

The enraged husband caught his wife in a stranger's arms and was about to shoot him when his wife cried: "Just a minute. Listen to me. Who paid for that mink coat, that swell car, and took care of all the b'lis? You? Like hell! He's been putting out the money." The husband dropped his gun, pointed to the bed, and shouted: "For Gawd's sake cover him up before he catches his death of cold!"

At that, I still prefer the one that has the wife (also caught in the act with her lover) cry: "There's that big-mouthed husband of mine. This'll be all over town tomorrow." (I promise not to tell these two again before 1950.)

Max Mendel, Albany, N.Y.: "Do keep up your recital of salty tales, because as listening-in on the radio gives me
pratt-pains, I feel that I am entitled to at least one belly laugh now and then.

Snatch of conversation: “When I told my son about sex he said it might have been mildly entertaining if he hadn’t been so bored by Freud and Havelock Ellis.” (Are we to understand this young man isn’t even interested enough to try out the ritual at least one time just to see what the shootin’ all about?)

A Jew, busted and in need of a job, went to the store of one of his rich co-religionists, and begged: “Give me some work; I have a wife and 10 children.” The rich merchant regarded the corner of his eye, and not looking up from what he was doing, asked: “Well... can you do anything else?”

Sign in a cafe: “Pies Like Mother Tried to Make But Couldn’t, 10c.”

Montaigne, in one of his finest essays (the one on love), tells how tailors of a few centuries ago developed a genius for inserting neatly contrived pads in men’s trousers, calling the installations “cod-pieces.” Such contraptions were designed to deceive the women, leading them to conclude the wearers of those quaint things were better fixed than they were in reality, thus giving at least a surface improvement to an at-times miserly Mother Nature. Today the men go to the other extreme in that section of the anatomy, preferring tight-fitting sport shorts that make even a mannish man look as level as the advertising models who show that even Kotex can’t break the sought-after smooth line. But the tailors, frustrated in one section, turned loose their genius in another direction, so that even the skinniest male can be fixed up with the broadest of broad shoulders. From comments I’ve picked up, I take it the women are still being duped, for they seem to hold to the theory that any man who’s broad in one section must be equally bulky in another.

An unconfirmed report says a Nazi professor is training a lion to live in the same cage with a lamb. The results are promising, but a problem is still to be worked out. It’s necessary to renew the lamb from day to day.

St. Joseph, Mo., where Jesse James was killed by Bob Ford, honored the outlaw recently by changing the name of the Woodland hotel to the Jesse James. Now the hotel is using this slogan: “You won’t be held up at the Jesse James.”

A Walterwinchellism: “Coincidentally enough. . . .”

A Washington, D.C., reader, who doesn’t want his name used because he’s on the staff of the Naval Dental School, writes: “I enjoyed reading the four issues of The Freeman you sent me as the beginning of my stay with you as a subscriber. How do you do it? How can one man utter so many words that, when thrown together, have an enduring purpose and meaning?”

I don’t know which is worse—to be unhorsed or cowed.

Linn A. E. Gale, who wrote Little Blue Book No 1314, entitled “The Bigotry Trust in the U.S.A.,” died in Washington, D.C., August 14, 1940, of a heart attack. He was a true liberal and Free thinker.

“Life,” said a philosopher, “is just one fool thing after another; love is just two fool things after each other.”

Artemus Ward said: “When I am sad, I sing, and then others are sad with me.”

Professor Shynpants asked Bishop Beerbelch, “Tell me, is there a life after death?” To which the bishop replied: “There certainly is. When we die, we enter upon a life of eternal bliss. But let’s talk about something pleasant, instead.”

Mark Twain, speaking to a group of physicians, said: “Gentlemen, there’s one disease to which you will never find a remedy. It will be fatal in every case.” “And what disease is that?” asked one of the doctors. “Life,” replied Mark Twain.

Henry Thomas, author of “The Story of the Human Race,” one of my most popular publications, writes that Walpole, speaking of Cardinal Richelieu’s inability to tell a good story, said: “His listeners laugh before they hear his story, which is right, for they surely will not laugh after they hear it.”

Nietzsche wrote the following about 75 years ago, and it’s especially true in 1940: “To imagine German invaders in Paris is like seeing the Venus de Milo crawling with vermin.”

Sample tall-corn joke used in Abbot and Costello radio show that’s taking Fred Allen’s place: “Mounted policeman... My goodness, are they stuffing cops nowadays?” This isn’t the creation of a razor-wit, but at least it’s as pure as the breath of an angel.

A newspaperman, writing from St. Joe, Ark., reports a church testimony that should gladden the hearts of all my pious readers. A St. Joe enthusiast testified in church that he was stranded away out on a country road with
two tires blown out and two others in bad shape. Instead of losing courage, he decided to pray over the matter. Sure enough, Gwad, knowing him to have a heart that’s as pure as the breath of an angel, arranged things so that before long five new tires came rolling down the hill. Four of them attached themselves to the wheels of his motor car and the fifth jumped onto his tire rack. This proves that pietly pays cash dividends. If your tires are worn down to the fabric and ready to blow out, it’s probably true that you’re an Atheist, or an Agnostic, or something of a backslider. If you lived the right kind of life you could put in a call to Jehovah and get a new set of tires in no time. And maybe, as in the case of the St. Joe prarboy, Gwad may even go so far as to slip the new tires onto your wheels and put the spare on the tire rack.

I don’t seem able to make up my mind which to call the Republican campaign—a hotairathon, a squawkathon, or a breakwindathon.

Stalin’s secret police tell the big boss everything. They are especially effective within the Communist party, where they fish out even the most private and secret facts for Stalin to use as he sees fit. Once, at a committee meeting, Stalin turned to one of his co-workers who had only recently caught gonorrhea. Said Stalin: “Well, comrade, how’s your dose of clap today?”

Once Winston Churchill visited the London slums and commented: “Fancy living in one of these streets—never seeing anything beautiful—never eating anything savory—never saying anything clever!”

Some years ago, Wedgwood Benn, a half-pint of a man, got up in the House of Commons to vent his violent indignation against Winston Churchill. “My Right Honorable Friend,” said Churchill, “shouldn’t develop more indignation than he can contain.”

NBC announcer: “Owing to circumstances beyond our control there has been an interruption caused by a loose connection in “The Love of Dr. Susan.”

The most boresome sport—fishing.

All priests are at home in the Dogma House.

Popular novelists like to write about the “mystery of woman.” There’s a myth. Men know all there’s to be known about women. So do the women. And the women know all there’s to be known about men. So do the men.

When the farmer’s daughter let it be known she wanted a quiet wedding, her pappy, to humor her, went to town and bought a Maxim silenced for his shotgun.

“Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?”

“With silver bells, and cockle shells
And one goddamn petunia.”

Streamlined cars enable us to go further in order to see the same things.

Alexander Pope observed that a Christian can bear perfectly the misfortunes of another.

It doesn’t make sense to have to turn on a light in order to see the machine on which I write this sentence while billions of stars are working up countless trillions of candle power.

I have always admired the thoughts of the coarse.

Money is still money after a skunk squirts on it.

When the day came for her daughter to marry, the wise, old mother (who knew men and the world) whispered that she should always remember that the difference between a successful sex life and failure is only about three minutes.

When a wild animal becomes a tame pet he loses his natural dignity.

If you seek money from a banker don’t give him the idea you are in a desperate jam and must be rescued at once or all is lost. He’ll let you sink. But if you can convince him you’ll profit a hundred dollars for each dollar of interest he takes from you, the chances are you’ll get the loan.

Many people would smile more if they had good, bright teeth.

In the old days men wore cod-pieces in order to give women the impression nature had fixed them generously. In these days men wear straps and other contraptions to make the area as level as a Hill of Venus. We’re still to hear what the women think about this change. They may prefer accurate appraisals.

Two sinful women get along better together than two virtuous ones.

The Rev. Charles Morrison, in The Christian Century, squirts this bladderdew over his subscribers: “God still reigns. Hitler is the rod of his anger, but he is only a rod, a rod held fast in God’s hand. He can go so far, but no farther.” This is just another way of showing the value of “spiritual realities” in these days of 40-ton tanks and 1,000-pound air bombs.
A freshly beautiful girl from a dentist's home in Brooklyn landed a Hollywood contract which called for small pay until she got made over and shunted on her career. First, they changed her name, and then they gave her a queer accent so they could say she was Scandianvian. Then, in making her over, she was made by the big boss, the producer, and three of the studio's top directors, all of which contributed experience to her career. Then her ears were clipped and taped back slightly. Her teeth were regimented in order to straighten a molar with Fifth Column tendencies. Her nose was docked and her mouth Simonized. Another department bleached her hair, shaved her legs, sneaked away a little flesh from one place and slipped on a little in another place. After pulling out her eyebrows they glued on artificial ones. Then they deflated the bottom of her bust and inflated the top. Eyelashes were attached, with shiny beads of black goo on the ends of the artificial hairs. When her first picture was released (in which she did a bit part) her dentist father back in Brooklyn went to see what she had done for art. He sat through her picture without recognizing her, thinking it was a double-feature and that she'd appear in the next film. When told he'd already seen his daughter, he insisted the girl was a stranger to him.

W. C. Fields, who amuses me even when he's in a bad picture, exploits trickery, deceit, dishonesty, and cussedness in general as parts of his shady, diverting character. I recall one of his old pictures, in which he explained he got the name of "Honest John" because he kept a friend's glass eye under his bar for several years, and when the friend dropped into the barroom and demanded his glass eye, Fields produced it without an argument.

F. D. R. can Stop Hitler.

Clifton P. Fadiman calls Jimmie Durante the poor man's Cyrano de Bergerac.

After all, why shouldn't a waiter grade his customers according to their tips?

Do-Goodsters remind me of the fellow who wanted to hold an umbrella over a duck when it rained.

There must be something basically wrong with the art of moving picture actors when any kind of a pooh can steal a picture from them.

While sashaying around in my library, after getting tired of reading about the Dook and Docthiss of Wyndzrr, my heart went pitapat when I pecked into a Stevenson essay and came on his remark that the difference between youth and age is that youth demands joy as a right; age asks only to be spared intolerable suffering.

Phineas J. Biror, in The Kansas City (Mo.) Jewish Chronicle: "A must for your reading-list is Little Blue Book No. 1761, published by E. Haldeman-Julius. It's called 'America's Little Hitlers,' and is authored by Roy Tozer, research director for the Friends of Democracy. Incidentally, the Rev. L. M. Birkhead, national director of the Friends of Democracy, is doing a swell job in his ruthless exposure of Nazi and Fascist organizations in this country."

A writer in The Christian Herald reports that it's never too sultry to commit adultery.

An old man was standing on a street corner. Whenever a dame would pass, the old man would look and keep on looking. Finally, after eight hours of it, a cop came up and said: "Sorry, Dad, but you'll have to move on." "I know, officer, I been here a long time, but I got a heavy date for tonight and I'm just charging my batteries."

A great psychiatrist knocked on the pearly gates. When asked by St. Peter to identify himself, he answered: "I'm a psychiatrist who specializes in curing people suffering from delusions of grandeur." St. Peter shook his hand warmly and cried: "Welcome! We need you badly. Come right in. We're having trouble with a fellow named God. He keeps telling everyone he's Father Coughlin."

Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler were conferring on ways and means to conquer the world, when Herr Stalin said: "After we finish our conquest of the world Moscow must be the capital of the world." Commissar Mussolini cried: "Oh, no. Just you quit this Trojan-Horsin' around. Rome's the right choice for the world's capital. Why, the Lord Himself called Rome the Holy City." Duce Hitler wheeled about, banged the table, and screamed: "When did I say a silly thing like that? The capital's to be Berchtsgaden."

The average man is a pushover whenever a woman, aiming to gain male sympathy, pretends a gushing helplessness.

A sailor, who had a cork leg, lived peacefully among cannibals, because when he landed he pulled up his trousers, cut off a slice and handed the sample to the chief, who decided it wasn't worth cooking.
A woman oughtn't to be more than half whole.

Dr. Bruce Mordecia Hicks forwards one of his prescriptions which he says has done some good. It reads:

20-30 Years Tri Weekly
30-40 Years Try Weekly
40-50 Years Try Weakly
50-60 Years Try

Charles Laughton, the actor who has a face like a tub of lard and is built like a R.R. water tank, said: "Friendship is more important than love, but not half so entertaining."

A Nazi has to be careful, after robbing and killing a Jew, not to let his conscience trouble him or he'll be called a reactionary.

Reports from Germany say it's an easy trick to discover a rich man. He's identified by grease spots on his vest. The fabulously rich man is recognized by his ability to buy gasoline to remove the spots.

Just because the Communists hate the capitalists it doesn't follow they love the workers.

A reader passes on this sign, which he saw in a Japanese tailor's establishment: "Ladies have fits upstairs."

Irish bull: The sweetest memories in life are recollections of things forgotten.

One day, when "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh" was on the best-seller list, a man wrote in for a copy of "40 Ways to Amuse A Dog."

The N.Y. magazine, Cue, printed this advertisement recently: "Your Dog's Horoscope. Send date of his birth and know your own dog better. Price $1. P.O. Box — White Plains, N.Y."

A reader says he saw this in neon: Do Bust Inn.

Delightful movie: "Pride and Prejudice."

Whenever I see a picture of Calvin Coolidge I'm reminded of Alice Longworth's remark that he always looked as though he'd been weaned on a pickle.

When a father sugested haltingly to his 21-year-old son that a certain girl was too young for him, the boy gave the old man a withering look and intoned: "If they're big enough they're old enough."

Two fireflies met in Hyde Park in London. One cried: "Put out that light; don't you know this is a blackout?" The other firefly replied: "I can't help it. When you gotta glow, you gotta glow."

I don't know whether it was near-il-literacy or sophistication, but a large sign in front of a group of 75c-per-night cabins between Joplin and Springfield, Mo., said: Thanks, "Come Again."

Walter Winchell sure has a keen sense of rumor.

"A Government," wrote James Madison in The Federalist, "ought to control the passions and be controlled by the reason of the public."

Early in 1934 a German officer made the rather odd remark that the British were gentlemen, but the French were not. When asked to explain what he meant, he said: "After the war, in 1920, I was in charge of a barracks. One day some of the Military Control Commission, under a French officer and a British officer, came to my barracks. They said they had reason to believe I had a store of rifles concealed behind a brick wall, contrary to the terms of the Peace Treaty. I denied this. I said, 'I give you my word of honor as a German officer, that I have no rifles concealed in the barracks.' Well, your British officer was a gentleman. He accepted my word of honor, and he went away. But that French officer was not a gentleman. He would not accept my word of honor, and he pulled down the brick wall. And he took away my rifles."

Scrap of conversation: "Too many American homes are a garage with a bed and bath attached."

Familiarity, sa'd Whistler, is the lowest form of intimacy.

Professor Earwax, who's so short he looks as though he's standing in a hole, got off a smile that hit me right: "as intellectually stimulating and culturally inspiring as a walkathon."

Irish proverb: "The man who finds fault with my horse is the man who will buy it."

Punch's suggestion for Hitler's tombstone: "This is definitely my last territorial demand."

Sir John Lavery, in "The Life of a Painter," says that Lloyd George, though only an amateur farmer, carried off most of the prizes at county shows. When asked to explain, Lloyd George said it was because he got his manure from the cavalry barracks, adding: "Perhaps the greatest benefit I have received from the Government."

Sure-fire way to get your name in print: Merely announce you're going to vote for Wee Wendell Willkie.

George T. Pickett, for many years manager of the Llano Cooperative Colony, in Louisiana, says: "Making a heaven on earth is a hell of a job." But,
I recall him as a patient, hardworking, tolerant, understanding executive who went right ahead working for utopia even though it was a hell of a job. People can be unreasonable in more ways than one. I'm reminded of the fellow who wasn't getting the right kind of service from the local laundry, his main kick being that the concern didn't do well with his white duck pants. So, once he attached a note to his pants, asking that more soap be used. When the pants came back they bore this message: "We're already using more soap on your white duck pants. You should use more paper." In short, utopia can't be achieved without a certain amount of cooperation. That's simple logic, but let's not get the notion that the human animal takes to logic. He doesn't. Only the other day I was asked this question: "If a light sleeper sleeps better with a light on, will a hard sleeper sleep better with the windows open?" No logical thinking there. Trying to fish out what was wrong with that sentence kept me as busy as a farmer trying to milk a galloping cow with a greased udder.

Tailor's boast: "My suits make you a snob immediately and a cad overnight."

Scrap of conversation: "I'm still waiting for the mystery story in which the detective refuses to deduce from the match folders in the stiff's pockets that he has been to the cafes they advertise."

If you want to start a pleasant and profitless argument just drop the remark that warm water freezes into ice cubes quicker than cold water.

A garage had a large metal sidewalk "Night Lubrication" sign in front of its place of business. A wag carried it into the next block and placed it in front of Maud's establishment.

A Kansas doctor received a call late one night, and on a lonely road in the country his car broke down. The only life he could see was a light in a home in the distance. He walked to the house and rapped on the door. A handsome young woman appeared—tall, with lovely curves, sparkling eyes, a ready smile that showed pearly teeth, lovely breasts, and all that sort of thing. Even though the doctor was a leader in the church and a pillar of respectability in the community, he couldn't help admiring this lovely vision of glamour before his tired eyes. His heart beat a little faster. Explaining his plight, he asked if he could stay all night. She said for a man that she was a widow and lived alone, had only one bedroom, but that she would be glad to let him have it, and she would sleep on the lounge. He entered the warm cozy house. She hurried to the ice-box and brought out several bottles of beer and an appetizing snack. They ate and drank heartily. The doctor, who had always been true to his wife (except the convention of the American Medical Association in Atlantic City early in the war) began to picture himself as a gay Romeo—at least for this unforgettable night. After all, he told himself, it's natural for a man to admire and want an attractive woman. She led him to the bedroom, and said: "I don't want you to be lonesome tonight. So, don't be frightened if you hear from me." The doctor's heart pounded away at double speed. With thoughts of romantic, heart-lifting adventures, he took off his clothes and crawled into bed, sure that he wouldn't be alone unreasonably long. Sure enough, a little later there was a knock. The door opened slightly, and there, in the form-revealing silk gown, stood the young woman, the most appealing sight he had ever seen. In a soft voice she inquired: "Are you asleep?" He answered, "No." "Would you like to have a bed-buddy tonight?" "Yes, nothing could make me happier," he replied. "All right," she responded. "Another man's car has broken down and he wants to stay here tonight also, and I'll send him in."

The catalogue of the Union Library Association, of New York, lists D. H. Lawrence's "Lady Chatterley's Lover," which it describes as "unexpurgated, except for the obscene passages."

From London comes this piece about a beautiful blonde who shouted from the darkness of a crowded air-raid shelter: "Take your dirty hands from under my dress. No, not you, YOU!"

A British instructor at a Canadian flying school, after trying out a new U. S. fighter plane, exclaimed picturesquely: "She climbs like an 'omsick angel.'"

Newsworthy event, worth a place in my newsclip filing system: A movie scene showed a motor car making a quick turn, and there was no sound of screeching brakes or shrieking tires.

Southern Californians like to brag about their sunshine, but play down on the rains. Everything from a sprinkle to a cloudburst is dismissed airily as high fog. It's embarrassing when a high fog washes out a bridge now and then.

Roosevelt had a jackass; he called it Duke's Mixture. Every time it wagged its tail, it showed Wendell Willkie's picture.

H. M. Cochran, New Kensington, Pa.: "Your Freeman is O. K. I need it once a month to wake up the gray matter."

These Hollywood gossip-columnists, who pour their stuff over the radio, get excited over things that look mighty
commonplace to me. Here's Jimmie Fidler with the breath-taking announcement that a Beverly Hills dentist got his tool in Joan Crawford's mouth for a mere $4.50. So what? Why should we have to pay mind to such routine matters?

Sign on a road in Florida: "Gas With Gus." Gus says those few words hiked business 50 percent. Another sign, advertising a shaving cream: "Said Juliet to Romeo, if I don't shave you next year.

Professor (in medical college): "Did you see much venereal disease while taking your special studies in Montreal?" Student: "Yes, and I brought some of it home with me." Professor: "Well, I think I can give you credit for that, because I can classify it as home work."

I don't mind a one-track mind, if it isn't narrow-gauge.

