QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

E. Haldeman-Julius

HALDEMAN-JULIUS PUBLICATIONS
GIRARD :: KANSAS
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Printed in the United States of America
Father Coughlin—Rasputin of American Democracy

I agree that Father Coughlin's menace to American democracy is so real that you can give even more space to this growing Fascist. I recall how you fought the K.K.K. tooth and nail about 10 years ago. But you're up against a stiffer proposition now. Why is there so little criticism of Coughlinism?

The newspapers are saying little about Father Coughlin, because they are afraid of the powerful Catholic Church that is standing behind the radio priest. Coughlin could perhaps ruin any newspaper that dared fight him sincerely and vigorously. With his growing National Union for Social Justice ("for Fascism" would be more accurate), Coughlin is aching for a chance to turn loose his immense mobs, who, of course, are answerable only to the Big Shot himself, Coughlin. The politicians are also afraid to open their mouths and denounce his Fascism, though Hugh S. Johnson did make something of a beginning, however inadequate. "Crack Down" Johnson is only one step from Fascism himself, so anything he might say against Coughlin couldn't give much comfort to those millions who still believe in freedom and democracy. The Church (with only two or three exceptions) says nothing, while the Catholic hierarchy sees in Coughlin an entering wedge to split the republic and destroy the splendid institutions that took generations to erect—-institutions like free speech, free press, free inquiry, etc., for which countless martyrs gave their life's blood.

Those who are against Coughlin's Fascism are bewildered. The storm is coming up so fast, there's hardly time to enter an effective protest. But I believe there will be an awakening—soon. And when it comes, the people who don't want to see the Constitution destroyed by a Catholic Fascist and anti-Semite will make themselves heard. As clever as Coughlin and his Church are, I still believe the American people will find a way to voice their real objections to the menace of Coughlinism, and when they do they will speak in plain words and, if necessary, back up their words with deeds.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church has never hesitated about resorting to violence in order to achieve its ends, so it is quite within the realm of the possible for Coughlin's Union to be turned loose for a desperate march on Washington (thereby emulating Mussolini's march on Rome and Hitler's burning of the Reichstag) and making a swift, decisive attempt to capture the government by force or the threat of force. Should Coughlin and the Catholic Church resort to such violence, the Fascists will find that they have provoked civil war, and there are millions of real Americans of all religions and no religion who stand ready to resist such a move.

Remember, Fascism works rapidly, secretly, and in the dark. It achieves its aims with ruthless, merciless, strong, swift blows. A Fascist does not stop to argue, when he sees a chance to reach his goal by force. Coughlin aims to be dictator of the United States, regardless of who tries to stop him, and when he feels strong enough he will strike with all his might. The Constitution? He will consider it a scrap of paper, as did Hitler when he went about the murderous deed of destroying the German Constitution and Republic, the most enlightened political form in all Europe.

Coughlin is young, vigorous, shrewd and adroit. He aches for the
show-down, if the higher-ups in the Catholic Church and Wall Street give him the word to go ahead. The fact that he was born in Canada will mean no more to Coughlin than the fact that Hitler was born in Austria deterred him from the gruesome murder of German civilization and culture. There's a bigger prize to be won when Fascism triumphs in the U. S. There's wealth—limitless wealth. Influence, power—greater than in any other part of the world. There's revenge on republicanism and democracy—two pet hates of the papal forces.

Capitalism and Catholicism will use Coughlin if they feel his Fascism is necessary to preserve their right to economic power. The triumph of Coughlinism will mean unlimited power for the economic masters of Wall Street and unlimited power for the theocrats of Catholicism in the realm of thought, freedom, and culture.

* * *

Please give more facts with regard to Father Coughlin building his church with non-union labor.

Coughlin's $1,000,000 church was begun in 1933, using non-union labor and paying from 30 to 40 per cent under the union scale. A committee of officials from the American Federation of Labor called at his church to discuss the matter, but Coughlin coldly refused to see the men. After this rebuff, the union officials took their grievance to the A. F. of L. national convention, in San Francisco, in 1934, where a resolution condemning Coughlin's anti-union policy was passed unanimously after being introduced by the International Typographical Union. The printers were glad to come to the aid of the building trades because they also had a serious complaint against Coughlin, the radio priest who poses as the friend of the downtrodden. As I've stated before, Coughlin does all his large printing jobs in scab shops. At one of Coughlin's Tuesday evening forum meetings, during November, 1934, Coughlin was asked to explain why he refuses to have his printing done in decently run union shops, where conditions, pay and working hours are invariably better than will be found in open shops. Coughlin replied that there are about 40,000-000 workingmen and women in this country, of whom only about 6,000-000 are organized in unions, and it seemed only fair to him (Coughlin) to give his business to the unorganized workers, since they are in the vast majority! Of all the jesuitical arguments that ever came from this word-spinner, this excuse caps everything. If Coughlin really wanted to help labor he would give his contracts to unions, thereby strengthening unionism and making it possible, to that extent, for the unorganized millions to advance a step towards better conditions. Later, Coughlin, realizing that his explanation was too childish even for his average audience of unthinking listeners, added that he gives one-third of his printing contracts to union shops and two-thirds to non-unionists. This was supposed to serve as proof of his fairness, but first comes the fact that he was lying, because the typographical union, which knows where each piece of his printing is done, persists in the claim that he gives all his work to scab shops. Furthermore, even if he were telling the truth, which he isn't, the argument would be weak because his giving the major portion of his heavy printing contracts to non-union shops results in holding down the union shops, both from the viewpoint of the workers who need the work and from the employers who are signed up as fair shops and are then compelled to compete with shops run by anti-union employers who use sweatshop methods, low pay, long workdays and other unfair conditions.