When I visit New York I usually stop at Frank Case's Algonquin, on E. 44th Street, just opposite of George Jean Nathan's apartment. The last time I visited Mr. Nathan he served the strongest cigars I've ever smoked, but they were good, especially when moistened by his excellent schnaps and bromlin. A fine host, Mr. Nathan but it's Mr. Case I want to talk about. Case's hotel isn't as big as the Empire State building, which is one reason why I like it. I hate these damned hotels that try to take care of 3,000 or 4,000 guests, and make an all-round mess of it. I know, because I tried out the much-advertised Statler in N.Y., the famed Hotel Pennsylvania, and staying there was one constant strain on my patience and character. The service was poured on with a shovel, but when you looked into it you found it was the rottenest kind of a phony. I never was more miserable in my life. Finally, I got out, swearing I'd never stay in a hotel that advertised it has more than 400 rooms, I claim it's a physical impossibility for any hotel to take care of more than 400 rooms and their guests at one time. You can take on more, but the net results are bad, and the expense is terrific. By the way, during the year I received 10 or 12 solicitations from the immense Palmer House in Chicago, begging me to register whenever I visit Chicago. The management sends me advance credit cards and all sorts of documents which I don't understand, including a card that assures me I can send collect telegrams from the establishment. The letter gives me the impression everything's waiting for me. But last January, while in Chicago, I found that all that direct mail publicity was the bunk, for there wasn't anything I could get except a room at $8 per day, and I'll be damned if I'll spend eight bucks for a place to sleep. I went out and told the taxi-driver my trouble and he remedied matters by taking me to a 330-room hotel where I got a room and bath for $2.50 and it was so good I stayed an extra four days. But, let's get back to Mr. Case's unpretentious, well-run establishment. The story, as he tells it, has the manager planning a little advertisement in a Southern publication. So, Mr. Case wrote to his advertising agency, asking that the copy stress the home-like atmosphere of his establishment. To make himself clear, he enclosed a hastily scribbled sample of the kind of copy he wanted. But, in a couple of places, the exact words eluded him, and he inserted dummy words which the agency could replace with the real thing. Somebody missed the point, for here's how the ad appeared: "A gentleman of the South, his wife, and family will find all the honey and what's of a refined home at the Hotel Algonquin." Mr. Case contends that the ad brought in more business than the cost gave him the right to expect.

A white collar worker, who wanted to express his feelings about the wages his employer was paying, wrote the following on the back of his pay check when endorsing it: "Any resemblance between this and all living wage is purely coincidental."

George Bernard Shaw said: "Few people think more than two or three times a year. I have made an international reputation for myself by thinking once or twice a week."

"He's a Sabbath-breaker!" So said a good soul in my presence the other day. "Which Sabbath do you mean?" I asked. "Which one? Winter, Sunday. What else could I mean?" "One that's-recalled, pretending profound enlightenment, "you see there are others. Monday is the Greek Sabbath; Tuesday, the Persian; Wednesday, the Assyrian; Thursday, the Egyptian; Friday, the Turkish; and the Jewish Sabbath falls on Saturday. Even the most pious Christian Fundamentalist is a Sabbath-breaker—in the eyes of someone else.

Recently a luncheon speaker made effective use of the old joke that has it that black horses eat more than white horses. Later he explained why. There are more black horses than white.

Goethe said: "I can promise to be sincere, but I cannot promise to be impartial."

A young Negro lover applied for a marriage license. A few hours later he was back. "Say, boss," he drawled, "I want to change de cain's name on dat marriage license. The clerk was puzz- ed. "What's de trouble?" The Negro replied: "Well, boss, dere's no trouble, but you see,
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ah jus saw ano’der colored gal up de street dat ah lak, and ah just wants you’l all rub out dis name dat ah gave yo’all dis mawm’n, and write in dis oder gal’s nam.” The clerk f’aberrated, said: “Why, you can’t do that! Thricely way you can handle a matter of that kind is to cancel the license you took out this morning, and take out a new license. That’ll cost you another two dollars.” The Negro pondered a moment. “Two dollahs? Well ah tell you’, sah, j’se’ let it go, den. Yo’ see, sah, dere ain’t dat much difference between de two.”

A student asked an old university professor who had long whiskers, “When you go to bed at night, Professor, how do you sleep with your whiskers out on top of the covers, or do you tuck them underneath?” “Well, my son,” mused the savant, “it’s strange, but I’ve never really noticed or thought about it. But I’ll che-ik up tonight and let you know.” That night when the professor went to bed he left his whiskers out on top of the covers, and lay there, wondering whether that had been his usual habit. But he couldn’t get to sleep, so he gathered up his whiskers and tucked them underneath the covers. Still he lay awake wondering how the dickens he had been sleeping. He lay awake all night wondering. The same thing happened the following night, and the next night, and after about 10 sleepless nights the poor fellow died from loss of sleep. And to this day nobody knows whether he had been sleeping with his whiskers underneath the covers or out on top.

Notes for Future Historians: From an ad. “Hearts beat faster because MAIUS OUI EAR PARFUMES is frankly flirtatious.” From a Macy ad offering “indiscreet accessories”: “Never mind if truck drivers turn and whistle—it’s part of the fun!”

The Japanese, as I pick off this piece, are trying to smooth the tail-feathers of the American eagle because word’s gone out that if they declare war on us we’ll retaliate by refusing to send them the essentials for their war industries. That’s a situation that could be turned into a movie for the three Ritzmaniacs. If we keep this up the first thing we know the Japs will get really sore and cut down their spies in this country until they’re only as thick as fleas in Istanbul. By the great Ethereal Esquire!”

When I was going too far. As always, bunk is the Archmedian lever that’s moving the world. The trouble with this world is it’s too full of crap. And on this high spiritual note I draw my sermon to a close.

Thumbnail portrait: He’s the kind of fellow who always puts his hand into his pocket at the first call of distress, and keeps it there until the danger’s over.

Sign on a high school kid’s jalopy: “Constipated; Can’t pass a thing.”

You don’t have to be a horse to have horseness or to be a horse’s rear.

The girl stood on the running board and deeply did she think. To get off meant a threadbare coat, to get in meant a muff.

Scrap of conversation: “Anyone who tries to predict Kansas weather is either a fool or a stranger.”

Dick and his cute little lassie finally had to get married. That was in September. In January a son was born. Shortly after his arrival he poked his little nose out of the covers and said, “hmm! Pretty damned cold for June, ain’t it?”

Not that it’s important, but it happens I was born near Third and Race, in Philadelphia, decades before the bridge to Camden was even thought of. As a kid I made many trips to the nearby Betsy Ross House, where tradition says the Old Glory was first made. All of which prepares the way for the telling of a little gag that was popular in those distant days. A stranger in town accosted a policeman and asked: “Where’s the Betsy Ross House?” The copper gave him an icy eye. “You a stranger in this town?” he asked. The visitor broke down and confessed he was. “I thought so,” growled the copper. “All them joints was closed up long ago.”

A huge woman, with a bulging front and protruding rear, went to the zoo and saw a hippopotamus for the first time. She looked at the animal for a long time in silence, examining it from every available angle. Finally she asked the keeper: “Is it an animal?” The keeper shrugged his shoulders. “Yes, it’s an animal—a hippopotamus.” There was a silence again. Then the persistent lady, of an exceedingly curious strain of mind, asked: “To what sex would you say it adhered?” The keeper shrugged his shoulders again. “Its sex? That’s something that could be of interest only to another hippopotamus.”

When paunchy Carol and his double-chinned, beefy-ankled Magda Lupescu beat it out of Rumania, my fly-paper memory brought back a cute jingle that’s been going the rounds for years. I think it ought to be embalmed here,
and if you disagree it won't do any good because I have the last say. I suggest that it be recited by Edgar Bergen's side-splintering Charlie McCarthy. It goes deeseway:

Said the beauteous Magda Lupescu
As she flew to Rumania's rescue:
It's a wonderful thing
To be under a king.
Is democracy better, I ask you?

Patrick Murphy says: "Youth would be more interesting if it came later in life."

One of Wee Wendell Willkie's lieutenants, beginning to worry about the way his pet was slipping, was told not to worry because the candidate was drawing big crowds everywhere, to which the politician answered, "Dead whales on flat cars also attract crowds."

Another worried Republican let real tears fall on his rotund mid-section as he moaned, "maybe Willkie is only a fatter and louder Alf Landon."

If you believe the underdog should remain where he is, then Willkie's your meat.

Tired of girls who make a career of caresses, tired of symmetrical shanks, tired of teaching virgins the A-B-C of S-E-X, tired of having husbands catch him doing guess what, tired of paying off Fleur de Flosie, tired of worrying about the lead in his pencil, the Park Avenue John broad-Aed his decision to leave it all for a turn at an Arizona dude-ranch. "I say, old fellah," a friend remonstrated, "going to pass up champagne?" The Park Avenue John replied: "Oh, no, I'll have my usual daily quart of champagne, but I'll drink it while roughing it." "And how, may I ask, does one take his champagne while roughing it?" "Very simple, old chap. I drink it out of a tin cup."

Lloyd George, who was Britain's prime minister during the first World War, said, in the London Daily Express, for June 25, 1930: "The last war was made by monarchs and statesmen and war-liers who were all Christians. It was not the Atheists, the Infidels, the Agnostics. It was Christian ministers, Christian kings and emperors, and Christian generals — professed Christians."

Down the centuries, priests, preachers and rabbis have made effective use of the suggestion that the poor should endure hell on earth without protest because God has arranged for them an eternal life of bliss in the heaven to come. But during recent years a change has come over the thinking of a considerable portion of the masses, making it more difficult for the gentlemen of the cloth to get their nonsense accepted as divine truth. You can chalk that down as a score for progress. And in these dark days we don't want to overlook the least favorable developments. The masses are beginning to hold that it's possible to establish heaven on earth through the application of scientific, secular measures. We're getting more down-to-earth, and the closer we get the better the prospect. The old I. W. W. song, "You'll get pie in the sky when you die, by and by" is still sung, but its satirical connotations aren't being overlooked. Goody, goody, goody.

Lecky defined Rationalism as "a certain cast of thought . . . which leads men on all occasions to subordinate dogmatic theology to the dictates of reason and conscience."

A button, worn by a day laborer, reads: "I work for a living. I'm for Roosevelt."

Three fairies entered a bar. The bartender addressed the first pansy: "What'll you have?" "A Dr. Pepper," replied the first. "What'll YOU have?" the bartender asked the second. "Oh, I'll have a straight shot of coke with no ice," was the answer. The bartender turned to the third, "How about you?" The lovely, lavender-tinted young man brushed aside a lock of fair hair and with determination said: "Nothing for me. I'm driving."

Two expressions thus far missed by the ad-writers for Listerine: "bird-cage mouth" and "stable breath."

Scrap of conversation: "I'm allergic to toe jam."

The following sentence is lifted from the June, 1940, issue of the London Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association Bulletin: "This country has reached a point at which, for the first time in 300 years, it is faced with war on its own soil, AND THE WHOLE IDEA OF FILM RENTALS MUST BE RECAST."

Paul Robeson, the great Negro baritone, is married to a woman who is half Jew and half Negro. Because of her husband's indifference to money, Mrs. Robeson takes charge of the family's finances, and whenever her distinguished mate wants money he must ask her for it. Needless to say, she is economical. One evening, Robeson wanted to
go from his home in Harlem to some point downtown, so he asked her for $2 taxi fare. She objected, insisting that he go by subway, thus saving $1.95. "Oh, come on," cried Robeson, "be all nigger this time."

I wonder if it's ever going to be possible to take the stink out of radio spot announcements.

Chamfort said an Italian woman knows her lover belongs to her when he's willing to commit a crime for her; an Englishwoman knows the passion is overwhelming when he permits himself an extravagance for her, and a Frenchwoman is delighted by a folly. In America, a woman knows everything is well when her lover screws up enough courage to ask the boss for a raise and begins to look around for a good trade on a set of tires.

An old English ballad begins, "Love knocks at the door." It isn't that way now in these parts. Love pulls up at the curb and honks.

The vast library of piety has never produced a single masterpiece of creative literature. When you answer with passages from the Song of Solomon, let me remind you there isn't any piety in that poetical triumph; it's a glorification of passion.

Even the truest lovers have to lie.

A drive through the country convinces me love is tough, for it thrives on a diet of hamburgers and hot dogs, washed down by Pepsi-Cola, and followed by fresh sticks of gum.

In love, you can express a truth and still be absurd.

Love, like everything else, has its business side.

A first-rate genius never looks for praise.

A truly great genius can produce a masterpiece with the same ease that a mediocrity varnishes a door.

Envv inspires extravagance. The other night a fellow bought me a 35¢ drink so he could have me around long enough to say something disparaging.

As a professional scribbler, I've no illusions about myself. I write because I have just so much space that must be filled.

In these days, when a man and a woman go out together, he wonders how many drinks it'll take to make her willing, while she figures how many drinks it'll take to make him want her.

I've noticed a steady improvement in the quality of off-color stories circulating among the public.

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An average man's perfect day—a period of perfect rest, a perfect meal, a perfect entertainment, a perfect emotional experience with a perfect woman, followed by perfect sleep.

Just because a man likes to hear himself talk it doesn't follow he hasn't anything to say.

I predict that the Lamour sarong—which snugly covers only butt and bubbles—is the forerunner of a general style of dress for the tropical-minded women of this non-tropical climate.

A bed-bug's stink is even worse than his bite.

Man has a talent for digging up the secrets that a man tries hardest to hide—for instance the length of his organ, what he does with it, where he uses it, and the like. Such things can always be common knowledge.

I wonder if the Pope, while enjoying his morning movement, still considers himself made in God's image.

Prof. William Lyon Phelps, in his "Autobiography With Letters," says he once came on a piece of matchless brevity on an American tombstone. The following inscription, writes Phelps, was put on at the request of the man buried there:

THORPE'S
CORPSE

"An Introduction to Arithmetic," published at Norwich, Conn., in 1796, left out fractions because, according to its author, Erastus Root, "they are not absolutely necessary."

Ira A Hirschmann, advertising manager for Bloomingdale's department store, in N.Y.C., gives this advice to copywriters: "Avoid superlatives—they lead to exaggeration."

"All This and Heaven Too" doesn't deal with Hitler's demands.

I can't understand why Claudette Colbert draws down six times as much money as the President of the U.S. So far as I know, she helped turn out a hit about six years ago ("It Happened One Night") but since then she's been on the depression side of the racket. Another mystery is Metro's Louis Mayer's $700,000 per year. It's my long-distance guess he earns less than 10 percent of that immense graft. He may get the money legally, but the effect is grand larceny just the same. And there's the mystery of another Morgenthau item—$200,000 during a single year to Mr. Temple, for "overseeing" Shirley. Here are millions of mothers overseeing their children at nothing flat per year, and glad of the chance, while there's
Ma Temple turning it into a big-time industry, like cellophane, rubberless condoms, snooty toilet paper, feminine hygiene and pay booths in public toilets.

Jittery, fluttery, frustrated, fatuous, fumbling Edward Everett Horton calls his place on the edge of Hollywood, "Belleigh Acres."

The American Mercury found this piece of roadside humor on a sign at the edge of Bridgeville, Del., on Highway 13: IF YOU LIVED HERE, YOU'D BE HOME NOW.

If God knows all, He'll forgive even the Atheist.

Material things are important, even in friendship. Sleep is a friend who serves better on an inner-spring mattress.

A match can lose its head and still be useful.

I'm convinced my readers are about evenly divided on the question of respectable and the kind that's outspoken. I say this after looking at two neat piles of letters in answer to my request for comments on a reader's brief note of protest against my "sophisticated" jokes. I'm surprised we bad people have so much company. I thought the righteous ones would outnumber the wicked ones five or six to one. Frank Harris, in his famous, or, if you prefer, infamous book, "My Life and Loves," has a valuable paragraph on this grouping of little angels in one corner and little devils in the other, thus: "There are two main traditions of English writing: the one of perfect liberty, that of Chaucer and Shakespeare, completely outspoken, with a certain liking for lascivious details and witty smut, a man's speech: the other emasculated more and more by Puritanism and since the French Revolution, gelled to tame propriety; for that upheaval brought the illiterate middle-class to power and insured the domination of girl-readers. Under Victoria, English prose literature became half childish, as in stories of 'Little Mary,' or at best provincial, as anyone may see who cares to compare the influence of Dickens, Thackeray and Reade in the world with the influence of Balzac, Flaubert and Zola." Well, at least I know that about 50 percent of my readers want what Harris called "man's speech," while the other 50 percent want it "gelled to tame propriety." My only authority here is the fact that the two neat piles of pro and con letters mentioned above are the same size. It could have been a lot worse. Seriously, I feel a little encouraged. While I think of it, let me say that none of my women readers were interested enough to enter the debate on either side. Not a single letter telling me to go ahead, and not a letter telling me to polish my halo. About one-fourth of my readers are women. So, though it sounds paradoxical, it's the men readers who write solemn letters demanding the caponized pap that Harris said is written for "girl-readers." This confuses the issue. Another fact I observed is that at least half the defenders of virtue say they don't mind a spot of wicked wit themselves, but are against it on account of the denuded others, who may be lost to some sacred cause —Socialism, Freethought, Rationalist, anti-Fascism, anti-Coughlinism, and the like—if they should be offended by a ligger of off-color wit.

A la-la boy made a pass at a normal fellow, who resented the overture and blurted: "If you don't let me alone I'll bust you one in the kisser." The pansy, hand on hip, lisped: "Maybe I'm not your type."

Frank Harris often quoted a limerick which he said the Prince of Wales (who later became Edward VII) learned by heart: There was a young lady at sea who said: "God! how it hurts me to see." "I see," said the mate, "That accounts for the state of the captain, the purser and me."

Some years ago I led an entertaining and somewhat spoofish discussion on the great poem which I'd discovered on a wall in the exquisite men's room of a cozy saloon, the first line being "Some come here to sit and think." Now comes a reader's request for me to repeat the rather raking mess, which I must refuse because it, along with all my silly stories, are available in my volumes of questions and answers. It isn't fair to expect me to reprint material that's at hand. Readers who like a little foolishness—sophisticated stories, one protestant called them—along with my serious discussions of weighty problems should stick their noses between the pages of those delectable volumes.

Poggio Fiorentino, of the 15th Century Roman papal court, some of whose facetious tales I've told before, offers a yarn about a widow who once said to a neighbor that, though she cared little for the things of this world, she still would like to find a peaceful man of advanced years, more for the sake of company and the mutual comforts of their daily lives than for the joy of the flesh. The neighbor promised to search for a man such as she described; and in fact on the next day returned and announced that she had found a man who possessed all the virtues she sought, and who above all should meet with her approval, in that he was a
eunuch. Upon which the widow cried: "Such a man I wouldn't take under any conditions, for if we should quarrel, as happens between man and wife, there would be no way to make peace again."

A reader, after seeing my piece about the unreasonable demands of cafe customers, tells of what happened in his favorite restaurant in Topeka, Kans. A waitress brought a second cup of coffee to a man, who said he hadn't ordered it. "Oh, that's on the house. It's a free service we give." The customer then announced he didn't feel like a second cup of coffee at that time, but that he'd be back later in the morning. The bastard showed up.

The popular magazines are advertising "Tattoo," a lipstick guaranteed to "give mouth that sexy look." Reports have it the stuff's selling big. I wonder if this is the first commercial use of Havelock Ellis's facts in lesbianism and related forms of behavior.

As everybody knows by now, H. G. Wells and Rebecca West once were dear, dear, intimate friends—lovely baby, and all that sort of thing. What's happened to the affair I don't know, but Miss West tells of the effect it had on a woman who attended one of her lectures in Dallas. The clubwoman took her aside and whispered: "Miss West, what is it you mistresses do that wives don't?"

Oswald Garrison Villard tells of how Theodore Roosevelt once handed a type-written story to the White House correspondents and asked them to print it. "This," he said, showing another piece of writing, "is the denial of this story. You shall have it in two days, but I want you to publish this one today." Mr. Villard also writes up an incident which I understand Senator Arthur Capper picked up while visiting Calvin Coolidge at his vacation resort in the Northwest one Summer. Capper told it to William Allen White, who, in turn, passed it on to the Villard. The story—I don't vouch for it—has it that Coolidge never impressed his wife (or anyone else) as a great lover. In fact, as a participant in the deathless pantomime he was looked upon (by his wife) as far below par. Once, while they were strolling through the barnyard, the Missus called attention to a rooster who was having one glorious time hopping from hen to hen. With a laugh, she said: "Calvin, why don't you take lessons from that peddy rooster?" To which the great Coolidge replied, with a wry smile: "Maybe I could do as well if you supplied me with a new hen each time."

When asked what love meant to her, she replied: "Love means a beautiful peace, exquisitely quiet, serene tranquility, and an utter sense of calm." "That," commented the man, "is what comes after love—sleep."

Fairies are having a wonderful time in Hitler's army. Everything goes. The Nazi party men are also busy leaving their fingerprints on their mother's hips. Here's how Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr. describes Hitler's Fairyland (in Rob Warmer's Script): "Few German 'maidchens' used lipstick, rouge, or perfume. All the men of 'the Party' (Nazi) do! In fact, perfumed men are very much the vogue in Europe anyway. They stalk so strong one understands why perfume is cheaper than soap. The majority of them wear Hitler's favorite: English lavender. Most of the men in the cities rouge their lips. All emulate Hitler's affected wrist on hip."

Mose Johnson, colored, had been condemned to be hanged for having wielded a razor on his neighbor, Amos Jackson. Sitting in his cell he struggled to find words that would explain his predicament to the governor and win him a pardon. Next morning the Governor received this message in his mail: "Dere Govner: They is fixin to hang me on Friday and here it is Tuesday, most spectfully, Mose Johnson."

A German refugee says he has discovered a cure for homesickness. He keeps a picture of Hitler on his table. When asked what he, a refugee, is doing with such a picture near him, he answers: "Ah, it's a wrench to leave one's home. I keep that picture as an antidote to homesickness."

When I first heard about the Russo-Nazi anti-aggression pact I couldn't help chuckling over the predicament of poor Japan, left far out on a limb. Here she had based her whole foreign policy on anti-Communism (the Chinese, we were told, were all Communists) and, presto, here was her anti-Communist pact coming home to roost, with the hated Bolsheviks among the supporters of the anti-Comintern. I can imagine Joe Stalin greeting the Micado with: "We, comrade, must stand together against Communism." I'm reminded of the ancient story about the farmer who, hearing a noise in his chicken-house, cried: "Who's there?" And the reply, in Ethiopian accents, "There's nobody here but us chickens."

I always get a kick out of letters written by readers in foreign countries. And if such letters sometimes say a good word for the work I'm doing I don't take any bones about admitting I'm tickled. Here's a letter from William J. Mealer, Liverpool, England: "If there is above all things in the make-up
of mankind a combination of qualities that is truly admirable, it is the rare combina-
tion of intelligence and courage. Neither of these qualities is rare, even
singly, but, as a combination, so rare that the man or woman possessing them
is outstanding. Without such people the world would indeed be poor. too poor to
be fit to live in; a state which is not impossible now with the boneheaded,
cowardly, bullying sadists and homosexualists who are at present in power in
so many countries. Through the medium of a brother-in-law, resident in Canada.
I receive your splendid paper, The American Freeman, regularly and I take
much pleasure in telling you how much I admire the paper and its learned,
courageous editor. Indeed it is an up-
lifting experience to obtain a paper
packed with knowledge, courage, inde-
pendence and generally thought-provok-
ing matter especially in these days of
rubbishy screeds produced by vast finan-
cial combines to bulldoze the people.
They are fit only for the lowest use to
which the human body can put them and
that is risking contamination. Your
Freeman is a good hard hitter at all
forms of tyranny. It seeks the truth
and tells it with never a care for the
censures of Church and State or other
hostile organizations. It stands as a
tower of strength against that vile
enemy of humanity, Fascism, that filthy
trash that has broken out upon the so-
ciety of peoples. May you long continue
to crash home your telling blows on
this foul fiend."

The British carry their “clahs” differ-
ences right to the privy. I’m re-
mined of how the problem of urina-
tion, etc., was solved during the corona-
tion services. Three toilets were put
up, bearing signs: “Men,” “Gentlemen,”
and “Peers.” In this country we’re more
democratic, except that we do go in for
pay toilets, which means either you pay
or you go without. In saloons we often
see the sign: “This Is It.” Most cans
merely carry the word “Men,” or
“Women.” The high-hat element goes
in for “Gentlemen” and “Ladies.” In
night clubs I’ve seen “King and
“Queen.” In others I’ve seen “Him” and
“Her.” This reminds me of a new night
club which went in for modern Spanish
design, extending its Spanish influence
to the wording on the two doors that
are so essential to the well-beings of
beer-drinking jointists. It happened
that a worried looking businessman felt
a sudden need for a visit to “the place,
and hurried to the manager for direc-
tions. He was in a desperate hurry and
could brook no idle chatter. “Don’t you
know the Spanish word ‘Hombre?’” the
manager asked, indicating with a nod of
his head. “No, I don’t!” snapped the
uncomfortable man, “and this is no time
to be giving me a Spanish lesson!”

Did you ever stop to think how often
we’re influenced by mere words? Take
an airline hostess. Her job’s the same
as a pullman porter’s, and yet she has
been given glamor while her black
counterpart remains a menial. This
comment is lifted from an article by
S. I. Hayakawa, an author on Seman-
tics. This same writer calls attention
to an interesting sentence by the late
C. S. Peirce (whose notes I’ve quoted
before), as follows: “It is terrible to
see how a single unclear idea, a single
formula without meaning, lurking in a
young man’s head, will sometimes act
like an obstruction of inert matter in
an artery, hindering the nutrition of the
brain, and condemning its victim to
pine away in the fullness of his in-
tellectual vigor and in the midst of in-
tellectual plenty.” All of us, adds Dr.
Hayakawa, have hundreds of such ob-
structions. (Dr. Hayakawa, by the way,
is a member of the Language and Litter-
ature Department, Armour Institute of
Technology.)

A good cartoon in The New Republic
shows three sheep talking things over.
One asks: “Can we put any trust in the
rumor that the human race is becoming
extinct?”

Hitler called his greatest spy into his
office and instructed him to go to the
U. S. A. “I want you to study the lay of
the land and report back on the best
way to capture the country,” said the
dictator. The spy spent months snoop-
ing in the 48 states and finally return-
ed to Hitler for h’s report on how to
take the country. “To begin with,” said
the spy, “there’s only one party in the
U. S.” “Only one?” Hitler asked. The
spy went on: “Yes, and it’s called the
WPA. According to the best statistics
gathered by the Department of Privy
Construction of the WPA, there now
are more than 10,000,000 WPA privies,
and I don’t know how many were built
under other auspices. I find that all
members of the WPA go to these quaint
establishments at the same time each
morning—10 o’clock, to be exact. Now,
the strategy I propose is that you have
a Fifth Columnist behind each privy
doors, and at the critical time see to
it that the door’s are locked tight.
From then on the U. S. A., caught with
its collective pants down, is a push-
over.”

The Wee Wendell Willkie publicity
staff is working overtime building him
up, in the words of Harold Ickes,
"the simple barefoot Wall Street lawyer."

Paul Brunk, Healdsburg, Calif.: "Got my Freeman today. It's always as welcome as a bottle of fine liquor would be. I enclose a dollar bill for renewal. I don't like to miss a single copy. Each issue is full of information, humanism and good sense. I am 76 years old but hope I'll never get too old to enjoy good literature, especially the liberal viewpoint."

Ask for free circular on how we can print your pamphlets. Haldeman-Julius Co., Pamphlet Desk P-2, Girard, Kansas.

A precocious six-year-old girl saw a statue of the Venus de Milo for the first time. She asked about the arms, and was told that the lady had never had any. "I suppose not," said the little girl. "If she'd had any arms, she'd have pulled her clothes up to cover those two cafeterias."

J. J. Howlett, Caribou, Me.: "I'd like to tell you the things I like about The Freeman. I like especially the continual support of Rationalism—the criticism of religion—the articles on government—your exposé of Coughlin and others like him. I was glad to see you compliment PM. I like the heat you have turned on people like 'Dr.' John R. Brinkley and Norman Baker because it is a national service."

Arthur Billings, of Delphos, Kans., Socialist candidate for the legislature from Ottawa County, attended a meeting of his party in Topeka, August 27, 1940, where he led a brisk fight against the use of the term "workers" in the platform because it's "Marxian phraseology." The noise that immediately disturbed the convention was made by Eugene V. Debs turning over in his grave.

The late Thomas Beer discovered Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, the lady who, when presented to Pius X, said: "Oh, how d'you do? I once met your father, Leo Thirteenth . . . ."

Dashiell Hammett, author of "The Thin Man" and other pieces of mystery fiction, was himself a Pinkerton detective, and it was while he was following this profession that he wrote: "Pocket-picking is the easiest to master of all the criminal trades. Anyone who is not crippled can become an adept in a day." This is going to cut into the professional pride of several of my readers, one of whom is in the penitentiary for picking pockets. Mr. Hammett also observed: "That the law-breaker is invariably sooner or later apprehended is probably the least challenged of extant myths. And yet the files of every detective bureau bulge with the records of unsolved mysteries and uncaught criminals."

Sign in a Boston beany: "A Thousand on a Plate for a Dime."

Being economical, it worries me to see a movie hero and his gal order expensive drinks, take a sip and let the rest of the champagne cocktail go to waste.

Maybe you can explain why movie actors never wait for their change when leaving a taxi.

A hobo philosopher, with boughten teeth that whistled on the sibilants, asked: "Why work to obtain leisure when you can have all the leisure in the world by simply not working?"

Whenever a reader tells me he liked a certain happy phrase in one of my pieces I make a note of it for future use. They say Shakespeare never repeats himself, but then I'm not Shakespeare. Besides, I can prove from the record that Shakespeare repeated himself, Frank Harris and I discussed this many years ago, and I recall asking for Shakespeare's favorite word and his reply that it was "gilded," which the bard used often.

A lady had three dogs which she called "Blackie," "Whitey" and "Paderwufsky." She called the white one "Whitey" because he was the whitest; the black one "Blackie" because he was the blackest, and the third one "Paderwufsky" because he was the pianist.

Someone has said: "Chemistry is a young science but an ancient art."

Inscription on an old maid's tombstone: "Who said you can't take it with you?"

Nazi Lindbergh, the Trojan Horse's rear, gets his blood from a mechanical heart.

Teacher: "What's your name, little boy?" Little Boy: "Hitler Cohen." Teacher: "Hitler Cohen? How can you have such a terrible name?" (Sends for the mother, an old maid Jewish lady.) Mother: "Vell, eef you vas an old maid and had a bastard vat would you call him?"

When I slapped down 21c (the penny goes to beating Hitler) at the local movie, the girl in the cage said: "The feature's been on 20 minutes." It was 7:20 p. m., a time when I thought I
had a right to walk in on the shorts, but being in an affable mood I replied: "That's all right. This means my period of boredom will be reduced by 20 minutes." And I was right, for I was to see "Torrid Zone," with three "big-name" stars—Ann Sheridan, Jimmy Cagney and Pat O'Brien. It was an awful show. Ann was coolly hot and frozenly sultry, as usual. Cagney was forceful and ready to biff anyone three times his weight. And the noisy Patrick chewed more than his quota of scenery. Nearby a huge customer's snoring carried Wagnerian overtones. How is it possible for shrewd businessmen to spend so much money on such unmentionable crap? As for myself, I was thankful I missed 20 minutes of it. Imagine if I'd had to take the full dose.

The Limey sergeant-major, grown old and deaf in the service, was placed in charge of a battalion of the British Women's Auxiliary Army Corps. Feeling disgraced and embittered, he became a martinet and roared and blustered at the lisdes till he had them half frightened to death. One day an order came to draw the troops up for inspection and he obeyed as he had understood it. There was some grumbling in the ranks, and even a sign or two of outright revolt, but he finally managed to get the battalion in proper alignment. Leaving the lydis stiffly drawn up at attention, he reported to the orderly room: "All ready for inspection, sir." The downy-cheeked subaltern adjusted his monocle, picked up his cane and stepped outside the barracks. Horrified, he viewed the WAAC's, who were blushing furiously. They were drawn up in correct formation—but stripped to the waist. "My word, Sergeant!" he exclaimed. "You misunderstood me. I said 'inspect their kits.'"

A reader who has followed the dishonest cavortings of the standard newspapers says, "Our press is as free as a caged canary, and just as yellow." True, but what's to be done about it? Just beefing isn't going to get us anywhere. Constructive action is better than defeatist resignation. Let's decide that a lot of the blame for our gagged and chained press belongs with the readers who have, for generations, demanded that publishers shall get the major portion of their revenue from the big advertisers. The buyers of big space are going to boss the standard editors, in the end, or put him out of business. If readers want the press to tell them the truth they must adjust themselves to the condition that they must pay the bill in real, hard cash. You can't get the truth for nothing. If you leave the truth to someone else, in the end that other fellow may take advantage of you and feed you untruths. The remedy is to agree cheerfully to give financial and moral support to editors who aren't afraid to smite liars and expose bunk-shooters. You readers can have a free press if you're willing to pay for it. The trouble is you want your reading matter free of charge—which is an entirely different thing from a free press. If you catch my drift show where you stand by doing something constructive immediately for the first publication you can think of which you know isn't afraid to say what it believes to be the truth. Too many independent, progressive editors are being nipped in the bud.

Walter Winchell says this sign is displayed in a Bryan, O., ice cream parlor: "Hitler Sundae—Half Nuts." Speaking of nut reminds me this scrap of conversation which drifted to me through the fog in a beer joint: "Nuts to you after I've had my fun with 'em."

A man in Hamburg, Pa., has his own idea of the meaning of free press. The pieces I wrote about my free press were intended to impress readers with the fact that my publications are free and independent, unsubsidized by advertisers, unafraid of the truth. But the Hamburg, Pa., guy got the notion I was advertising to him and the rest of the world that anything I print may be had for the asking. Here's what he wrote to me: "I am sending you on reverse side a small order for books. Would you please send them to me as I understand this to be a free press." Then he lists 11 books which I'm to send him free, gratis, for nothing. Also, he slips in a request for a free shipment of 500 sheets of 8½ x 11 typewriter paper. I'm sorry, but I'm not running that kind of a "free press." It's free, if you pay for it. That sounds a little confusing to one or two persons in a million of population. The rest seem to understand. They know you can't get a free press for nothing. You have to pay for it in order to keep it free. Gosh, I'm beginning to get balled up myself. But I stick to my thesis. If I didn't I go broke.
Questions and Answers

A straying husband, off with his sweetie for a hilarious week-end, took to many whisky soars and wired his wife: "Having wonderful time. Wish you were her."

A high school graduate went to Washington to take a civil service examination for a position in the bureau of standards. During the oral part of the examination he was asked: "And what, young man, could you do for the bureau of standards?" Applicant: "I'd keep 'em high, sir; keep 'em high."

S'gn's. In a barbershop: "Haircuts 25c. For Musicians, 50c." In a beauty parlor: "No Gossiping Please, Above A Whisper."

The Voice of Experience: If you give it away when you're young, you can't sell it when you're old.

Dick and his cute little lassie wanted to get married, but her mama said "No." So Dick suggested that they slip away, marry, and keep it a secret. She: "But what'll we do if we have a baby?" He: "Oh, we can tell the baby."

Bill Nye didn't have me in mind, but I like to think his words can be applied to my score of volumes of "Questions and Answers": "Everywhere this book has went they'll be glad that it has came."

When the scientist, Michael Faraday, was doing research in the new field of electricity, he was asked how his experiments with electrical currents were useful, to which he replied: "Of what use is a baby?"

"The long and intimate account written about Norman Baker by your correspondent, M. N. Bunker, checks quite well with the conceptions of Baker which I had formed from a perusal of his own writings. His impostures are so blatant that, in my impatience with it all, I sometimes think we Rationalists are wasting our time in trying to warn and protect the dupes who fall for it. But then I think of the pitiful sufferings, the frantic but vain grasping at every slightest hope, of nearly every sufferer from this terrible disease—my mother was one—and then I change my mind again. The crying need, it seems to me, in this as in other matters, is the election of national legislators with the vision and intelligence to see these things and the will to end them. That would stop, in one stroke, this business of ghouls flitting about for sanctuary from one State to another. It is another instance in a very long list where the doctrine of States' Rights works out to the advantage of the exploiting few and the undoing of the many. But how get such a body of lawmakers when the election of them depends on an ignorant electorate? The work of education simply must go on and there's no one to do it but that part of the press which is not dependent for its life on advertising subsidy."—C. A. Lang, Maplewood, Mo.

Early in the war, officials visited rural England in order to place evacuated children from the London area. One called at the country home of an elderly spinster, whose maid met him at the door and heard his errand. Rushing upstairs, the maid shouted: "Please, mum, you've got to have two babies, and the man's downstairs waiting to give them to you."

Scrap of conversation: "That obliging kitchenboy got a smack in the face from the young housewife who had asked him for a little oven."

After she had doved five straight whiskies (which didn't seem to hit her at all) the bartender asked: "How much does it take to make you dizzy?" She: "Two dollars, and my name isn't Dizzy, it's Daisy."

Harry Houdini, the great magician, used to tell about his experiences in Europe, where he appeared before most of the crowned heads. Once, while in Belgium, he was commanded to perform before the queen and her ladies-in-waiting. "Mr. Houdini," said the Belgian queen, "I hear you can pull out live hares from the strangest places. Please show me what you can do." Houdini deliberately reached up under her dress and pulled out two Belgian hares.

Hotel men are trying to put hors d'oeuvre on the shelf (hors de combat) and popularize "apiteasers" to describe those gimcracks that come spread out on trays. I've never had any trouble with the word. Where others yell, "Hey, Maggie, pass them gadgets," I drop my voice and mutter something about wanting the "whores do it." It's never failed me yet.

Noah Webster, the word doctor who corrected everybody, was caught making violent love to the maid, and the party who caught him with his pants down was Mrs. Webster, who said: "I'm surprised!" Mr. Webster answered: "No, dear, you are astonished—I am surprised."

How wonderful it is to wake up in the morning, feeling so blithe and gay with that glorious, bright sunshine pouring down on another new-born day... the dew drops form tiny jewels on trees, flowers, Oh everywhere! You rush to
your window—throw it open wide and breathe in that sweet, fresh air. A few moments of scurrying, hither and yon; and out towards the back-house you go, tripping lightly on blades of grass that have just bidden goodbye to the snow, chin up, chest out, and hair tossing in the wind, so buoyantly alive, so eagerly alert, thanking all the gods of field and forest that the can is close at hand and that glorious nature has set the stage for a magnificent, exquisite, heart-lifting evacuation.

Uncle Pete, whose home is on a Mississippi sandbar near Jiles County, Tenn., missed the community picnic, so he lamented: "If I'd 'a knewed I could 'a rode I would 'a went, but I couldn't 'a et nothin' nohow 'cause I had a gum boil."

An ambitious hog always has something to look forward to. If he eats lots of corn and gets fat, if he behaves himself and takes on a county-fair look, if he develops enough oomph to enable his owner to brag about him, if his love-life is established on a cash basis and other hog-raisers bring him their sows for his personal attention, he may escape being called a hog and be referred to as a swine.

While making a speech on the international situation before a luncheon club of businessmen the other noon, the chairman who introduced me sat filing his nails all during my talk, which gave me the goddamnedest willies.

The late Joe Jacobs’ record as a fight manager won’t be long remembered, but I’ll always recall his two delightful cries, “We wux robbed,” and “I should have stood in bed.”

Having been informed of the moral perfection of a prude whom he was meeting, Robert G. Ingersoll asked him, “Do you dr.nk?” The man answered that he did not. “Do you chew?” The answer was no. “Do you smoke?” No. “Do you eat hay?” Of course not. “Then you are not fit company either for man or beast.”

W. H. Auden’s definition of a professor: “One who talks in someone else’s sleep.”

When little, black Rastus asked permission to leave the room because it was necessary, teacher said: “No, Rastus, you stay here like a good boy and fill up the ink wells.”

Betty Co-ed, all-American pushover of the popular song, was seen pushing a baby carriage. A surprised spectator asked, “What’s this?” Beamed Betty, “The all-American boy.”

Remark of customer after seeing the movie’s de-nutted version of Steinbeck’s novel: “It should have been called ‘The Seedless Grapes of Wrath.’”

A tourist, just out of Germany, kept insisting that conditions in Hitlerland were better than outsiders imagined, “I wouldn’t mind living in Germany if I could do so on my own terms,” he told a newspaperman, who asked, in return, “Can’t you say the same thing of hell?”

A “femme de guerre” is a certain type of woman who, in times of war, finds it profitable to station herself in a place easily accessible to the soldiers. During the first World War we called such hussies “Hors de combat.”

Mrs. Jones, being dead, was placed in state. “How wonderful she looks!” a neighbor said, sympathetically. Mr. Jones: “And why shouldn’t she? She spent all last Winter in Miami.”

A little chap, sick and just able to crawl down the street, met an old friend, a big, boisterous, loud-mouthed veterinarian, who got it out of him that his bowels hadn’t moved in two weeks. The vet clowned around a bit and brought forth a gorgeous glove, three inches long, and said; “Take this; it’ll move you into the next block.” Assured the pill wouldn’t harm him, the little guy took it and went on his way. Thirty days later the vet happened to meet the little chap’s brother, and asked: “Say, what ever happened to Bill? Saw him a month ago, and he was low. I gave him a pill but I’ve not heard from him. Do you know if it did the trick?” Nearly choking, the fellow answered: “Oh, yes, it did the trick—13 times before he died and four times in the coffin.” (Yes, I know it’s ancient, but this is the first time I’ve embalmed it in print.)

Nellie Taylor Ross, governor of Wyoming in 1922 and now director of the U.S. mint, told a meeting of miners: “Before I’d take a drink, I’d rather commit adultery.” Tastes differ. Some prefer their liquor first.