Where does Father Coughlin get the material for his numerous speeches?

It seems now that he reads them from prepared manuscripts, supplied free of charge by a group of Wall Street semi-fascists, or he steals what he thinks he needs. The good father (of what?) was charged, on March 7, 1935, with plagiarism, and what counts is that the charge held fast, for on the
same day Coughlin admitted his guilt and offered to make amends to the publishing company whose copyright he infringed.

The facts, boiled down, are as follows: On March 3, 1935, Coughlin delivered a radio speech that, according to a telegraphed complaint from the well-known New York publishers, Harcourt, Brace and Co., was lifted, without credit, from a recent book, copyrighted by this company, entitled "The Economic Consequences of the New Deal." It was alleged that more than half of Coughlin's "great" speech was stolen from the book, written by a journalist, Benjamin Stolberg, and the director of the American Association for Social Security, Warren Jay Vinton. Space does not permit more than a brief look at the deadly comparisons.

In "his" speech, Father Coughlin said:

"In 1776 Washington was faced with a clear-cut issue. He closed his mind definitely to one side of the question... In 1861 Abraham Lincoln was confronted with the making of an irreconcilable choice." Page 3 of the plagiarized book contains:

"In 1776 the leaders of the American people faced a paramount issue... So they closed their minds to one side of the question... In 1861 Lincoln faced a more complex but an equally irreconcilable conflict." Father Coughlin said:

"The administration continued the Hoover policy of lending public cash to private banks and when banks ran short of collateral the new administration out-Hoovered Hoover in furnishing them with additional 850 million dollars through the purchase of these banks' preferred stock and capital notes."

The infringed book, on page 28, says:

"The administration continued as a matter of course the Hoover policy of lending public cash to private banks. And when banks ran short of acceptable collateral, it out-Hoovered Hoover in furnishing them with further 850 million dollars through the purchase of their preferred stocks and capital notes."

The publishers claim the above "are drawn from a score of parallel passages, many of which are longer and even more faithful transcriptions, especially those dealing with statistical material put together by Stolberg and Vinton."

Father Coughlin was therefore guilty of violating Section 28 of the Federal Copyright Law, from which I quote:

Any person who willfully and for profit shall infringe any copyright secured by this Act, or who shall knowingly and willfully aid or abet such infringement, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by imprisonment for not exceeding one year, or by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars, or both, in the discretion of the court.

Caught with the goods and threatened with the above penalties, Father Coughlin (whose religion is always the mainstay of morality) gave "complete satisfaction to the publishers," which, of course, means some form of damages, and agreed to have the printed version of the speech contain notices of credit to the real creators of his material, the authors of the stolen book, and the publishers who controlled the literary property which Father Coughlin had filched.

* * *

Has Father Coughlin ever proposed discrimination against the Jews.

According to a Detroit despatch from Samuel Romer to the Federated Press, Coughlin, in a speech at Royal Oak, said:

"We cannot compromise our Christianity. The Jews can come here; but do not overwork democracy. Our representatives to Congress and to national office must be Christians."

That reveals Coughlin's Fascism and anti-Semitism anew. He says democracy should not be overworked, which is merely another way
of saying democracy should be thrown overboard for Fascism. The Constitution clearly says there is to be no religious test, but Fascist Dictator Coughlin says otherwise. Fascist Coughlin would begin "modestly" with a boycott of the Jews in the national government, and later, of course, spread out to the states, counties, cities and townships. Hitlerism began that way and in several other ways similar to Coughlin's present policies.

Father Coughlin imitates Hitler in another respect—that of a nationalistic appeal. Since Coughlin is Canadian born, it follows that, to be consistent, he should apply his nationalistic tirades to Canada, but, no, it is intended for the U. S. But then, Hitler did the same thing, having been born in Austria, but telling Germany how to be more nationalistic. These dictators are of a feather.

Why did Father Coughlin, in his nation-wide hook-up, go to such pains to let the country know that Baruch's middle name is Manasseh?

It was a part of his anti-Semitism, and was, of course, based on a lie. Bernard Baruch's middle name is Mannes, but as this didn't sound Jewish enough Fascist Coughlin deliberately changed it to Manasseh for his purposes of race prejudice and persecution. It is of such stuff that Hitlers are made.

Is Father Coughlin continuing his anti-Semitism?

His radio speech of March 11, 1935, contained subtle expressions of anti-Semitism. Whenever he spoke of bankers, he named Baruch, the Rothschilds, the Lazzere, the Warburgs, the Kuhns, the Loeb's and the Morgans. You see here six Jews, followed by a good Episcopalian, which throws out the hint that we are in economic distress because of six Jews to one Gentile. Such methods can grow more Hitleristic as the poison bites in deeper among this amazing demagogue's dupes. It happens that the interests of all the six Jewish financiers listed by Father Coughlin do not command the resources of the National City and Chase National banks, which are, of course, sacredly Baptist.

* * *

Father Coughlin's attacks on so-called Jewish international bankers can best be answered by the facts of international finance. What are they?

Of course, you're right. I've written many times that just a few non-Jewish banks do more business than all the Jewish bankers combined. Father Coughlin's insistent pounding on this point of Jewish responsibility for our monetary difficulties is, first of all, a rejection of the facts in the case, and, secondly, a deliberate attempt to provoke a wave of anti-Semitism in this country.

The way to meet this problem intelligently is to go to the figures dealing with the financial syndicates that have disposed of foreign loans. In all, bonds to the amount of $8,469,000,000 were sold (1925-1928), according to the annual compilation of the "American Underwriting Houses and their Issues." Now, if it can be shown that the Jewish banks sold all, or a great portion of these bonds, then Father Coughlin has some basis for his persistent attacks, but if it can be shown that the so-called Jewish houses sold only an insignificant fraction of these bonds, then Father Coughlin's case collapses among intelligent people, leaving him still in possession of the demagogue's stock-in-trade, the masses who are made to accept poison propaganda because they don't know any better. The blame is not to be put on the shoulders of the ignorant masses, because they are helpless putty in the hands of the rabble-rousers. The blame rests with the demagogues of the Coughlin type who, following the lead of Hitler, advance themselves as misleaders through appeals to race prejudice and intolerance. But to return to the financial problem just mentioned:

By a Jewish banking house I mean any corporation or firm whose directorate has at least 50 percent Jews. Such Jewish firms did only eight percent of public financing from 1930 to 1933 inclusive, but during 1932 such fi-
nancing amounted to one-half of one percent of the total. In the field of international financing, we find the situation as follows:

**FOREIGN LOANS (1925–1928)**

**Non-Jewish**

- National City Co. $1,741,800,000
- Lee, Higginson Co. $1,332,000,000
- Guaranty Co. $1,248,700,000
- Dillon, Read Co. $1,076,200,000
- Harris, Forbes Co. $1,046,200,000
- Equitable Trust Co. $891,600,000

**Total** $7,336,500,000

**Jewish**

- J. & W. Seligman $400,000,000
- Lehman Bros. 239,700,000
- Kuhn, Loeb & Co. 192,800,000
- Speyer & Co. 162,500,000
- A. G. Becker Co. 110,100,000
- Goldman, Sachs Co. 28,000,000

**Total** $1,133,100,000

Here we find a perfect answer to Father Coughlin, but knowing this fascist hate-peddler for what he is, I feel confident that he will go right ahead with his propaganda and help keep the Catholic Church true to its traditional policy of anti-Semitism. It takes more than a set of facts to cause a Father Coughlin to change his course.

* * *

In his radio speech of March 24, 1935, Father Coughlin warned the U.S. to "remain aloof from European difficulties." Please comment.

As Europe is being turned into Fascist dictatorships (with the help of the Catholic Church), it is plain that what Fascist Coughlin wants is a free field for further encroachments on democracy and freedom. The utter hypocrisy of Father Coughlin's position will be better understood when one compares this policy with that which Coughlin and the Catholic hierarchy offer the U.S. with regard to Mexico. Because Mexico is not Fascist and does not accept the dictates of the Catholic Church in its internal affairs, the Coughlins have actually had the gall to propose to the U.S. that we intervene in Mexican affairs, which is just another way of asking us to declare war on the Mexican Republic in order to advance the interests of the Fascist-Catholic group. In other words, we are to keep hands off in Europe, where Fascism is practically in control of all of Central Europe, but we are to boycott Mexican industry, refuse to visit the country as tourists and, finally, send an expeditionary force into a friendly neighbor's territory, because the Mexican revolution deprived the Catholic reactionaries of their powers and privileges.

* * *

Apropos of Coughlin, I am ready (if it does not shock you) to make a bet with you—$1 each way—that within five years from now Charles E. Coughlin (ex-priest) will be contributing to your review.