E. A. Hedeen, Pa.: “You publish a great little paper.”

A couple of interesting items come out of the Worker’s Fatherland. The first is a blast against “false democracy” in the Red Navy, where, according to an editorial in the navy’s official journal, “Red Fleet,” officers have been known to get too familiar with ordinary gobs, some going so far as to pat sailors on the shoulder in bursts of comradeship. Such nonsense must stop. Fraternization between officers and ordinary men is “bourgeois,” or rather “false democracy.” Another story says the Moscow
comrades have made a neat pact with Dr. Goebbles, by which the Russians will issue (free of royalty) a discreetly edited version of Adolf ("shock-shuck- er") Hitler's "Mein Kampf," while the Nazis will return the courtesy by publishing a discreetly edited version of Lenin's writings. I suppose my calling attention to such facts will bring me several letters branding me as a capitalist, imperialistic, Hearstian war-monger.

"The Literary Guide" says it found the following sentences in a sermon by Father F. Woodlock: "Christ is less of a reality to city children to-day than Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. Very many children are being submitted to a purely pagan upbringing. The outlook of the majority of teachers other than those in Church schools has been directed more by Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Bertrand Russell than by any Christian philosophy of life." I think the priest's facts are pretty straight, but instead of accepting his opinion that the situation is dark it seems to this writer that it's all to the good that things are as he describes them. He's pointing to intellectual and cultural progress but is too obtuse to grasp what it all means. A community that's being guided by men like Wells, Shaw and Russell is certainly going places. Things would be really discouraging if such a community turned to the Church's saints, fanatics, miracle-mongers, supernaturalists, obscurantists, bigots, dogmatists, and similar enemies of truth and enlightenment.

Sunday School instructor: "Now, children, I want you to tell me what was the most prominent thing you saw when you entered church." First reply: "Cobwebs."

Customer: "What's the price of boloney sausage today?" Butcher: "Thirty cents a pound." Customer: "Where do you get that stuff? The butcher in the next block asked only 15c a pound." Butcher: "Why didn't you buy from him?" Customer: "He didn't have any in stock." Butcher: "O.K., the next time I've got none in stock I'll make you a price of 10c."

Nature's biggest failure—the human race.

Our hearts go out to China but our scrap iron goes to Japan.

I don't know where a certain kind of advertising is headed. I refer to the new trick of scenting an issue, as was done by a Chicago newspaper, with rose perfume to sell readers the special offerings of florists. A St. Louis newspaper came along with an issue scented with the odor of peppermint to boost a candy ad. The latest is a Los Angeles newspaper with the sweet aroma of gardenias. What will all this suggest to the bright boys who prepare advertising for toilet paper, Katchel or old-fashioned limburger cheese? The possibilities challenge the imagination.

Ingersoll: "I had rather be a beggar and spend my last dollar like a king, than be a king and spend my money like a beggar."

Sign in a dance hall: NO DANCING ALLOWED WITHOUT ALSO MOVING THE FEET.

A colored woman, in a Harlem hospital, asked if she had been X-rayed, replied: "No, but I've been ultra-violated."

Radio announcer's boner: "Dewey charged that Business has been treated as a SCRAPGOAT."

As my readers undoubtedly noticed, I've been plugging Clarence Darrow's works of late, but the motive isn't mercenary. I even though I like money as much as the next fellow. I really want to give the great philosopher, Freethinker and humorist a whirl now and then in order to show my appreciation for his contributions to Rationalism and Liberalism. Ever since I began issuing booklets by Darrow (and the set is pretty hefty by now) I've found a public that's avid for his refreshing philosophy and biting wit. I'm reminded of a story Darrow told me (which Walter Winchell didn't get right at all) shortly after he finished defending the two murderers, Loeb and Leopold. When he got them life instead of the gallows, Darrow was approached by the sister of one of the youths, herself a millionaire several times over. "Oh, Mr. Darrow," she cried, "what can I do to show my appreciation?" Here's Darrow's answer: "Ever since the Phoenicians invented money one doesn't have to bother asking that question." Later, Darrow asked for $100,000, which the families refused to pay. He compromised at $66,666, which was paid.

A woman entered a department store and stopped at a counter for service. Her curiosity aroused by a commotion in the rear, she asked: "Is there a demonstration there?" Clerk: "No, Madam, there's no demonstration." Lady: "I want a—oh, that must be some kind of a demonstration." Clerk: "No, Madam. To tell you the truth, those customers back there are taking advantage of today's big sale of six rolls of toilet paper for 23c, but there's no demonstration."

The Nation found this advertisement in a British newspaper: "Patriotic Down
to the Pantees. These slick little pantees embroidered with the slogan ‘England Expects’... are certain of a rapturous welcome as a gift for any lingerie drawer.” This comes under the heading of what the Laplanders call “patriotic yentzing,” in which every man is expected to do his duty by his country. Slick pantees that are imbued with the war fever may do more for a cause than many army divisions.

Quackery is quick to utilize anything new that comes along. Quackery pounces on any scientific idea and twists it to its ends. It not only operates in medicine but barges into business and advertising. Usually the quackery pays dividends, because the quacks are smart, often smarter than the people they deal with. I’m reminded of the manager of a large advertising agency who was hot on the trail of a rich prospect who thought nothing of spending several million dollars a year. But this prospect had tremendous respect for the word “research.” The word came from his mouth almost every other sentence. The advertising executive, learning that the prospect was coming to his office to look the outfit over, cleaned out a large room, installed a dozen stenographers (most of them glamorous), hung all sorts of maps and charts on the walls, and had the words “Research Department” painted on the door. All this was done overnight. He got the account.

Major Elliot writes that in these days an aggressor is a small country that has something a big country wants.

When an habitual drunkard asked Robert G. “Jingles” Roll for a dime, he handed over a dollar with the admonition, “Now, don’t waste it on bread!”

Two strangers were drinking together at a Joplin, Mo., bar. First stranger: “I’ve come to this town for a special reason. I’ve learned this place is different from any other town in the country.” Second stranger: “How come?” First stranger: “A stranger who comes to this town is taken to a hotel and given a good room without charge, is given plenty to eat and is supplied with an acceptable love partner. Then the next morning the round begins all over again, with all the love partners one cares for. And everything absolutely free of charge, including the best liquor. Free rides in good cars, too. And when one is ready to leave one is handed fifty dollars for Friendship’s sake.” Second stranger: “Did you ever get such a reception in this town?” First stranger: “No, but just that kind of a hospitable reception was given to my sister.”

A seven-year-old, precocious and outspoken, had been exposed to the “rough” literature of the day—especially “Grapes of Wrath” and “Native Son”—and had been conditioned to the plain speech of his writing parents. One day there was a visitor, and the son, gazing intently at her, said: “My! Aren’t you the homely, old whore!” His horrified mother sought to undo the mischief as well as she could. “Why, Ralph,” she said, “what do you mean?” Stammered Ralph: “I only meant it for a joke.” The mother pushed disastrously onward: “Well,” she said, “it would have been a much better joke if you had said she’s young and pretty.”

London’s blackouts have practically killed the lucrative business of lawyers who specialize in divorce cases—during the Winter months, at any rate. These lawyers hire private detectives to gum-shoe for evidence of adultery. But adultery can’t be proved because identification is impossible in the pitch dark.

A man who reached a neutral country after a long stay in Hitlerland rushed into the first restaurant he saw, ordered a tremendous steak, and explained to the waiter: “I didn’t mind it when we had to eat cats and dogs. I didn’t even mind it when we had to eat rats. But when we had to eat ersatz rats that was too much for me.”

A Nazi lecturer was telling a German audience about the terrible privations the British are suffering during this war. “Why,” he said, “in England they are even rationing coffee!” Whereupon a young member of the audience raised his hand and asked: “Please, mister, what’s coffee?”

A drunk wandered into a flock of pigeons in the city park. The birds went on grain-grabbing as the drunk meandered uncertainly into the center of the flock. Looking around, to be sure he wouldn’t be overheard, he leaned down and asked, confidentially: “Any messages?”

**Early to bed**
**Early to rise,**
**Work like hell,**
**And fertilize.**

The above sentiment, let me explain, is as pure as the breath of an angel. It’s a popular piece of advice to struggling gardeners. Let that be a lesson to you dirty-minded, obscene, ornery bums who’re always sniffing around for something suggestive.

Rob Wagner says: Marriage is more respectable, but free-lancing is more fun.

Two Florida gals met. Both were the sort that wore silver fox coats. First Foxy: “How much did you give for your coat?” Second Foxy: “Oh, nothing,
practically. What did you give?” First Foxy: ”In.”

When mama heard her daughter had become a boarder in one of the town’s fancy houses she hurried down to the wicked place. ”You loafer, I want to know what you’ve got to say for yourself?” she demanded. The daughter replied: ”Well, it beats doing nothing, don’t it?”

It was a boozing, hissing mellow-drammer along the lines of the original “Drunkard.” This one was called “She Gave Him All She Had” (every night and Sunday, according to the theater ad) and it reached a climax when its heroine, by the name of Fanny, turned up missing. Her mother rushed to the footlights, crying: ”Oh where, oh where is my Fanny?” A man in the gallery yelled: ”Right behind you, ma!”

I still insist the guy who claims he can tell the difference between a Camel, a Chesterfield, an Old Gold and a Lucky Strike is a damned liar.

The experts can argue themselves into a coma, but I hold that bridge is just another card game and not an exercise in science and logic.

A waitress, when asked by a customer from what part of the cow his Swiss steak came, slapped her fanny and intoned, ”Along about here.”

The great literary journal of the Soviet Union, Literaturnaya Gazeta, reports that while Hamlet, and other Shakespearean plays, may puzzle bourgeois critics, everything’s crystal clear to the Russians. The journal’s leading authority on Shakespeare writes: ”I asked one of the principal actors of the Dramatic Theater about Shakespeare, and he told me that he is just learning German, so that he may soon be able to read Shakespeare in the original.” I am organizing a class in Chinese, to which I invite my pious readers, so we can study Mark Twain in the original.

A relief officer in an unnamed county offers these excerpts from his letter files: ”In accordance with your instructions, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope.” ”I am mad that you called my boy illiterate. This is a lie as I was married to his father at the time.” ”I am forwarding my marriage certificate and my three children, one of which was a mistake as you will see.” ”I have had no clothing for a year and have been visited regularly by the Pastor.” ”This is my eighth child. What are you going to do about it?” ”This is to certify that Mr. S. is suffering from indigestion due to no teeth and fallen arches and needs teeth so he can chew his food and shoes with arch supports.”

Waiter in a bean-joint: ”Ruzbif-sanwsh” and ”lemstoo.”

No one’s ever asked me, but I thought I’d tell you anyway about Judge Bean who was once The Law in West of the Pecos. Once the judge tried a case in his combination saloon and courtroom, the defendant being a friend who was charged with carrying a pistol. Anxious to help a friend and retain the business of the community’s best consumer of whisky, Hizzoner decided that ”if a man is standing still he can’t be accused of carrying anything, a gun or anything else; but if he’s moving, he must be regarded as traveling, and the law is very specific about the right of a traveler to carry a gun for his protection.”

Since it’s known that Hitler has his eyes on India, wouldn’t it be a pious idea if he were to get there, learn the rope trick, climb up, and disappear.

Chicago’s aristocracy is split between those who were in Chicago Before the Fire and those who were against Roosevelt even before the Chicago Convention nominated him.

Murphy says: ”On an opening night some one remarked the playwright had done it again: word for word.”

A traveling salesman, compelled to spend two hours in Brusville, learned there was no picture show, poolroom or library, so when he asked how on earth the natives amused themselves he was told they go down to the grocery store in the evenings to watch the bacon slicer work.

Said one little rabbit to the other little rabbit: ”This is fun, wasn’t it.”

Motto on the wall of an art classroom: ”He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and his head is an artisan. But he who works with his hands, his head and his heart is an artist.”

You have at least 10 friends who would like to read The Freeman, so let me suggest that you do them a good turn by subscribing for them at only 10c per trial subscription. I need more readers, but don’t know how to get them unless my pious subscribers do this missionary work for me.

Scrap of conversation: ”That gold-digger is like an insurance policy—both have cash surrender value.”

Mistress: ”You know, I suspect that my husband is having a love affair with his stenographer.” Maid: ”I don’t believe it. You’re only saying it to make me jealous.”

Ogden Nash wrote this neat, cute
jingle: The turtle lives 'twixt plated decks which practically conceal its sex. I think it clever of the turtle in such a fix to be so fertile.

I wish my readers would help me reach a wider public. How? Just get me 10 names of new subscribers, at only 10c per name. I'll put them on for trial subscriptions. If The Freeman's to grow, the work of promotion will have to be done by the paper's friends. If you like my excursions into the profound and the trivial, go on the assumption that you know at least 10 friends who also may like this sheet. This suggests the gigantic discovery that if many readers were to act on this hint my audience would expand immediately. I don't feel too proud to beg this favor from my paper's friends. This is a sure and quick way to get me a lot of new subscribers, and Jehovah knows I need new readers desperately. Ten cents per name is mighty cheap. Will you shoot me 10 dimes and 10 names right away?

I accept human nature for what it is because it'd be mighty foolish not to.

It isn't considered in good taste to try to see things as they are.

Beware of the teacher who has quit being a learner.

Cyrus A. Davis, Pittsburg, Pa., attorney, approved of my clean, non-perscious, enjoyable, non-suggestive, non-pornographic, decent, cute and uplifting list of stories, and submits the following as being of possible interest to the rest of my pious, pure-minded, Gawd-fearing subscribers: A colored minister announced to his congregation: "I want you all to attend church here next Sunday and bring your friends and neighbors as I am going to preach a special sermon, the subject of which will be 'The Widow's Mite.'" A worldly-looking individual arose from about half-way back and addressed the minister: "Parson, I think that kind of sermon is absolutely unnecessary. I don't see any use of it at all. There are only three widows in this whole congregation and I can tell you right now they do."

It's significant that the Church was most powerful when most people couldn't read or write.

The Church has mastered the art of combining devotion with lunacy.

Pacifists who shut their eyes to Hitler while they continue to prate of non-violent resistance remind me of a convention of sheep passing resolutions in favor of vegetarianism while meat-eaters beyond the door sharpen their knives.

They say of Vice President Garner he was a child prodigy. When he was three, he was as intelligent as he is today.

A. M. Paschall, Azel, Tex., turned out this home-made quotation: One may accept religion without thinking, but one seldom, if ever, accepts Rationalism without thinking.

Waiter's epigraph: Bye and Bye God caught his eye.

If the world keeps on the way it's been going there'll soon be a demand for a few asylums for the sane.

An editor says he received from a London business establishment—run by a woman, by the way—a letter that bears in the corner of its stationery the words: "Our telegraphic address is: Chastity, London." Across the word "Chastity" is rubber-stamped the phrase: "Canceled for the duration of the war."

When a birth certificate, to be filed in an Ohio city, listed only the mother's name, it was decided to ask her to write in the space reserved for the father's name, which she did, inserting the single word, "Nuts."

Here's another remark heard frequently in Italy: "There's only one person in the world who can save us—Mussolini's widow."

The Columbia University Press has issued a study which shows that centuries ago theologians discussed how often a man might take a bath without being guilty of sin, and once a year was admitted.

The public still acclaims the quints and Mrs. Dionne gets an endless ovation, but let's not overlook the ovulation.

A Scotsman phoned his girl friend and said: "Are you free tonight?" and she answered: "No, Mac, but I'll be reasonable."

One of the minor (but significant) achievements of the WPA is the building of 937,000 outdoor privies, all of them neat, attractive, scientific jobs. The old-time backyard shack has, at last, given way to architectural progress. President Roosevelt's efforts in this field are praiseworthy. The whole country should commend our President for the courageous way he's been standing behind the people and serving their most pressing needs. But, let's leave high politics and wander a little into more human realms. A story has it that a man, when asked how he happened to get his black eye, explained: "I was trying to get one of those new privies that F.D.R.'s WPA is building everywhere, so I entered my application at
the nearest office, where a young lady, who was taking the applications, asked to see my credentials in order to prove I was entitled to one. You know that everybody makes a mistake now and then."

According to a report from Washington, D.C., the Kiwanis Club, at a recent meeting, heard an expert on road safety say that reckless driving must be stopped and that "death can and must be eliminated from our national roads." Immediately, according to The Washington Star, two agitated undertakers rose and left the hall in anger.

When Alexander Woollcott toured the Soviet Union he created a sensation because of his girth, for a fat man is an exotic rarity in Rooshia. Moscowsites patted his soft facade and asked how many carloads of butter, cream, sirloin steaks it took to get such magnificent results. He says his parting gift to a lady living in Moscow, who went to the train to see him off, was what was left of his roll of toilet paper, a luxury item in the U.S.S.R. She wept with joy over the exotic treasure and, in a spasm of emotion, promised to think of him whenever there was occasion to use the sheets. Holding the roll aloft, she cried: "On the whole, this will seal our love!" to which Woollcott responded: "And when it is gone, fair one, pray for my return, for next time it shall be a whole roll and not this skimpy thing, faint symbol of only a portion of my pure and deathless passion!"

In addition to being the country's liveliest jiggerbug, a cute little office girl spent her days in the WPA office where applications for privies were received. One afternoon she knocked off work long enough to visit the soda fountain across the street. Jumping on the stool, she explained, "Hello, big boy, slip me a ha-cha-cha-chocolate and make it snappy." The soda-jerker, a distinguished rug-cutter himself, having won several jiggerbug contests with this girl, played a joke on her by adding a large tablespoonful of castor oil to her drink. The next day, when the office girl made her appearance, she wasn't so peppy. She asked: "Gimme another one of those ha-cha-cha-chocolates, and just because I work in the WPA privy office don't put in any of that boop-boopado stuff, will ya?"

That the war is growing more serious every day is shown by the decision of the Women's Voluntary Service for Civil Defense in England to issue a pamphlet entitled: "Information on Bed-wetting for Householders Taking Unaccompanied Children."

Daddy loved Mamma
Mamma loved me.
Mamma's in the cemetery
Daddy's in the pen.

Sign on a garage: "Limp In—Leap Out."

There's some awful writing being done by people who wouldn't get away with it if their editors knew their jobs. Listen to John Lardner, in The Saturday Evening Post: "The son of the house's room." And this is from a Kansas City newspaperman: "The girl he was engaged to's brother."

Willie came home from school one evening and announced he was unable to do the milking because the teacher had rapped his knuckles with a ruler. Next day his father sent a note to school: "Willie sez he kaint milk no cows on account of you licked him on the nuckles with a ruler. My son is provided with a place for punishment, after this please use it and oblige—His father."

A. P. Herbert writes: "The Trojan War was fought because of one very beautiful woman. This one is being fought because of one very ugly man."

Noel Madison writes: "While Raymond Massey was playing Lincoln on the N.Y. stage, he became so carried away with the character that he was playing Honest Abe both on and off the stage. One night he finished his performance, rushed out of the theater, dashed up to Harlem, and freed Cab Calloway's band!"

A reader tells me his secret ambition is to hit Father (of what?) Coughlin over the head, using the Rev. Winrod as a club.

In doing business there's one policy I always insist on—never to hound slow-payers for their money. If there's one thing that disgusts me it's the vulgar way so many businessmen have of harping on the subject of getting their money. It sickens my sensitive, artistic soul. I never hound a slow-payer. If he doesn't want to pay his bills, it's O.K. with me, and never do I let even a peep escape me. So far as I'm concerned, he need never pay a penny on his debts, for why the hell should I care when I always prevent nasty arguments about money by the simple device of demanding payment in advance? I learned that simple lesson from Uncle Sam. Did you ever try to buy a postage stamp on credit? You wouldn't even ask, because you know the fellow with the whiskers does business only one way and that's the right way, as the saying goes. All this reminds me of the Chicago newspaperman's definition of a
sonofabitch—a fellow who wants his money.

When I first went to Los Angeles (where I lived for more than a year) I was told by a native son who had more than his share of civic pride and could express it more boldly than others: "In California we have 365 days of sunshine a year—and that's a mighty conservative estimate."

One of my readers invites me to drop on him the next time I'm within parachuting distance of his shack in Pennsylvania, and closes: "Bring a bottle and a blonde, or bring the wife and argue; it don't matter which." Then he adds this cute little chunk of nonsense which used to please my gang 40 years ago:

Said the Little Brown Hen to the Little Brown Rooster
"You don't come around as often as you use-ter."

Said the Little Brown Rooster to the Little Brown Hen
"I've not seen you, honey, since the Lord knows when."

"Mademoiselle," the young women's magazine of glamour, describes Baron de Reutern as a valiant warrior who tried to organize a battalion of his compatriots in this country for the defense of his beloved France. When this scheme fell through, he let the French ambassador know he was ready to answer the call to arms. Until ordered to fight, he said, he plans to continue his work in N.Y. launching a new perfume.

Even 140 years ago, according to lines inscribed on an ancient headstone in a Lincoln, Maine, cemetery, there were those who agreed that "It Pays to Advertise":

Sacred to the Memory of Jared Bates
Who Died August the 6th, 1800.
His Widow, Aged 24, Lives at 7 Elm St.,
Has Every Qualification for a Good Wife,
And Yearns to be Comforted.