The above comes from that distinguished writer, Dr. E. Boyd Barrett, himself a Catholic priest and professor for some years and even now, despite his sharp criticisms of the Catholic Church, a member of that body, so far as I know. I have long wondered why he wasn't excommunicated. To come to his bet, I hesitate about placing the dollar, for fear I might lose. But I put Dr. Barrett's challenge in print for the sake of the record, and then wait to see what we'll see. Dr. Barrett certainly takes in a lot of territory. He assumes that, in five years, Coughlin will be kicked out or made to resign from the Church, will abandon his anti-Semitism, anti-democracy, pro-dictatorship, Fascist doctrines and policies, embrace liberalism, even radicalism, throw off superstition, clericalism, religion itself—and then write for me. Wow!

* * *

**Did Father Coughlin ever take a vow of poverty?**

Father Coughlin, when he lived in Canada (where he was born), was a member of the Basillian Order, and as such was compelled to take a vow of poverty. How he lived up to it may be seen from the manner in which he played the market on 50,000 ounces of silver in an attempt to take financial profit from his campaign for the remon- etization of silver.

* * *

**Where does Coughlin get his money? How much does he get?**

He gets some money from inter-
ests in Wall Street, but most of it comes from his followers. Immense sums are collected from the poor and ignorant dupes of this would-be dictator, but he steadily refuses to issue any kind of a balance sheet. Perhaps millions of dollars pass through his hands yearly, but the priest (learning a lesson from the hierarchy in the Catholic Church) fails to say how much money was turned over to him or what he did with it.

Please comment on Father Coughlin’s reply to Johnson regarding money collected from the public.

Hugh S. Johnson clearly stated that Coughlin was collecting great sums from the poor and making no accounting. In his reply, Coughlin calls Johnson a “bigot” for bringing up this question of money. But Coughlin forgets to answer Johnson’s claim that the priest never tells how much money he receives nor what he does with it. If Coughlin persists in ignoring this legitimate inquiry, he leaves himself open to the suspicion that great sums of money are being diverted to purposes other than were intended by the donors. We know from his past that Coughlin does not hesitate to reach out for an easy dollar, as was the case when he used his followers’ money to play the silver market for 50,000 ounces.

P. S. While I think of it, let me mention Coughlin’s denial that he ever took a vow of poverty. He now says: “I never belonged to any religious order although I was associated with a group of priests.” Coughlin was certainly associated with the Basilian Order, in Canada, and could not thus be connected if he failed to take the vow. Here we have just another instance of Catholic “mental reservations,” which are permissible if they are intended to further the interests of the priest or his Church. To be associated with the Masons means to be a Mason, and to be associated with the Basilians means to be a Basilian. Such subterfuges will undoubtedly impress his followers, but there are others who feel justified in stating that Coughlin is a racketeer of the first order, out to make big money, profit in silver speculation, collect vast sums from his dupes, and so on down the line of legal, but unethical, racketeering, considering his pretentions as a leader of the masses, as a Savonarola in the war on Satan and the other enemies of gentle silver.

As I see it, Father Coughlin speaks as an individual and not as a voice of the Catholic Church.

Coughlin himself claimed that, in his reply to Hugh S. Johnson, but the excuse strikes me as nothing but a subterfuge. He speaks from a Catholic Church, and as the pastor of that church, in Royal Oak, Mich. He speaks with the approval of Bishop Gallagher. If the bishop objected to Coughlin’s Fascism, he could silence him in 24 hours, and the priest would have to remain silent or be unfrocked. There is a cardinal over this bishop, and if he objected, he could order Gallagher to gag his American edition of Hitler. And then, of course, there’s the pope himself, who could tell the cardinal what to tell the bishop, and so on down the line to Father Coughlin. But there isn’t a peep. Coughlin goes ahead with his Fascism, his anti-Semitism, his appeals to narrow nationalism and his building up of the National Union for Social Justice, a dictator’s paradise, with Coughlin at the top issuing orders and millions of robots at the bottom being told what to do and think, without voice, vote or power. This situation, therefore, can be described in only one way—the Roman Catholic Church, using Coughlin, is beginning to apply its anti-democratic policies in the United States. The Vatican now feels able to promote Fascism in the U. S. A., as it did in Austria, Italy, Poland, and Spain. Like Mussolini, in his early days, Coughlin uses a line of radical phrases, but they mean nothing, for they are intended only to fool the discontented workers, farmers and small traders into accepting Fascism while under the illusion that great social changes are in sight. That is an old trick of the rabble-rouser. He would serve Wall Street, but he can’t do that by talk-
Father Coughlin—Rasputin of American Democracy

ing the language of monopoly finance. He must fix up his medicine with a dash of radicalism, and that is always acceptable to the great capitalists (considering Hitlerism and the rich junkers of Germany) when they see such seemingly denunciatory language line up millions of victims of the capitalist system who should, by rights, be ready to end Capitalism and bring in its place a system of socialized industry—Socialism. Hitler even corrupted the word "Socialism" when he prepared to steal power for the capitalists of Germany, calling his brand "National Socialism," and it succeeded in befuddling millions of Germans universal in the science of economics.