Santayana defines two words in ways not found in Webster's: Difficult—that which can be done immediately. Impossible—that which takes a little longer.

If it takes a 600,000-word dictionary to enable us to say what little we know, how big will it be when we really know something?

He wheeled and threatened and blustered; he ranted and wrangled and roared; he chided and fretted, he scoffed and he vetoed, he snickered and wept and implored. He groveled and swore and demanded; he spurned and he fawned and he brayed; he trampled on data, he tossed ultimata, he grumbled and stamped and inveighed. He whimpered and simpered and shouted, pretended, defended and doubted; he smiled and he jested, reviled and protested, debated, orated and scouted! He cooed, pooh-poohed, he yelled, rebelled; he warned, he scorned, he yammered. He slurred, he purred, he sighed, defied, he wailed, and railed, and clamored. He fumed and he sneered and he whined, he flattered, cajoled and maligncd, consented, revoked and declined... and finally paid the five bucks demanded in what he knew was a $2 house.

Androcles, you know, was the timid, shy, little fellow who made a big reputation fighting lions in the arenas of Rome. One emperor noticed that the half-pint gladiator's system seemed to consist of whispering in the lion's ear, whereupon the beast would demonstrate a complete loss of appetite and sink away, spiritless and defeated. Androcles was called to the royal box, where the emperor asked: "How come?" Androcles answered: "It's this way, sire. I merely tell him, 'As soon as you've finished your dinner, you'll be asked to say a few words.' It gets them every time."

A story (I don't know if it's true) has it that an American tourist was being shown Moscow's new subway. The guide pointed to the frescoed walls, the artistic lighting effects, the shiny marble. The tourist, after admiring all these, asked: "What about the trains?" The guide then pointed out the new washrooms and their frescoed walls. But the tourist asked again: "What about the trains?" "What about the trains?" the guide repeated in a rage, "What about the trains? What about the share-croppers in Alabama?"

"Choose a pipe as you do a wife," says an advertisement of a maker of briars. It seems to me that men are usually more careful about a pipe than they are about a woman. When a man buys a pipe he wants to know what it looks like, how it draws, how it fits in the hand, how it feels in the mouth, how much its bowl holds, its style, its price, its coloring, its gadgets, and so on. The other day a salesman told me he was going to a distant city to get married. "What sort of a woman is she?" I asked. "All I know about her," was the answer, "is that she's a plump and pleasing person of the blonde variety." And that's the limit of his knowledge. So, I'd turn the advertisement around and advise men to pick a wife at least the way they pick a pipe.

Practically every line of the New Testament was written by Jews, and yet a certain type of anti-Semite keeps harping that while he rejects the Old
Testament (because it was written by Jews) he accepts the New Testament (but fails to add what I’ve said—that that also was penned by Jews).

William Randolph Hearst, who has taken to columning, tells this story, slightly revised: An Irishman lay dying, his wife on one side, a priest on the other. “Remember,” said Murphy, “that Casey owes us $100 for what I put up when he needed masses for his late wife.” Said Mrs. Murphy: “Oh, Father, isn’t it wonderful? He’s pious and sensible to the last.” “Remember, too,” Murphy added, “that I owe Duffy $200 for the note he made me sign when he caught me layin’ up with his ol’ woman.” Cried Mrs. Murphy: “Father, isn’t it terrible! His mind is wanderin’.”

Cash customer Joe Michaud, Cleveland, O., who is a keen and pious student of changing social habits, quotes the following letter from one of his Kansas friends: “Well, since I sold my farm in Arkansaw, I have prospered. You know we always lived in the one-room shack, but I came to Kansas and bought a farm and pretty soon I leased it to an oil company, and sure was lucky. They hit a big oil field in the place and now I have a big house in town. My house has six rooms. There is one room that we do nothing but eat in. There is one that we just sit in. There are two rooms that we don’t do anything but sleep in, and one room that we don’t do anything but cook in, and there is one that is all white and has a place that you can wash all over, and over in the corner is a place that you can wash your feet in. When we moved in there were two lids on this, but we have taken them off. We are using one of them for a dough board and have framed grandpa’s picture with the other one.”

After a week of disappointing business, the Madame turned to one of her girls and said: “There’s nothing wrong with this profession that oomph won’t cure.”

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the genius who wrote “School for Scandal” and “The Rivals,” met an old creditor to whom he owed 100 pounds, and here’s what he said: “Twenty years ago, and I never remembered it! What a brute I have been! What would you say to my plan to pay it on the Day of Judgment? No, no, not that day, that’s a busy day. Let’s say the day after.”

Many writers, especially in the newspapers, have trouble with “consensus,” frequently saying, “general consensus of opinion.” Consensus, according to my pet authority, Webster’s New International, means “unanimity or general agreement in matters of opinion.” So, when one writes “general consensus of opinion” he’s saying, “the unanimous, general unanimity of opinion.” In short, he’s saying the same thing more than once, but complaining about it won’t do any good, for “consensus of opinion” is being accepted so widely that it’s a waste of time to object, and so far as the dictionaries are concerned, it’s only a question of time before all accept it as in good usage. But sticking that word “general” in front of it is going just a little too far.

Teacher: “A man of 83 marries a woman of 23. What’s the difference?”

Pupil: “Yeah, who cares?”

A Red knocked at a fashionable house and shouted to the footman: “The Revolution is here!” Said the footman coldly: “All revolutions must be delivered at the tradesmen’s entrance.”

A dealer in patent medicines has this sign in the window of his shop: “The public is requested not to mistake this shop for that of another quack down the street.”

The speech of a lecturer was broadcast over an international hook-up. Who heard it first, the people at the rear of the 200-foot long auditorium in which he spoke, or the 2,000 miles away who listened to the radio broadcast? Answer: The people 2,000 miles away. Radio short waves travel 186,000 miles a second. Sound waves 1,000 feet a second.

Shapely Showgirl: “I want you to vaccinate me where it won’t show.”

Doctor: “OK! My fee is $10 in advance.”

Showgirl: “Why in advance?”

Doctor: “Because when I get busy down in those regions I often weaken and don’t charge anything.”

Here’s an idea for match book manufacturers: Make match booklets bearing the legend, “WATCH HITLER BURN.” Make each match a miniature figure of the illustrious shock-shucker.

An Associated Press dispatch to The New York Times, March 15, 1940, tells of a Paducah, Ky., book store manager, Christopher Grauer, who installed an automatic scales and set up a sign announcing: “Self-Service. You pick ’em, weigh ’em and read ’em. One dime a pound.” Very good, my good man, but it happens I introduced that idea 20 years ago with my grab-bags, which offer 10 pounds of reading matter for a buck, plus two-bits for carriage. A dime a pound is my contribution to the book trade, except that I insisted on making each package contain 10 pounds, because
it wouldn’t be good business to promote a sales scheme that brought in only a dime at a time.

Three friends—a Catholic, a Protestant and a Jew—were making a tour of Europe. When they got to Rome, nothing could satisfy the Catholic but that they should have an audience with the Pope. The audience was arranged and the Catholic went first to the throne. His Holiness held out his hand, which the Catholic kissed. Next the Protestant went up and the Pope held out his foot, which the Protestant kissed. The Jew, seeing all this, became jittery and said to his Catholic friend: “I’m not going up there until I know for sure what he wants kissed next.”

In Marlene Dietrich’s new picture (which is lively “hoss opry”) she plays the part of a floozey. In one scene she deposits money down her bosom, which leads a nearby miner to say: “There’s gold in them thar hills.” It’s mild, but I still wonder how it got by the Hays office.

Senator Tom Connally tells of a Southern politician who urged secession “because we can lick those damn Yankees with cornstalks.” When the Civil War was over the boasting rebel was reprimanded of his statement when he ran for office. His reply: “We could have whipped them with cornstalks all right, but those damn Yankees wouldn’t fight that way.”

I still like Prof. Huxley’s definition of science as “nothing but trained and organized common sense.”

The other day, while rereading some of the booklets Clarence Darrow did for me, it came to me with new force that there was a man who was a better thinker when he was wrong than most people are when they’re right. By this I mean that Darrow could be compelling and warming even when he was off his base. I predict that Darrow’s works will be read for many years to come, because he always had a lot to say, knew how to say it, wasn’t afraid to offend the righteous, espoused the cause of the devil even among pious do-gooders, slashed bunk-shooters, exposed frauds, ridiculed charlatans, and always stopped the performance when the chance offered itself to get off a neat joke or a cynical witicism.

A platonic friendship ends in either a love affair or loss of temper.

As my readers know, I have a yen for Irish bulls. Someone ought to compile a little book containing several hundred amusing specimens. Here’s the latest one to come across my desk, and it’s from Commander Raymond J. Kelley, of the American Legion, who issued a statement praising the Dies committee because it “is dragging into the light of day the rats who are gnawing at our foundations, and doing it regardless of whose ox is gored.”

An English newspaper tells of a telegraphed message which was received by the warden of the Air Raid Precautions posts in a London district and which was posted all over the district. It read: “Please note that the provisions of females for warden will cease as from tonight under Home Office instructions.” A little later a correction was received, ordering that the word “females” be stricken out and “free meals” be substituted.

The German propaganda minister has instructed all Nazi newspapers to direct its blows at England, not Britain, or Great Britain. The reason we’re told, is that England is a little place while Great Britain is so big. It’s supposed to be a good psychological twist, but I still believe the Germans are intelligent enough to know that calling the enemy England isn’t going to put the British Empire out of action. And we’ve been told Germany’s Dr. Goebbels is so clever.

Three men got into a discussion on which part of the body each would least want to be deprived of. “My eyes,” said the first, “because I love to see all the beauties of nature.” “My ears,” said the second, “because I love music more than anything else in the world.” “My navel,” said the third. The other two looked at him in astonishment. “Why do you place so much value on your navel?” he was asked. “I love to eat celery in bed, and that’s where I put my salt.”

A WPA worker, out in the country one morning, was headed for town, where he was to report for work. Along came a car, driven by a farmer, who stopped when the WPA worker thumbed him. Down the road a way, they saw a turtle crawling across the highway “See that slow turtle?” the farmer asked. “reminds me of a WPA man at work.” Later, they saw a rabbit go dash ing across the road, hellbent for election. “See that fast rabbit?” the WPA man asked, “reminds me of a farmer rushing to town for his dole.”

I’m afraid we’re in for a long spell of double features, regardless of how much the public protests. The reason is simple. Hollywood has discovered that it wasn’t good business to try hard to make a good single feature—and fall. It’s better to take it easy with two features that aren’t any good—and succeed.

Businessmen who spend whole evenings squawking about taxes and how the government is “interfering with
business" are my idea of the country's greatest bores. One, a fanola shaped like a pianola, saw the end of liberty and the social order because he has to fill out some extra blanks for social security and unemployment insurance reports. He ought to try to do business in Germany—even before the war—where it takes at least 30 forms to get a supply of material (now unobtainable, in most cases). Or a farmer who has to get 70 blanks filled out and passed by the proper officials before he can sell a cow. As for taxes, the bellyacher who bothered me the other night makes a net of about $10,000 per year. His taxes total a few hundred dollars for the Federal government and a little more for State and local taxes. If he lived in England, his income tax alone would be $3,700, and then there'd be all kinds of local, unemployment, old age, health and other taxes. In Germany, the bill would be even higher.

My old friend, Rob Wagner, visited an art gallery, where he came on a statue of Peter Pan, but to his amazement he found the fellow's anatomy absolutely level where it shouldn't have been. Amused, he wrote a critical piece, calling it "The Peterless Pan."

Said the diaper to the baby: "Go ahead and shoot; you're covered."

The other day I was in the book department and happened to stop near the case which holds the first two Little Blue Books I ever issued—No. 1, The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, and No. 2, Oscar Wilde's Ballad of Reading Jail. As I stood there it came to me quite suddenly how it first happened to come on Wilde's great poem in a single-block city park at 5th and Pine, in Philadelphia, when I wasn't much more than 15 years old. I'd bought the pamphlet—in brown paper covers—at a corner bookstore. Was it run by Nicholas L. Brown? I seem to recall it carried such an imprint. It was a cold, windy day, but I didn't notice the weather after sitting down on a green-painted bench to read this dramatic, thrilling, beautiful ballad—a poem which I heard Frank Harris tell me, several decades later, was the "greatest ballad in the English language." That sounded true then, and still does. I broke my reveries by reaching up and taking a copy, which I carried into my office, where I settled down on my couch to read it over again, after these many years. The old thrills came back, except this time I was spread out on a warm, soft couch instead of making icicles on my bottom on a hard, cold bench in a bare, forbidding cit. But still, my eyes for a brief nap the notion flashed through my mind that it's nice to come back to a piece of literature that meant something in one's life 35 years ago and still find it great stuff. Too often do we feel ashamed of the earlier admiration we happen to stumble on. Early in 1919, when I decided to issue a library of low-priced booklets, I reached into my desk drawer and pulled out two pamphlets with which to begin the series—and No. 2 was the very same copy I'd bought at 5th and Pine Streets when I was a boy. I don't know that that means anything. I just happen to mention it because the thought popped into my mind. After all, one shouldn't feel impelled to have everything he says mean something. There are times when all of us have a right to just dawdle along and chatter about anything that happens to jump out of our brains.

"The Freeman gets better all the time."—Albert Goldman, Bristol, Pa.

W. G. Clugston, of the editorial staff of the Kansas City Journal, writes: "If your newsclip filing system will enable me to keep clippings where I can get them when I want them, it's certainly worth the price. So, enclosed find check for one of them."

Eber Wilcox, a reader who lives at Harrison, Mich., tells me "an optimist is a man who doesn't give a damn what happens so long as it happens to the other fellow."

Frank Harris, in his "My Life," tells about a man who had talked with Oscar Wilde after his first lecture tour in the U.S. Asked if it had been a success, Wilde "answered him gravely but with dancing eyes": "A great success! I had two secretaries, one to answer my letters; the other to send locks of hair to my admirers. I have had to let them both go, poor fellows; the one is in a hospital with writer's cramp, and the other is quite bald."

A brand new baby jumped up in his crib to tell the little girl in the next crib: "I'm a boy!" "How wonderful!" she said, admiringly, "but how do you know?" He answered by lifting his nightie and crying, "Look! Blue Booties!"

When two old maids in a war-torn town were brought the horrible news that the invading army would soon march in, one became hysterical and cried: "Oh, dear me, when will the ravishing really begin?"

When I was a boy I could explain to anyone who'd listen all they should know about the Riddle of the Universe, but now, at 50, I can't even tell who the giant genius was that invented inner-spring mattresses (one of the great creations since the discovery of fire
and the wheel) or who the man was that made the first rubber condom, the simple device that did more in a single day to undermine conventional morality than all the books of all the devils of bohemianism.

This noon I saw a lone bottle of mustard on the table, and the thought came to me how useless it was without a piece of meat. The meat can get by without mustard, but the mustard's no good without meat. I ought to be able to read some profound observation into that, but my mind's impatient to get on to something else.

An epigram never means the same thing to two readers.

After coming out of the ether, following an appendectomy, the chap noticed that a private part of his anatomy was carefully packed and bandaged as well as the abdomen. The doctor, when asked, replied: "Well, it was like this. You'd just passed off when there came a rap at the door. When the nurse investigated, she found 12 of the world's most famous surgeons standing. By Gosh, they'd made a special trip to do me the honor of watching me operate. I removed your appendix in nothing flat, and the way those famous surgeons clapped and cheered warmed my heart. Well, what could I do? I had to respond with an encore, so I circumcised you." (Apologies, my friends, for the hoar frost on this yarn, but it happens the telling of it always amuses me.)

Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, when she was a school-teacher, was told that one of her pupils, Jackie, liked to shoot birds better than doing anything else. He did it so much that the teacher decided to take a stand in the matter. "Jackie," said Mrs. Prissy-Pratt hopefully, "isn't there something you'd like to do besides shoot birds?" Jackie replied in the negative. But the teacher insisted that he think of something else. "Well, next to that, I'd like to make sling shots to shoot birds with." That didn't satisfy Mrs. Prissy-Pratt, of course. After much trying, Jackie brightened up a little bit. "There is something," he said, "I like to play with little girls." The teacher wasn't so sure about this. "Where do you play?" she asked skeptically. "Behind the barn." Mrs. Prissy-Pratt didn't lose hope. "What do you do?" she asked. "Oh, I lift up their skirts." "Uhhuh!" the teacher stammered. "Then what do you do?" "Take down their pants," the boy said gleefully. "Jackie!" "Then I take the elastic out of their panties to make slingshots to shoot more birds with!"

Eve had no dressmaker, beautician, rouge, powder, perfume, the Voice of Experience, corset, silk hose, glamorous undies, long cigarette-holder, paint, nail coloring, cuticle remover, Kotex, false eyelashes, permanent waves, cold cream, perspiration deodorant, hair remover, bath salts, eyebrow plucker, skin nourisher, lip-stick, breath sweetener, mirrors, form-fitting gown, bust developer, fancy controller, high heels, earring, chin supporter, mascara, Emily Post, eccentric hats, feminine hygiene, Dorothy Dix, hair dyes, one-piece bathing suits, files, dainty panties and pink brassiere—and yet she made her man.

I know a fellow who's been getting by for 30 years as an original cynical, whimsical, worldly man on the basis of a single epigram, and even that one's awful. It runs this way: "Life is like a spendthrift's bank account—always overdrawn."

A woman who looks nice when sleeping or when chewing beef steak has little to fear.

A philosopher is one who knows how to laugh, likes to laugh, knows when to laugh, and never has any trouble finding the right things to laugh at.

Some men are prejudiced against virgins because they can't give references.

How many times have I been bored by that bromide, "Money can't buy happiness?" Even the bores who say it admit money will buy off a lot of unhappiness.

A reader says he found a companion notice to the sign I found in a beany. He saw this in a cafe in a small town in Alabama: "It's tough to pay 75c for a steak, but it's tougher if you pay 25c."

An old man heard about a goat-gland treatment that would restore his virility. The medicine was a certain extract made up in pills. He bought a box. But instead of taking one every day, he swallowed the whole boxful one night before going to bed. Next morning the family had great difficulty in waking the old man. At last he rolled over and rubbed his eyes. "All right, all right," he grumbled. "I'll get up. But first I'll have to tell Greta Garbo, Hedy Lamarr, and Mae West not to come back again until tonight."

Professor Everson, according to an advertisement in the church page of the Chicago Daily News, has worked out a line that absolutely guarantees to end Freethought and religious skepticism in general. Rationalists must close up shop. Even church Modernists haven't a leg to stand on. Recognizing the inevitable collapse of Agnosticism, The Freeman, as of today, is changing its policy and becoming an official organ of
pity. I know when I’m whipped. The millions of anti-religious words I’ve written are so much bellywash. Out with them! Back to Fundamentalism! Here’s the little advertisement (which I reprint without charge) that turned the trick: “Three million church members in Chicago and how many know where Heaven is?” Professor Everson, noted Bible Lecturer, will tell exact location. beans, and could run children ‘grow up. Why heaven will never grow tiresome, and if we will feel bad because some loved ones are missing.” All heretics who want to get on the bandwagon with me should form a line to the right.

In grammar school—this time in Northeast Philadelphia, not far from where I lived for some years, 1326 Germantown Ave.—I don’t remember much I’d learned but I recall vividly the principal, a Civil War veteran who had fought at Gettysburg. He was famous for his “milk shakes,” which means he grabbed boys by their coat lapels and shook vigorously. He also felt freely the breasts of the more mature girls, some of whom seemed to like it very much for they continued coming back for more. His brother was a famous writer of popular songs, and whenever he issued a new one the principal would sing it for us in a voice that slipped from high baritone to bass and back again at the most unexpected moments. One day there was a fire in a factory across the street, which meant school was out for several days. Several women and men were killed. I saw some of the factory workers jump to safety and a few fall to death. I even heard one rescued woman gasp: “It was a beautiful day. They were making a few days later I was tardy at school because of a suicide on a railroad near the school. The body was between the tracks, but there wasn’t any head. I was impressed with the way the policeman in the wagon picked up pieces of flesh with his bare hands and put them on a stretcher. It was a business—like selling lamb chops. Later I explained my tardiness to the teacher, who let me off when I gave her all the horrible details. She gasped, shivered and shuddered as I talked, but didn’t tell me to stop. Having such a fine audience I piled on a few extra horrors. When I finished she told me I was a terrible person to loiter around such awful scenes. I couldn’t understand how anyone could turn away when such things happened. I read about the suicide in the evening paper that night and wondered why a writer gave only six inches of space to so exciting and memorable an occasion. I had expected to read columns about the tragedy. However, the story did tell how the self-killer had been given the air by a woman. People are funny, it came to me. They kill themselves when they can’t marry a certain individual. None other will do. From then on, whenever I heard newsboys cry “Murder and suicide!” I knew immediately some fellow had shot a girl and himself (or the other way around). He couldn’t get her for himself and didn’t want anyone else to have her. This always seemed silly—what with a city full of people all round one.