Yes, Father Coughlin is the voice of the Catholic Church, and not a mere citizen expressing his views. If Coughlin were really sincere, if he defended free speech and free press, democracy, and liberal civilization, the Catholic Church would make a quick hash of him. But he says what the Church wants said, in these days when democracy and civilization are in danger everywhere, and that explains why the great powers in the Catholic Church are letting him advance his fascist movement. Here and there an individual Catholic voices a weak note of protest, but the all-powerful hierarchy lets its influential demagogues carry forward the despicable work of destroying the fruits of enlightened civilization.

Why did the Ku Klux Klan fail?

From the viewpoint of establishing any of its policies, the K.K.K. was a failure because of the low caliber of its leadership, which really had no definite program. Windiness may sound like something real for a while, but in time verbiage wears itself out, and that's what happened to the Klan. It made a tremendous splash—some say almost 10,000,000 joined up—and fizzled out in less than a year after it reached its climax, because, as I see it, it didn't know what to do with its following once it got the suckers together.

If the Klan 10 years ago had had a leadership consisting of Hitler, Goebbels, Goering and Streicher, there'd have been a different tale to tell, for with such a vast following one could even picture them ordering a march on Washington and at least making an attempt to capture the government. The ignorance, bigotry and prejudice that brought together those millions of klansmen are still to be found in this country. They can be made to function for reaction, racial persecution, banditry and murder if once the leadership of a Father Coughlin were to assert itself, for here is a rouser who knows what to do once he gets his followers lined up for action, and if that day ever comes we'll find a worse orgy of persecution than prevailed in the worst days of Hitler's pogroms early in 1933.

After all, Hitler and his gang are only a bunch of mercenary, emotional, anti-intellectual hate-mongers. They rule because they are gangsters strong enough to keep other gangsters from muscling in or to keep honest people from asserting themselves. But in this country, if a Father Coughlin were to get control of the country (and that is by no means an impossibility) we would find a swift return to the days of the Spanish Inquisition and the horrors of the Dark Ages, for Coughlin and his gang are followers of the One and Only Church—the Catholic Church—which has had long experience in the "art" and "science" of torture, persecution and reaction.

As for the Jews, once Coughlin became dictator, they'd feel Germany was a haven of peace compared to the policies Coughlin and the Roman Catholic Church would inaugurate here. The authority for this conclusion is a simple knowledge of history. One must judge the Church in power by what it did, or does, when it had, or has, full control.

In Austria, in February, 1934, we saw the Catholic Church in a conspiracy with the Dollfuss Fascists, and what happened? The Free-thinking, anti-clerical, pro-democratic Socialists in Vienna, were made the targets of an attack by
artillery, their apartment houses shattered and about 1,500 Socialist men, women and children murdered. That's one way of restoring the might of the Church. Or consider the record of the Catholic Church in Mexico, Spain, Poland, Italy, and other centers of Catholicism. In each country mentioned it is the same story—ruthlessness, persecution, exploitation, robbery, discrimination, anti-Semitism and intellectual bondage.

Yes, give a Father Coughlin an army of 10,000,000 mercenaries (he admits he is aiming to organize that many) and you will see the streets of America flow with blood. Free thought, free speech, free press, education, enlightenment, democracy—in a word, real civilization—would be destroyed with a few swift strokes. The Catholic Church—through its Coughlins and its Hitlers—aims to restore what social progress took from her. She never forgets and never forgives. And she is intelligent enough to know that the battle must be won now or forever be a lost cause.

Democracy, intellectual freedom, free inquiry and unlimited exchange of ideas—such precious heritages are only of recent birth in the modern world. A few years ago they seemed solidly entrenched, but now we know better. The world is not safe for freedom. It is, rather, safer for reaction—and who can improve on the Catholic Church in the matter of establishing and maintaining social reaction?

In the case of Father Coughlin—who is the Church's spearhead—we find one who loves money—yes, that's plain because of the manner in which he played the silver market for 50,000 ounces when he promoted his silver campaign—but it is also true that he sees beyond immediate money and discerns the greater profits to come when his forces are in complete control. So with him it is fundamentally a question of capturing power—the real profits will come later. It was at this point that the K.K.K. made its fatal mistake. It had a few high-sounding notions and a set of race-hating "principles," but underneath it all was the passion of the leadership to cash in in a hurry—and cash in the wizards and kleagles and other directors of mumbo-jumbo did with a vengeance. To line up 10,000,000 men in a hurry and get $10 a head to begin with, not counting the additional dollars that can be garnered later on, means just one thing—there's a harvest of rich pickings waiting for the wise guys, and the Klan leaders were wise to that extent, forgetting to be wise in the age-old wisdom of the Mother Church which, through its Coughlins, sees such collections as mere chicken feed compared to what may be had when the richest country in the world falls into the hands of its fascist mob. The Klan died, but Klanism (Catholicism plus Fascism) still endures.

* * *

After reading your comment on Father Coughlin's Canadian citizenship, I wrote to the Radio Priest, and received the following reply:

"In answer to your inquiry, may I inform you that I am an American citizen. My father was born in the United States, and when he moved to Canada, he still retained his American citizenship. Upon the marriage of my parents, my mother became a citizen according to the law which existed at that time. Therefore, although I was born in Canada, I am a citizen of the United States."

Father Coughlin's mother was Irish; his father, a citizen of the United States. Before Father Coughlin's birth, they moved to Canada. The State Department has held repeatedly that when American citizens leave the United States they do not surrender their children's American citizenship if they file a statement with the department, either in Washington or with the American consul, this time, of course, in Canada. Was such a statement filed? It would be a simple matter for Father Coughlin to produce such evidence, if it existed. But so far he has merely insisted that he is a United States citizen, on the basis of his father's American citizenship. Father Coughlin is a Canadian so long as the facts show that he was born in Canada and that his father did
not retain his United States citizenship.

* * *

It is claimed that Father Coughlin is organizing millions of followers to combat Communism rather than to establish a dictatorship. Please comment.

Communism is far less "menacing" in the United States than it ever was in Germany, where Hitler used the Communist scare as an excuse for establishing the most brutal and ruthless regime in the history of all Europe, which is saying a whole lot. Father Coughlin is merely echoing Hitler's tactics. The Communist party of the U. S. is insignificant. Communism is nothing more than a political sect in the U. S., followed by a small group of bigoted fanatics. In their own way they are as dogmatic as Coughlin, but with this difference; they don't amount to anything, and probably won't, so long as they follow their present tactics and leadership. And yet, Coughlin keeps screaming it's a case of "Roosevelt or Ruin," the "ruin" meaning Communism. It is to laugh. Even the Communists themselves, as dumb as they are, admit they haven't the slightest chance in the world of capturing this government, without first winning over a vast majority of the American masses, which, of course, is inconceivable, in view of their policies. No, it's not Communism that Coughlin is against—rather is it a case of being for dictatorship.

The big industrialists in Wall Street would not support Coughlin if they didn't feel he was their ace in the hole, should the depression get worse and the people decide to desert both old parties. Those who question the fact that Coughlin has Wall Street support should refer to the April, 1935, issue of the Review of Reviews, where George N. Shuster, himself a Catholic writer, says:

"It must not be supposed that Father Coughlin was without connections in the realm of big business. . . . Numerous railroad, mining, and real estate executives who favored inflation did everything in their power to aid and abet the Detroit priest."

As Father Coughlin is still preaching in favor of inflation, it stands to reason that those Wall Street industrialists are still supporting him, financially and otherwise. The Wall Street bondholders and bankers naturally oppose inflation, because such a policy would reduce the value of their holdings, but industrialists who own or control railroads, mines, real estate, etc., are in favor of Coughlin's inflationary propaganda because they see an easy way to pay off their vast bonded indebtedness with cheap money and at the same time greatly enhance the value of their holdings. But it wouldn't do for Father Coughlin to admit these facts simply and candidly, for that would destroy his hold on the minds of millions of his dupes. So he covers up his real position by yelling, along with his friend and pal, Hearst, that the country is going to fall into the hands of the Communists, unless he and a few other self-appointed heroes can stop the menace.

Of late, Father Coughlin has been giving some attention to his critics, the latest being his denial that he was against organized labor. In the Review of Reviews article, on page 27, last column, will be found these words:

"On October 10, 1934, he (Father Coughlin) issued his fullest statement on the labor question, averring that the American Federation of Labor ought to be 'taken over' by a federal bureau empowered to render strikes and lockouts unnecessary."

This, as I have shown before, is out and out Fascism. This statement alone would be enough to brand Coughlin as a Hitlerite, but there are numerous other similarities between the Detroit radio priest and the chief Nazi. Hitler also wanted to deprive labor of the right to declare strikes, and this he did by suppressing the unions. He also said he was against lock-outs, but as I have already explained, a lock-out is an unnecessary weapon in the hands of capital when labor is deprived of the right to strike, so it follows that opposition to lock-outs is clap-trap. The design is to enslave the working class, and
that can be done best by destroying unions and making strikes illegal. That is bald, plain, clear Fascism. It follows, therfore, that it isn’t Communism Coughlin is worried about. He aims for something entirely different—a dictatorship, through the economic philosophy of Fascism.

Can you explain why Father Coughlin for so long continued his attacks on the Detroit banks?