It’s been more than 30 years since I’ve seen 1305 Arch Street, in Philadelphia, nor do I know what’s there as I write. The structure was a two-story “office” building, tenanted by the kinds of businesses that can be run from a desk in a 9x12 room. Old and dirty with the dust of the decades, it looked as though it had been put up shortly after the Civil War. But, one flight up and down the end of the hall was a rather large room which served (at a cost of hardly more than $12 a month) as the city headquarters of the Philadelphia Socialist Party, a place that served me for at least five years—beginning when I wasn’t more than 13 years old—as school, club, social center, entertainment, and the jumping off place for my groping idealism and messianic impulses. Half of it was a combination gathering place and bookstore. The other half was given over to party affairs, where a $12-a-week secretary kept the forces of social reconstruction (right-wing reformism) and militant revolution (extreme left-wing he-man Marxism) in the harness and getting things done. Here, from workers and craftsmen, to poets, students Feminists, Single Taxers, utopians, unionists, agitators, organizers, soap-boxers, big-time lecturers, authors, newspapermen, candidates, and streams of Jimmie Higginses (anonymous, unsung, unpublishable workers in the ranks) flowed in and out, each leaving me something that went into my mind—bits of economics, history, humor, rough wit, shrewd observations, national and international affairs, Freethought, flashes of Ingersoll, Huxley and Blavatsky, capitalism’s injustices, the scientific bases of Marxism, the records of labor throughout the centuries, evolution, genetics, psychology, health, sociology, political economy, government, and other odds and ends of knowledge (mostly sound) that rattled around in my head like a nickel noise-maker. It was disorderly, unorganized and unrelated, but it was the best I could get, having left school while still in the seventh grade,
this out of the conversations I heard him participate in. That was his secret vice, for it would have caused consternation among the 1295 of the B. of the W., most of them being dark-hued Atheists, acclamers of Darwinism, Spencer’s Rationalism, Huxley’s Agnosticism, and Marx’s slogan about religion being the opium of the people. He kept his religion to himself—his job was to fight (literally and actually) English rule and prepare the way for Socialism. He was a little man—hardly more than five feet five inches, and stocky, like Traubel, only more so. He was a modest, simple man, his heart set on one thing—freedom for Ireland. Later, he went back to Dublin, where he was wounded while leading the revolutionary forces holding the postoffice, during Easter, 1916. When his men were defeated Connelly was taken prisoner and executed. Connelly showed me how men die for their convictions—simply, untheatrically, but heroic in their devotion to something that millions of other men wouldn’t give a dime to achieve. His daughter, Nora, writing about her father’s stand against the British, tells of how a small, excitable Irishman approached the postoffice while the British soldiers surrounding it were pouring machine-gun bullets and hand grenades into the building. When halted, the Dublimer became hysterical with anger and cried: “This must stop immediately. I want a penny stamp.”

A preacher’s announcement of the week’s service: Directly after this sermon there will be baptism of one adult and one underterminers. On Tuesday, at 6 P.M., the Society of Benevolence will give an ice cream supper in the basement. All the women giving milk will please come early. Wednesday the choir will rehearse in the usual place. Sister Johnson will sing, “Put Me in My Little Bed,” accompanied by the pastor. Thursday there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers’ Club. All sisters wishing to become little mothers will meet the pastor in the study. I do hope all you sisters join and come prepared. Friday the Ladies Aid Society will serve a bean supper, followed by music and a short review of “Gone With the Wind,” a picture that has commanded the praise of the entire public, with the single exception of the notorious E. Haldeman-Julius, who, as usual, resorted to destructive criticisms. Next Saturday morning’s service will be held in the North end of town, while the evening service will be held in the South end. Children will be baptised at both ends. This being Easter Sunday, I will ask Sister Willie to lay an egg on the pulpit, after which this service
will close by singing "Little Drops of Water." Well some sister kindly start little drops of water and the congregation join in?

King Charles X of France never passed the old Marquis de Balzeecourt without asking the aged gentleman, "Well, Marquis, how is your bronchitis?" Once the monarch, instead of asking this habitual question, inquired about his wife, the Marchioness, Balzeecourt, who was nearly deaf, believing the king had asked as usual regarding his malady, replied: "Tolerable during the day, but oh! Sire!... at night! There's a limit to a man's strength and I believe I've reached it. How I pray for just a single night's undisturbed rest!"

Religious instructor (to pretty young thing): "You know your guardian angel is always with you." She: "Does he eat with me?" He: "Yes." She: "Does he sleep with me?" He: "Yes." She: "Is he handsome?"

When an earthquake was reported from Salt Lake City it was found there hadn't been any 'quake at all in Utah, but since the earth's vibration was still demanded an explanation, an inquiry was conducted which showed that Mae West had walked over Brigham Young's grave.

When I was a reporter in Milwaukee, my city editor sent me to interview a well-known European playwright, who, I soon learned, was that way about boys. I called his hotel and got him on the telephone, opening the conversation with the statement that I wanted an interview with him. He thought I said "rendezvous," and exclaimed: "Rendezvous! Really, I can't arrange such a matter over the telephone. I must see you personally to make sure you appeal to me."

The girl dated the young blade even though she'd been warned he went in for cave-woman-love-making once the car got parked on some lonely road. But the girl was sure she could handle him. Later, she was asked by an intimate friend: "Was it much of a struggle?"

The girl replied: "Oh, no,—I thwarted him,—by timely compliance."

Emerson said "we need not assist the administration of the universe," but I feel nevertheless that, despite my limited experience, I could give Gawd several valuable and constructive suggestions. His handiwork shows numerous grave defects.

Beware of a people when circumstances drive them to do the right thing... Generals taught to take to heart the theory my gang held when I was a kid: "If you can't lick 'em, surround 'em."

Those of my subscribers who have read my edition of Schiller's "Maid of Orleans" will be interested in an exchange of remarks between a British tourist and a German guide at the birthplace of Schiller at Marbach, before the war. Said the guide: "It was here that our national poet was born." "Not at all," the British visitor replied, "he was an international poet." Testily, the guide asked: "How can you say that sir?" "Because Schiller wrote the 'Maid of Orleans' for the French, 'Emont' for the Dutch, 'Mary Stuart' for us British, and 'William Tell' for the Swiss." The guide scratched his head. "But what did he write for Germans?" "The Robbers."

A rabbit and his girl friend were out for a walk when some coyotes took after them. The rabbits ran into a cave, but the coyotes stayed outside the cave howling and frightened the little girl rabbit so much she started to cry. The boy rabbit said, "Never mind, dear; don't be frightened. We'll soon outnumber them." Life magazine, which has been doing a good job of picturing the second World War, took time out recently to give a couple of pages to a barbecued conducted by a tribe of cannibals. Instead of russels, they were roasting a human being. The thing was gruesome, unforgettable, but effective journalism, for its reader-interest (or should I say look-interest) couldn't be denied. Then I turned to a newspaper report of Hitler's dash through Holland, Belgium and Northern France, from which I learned about the Nazi technique of attacking a pill-box. At the last I'm told, rolled up to the opening of a pill-box, through which is squirted quarts of burning gasoline, with the result that the soldiers inside are roasted to death. The report didn't say anything about eating the cooked meat of the men caught in the pill-box. I understand such meat is permitted to go to waste. The job isn't done in order to add proteins to the diet but to add to the glory and honor of the Fuehrer. All this puts the cannibals in their place. Those savages can't hope to be considered civilized until they roast human flesh for glory instead of a good dinner.

When Edna Ferber opened a popular magazine which was running one of her serials she found that two pages were occupied by an uninteresting introduction, with just a trickle of her text running thinly around the edges. She wrote the editor: "Next time you print one of my stories, devote the first pages entirely to pictures, and just put my text in the back of the magazine among the Kotex,
E. Haldeman-Julius

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snooty toilet paper, and body-odor ads.”

Yesterday I heard a doctor deliver a speech to a businessmen's luncheon club. He was given 20 minutes in which to explain the highlights of a problem in medical science that he's been working on for 30 years, and yet that intelligent fellow had to read from a manuscript. That doctor (and he has plenty of company) ought to accept the services of a psychiatrist, for there's something out of joint in his mental makeup. A man ought to be able to talk in a conversational tone, without pouring over a manuscript, on a subject which he knows thoroughly. After all, we laymen aren't hard to please when we know we're listening to a man who knows what he's talking about. All they ask is that he talk shop modestly and informally. If that means a few misworded sentences, what of it? The point of his subject is still good. I can understand how a great figure in high politics—a President of our country, for example—must resort to a manuscript in order to make each sentence say exactly what he wants known, or wants to conceal. An extemporaneous talk from such an executive can cause a lot of trouble. But the public is justly impatient with persons like the doctor I've just described, who couldn't talk 20 minutes on a subject he'd been studying for 30 years. The point, of course, is that he could, if only he'd be careful to prepare a good manuscript, read it over a few times, and then, just before going to the meeting, throw it in the fire. He'd then be able to talk informally and pleasantly to laymen who dislike speeches that have to be dished out from 12-page manuscripts. My suggested method may give the doctor a hike in blood pressure the first few times, but before long he'll get himself in hand and do the job without causing painful butt-squirming among the members of his audience. I know what I'm talking about because I was an incorrigible manuscript reader for years, during which I pained many posteriors. Then one day I decided I was going to quit that habit. The first few times my heart beat so fast I could hardly breathe. But one day I got hold of myself, and since then I can get on my feet for an hour or more without the slightest increase in my pulse. Audiences don't mind suffering if there's a real reason for such killing pain, but most of it can be avoided. This brings to mind the giant of a man who began making love. His partner cried, "You're killing me." Said the man: "Shall I stop?" "No," she replied, "I guess it'll be all right to go ahead and kill me." I recall an Irishman who addressed our luncheon club here in Girard some years ago, opening his speech with this: "I don't know why I'm scared to death over making this speech because I know I can lick any man in the room." From then on he had an easier time. That remark gave him assurance, and, as it was a stag meeting, he told us a story which is still with me. It went like this: A young married man, when called on to give a toast at a stag party, decided to make it fit the mood of the men, so he said: "To the many happy hours I've spent in bed with my wife." For this he received the prize, a silver cup. When he showed his wife his prize, she asked how he came to win it. He decided to say nothing about having toasted his hours in bed with her. Instead, he told her his toast was: "To the many happy hours spent in church with my wife." Later, when the wife met one of the men who had attended the stag party, she exclaimed: "It's funny how my husband came to win that silver cup, for the truth is he's been there only twice—once before we were married and once after—and each time I had to wake him up to tell him it was out."

Scrap of conversation at the Ritz: "Consomme, bouillon; hors d'oeuvres, fricasee poulet, pommes de terre au gratin, demitasse des glaces, and tell that tumbler in the corner to keep his lamps off me, mool!"

Rob Wagner's blast: The better I know women, the worse I like cats.

A London theater has discovered the box-office appeal of the American strip tease, but instead of using one artiste it offers "artistic nude tableaux." As it's considered bad taste to stare at the gals through opera glasses, the management inserted the following in its program: Any additional artificial aid to vision is not permitted.

Scrap of conversation: "That jitterbug got awfully jittery when he became constipated and found he couldn't jit."

The garage sign I repeated recently—"Limp In—Leak Out"—suggests one that Maud could put up in her establishment: "Leap In—Leak Out."

Ad in a Munich paper: "Young ambitious girl looking for position in restaurant or coffee house. Can be used for anything."

Reader Robert Saponard, Brooklyn, N.Y., writes: "Money used to fight the causes of poverty is better used than that given to charity."

Triumph of ad-writers: snootiness in toilet paper.
Charlotte E. Stebbins, Akron, O., writes: “You are doing good work.”

Doctor: “I see you have acute vaginitis.” Peachy patient: “Oh, thank you, doctor, I’m so glad you like it.”

Scotsman: “Get behind your lover, you unfaithful wife. I’m going to shoot you both.”

When the glamorous blonde with the big blue eyes got on the subject of her date, she described him as being 89 years old and a caveman. Asked how a caveman could act rough at 89, she replied: “Yeah—every time he makes a try he caves in.”

The great magician got a little too intimate with his beautiful assistant. Later she presented the gallant bachelor with a bouncing baby, and cried: “Let me see you make a bunny out of that!”

The glamorous blonde with the big blue eyes approached the floorwalker and asked: “Do you have notions on this floor?” The floorwalker looked her over, and replied: “Yes, madam, what about tonight?”

In addition to other financial troubles, I’ve just been informed the price of future supplies of paper used in printing The Freeman will cost me an additional 20 percent. This means I’ll have to work a little harder convincing Freeman readers they should make contributions to the deficit fund. This problem wouldn’t be serious if I could get another 500 subscribers to join those who have already sent in donations.

Hollywood’s distorted version of Lillian Russell’s life is taken as a matter-of-course by people who know how the cinema can’t face “the Facts of Life.” Maybe it will some day, when it reaches adulthood. But for the present, we have to accustom ourselves to blinders whenever emotional situations bring out facts shocking to conventional minds. So, Lillian was given two husbands instead of four. It wouldn’t do to tell the facts about Lillian Russell’s marriage to the tenor, Signor Perugini, who was as impotent as a hot-water bottle. Once, while telling about this marriage, according to her friend, Hobart Bosworth, Lillian said she had acquired the knowledge which enabled her to write a book entitled, “How to Remain Single While Married.”

After Napoleon’s fall, Tallyrand, great French diplomat, found France in confusion. One evening, at a court function, a cross-eyed lady cornered Tallyrand and kept pestering him with the question: “How is the political situation?” Out of patience, Tallyrand looked coldly at the cross-eyed lady and said: “As you see it, madam!”

Questions and Answers

A highschool paper, reporting its school’s concert: “The hall was filled with expectant mothers, eagerly awaiting the appearance of their offspring.”

You have my permission to shove up the well-known flue any radio guy who reads poetry to organ accomplishment.

More than a half century ago, Colonel Mann, of Town Topics, made the discovery that champagne is cheaper than lager beer if somebody else pays for it.

The trouble with most movie biographies is they’re written in a mood of sentimentality instead of a mood of amiable malice.

When a girl student read Shakespeare’s line “Did you do that?” her teacher complained: “You must put meaning into the words.” Trying to please, the student read: “Did you”—and here she sniffed twice—“do that?”

San Francisco’s famous ferry building was the goal of a stranger. Approaching a fairy who happened to be at hand, the stranger asked: “Where is the ferry building?” “Oh, goodness gracious me,” exclaimed the fairy, “do we have our own building in this town?”

A colored preacher made a visit to another church, and was introduced by the regular preacher as follows: “Brothers and Sisters, the speaker is from the Baptist colored congregation. While his skin’s a different color from that of ours, I assure you his heart is as white as yours.” Sometime later the time came for the white preacher to address the colored congregation, and was introduced by the colored minister with the words: “Brothers and Sisters: It affords me pleasure to introduce this speaker, and I want to explain that though his skin isn’t the same color as the others here, his heart is as black as any of yours.”

She was in bed with her lover when the door opened, and there stood her husband. “There’s that big-mouthed husband of mine,” she cried. “This’ll be all over town by tomorrow.”

When Robert G. Ingersoll was a young man—long before he became an outspoken Agnostic—he found himself in the company of a group of religious fanatics who insisted on learning his opinions on salvation, Hell, and Heaven, “where,” according to the hymn, “congregations ne’er break up and Sabbaths never end.” “What do you think of baptism, Mr. Ingersoll?” he was asked. “Well, I’ll tell you,” Ingersoll replied. “With soap, baptism is a good thing.”

Salesmanship reached a new high in Topeka, Kans., when a druggist advertised castor oil at a bargain price, with
a roll of toilet paper thrown in as a premium.

I'm beginning to fret over the possible fate of the motto used for generations by the Prudential Insurance Company, "The Prudential has the Strength of Gibraltar." I suggest (and here I make no charge for advice) that the company continue using the picture of the Rock of Gibraltar, but change the wording to: "The Prudential is Stronger than Gibraltar." Such a change might take care of a difficult advertising problem should the Rock fall before a blitzkrieg.

When Mussolini stuck that famous knife in France's back, the London New Statesman and Nation described his as "clad in shining blackmail," which strikes me as a perfect description.

"Bishop Manning's subject for a recent sermon was, "The Need for Morals in Mathematics."

Sign on dairyman's delivery truck: "You can whip our cream but you can't beat our milk."

Scrap of conversation (bravely uttered by a man who carefully avoided walking under a ladder): "Of course, I'm not superstitious, but why take chances?"

Bernard Shaw, upon being asked to become vice president of something or other, thundered that he'd never agree to be vice president of anything—except, possibly, the universe.

Thomas and Cynthia Weymouth-Dowling, Oak Bluff, Mass.: "We appreciate your gags! But this is no gag—we're skimping ourselves to forward the enclosed dollar. When we can, we'll add to it for the deficit fund."

Anthony J. King, Milwaukee, Wis.: "I hope your appeal for the deficit fund will be answered generously by many readers."

"I wish you would let me ask Freeman readers to get behind William Allen White's 'Help the Allies' movement. If enough people would write to the President and Congress there might yet be time to save our way of life. I enclose something for the deficit fund."—Clyde W. Hall, Webster City, Iowa.

"I'm afraid the President won't get organized in time to head off the German scourge."—Joe A. Thomas, Melford, Ore.

Candidate (beginning his speech): "I am pleased to see such a dense crowd here tonight...

When a census taken in Chicago found the man of the house out, he de-
Anti-Fascists, in Italy, make much use of this comment: "Where there are 10 Italians there are 10 Fascists; where there is one Italian, there isn't any Fascist."

While Farmer Jones was busy turd-tumbuming (hauling manure from his barn to the field) the tractor salesman caught up with him and presented the official contract for his signature, thus binding the sale of a tractor on the installment plan. Salesman: "Do you know what this document is?" Farmer: "Sure. That's one of them things where it's got big writin' for me and little writin' for you."

Reactionary publications like The Kansas City Star, The Chicago Tribune, The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, and many others (including The Saturday Evening Post) go on year after year without missing a dividend, which shows that it pays to use the press for class ends. In Kansas City, for example, the masses are so opposed to the Star that they almost instinctively oppose anything the paper stands for. For years, one of the surest ways of getting whipped in an election is to be condemned to accepting the paper's editorial support. This reminds me of George, a colored boy, who was telling his friend about his latest romance. "Man," he said, "I got me the peachiest gal now. She keeps beer in her icebox for me and feeds me chicken all the time." "George, that sounds like a real set up," "Yes, sir," said George proudly, "and what's more, she's got syphilis." "Syphilis? Why, that's so good, George," "Sure, man, it must be. Ain't you been reading where The Kansas City Star's against it?" (This story, of course, can be changed to fit the nearest reactionary newspaper.)

An Oklahoma motorist was arrested last year for "speeding in reverse."

I wonder how long it would take to re-humanize the average young Nazi. The poison's in deep.

The Nation's advertising manager seems to be reaching out for new accounts in an unconventional way, judging by this classified ad: "FOR RENT—W. 95th St. Attractively furnished private room, bath, young lady. Call River-side 9-4343, evenings."

A local businessman, who had registered to attend a convention in Oklahoma, received these instructions: "You arrive in Tulsa Sunday morning and register. You then meet and greet old friends, shoot craps, or go to church."

Counsel for the defense was cross-examining the witness, a gorgeous, glamorous blonde with big blue eyes: "Where were you," he thundered, "on Monday night?" "I was. lolling around in bed," the beauty replied. "And where were you, bellowed counsel, "on Tuesday night?" "I was lolling around in bed." "And what are you doing tomorrow night?" asked the counsel as he leaned closer. Prosecuting counsel leaped to his feet. "Your honor," he protested, "I object to that question." "And why do you object?" "Because I asked her first."

A man, after propositioning a reluctant woman, asked how much she wanted. When she said $50, he offered $5. She: "I'd have to starve before I take that figure." He: "All right— I'll wait."

Mrs. Patrick Campbell, the actress, got into a taxi with her dog one day, and when Fido deposited a half-haful the driver let off stream of profanity. Staring coldly at him, she drewled, "Young man, that was me."

J. J. Thomas, M.D., Cleveland, O.: "I read every word of The Freeman, putting aside everything else as soon as each issue arrives."

Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, who always insists on calling legs, limbs, asked her maid whether she had given the canary its morning bath. "Yes, mum," the girl replied, "you may come in now."

Jack Albitz, Albany, Calif.: "The Freeman is the most interesting paper I've come in contact with during my life. I enclose $1 to help meet the deficit. I am 17 years old and graduate from Albany High June 5, 1940. May The Freeman continue as long as man has the power to reason. I thank you for your endless work."

Mark Twain, talking of gratitude, said he didn't care for gratitude of the noisy, boisterous kind. "Why," he said, "when some men discharge an obligation, you can hear the report for miles around."