Father Coughlin’s superior, Bishop Gallagher, had all of Catholic Detroit’s vast funds in these banks and it is claimed that he used Coughlin in an attempt to whang-doodle this money back into the bishop’s hands. This near-blackmail did not work. The bankers insisted on treating the Church the same as the other depositors, which brought additional, but quite ineffectual, blasts from Coughlin.

If Father Coughlin gets control of the country, will he outlaw unions?

While speaking before the Tuesday night forum of his Shrine of the Little Flower (according to a report in The Nation, March 20, 1935), Father Coughlin was asked if his Fascist National Union for Social Justice was opposed to unions. He answered: “The Union is in favor of unions, though not the kind we have now.” This is the same industrial philosophy one hears in Hitler’s Germany and Mussolini’s Italy. They also believe in unions, but not in the kind of unions workingmen want. They favor, and insist on, Fascist unions. Fascist Father Coughlin would most assuredly outlaw unions like the A. F. of L. and offer Catholic-Fascist unions, along the lines of the Fascist unions now demanded by the dictators of Central Europe. A Fascist union means that the organization is run by the dictator or his chosen spokesmen. They will not represent the will of the membership, as does a free union today. They will not tolerate strikes, and thereby enslave the workers and deny them the right to use the weapon that is most effective in the factory. Fascism in the United States is now a menacing threat. It is around the corner. Father Coughlin, despite his vast exaggerations in the past, is now making rapid headway. He is growing stronger each day, and that means we are getting closer to Fascism day by day. There’s no telling how far he may go. The Coughlin—Long Fascist campaign may blow up, but there is also the possibility that it may come into power, in which case we will soon see America turned into a Fascist authoritarian state.
Would your columns be open to questions and answers regarding the peculiar problems of persons like myself who are leprosy patients?

The above question comes from a Freeman reader who is associate editor of The Star, a monthly magazine published by and for leprosy patients in the U. S. Marine Hospital at Carville, La. So far as I know, this is the only publication edited by, written by and published for victims of leprosy, though there are numerous medical journals that devote space to this disease. I was more than delighted to learn from this Star editor, Mr. Elton Record, that my publication is read "with a great deal of interest in the Carville leprosarium."

Of course, I know little about the problems of leprosy victims, for my interest is only that of the layman, but I do believe that these unfortunate people have extra burdens to bear that are unjust and even cruel. The proper way to look at a leprosy victim is to consider him or her as a very sick person, in need of help and understanding. But hundreds of years of religious prejudice and ignorance have brought about a condition where it is almost impossible for the average non-Catholic person to look on this problem sanely and scientifically. Leprosy patients are not only sick, but they must bear the added handicap of being considered outlaws, outcasts and things "unclean," to be persecuted like so many wild, mad animals.

For long centuries the Catholic Church conducted what is known as the "Leper's Mass," one of the most brutal ceremonies in the history of religion. A person who became infected with this disease (or who was frequently merely suspected of such infection) was forced, under penalty of execution, to follow a parade of religious fanatics, usually many feet in the rear, dressed in rags and treated like a vicious dog. At the end of the ceremony, the victim was given a bell (which he must ring whenever he was about to approach any person), a bucket and long pole, which he was to use when he found it necessary to obtain help from anyone. He was then turned loose to live like an animal, without friends, family, loved ones or the help of medical science. During the ceremony he was marched to the cemetery, where he was forced to look into an open grave, which symbolized his own death. The church then read to him the news that he was dead, officially and morally—all but physically. Failure on his part to accept this decision could mean only one thing—quick destruction on the gallows.

From such an attitude came the superstitions regarding this disease. "Lepers! Unclean!" so cried the church. I notice, with vast approval, that The Star is conducting an editorial campaign to teach the more intelligent portion of the population to cease using the dreadful, cruel word "Leper." Scientific leaders, I see, prefer to say "Leprosy patient," which is correct and decent. Let's hope The Star's campaign will bear fruit, that this awful religious hangover will wither away and people will approach the problems of the leprosy patient with kindness, fairness and ordinary decency.

Scientific men agree that there is no real evidence that leprosy is a contagious disease. It is no more dangerous than cancer, and yet we do not treat cancer patients as outcasts. Leprosy, according to authorities on this ancient disease, isn't nearly as dangerous as tuberculosis or syphilis. In the case of tuberculosis, we are making real headway, because the fight is being conducted without the handicaps of moral
or religious prejudices. In fighting this disease it is to be noticed that the old term “consumptive” is practically out of the language. But in the case of syphilis, we still find religious handicaps, with the consequence that we are not making the progress that could easily be made if we were to approach the situation in a scientific spirit.