The oldest inhabitant had his first look at a new lighthouse and commented: "It can't do no good for fog. It can shine, whistle and ring—but fog comes in just the same."

Erika Mann, in her new book about Naziland, "The Lights Go Down," tells about a peasant boy who was imprisoned because he fed some barley to his hens, and about a sailor who was shot when he got back to Germany because he had attended a workers' mass meeting in New York City.

About 20 years ago Frank Harris told the story about the actor and the prostitute, which I used recently. Now I find that Alexander Woolcott is using the same yarn, but dressed in fancier
words. His version (which doesn’t change the point in the slightest) runs this way: "In his “The Knock at the Stage-Door” the attitude of the professional players toward the amateurs is best summed up in a raifish story they delight in telling on all occasions. It begins with a touching picture of an old broken-down tragedian sharing a park bench with a bedraggled-and unappetizing—street-walker. “Ah, Madame,” says the tragedian, “quelle Ironic! The two oldest professions in the world—ruined by amateurs.”

Thoreau said: “Read the best books first or you may not have time to read them.” You turd-tumblers ought to take that message to heart.

Lindbergh—the Trojan Horse’s rear.

I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say that Gandhi is the world’s most humorless leader.

After the first World War many N.Y. night clubs boasted of their aristocratic doormen and waiters. You couldn’t throw a hamburger without hitting a czarist general, duke or prince. This war ought to enable the spots to put in a supply of British aristocrats, for even if England wins there’ll be plenty of lords, viscounts, earls, and dukes glad to hold down jobs in our places of light, expensive entertainment. They might even wear their court costumes in order to enjoy fatter gratuities.

From a newspaper report of a wreck: “Amid the cries of the dead and dying.” This shows how journalism, aided by science, is able to send its reporters to the Other World to get the facts.

The New Yorker carries an advertisement of a Ciro Perfume which puts the question right up to many women of the middle and uppah clauses:

Did you ever! SURRENDER at $5.00

As well as $10-$17.50 and $32

“A paper like The Freeman is necessary to present the facts about crimes such as we are now experiencing. The least I can do is to send my contribution to the Deficit Fund.”—Louis Long, Chicago, Ill.

“Here is my donation to the Deficit Fund. Your efforts to debunk religion and all other forms of graft are doing plenty of good and no harm. Keep it up, by all means.”—C. J. Kirk, La Belle, Fla.

Call William Randolph Hearst a demagogue and I’ll agree with you. Call him a journalistic quack and I’ll yell for you to say that again. But I’ll admit the scoundrel has a sense of humor. This thought came to me the other day while rereading Ambrose Bierce’s thumbnail sketch of the publisher. Bierce was on Hearst’s payroll for many years, during which he had his say without the boss’s interference. After resigning, he wrote a piece about his ex-employer, from which I want to lift a few sentences about a Hearst reporter who, when he had a disagreeable assignment, would disappear for a few days, then return and plead intoxication. Bierce then tells how the clever fellow got word to Hearst that he was absent from duty because he was full of gin. “An hour afterward,” says Bierce, “Mr. Hearst met him and, seeing that he was cold sober, reproved him for deceit. On the scamp’s assurance that he had honestly intended to be drunk, but lacked the price, Mr. Hearst gave him enough money to re-establish his character for veracity and passed on.” That, needless to say, was the Hearst of 30 years ago. Now, in his old age, he could restrain his eccentric humor should a similar case arise.

Eddie Cantor explains why a lot of men with plenty of money marry show girls—at least they see what they get and dress them up later.

D. Taylor’s “Own Cook Book” offers this receipt on “How to Make a Dizzy Blonde,” which I’ve quoted before but want to repeat for a reader who says he’s in need of the data: Take a fresh green flapper. First mash, then dress well. Later remove outside wrapping, roll gently in butter (cups), then place on ice chest to cool. Take out, melt slowly before an open grate-fire. When red-hot serve under cover. (Excellent dish for midnight supper.)

On April 27, 1940, I distributed the issue of The Freeman containing that little story about the British sailor, home on leave, answering the phone many times and saying each time, “I’m sorry, old chap, but you’ll have to call the admiralty.” and when his wife asks him who’s calling, he answers, “Oh, just some bloody boozier who wants to know if the coast is clear.” On May 24 the same gag appeared in Walter Winchell’s syndicated column. Mark you, the story wasn’t original with me. I merely picked it up while swapping small talk with a paper salesman, but it amuses me to be able to beat a wise guy like Winchell. Mark you, April 27 was the day I released the paper. The date I actually got the story was several weeks earlier.

Life Magazine got this joke about Hitler from a reader who says it’s popular in Brazil: Hitler went to the country and saw a beautiful ox. He asked the farmer what food he gave to the ox.
The farmer told what he did to keep the animal fat. Hitler threatened him with severe punishment if he continued to waste food on an ox. One month later a Nazi came and asked the farmer again about what food he gave to his ox. The farmer said he only gave him garbage. The Nazi was furious that valuable food was being wasted in the garbage. The next time a Nazi came for checking him the farmer played safe: “I don’t know what my ox eats. Every day I give him three reinmarks and he goes and eats where he pleases and what he pleases.”

Patient (waiting in hospital): “What’s the matter with you?” The other replied: “They’re gonna operate on my ear.” “Piles?” “I said EAR!”

With Rabelais I cry: “Now make ye merry, my hearties, and gaily read with ease of body and rest of reins, and may a cancer carry you off if you disown me after having read me.”

What does F-E-E-T spell?” asked the teacher of a backward pupil. The boy didn’t know. “What is it of which a cow has four and of which I have but two?” persisted the teacher. “Teats,” answered the boy.

Precious 3-year-old Wisteria, who kept a diary, asked her mother: “Where did I come from Mama?” “Er—the stork brought you, dear.” This wasn’t explicit enough. She pressed the matter further. “Where did you come from, then, Mama?” The cornered parent answered. “The stork brought me, too.” Wisteria sought out grandmother. “Mama said the stork brought me, and brought her too. Grandma. How about giving me the low-down? Where did you come from?” “The stork brought me too, darling.” Wisteria went to her room, got out her diary and wrote: “After careful consideration and exhaustive research. I have come to the conclusion that there hasn’t been any sex life in our family for the past three generations.”

An old lady, who was about to die, told her niece to bury her in her black dress, but to cut the back out and make herself a dress. “Oh, Aunt Mary,” said the niece, “I don’t want to do that. When you and Uncle Charlie walk up the golden stairs, I don’t want people to see you without any back in your dress.” To which the old lady replied: “That’s all right—they won’t be looking at me. I buried your Uncle Charlie without his pants.”

Some jokes are dull and others are duller, but the funniest jokes are a trifle off-color.

Scrap of conversation: “I’m going to a fancy-dress ball tonight in the garbage of a nun.”

A radio parson’s plug for the perfect world awaiting saved souls on the Other Side didn’t impress me, because I know the kind of people who are sure to go there. Look at the world they’ve built. If this one is such an unholy mess, why expect the other one to be any better? I prefer to believe we’re all going to H—I when we kick off, and even that place of the d—d may be an improvement on what we’re going through. I understand there are no dive bombers or 80-ton tanks in H—I. So why worry?

The more educated members of the clergy have tried, during several thousand years, to humanize and civilize religion, but with almost insignificant results, because the thing they’re working on is based on the implacable enemies of progress—ignorance, superstition, magic and blind faith. As learning, intelligence and understanding grew, disbelief and skepticism went forward.

That gigantic logician and neurological sexologist, Gracie Allen, says in her lecture on “The Proper Position of Eugenics in the Bedroom,” “You should come from a good family, because while breeding isn’t everything, it is said to be lots of fun.” . . . In another lecture—“The Meaning of Mass-Psychology”—Gracie disposes of some of Freud’s errors and concludes, “A nonentity can be just as famous as anyone else if enough people know about him.”

Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, leaving a Dorothy Lamour picture, commented: “After you take off her sarong what has she got?”

Slogan of Mack’s Tavern, Topeka, Kans.: “Be here to eat, drink and socialize.”

Plagiarism was once the subject of an article by Prof. Brander Matthews, critic and writer. In his discussion of this moot and difficult theme, he said that in the case of the first man to use an anecdote, there is originality. In the case of the second, there is plagiarism. With the third man, it’s lack of originality, and with the fourth it’s drawing from common stock. The situation changes in the case of the fifth man to use it—it becomes research. Of course, these five degrees don’t begin to cover the situation. Take, for example, the inverted plagiarism of radio comedians who take good off-color stories and “clean them up” so they may pierce the air without injury to the moral code or provoke lustful males.
to rape the nearest grandmother. Take, by way of illustration, my little nifty about the doctor who told a tide-torssoed patient that she had acute vaginitis, and her response, "Oh, thank you, doctor. I'm so glad you like it." I heard it come over the radio the other day, but the ailment was pyorrhoea. In cleaning up the joke the alleged comedian had cleaned out the humor, which is what happens too often among radio humorists. They work hard taking the "dirt" out of their jokes, so they'll pass the censors, but what's left isn't a joke. There has to be a certain amount of off-color in one's humor if it's to be human. This doesn't mean I'm defending dirty jokes that have no point except their use of rotten language. They're not worth considering. But there are many anecdotes which are entertaining and really funny because they are down-to-earth and warm with the juices of life. Here I'm reminded of the fellow who was bewailing the attitude of the world. I've been working in a bank for 25 years," he said, but yet no one calls me a banker. I've been playing golf for 23 years, but no one calls me a golfer. I've sung in the church choir for 20 years, but no one calls me a musician. But just because I had a fleeting affair with one boy every body calls me a fairy." The story has character, one of the essentials of a humorous yarn. But if you "clean it up" you kill it. And that, I repeat, explains why radio comedians are usually given to the dull puns and weak gags one sees by the thousands in volumes of collected jokes. Not one in a thousand is funny. Here plagiarism (which is considered the normal thing) takes what certain people consider "worldly" and launder them so that the essential and valuable colors are washed out. Others turn the trick the other way, taking an innocuous story and giving it a wicked twist. I've been guilty of this offense many times, and my defense is that the slant in the direction of off-color gives flavor to the anecdote.

Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, who is the self-appointed protector of the community's morals, accusing a workman of having reverted to strong drink because "with my own eyes I saw his wheelbarrow standing outside a saloon." The accused man made no verbal defense, but the same evening he placed his wheelbarrow outside her door and left it there all night.

The cowhand stood patiently while a tenderfoot in the barroom bravely held forth to the gang. "Young feller," drawled the cowhand, "if you're tryin' to say somethin' big, why don't you say elephant?"

A humorist sees life's bright and dark sides, but since fretting can't help any, he laughs.

Amazing discovery by the Soviet author, G. Olshansky, in one of his novels: "Beautiful, sunny weather can also be observed in capitalist countries."

Comrade Harry Gannes, the N.Y. Daily Worker's expert on foreign affairs, achieved something of a geographical triumph when, in one of his articles, he placed the Pyrenees in the Alps.

Mama, speaking of her child, said, "something stunned his growth."

The Hon. G. Albert Stewart, Pennsylvania secretary of Forests and Waters, said in The New York Post that the Governor of his State, Arthur H. James, should have had the Republican nomination instead of Mr. Wendell L. Willkie, because James is "a man whose simple virtues are demonstrated by the fact he wears long underwear and high-top shoes all the year round," which surely makes him "the man the White House needs in this crisis."

A. M. Paschall, Azle, Tex., sends the following, which is amusing even though it's pure as the breath of an angel: Two sparrows were flying over a fort while the gunners were having their target practice. The gunners were aiming at a target out at sea, but, naturally, the sparrows didn't know this. As a shell went whistling by within a few feet of the sparrows, one turned to the other and said: "Gosh, the army must be hard up for meat."

Many a woman has joined with one man in preference to another because she knew he'd take her to a better inner-spring mattress.

A London newspaper, the Sunday Express, in a June, 1940, issue, getting ready for Hitler's blitzkrieg, decided to throw out its department, "What the Stars Foretell," with the following announcement: "We are living in tense, grave days. The Sunday Express believes that the light, popular entertainment of normal times is out of place now. For that reason it has decided to discontinue the weekly article of astrological predictions." The explanation isn't quite candid. The department wasn't printed as "light entertainment"; it was offered as serious, sincere, reliable astrological predictions, and as such was accepted by readers who were too gullible to know they were swallowing bunk. The real reason that moved the editor was the fact that his astro-
logical expert was making himself ridiculous from hour to hour during a period when hardly a day passed without world-shattering events. Even bunkshooters think it wise to go in for a little discretion.

Sears Roebuck sent a silver-plated cornet to one of its customers, a farmhand, who returned it with the note: "A silver cornet won't do because my music is all marked for brass."

The Catholic Church has suffered gigantic losses in Europe. Poland, Southern Germany, Austria, Spain—in these places the Church's economic structure has been destroyed or weakened. I include Spain here because the Civil War caused heavy losses to the Church in real estate, bonds, mortgages, stock certificates, gold, precious stones, and the like. But Rome hasn't lost her head. She asks the U.S. to recoup her losses, mainly financial. Where would the Vatican be if the U.S. omitted its Peter's pence for a year or two? American wealth is meat to the Pope's ribs, but the strength he absorbs from our country isn't used to preserve democracy—it's made to work for Fascism, whenever political and economic totalitarianism can be made to work in harmony with the Church's financial, social and economic interests.

When George Bernard Shaw was writing musical criticisms under the name of Corno di Bassettotto (which, of course, was the name for the Italian bassett horn which eventually made way for the bass clarinet) he had to tell his readers why he missed a concert. He did it this way: "Ordinary critics find it almost impossible to be in two places at the same time. I find considerable difficulty in being in one." On another occasion, G. B. S. stopped to listen to a street musician, who, by the way, pleased the great critic. Shaw wrote: "The man played with great taste and pathos; but to my surprise, he had no knowledge of musical etiquette, for when, on holding his hat to me for a donation, I explained that I was a member of the press, he still seemed to expect me to pay for my entertainment, a shocking instance of popular ignorance."

O. M. Southworth, Venice, Calif., is one of my oldest readers, in fact, he was on the list here back in the days of the old Appeal to Reason, which was before my time. The other day he jotted the following words at the bottom of a letter to the business office: "Tell EHJ my hobby is still the same. What other men spend on cigarettes and booze I spend on reading matter, postage, etc. That's an excellent hobby, but I'm afraid it's a little too late for me to pass up my pipes and cigars, and let me be frank, an occasional snifter of good whisky, or, on a warm day, a bumper of beer.

I could stop the war in no time if my program could be carried out. Here it is: Broll plenty of 16-ounce porterhouse steaks and tell the Nazis they can have their fill if they'll get rid of Blitzem. Right here. Good steak can do more good than a carload of munitions. Why, just a good whiff of sizzling bacon could immobilize any regiment along the Westwall.

Psychologists are having plenty of fun these days quoting from an article by a well-known German psychologist. It appeared in the October, 1933, issue of "Psychological Abstracts." The author, E. R. Jaensch, said, in an article entitled, "The Poultry-yard as a Medium of Research and Clarification in Problems of Human Race Differences": "The superiority of Nordic races is reflected in race differences among chickens. The Nordic chick is better behaved and more efficient in feeding than the Mediterranean chick, and less apt to overeat by suggestion. These differences parallel certain typological differences among humans. The Nordic is an inwardly integrated type, the Mediterranean an outwardly integrated type. The poultry-yard confutes the liberal-Bolshevik claim that race differences are really cultural differences, because race difference among chicks cannot be accounted for by culture." Hereafter, when I'm to have chicken, I'll make clear to the cook to use only pure, inwardly integrated Nordics. I can't afford to take any chances with hillbilly, Gulf of Mexico or Mediterranean pullets. When I reach for the part that went over the fence last I want it to be devoid of any taint of non-Nordicism. One can't be too careful about such things. A gizzard may be just a gizzard to you, but in Hitlerland it presents scientific problems that command international attention—and snickers.

My dear, old friend, C. A. Lang, of Maplewood, Mo., says my story about the young priest hearing confessions under the guidance of an older one reminds him of another: This young priest was listening to the recounting of a buxom young widow's indiscretions and was making what he considered suitable rejoinders. Later he asked his mentor, "How did I do?" The old priest replied: "Very good, my lad, but there's one thing you're going to have to change: instead of that low whistle, occasionally, you're going to have to learn to say, "Tsk! Tsk! Tsk!" And here's another, said to come from a St.
Louis parish: An Irish servant-girl, in confession, was leading up to her "sin" with vague hints. The aged priest, to help her, suggested, "Come, my child, speak out. Was it...?" "Yes, Father... it was." "Now now, sure and tell me... was it done against your will?" "No, Father; sure it wasn't. It was done against the kitchen cabinet—and it would have done your old hear-r-r-t good to have heard the dishes rattle!"

Rob Wagner repeats Oliver Herford's story (with full credit, of course) of the professor of mathematicians who noted that the legs of the giraffe were longer than its neck, but that by letting the angle ABC equal the angle ABD—in other words, by spreading his legs apart—he could reach the water with his mouth. The giraffe kicked the professor and his slate to Hellangone, saying, "Why, you damn fool, I've known that all my life."

Molière, in his magnificent comedy, "The Bourgeois Gentleman," has one of his funniest characters express amazement over the fact that he'd been talking prose for many years without knowing it. Many of us repeat famous lines and gags without knowing their source. For example, Mark Twain, when the press carried a fake story about his death, wired back, "Reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." The other day an old resident of a little town was reported dead. Many neighbors called, only to find the old fellow well and cheerful. When told of the report, he smiled knowingly and said: "I knew it wasn't true as soon as I heard it."

An old maid on a train found herself sharing a Pullman section with a man who, like a perfect gentleman, allowed the elderly spinster to have the lower bunk. To the woman's anger, however, no sooner had they settled down for the night than from the top bunk came resounding snores. Unable to stand the strain, she picked up a shoe and rapped smartly on the side of the upper bunk. The snoring continued. She rapped again. More snores. She rapped still harder. The snores ceased abruptly. A tousled head appeared over the side of the top bunk. Said the voice, "All right! I heard you the first time—but I'm not comin' down."

Italians are saying: "If we had half as much to eat as we have to swallow, we would lead a marvelous life."

Too often writers use the sign "etc." to give others the impression they know more than they do.

Maxie Rosenbloom, who runs "Slapsy Maxie's," a hole-in-the-wall night-club in Hollywood, once posted a 15¢ cover charge to "keep out the riff-raff."

C. A. Lang, of Maplewood, Mo., who hauls mail for the postoffice and writes informally and understandably on scores of topics, is my idea of an all-around Man of Letters.

A Hutchinson, Kans., women's club, anxious to help the Republican cause, suggests the following slogan: "Women—Wake up with Willkie."

An Englishman, who writes under the name of Protonius, says he saw on a wagon loaded with rusty iron, the legend: "Send your scrap to Church."
The church, after accepting scrapped ideas for centuries is venturing into new fields.

Whenever Clarence Darrow first comes into my mind (which is often) I don't picture a great lawyer, a fine speaker, or a brilliant Agnostic. He's just one of my authors, for I always feel proud whenever I think of how generous he was in letting me have so many of his lectures and essays. These volumes, after all, picture every aspect of his life, his character, his philosophy, his humor, his iconoclasm, his humanitarianism, and his career. All this is by way of preface to an anecdote about Darrow. As he said in his autobiography, he didn't take pleasure in his early schools. "But there was one thing I did enjoy," he declared. "What was that?" asked a friend. "The whippings I got—because they gave me such standing and prestige with the kids!"

Six men died on the same day. One was an author. He left $5. The second was a printer. He left $25. The third was a bookseller. He left $50. The fourth was a publisher. He left $500. The fifth was a waste-paper merchant. He left $50,000. The sixth was a seller of printing papers. He left $500,000. This is what you call a success story.

The lovey-dovey newlyweds, leaving immediately after the ceremony for their honeymoon, took a stateroom in the Pullman. Before retiring, the young hubby slipped a dollar to the colored porter and told him to be sure not to tell anyone he and his bride had just been married. However, the next morning, in the diner, the newlyweds found themselves the target of all eyes and the butt of many smirking remarks. Sorely embarrassed, hubby hunted up the porter and complained: "I thought I told you not to tell anyone we were just married." The porter, anxious to please, replied: "I never mentioned to no one that you all was married. I was careful to say you and the girl were just good friends and what you done was nobody's business but your own."
Questions and Answers

Salesgirl (after date has kissed her good-night): "Will that be all?"

One of the first things I learned in business is that all the world loves a bargain. This doesn't mean that because a fellow wants a bargain it follows he's as tight as cheese. I know of many readers who go to great pains to pick out my best bargain offers and then add an extra buck, five spot or more for the deficit fund. For no reason in the world my memory brings forth a little story that was popular among the boys when I was a kid. It deals with a guy who wanted an acquaintance to recommend an orderly, well-run cat-house.

"That one on the corner charges $2 for the first visit, but after that the price is only $1," the man was told. He hurried down to the place, rang the bell, and, when the door was opened, exclaimed: "Well, well, here I am back again!"

A woman stepped into a bank to get $20 changed. The clerk looked at the money carefully and said: "Madam, I'm sorry, but this note is a counterfeit." The woman gasped: "My God! I've been raped!"

Frank Harris often amused me by drawing himself up to his full five feet four and booming: "All women are whores!" Hell, he meant it, literally.

Speaking of Harris's reminds me of how he closed the second volume of his autobiography. He picked up a piece of "poetry" which he felt impelled to immortalize. It went this way: "If the skirts get any shorter, said the flapper with a sob, I'll have two more cheeks to powder and a lot more hair to bob." He asked: "Is there not a laugh in it? And a good laugh is something in this old world," he continued. "The soul of living to me has always been love of women and admiration of great men."

Many years ago I was amused by an anecdote told by a desk clerk who worked in a hotel that was popular with couples bent on love. Once, as a couple came forward, the woman tripped on the rug. "Oh, darling, did you hurt yourself?" the lover asked. The next morning, as they were leaving, she tripped over the same rug, and the man barked: "Why the hell don't you watch your step? Do you want to break your damned neck?"

Sir Henry Hawkins, the famous "hanging" judge, so-called, had married his cook in later life, and she used English like a common cockney woman and soon became, in London, the notorious Mrs. Malaprop of the last decade of the 19th Century. Sir Henry Hawkins loved beautiful oriental carpets and had got a splendid one for his sitting room. At a reception once a young lord complimented Lady Hawkins on the splendid carpet. "You don't know how many men have copulated me upon that carpet," the lady is said to have replied.

An English lord and his butler, who was always his gun-bearer, were on safari in Africa. Back in London, they found the lord's wife cheating on him and the butler was told to watch. When the lord came home one night he found the butler waiting for him, gun in hand. "'Es up there now with the mistress," said the butler, leading the way upstairs to the bedroom. The door was ajar, the butler cautiously peeked the gun in, aimed it, then put it in his master's hands and whispered, "Get 'im on the rise, sir."

Scrap of conversation: "Oh, dear me, after the third drink I always feel so givinny."

The Catholic Church doesn't tolerate democracy in its own organization, so it shouldn't be cause for surprise when it caters to totalitarianism in realms outside the Church. It's anti-democratic and authoritarian within; it's the same on the outside.

My favorite saloonist, Dr. "Knobby" Carlisle, of Joplin, Mo., tells some of his customers a story about Charlie McCarthy. He produces a bung-hole from a beer-barrel and asks the patron to smell it. "Is there anything peculiar about it?" he asks. "No," the customer answers, "what's the point?" Answers "Knobby": "You have just smelled an intimate part of the anatomy of the great Charlie McCarthy."

Years ago a reader asked me to finish a poem which began: "Some come here to sit and think." I couldn't deliver. Can some reader help me out? For once my world-famous newsclip filing system failed me. The Ethereal Esquire knows I'm doing my best to serve the public.

To this protean scribbler—ever ready to face-the-fax-of-life—it's clear that when a man says he's absolutely devoid of prejudices he's just telling us in another way that intellectual rigor mortis has already set in. The first hint of this misery is found in the fact that the smell of his ideas suggests that little things had crept into his head and died.

Scrap of conversation: "When she made her way to the altar she muttered to herself: 'It won't be wrong now.'"

This anathematician and One-Man-Supreme-Court-of-Literature doesn't believe that Ben Hecht once sued his city editor for changing the lead of one of his stories. If I could, then I could endorse the words of Lew Lehr, the newsreel comedian, that
With a wet butt and hungry gut
Smelling of strong drink and the truth
is not in him.


Scrap of conversation: “Their wed-
ing was a public announcement of
a private intention.”

A radio announcer said it, but I don’t believe it: “One taste of this bread is as thrilling as your first romance.”

The tall blonde was beating it along
at 70 m.p.h. A speed cop took after her.
She glimpsed him in her mirror and
stepped on it, leaving him behind in a
cloud of dust. At the next service
station, she pulled up sharply and beat it
into the Ladies’ Rest Room. But the cop
was waiting for her when she emerged.
“Ha, ha,” laughed the girl. “You thought
I wouldn’t make it, didn’tja?”

I nominate Henry Ford for the “hon-
or” of Fuehrer of the BENEDICT AR-
NOLD SOCIETY TO ABOLISH REMAIN-
ING DEMOCRACIES. (To get the real
idea of this title abbreviate it by using
the first letter of each word.)

Bob Burns says some of his folks
“live so far back in the mountains that
they ain’t even seen Mrs. Roosevelt yet.”

Boycott Ford cars. The reason? Old
Henry is Nazi-minded.

The gallant captain was showing
Maud over the ship. “This,” he said, “is
the quarterdeck.” “Listen, big boy,” re-
joined the gal, “if you can’t put me or
the $2 deck I won’t go to work.”

Remarkable remark (by Mickey Roone-
y, in “Strike Up the Band”): “George
Gershwin is better than Bach or Beeth-
on—and besides he’s an American.”

When I was a kid in Philadelphia, it
was considered naughty to sing a wick-
ed jingle that started off with: “Not
by a dam site will I live with you.” I
don’t recall the other lines, but I still
can see the expressions of brazenness as
the outrageous words were uttered.
Maybe, for the sake of the record, some
reader will send me the complete pome.

It’s been hinted that the quickest way
to make friends and pleasant casual
acquaintances is to go walking with a
dachshund.

From a radio commercial: “The elimina-
tion of faulty elimination is our first
line of defense.”

The great Chinese philosopher, Dr.
Who Flung Dung, in a letter to Prof.
Wang Hung Lo, wrote: “Kissing one’s
own husband or wife is like scratching
a place that doesn’t itch.”

When near a bar I can take it or leave
it—but usually I prefer to take it.

Samuel Johnson’s remark that “pat-
riotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel' didn't go far enough, n the opinion of Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes. The old doctor surely overlooked Puritanism.

Father Coughlin's mind is as crooked as a barrel of snakes.

W. G. Clugston, Topeka newspaperman, says Senator Arthur Capper, of Kansas, "keeps his ear so close to the grass roots the grasshoppers nibble it."

"The check of that man. He stared at me as if he wanted to ask whether I was on the make." "And what did you do?" "I glared right back at him as much as to say what if I was."

What difference does it make if the worm turns? It's the same on both ends.

Lodge meeting had to be postponed last Tuesday because the Grand All-Powerful Incrincible Most Supreme Unconquerable Potentate got beat up by his wife.

To be a good Hula Hula dancer all you have to do is stand around and twiddle your tum.

A century-old inscription in a Nantucket graveyard:
Here lies Nancy Pease.
She shelled her pod
And went to God.

Whenever I read about Ralph Waldo Emerson's progressiveness as a thinker I'm reminded of an incident which I tell with amiable malice, being as ever a cheerful pessimist. I can do this because I don't live in Emerson's ivory tower, preferring to keep my place of vantage in a democratic Chic Sale out-house. In short, I prefer to comment on the extraneities that others overlook. However, my mood is always one of scholarly dissent rather than epithet-studded denominational. Well, it's time to get to the little incident: The great Emerson forbade Frederika Breme to play the piano in his home because it would break the Sabbath. It sounds funny in these days of ramp-bouncing jitterbugs, hot sax-monsters, and other prisoners of swingmania. With and that I bring my undige-like requiem to a close, except to mention that I've just been told about a marriage ship in a nearby town whose job it was to sell a bereaved family a suit of clothes for daddy who'd just gone to join the angels and he sold the family on a suit for the corpse with two pairs of pants.

B. L. Taylor, Naval Dental School, Washington, D. C.: "The more I read the Freeman the more enthusiastic I become. The paper must not die. It must be publicized and read by every sane person in America."

Bill Nye: "I would not strike a woman, especially when I had not been married to her and had no right to do so."

An old Negro, father of 16, was being lectured by the welfare worker for having too many children. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she said. "Bringing all these children into the world, when you have no earthly means of support." "I am ashamed," he replied. "And if it ever happens again, I 'se gwine to hang myself." But it wasn't long until little It was at his house, "Well, Mose," said the welfare worker, "what have you got to say for yourself? Shame on you! I thought you told me you would hang yourself if this happened again." "Deed I did, missis," said the old man. "An' I done took a big rope and put it round my neck and threw it over a limb. Then, would y'all believe it, just as I was 'bout to jump off that stump I said to myself: 'Mose, y'all better be careful here. You might be hangin' a innocent man.'"

Back in old Philadelphia, 30 years ago, I used to hear the young swells turn out this pet punch-line: "Marriage is a great institution, but who wants to live in an institution?"

Arthur Vickery's cute observation: "Elephants walk as though their pants are falling down."

The papers say a man who hadn't kissed his wife in five years shot a man who did.

When the millionaire husband died his will showed that the young widow was to be provided with plenty of gravy until she remarried, when the cash would suffer a sharp decline. When it came to ordering her husband's tombstone, she hit on an epitaph that expressed her feeling perfectly: "MY SORROW IS MORE THAN I CAN BEAR." Later, she took a lover, but didn't marry him for obvious reasons. Thinking of the inscription, she called up the man with the chisel and told him to add the word "ALONE" at the end.

Delivery boy in cleaning establishment: "I get paid for picking up women's dresses."

You can't fight anti-Semitism with facts, figures and logic. An anti-Semitic prejudice and bigotry aren't based on reason. They're the consequences of emotional orgies. The famous Blitz Brothers, Adolph and Benito, have taught millions to "think with their blood instead of their brains."

An intelligent woman told us the news that her husband had been sent to an insane asylum this way: "Jim has escaped from reality."

A little Eskimo with a frozen finger has been described as a frigid midget with a rigid digit.

A. M. Paschall, Azle, Tex.: "So far Musolini's navy has come out with fleeing colors."
In his show, "It Happens on Ice," Joe Cook appeared in one scene wearing a lion-tamer's coat that's illuminated with neon tubing.

An old-fashioned American—who is ultra-conservative in politics but believes passionately in the Bill of Rights—accepted a case involving some Communists who were to be tried for things they'd said from a platform. Their attorney took the position that this was a free-speech case and should be fought on the issue of Americanism. When he entered the courtroom, another conservative lawyer greeted him with this remark. "So you've become a Communist!" The defender of free speech struck back with this stinging sentence: "I've defended murderers in this courtroom for 20 years, and you never called me a murderer."

President Coolidge once was asked by a congressman to give him one of his cigar bands as a souvenir to show constituents. Coolidge carefully gave the congressman a cigar band—and kept the cigar!

A fellow applied for the job of tower switchman in a railroad yard. The inspector took him to the tower to quiz him. "If a train down there was coming this way, what would you do?" The applicant showed the levers he would pull. In fact, he correctly showed the levers he would pull in every possible emergency. Finally the inspector said, "Well, if trains were coming from four directions, and you, finding the levers jammed, went below to work the emergency levers and, smashing the little box, you found the key missing, what would you do then?" "I'd phone my sister," smiled the applicant. "For God's sake, what are you talking about?" exclaimed the inspector. The applicant replied, "I'm talking about phoning my sister, for whom I have a great regard. And I'd tell her to hurry right down to the switch yard if she wanted to see the goddamnest train wreck in the history of railroading."

From the London Times: "His face was a striking one, and even without his clothes people would have turned to look at him."

From the East Coast Shipping Record: "Alice Longhorn has been engaged as stewardess and social hostess aboard the S. S. Alexandria. Before leaving port she will have her barnacles scraped."

Ad in the Belen (N. M.) News: "Wanted—a sales girl; must be respectable till after Christmas."

From the Willard (Ohio) Times: "George Throttlebottom had charge of the entertainment during the past year. His birth-provoking antics were always the life of the party, especially among the ladies, and he will be greatly missed."

From the Painter (Oklahoma) Recorder: "The victim said that when he left the cafe with his two pretty companions he had $60 on him. But after being hit on the head he says he woke up without a dime."

The following quotation is from the writings of Lord Snell, well-known Rationalist and Socialist: "The decisive defeat in life is not to remain poor, but to become broken in spirit, to suffer an invasion of the sacred citadel of the will."

Celibate: One who can always be content with another man's wife.

The first characteristic of a bigot—brutality.

Marseilles is suffering such a shortage of oil that the Bishop (not Beerbelch) has authorized the use of electricity in lighting the Churches of Gawd. Here, it seems to my coarse mind, is a chance for the Ethereal Esquire to pass a miracle and thereby do honor and glory to his own name. I suggest (and here I speak reverently) that some noble character be filled with such holiness that the needs of the Church will be provided for whenever he or she (Bishop Beerbelch or even Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt) felt the urge to void the bladder. It might be a crude way of getting crude (disgraceful pun) but think what it would do for the promotion of the Lord Gawd's sacred establishment. Produced that way (without resorting to wells and pipe-lines) every last drop could be made to light the way to everlasting glory.

Mr. Herbert Coleman Casanova was a swift and sure salesman for the Ajax Crackerjack Cantilever Bridge Corporation, the slogan of which is, "Your Daughter Is Safe on an Ajax Crackerjack Cantilever Bridge." When not selling bridges Mr. H. C. C. acted as a fugitive from chastity. Next to selling an Ajax Crackerjack Cantilever Bridge came the pleasant job of paying tender attention to any attractive and willing woman. Once, while admiring one of his company's finest bridges, this big-dame hunter got acquainted with a beautiful gal, who agreed to spend the weekend in the neighboring city of Tulsa, Oklahoma, a community being considered safe because of her assurance that her husband would be in Oklahoma City that weekend selling fertilizers for the great Armour Company. So Mr. H. C. C. and his catch spent the weekend as planned, after which she hurried home and he went on to Oklahoma City, where he was visited by the lady's husband, who was plenty mad. "Listen," cried the
Questions and Answers

...ing head-em-off-at-the-pass mellerdrum-on his latest opus: "After she lands in jail they kidnap the baby and kill her h u s b a n d—and THEN—disaster strikes."

Classified ad in The Barre (Vt.) Times: "Wanted—Capable housekeeper, one who can cook and go home nights."

Mrs. Priscilla Prissy-Pratt, when asked about modern versions of the Bible, said with air of finality: "If the King James Version was good enough for St. Paul, it's good enough for me!"

The Nazis denied any ship had gone down in the Atlantic, so 38 children couldn't have been drowned. Besides, if such a ship existed and went down, it was done by Churchill in order to win American support. Finally, if the ship really was torpedoed it must have been a British mine. All this reminds me of the fellow who borrowed an expensive bed-pan. He returned it broken, and then he took to be his damages. The borrower made the following three defenses: 1. I never borrowed that bed-pan. 2. It was broken when I got it. 3. I returned it in perfect condition.

Father Coughlin is allergic to the truth.

George S. Kaufman went in for his own Gallup Poll asking this question: "What do you think of sex?" The result: 90 percent were "for it"; 5 percent "didn't know"; 4 percent were "agin it"; and 1 percent said "what this country needs is a Mussolini."

A student flyer showed up at the airport to make his first flight. He wore everything a young aviator should wear—from goggles to fleece-lined boots. Arriving near the training ship he met another aviator similarly clad, who then took to be his instructor. "Ready?" he asked. "Aye, ready," said the other. They climbed in and went off. At 5,000 feet the novice yelled through his telephone: "Well, what do we do now?" A startled shriek came from the forward cockpit followed by these questions: "How the hell should I know? You're the instructor, aren't you?"

A Michigan reader, who signs herself Schoolmarm, lets loose with this: "A long list of my women friends eat up those little stories, and they go the rounds. Many of them are Schoolmarm-like myself, so don't be discouraged about the women's viewpoint." On the other hand, Dr. Henry M. Schaeffer, a Chicago dentist, strikes out for the greater spiritual realities, this way: "I entirely agree that you should leave out the back-alley stuff. It's nauseating. It's the most important reason why I don't pass on your paper."

husband, "you didn't get away with anything. I had that cabin wired for pictures, and I got plenty." Here he opened his brief-case and drew out a batch of shots. "Look at this one," cried the husband. "It shows you and my wife sitting near the window. Look at this next one. It shows you and my wife on the sofa. And look at this third one. It shows you and my wife on the bed." Handing over the pictures for closer inspection, the h u s b a n d screamed: "What are you going to do about all this?" The sinner picked up the pictures, looked at them carefully, pursed his lips, studied a few moments, and then replied: "I can use only three of the one near the window, six of the one on the sofa, but a dozen of the bed scene."

The Ritz Brothers (not related to the Blitz Brothers, Adolf and Benito) operate on the theory that if you can't be funny you can at least be noisy.

Leon Trotsky had a talent for witty, brief, curt characterizations. Take, for example, his description of one of my admirations, Morris Hillquit, as "the ideal Socialist leader for successful dentists." In another place he describes a public meeting at which Lenin had to endure wordy praise, and comments: "Lenin endured the flood of eulogistic speeches like an impatient pedestrian waiting in the doorway for the rain to stop." Trotsky was especially brilliant when in a hot debate, Bernard Shaw, who studied Trotsky's personality, artistry and style, put Trotsky above Karl Marx as a polemist, thus: "In everything but length of wind the pupil surpasses the master. . . . Trotsky has a much better temper. Marx hit where he could and often hit spitefully; Trotsky does not hit below the belt." In another paragraph he describes Trotsky's controversial style. Dwight Macdonald, from whom I got the above quotations, suggests "there is more of Voltaire about him than of Jeremiah."

Sign on a revival tent: "Peace, Light, Joy; Every Night Excepting Monday."

John was taking Melissa on probably their thousandth long and silent-buggy ride. After an hour's dreary jogging Melissa said, "John, what d'ya say if we get married?" "Don't care if we do," from John. After another hour they turned into the long lane leading to Melissa's home. "John," said Melissa, "you hadn't had much to say tonight." "Nope," said John, "done said too much already."

Newsworthy event, worth a place in my newscap filing system: A piece about John Barrymore, in which the writer failed to call him either Caliban or The Great Profile.

The gee-whiz author of a spine-chill-
We all look up to our great architects and engineers, but isn't it a fact that on a smaller scale the same talents are possessed by ants, wasps, beavers, birds and many other animals?

The observation at first sight seems plausible, but deeper study shows that the analogy isn't valid. Science has learned that man's behavior is unlike anything else and, as Karl Marx wrote, "is not to be encountered except among men." Let me quote a few informative and valuable sentences from Marx's "Das Kapital":

"A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labor-process we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the laborer at its commencement. He not only affects the change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will."

The point to remember in this discussion is that, unlike the animals who do wonderful things, man is not a slave of his environment, while the animals are captives of circumstances. Man, through reason, imagination and knowledge—with science as his tool—is the master, not the slave, of his environment. He not only can build a new world but he can picture that world before he begins the labor of constructing it. Your bee is an instinctive toiler, while man is an imaginative creator. The fact that man doesn't make greater use of his imaginative powers is beside the point. The fact remains that he has capabilities that rest on reason, knowledge and imagination. And when he decides to use them to their fullest powers, his environment will be made over on the basis of peace, plenty, happiness, security and progress. Too often man acts the part of an ass, but he has natural gifts that make it unnecessary for him always to play the ass.

+ + +

Can you explain why the word "its" is not to be found anywhere in the Bible?

When the King James version was produced more than three centuries ago the word "its" was considered vulgar, slangy and unworthy of acceptance by people of refined taste. That's why the 11th verse of Genesis speaks of "The fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind," instead of "after its kind." Grammarians of that time insisted on eliminating it from proper literature, though Shakespeare, ever the rebel in language forms, defied conventions by using it three times. In time, "its" won out because it is a useful word and belonged in our language. We couldn't get along without it now. All this brings to mind a silly little joke (which has nothing whatever to do with the subject under discussion) to the effect that a teacher, who asked little Willie to tell what the two genders are, was told: "Masculine and feminine. The feminine are divided into frigid and torrid, the masculine into temperate and intemperate."

+ + +

Isn't it a fact that our Fundamentalists, who believe literally in the Bible, commit a sin when they fail to pare their nails according to the ideas of the Old Testament?

Yes, and it's very shocking indeed. Whenever I see a good believer clip off his nails any which way—and, actually let the parings fall on the floor—I recoil in horror. There's only one correct way of getting the job done, and that's to start the Sabbath with this trimming, "beginning at the fourth finger, then going to the second, then to the fifth, then to the third, and ending with the thumb." The parings must NOT be thrown on the ground. That's sinful, because Satan always picks up the pieces and uses them to make trouble. I'm always glad to help set my pious readers right. It's one of the numerous services I render to the greater glory of Jehovah.

+ + +

How is glass colored?

Color is introduced when the sand is in its molten state. The whole thing is a triumph of chemistry. If blue glass is wanted, cobalt oxide is introduced. Yellow glass results when silver is used. Green glass is made by ferrous iron. Red glass gets its color from gold or copper. Selenium makes glass orange-colored.
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