Dr. John L. Rice, Commissioner of Health, New York City, on January 30, 1935, reported that syphilis is one of the first four, if not the first, causes of death in this country. There are, according to Dr. Rice, 6,000,000 persons in this country afflicted with it, and that only one case in nine is under treatment by authorized practitioners. In New York City alone, said Dr. Rice, 46,276 cases were reported during 1934, an increase of 9.5 percent over 1933.

Unlike leprosy, we know the cause and cure of syphilis and yet nothing is done to wipe out this scourge. In Soviet Russia, on the other hand, syphilis is being fought openly and honestly, without the handicaps of the religious fanatics who look on the disease as the just punishment of an angry God and that cure and eradication would result in an orgy of immorality. It is stated on good authority that syphilis will be a thing of the past before long in the Soviet Union and that the United States could rid itself of this disease in less than 25 years—and yet we go on placidly enduring 6,000,000 syphilitics, who do not even have to take treatment from authorized practitioners, should they prefer to practice self-medication, or no medication, or the services of rank charlatans and quacks. What hypocrites we are! And what dumb fools! To yell, “Lepre! Unclean,” at a few leprosy victims and then tolerate a cesspool that endangers the lives of millions of innocent people. But this, as in the case with leprosy, is one of the numerous prices we must pay for enduring religious ignorance and superstition.

Do you favor the socialization of the medical profession?

Yes, and no. Where medicine is operated on a big business basis, in the instances of vast hospitals, plants, and laboratories, I certainly favor the socialization of medicine. It is the duty of the state to look after the physical welfare of its humblest citizen. Hospitalization should be provided by the government, through social insurance. We give such service to victims of war; why not provide hospitalization to victims of industry?

Socialized medicine is a great success in Russia, where it has been demonstrated that is is possible for the people, through their government, to provide clean, modern, strictly scientific facilities for medical service. In addition to giving the people the benefit of the best knowledge, the Russian medical scientists have, through their socialized institutions, availed themselves of improved laboratory equipment to the end that newer and greater discoveries might be contributed to the welfare of humanity.

The best hospitalization in Russia is free to the workers. In the United States a working man has to be satisfied with second-rate hospitals or charity wards. The best institutions are beyond his means. This is wrong, and the remedy is socialized medicine. This policy is opposed by rich physicians and surgeons who take immense fees from their rich patients. Their motive is purely mercenary. In a socialized state, with the vast contrasts of wealth and poverty removed, this motive would, in great degree, be removed and in its place we would find an impulse to social service.

On the other hand, I believe it would be entirely permissible for family doctors and others who wish to follow private practice to be permitted such a course. There is no need to socialize every doctor in the land. Thousands could be left to work for themselves, should they prefer to function without the cooperation of the state institutions of medicine. The same applies to dentists and other professionals similarly occupied. By combining individual enterprise with socialized medicine we get a happy balance that will, in the end,
work to the benefit of mankind.

It is a mistake to assume that all doctors and dentists in Russia have been socialized. Many can, and do, conduct private practice, but they are not permitted to exploit the labor of others.

What has become of Fred D. Warren?

I see that he is writing scorching attacks on Capitalism in a Socialist weekly and at the same time supplying the dear comrades with an eczema salve guaranteed to cure psoriasis, eczema, dandruff, hives, whisky nose, blackheads, pimples, dirty fingernails and rank armpits. It’s a great system.

* * *

I am shocked beyond words at what you write about Fred D. Warren and the patent medicine business he is in. I can hardly believe what you say, though I have always found you accurate. Are you sure?

My reader should realize that Fred D. Warren conducts his mail order patent medicine eczema business only two blocks from the Haldeman–Julius plant. If I have written what is untrue—if Mr. Warren is not engaged in this strange business—he can do one of two things: 1. Issue a statement of denial, which I would be more than glad to print. 2. Sue me for libel. If he remains silent, it can mean but one thing: He is in the eczema patent medicine business.

And while I am on this subject, let me answer another correspondent, who asks why I tell my readers about Mr. Warren’s cavortings. I am more than willing to explain my motive. When Mr. Warren left my employ something like two years ago to engage in his eczema business, I said nothing because I considered him a private individual doing what he thought was best under the Capitalist system of “getting by.” But when he entered Socialist journalism, went on Socialist speaking tours and in other ways presented himself as a leader of the American Socialist movement, I felt it my duty to say that a person engaged in the business of selling poor workers and farmers an eczema patent medicine has no business posing as a leading Socialist. The Socialist organization is an idealistic movement that aims to liberate the working people from the thraldom of capitalistic economics. The patent medicine business is one of the most unsavory aspects of Capitalism. A Socialist leader must make a living like anyone else, but it does not follow that he has a right to engage in a business that exploits the diseases of the poor, especially when science says no salve can cure skin diseases. To argue otherwise would be like saying that a Socialist leader has a right to conduct a private strikebreaking business on the side, merely because he must live under Capitalism. Such conduct would never be tolerated. My writing in this vein is strictly one of public service, my impulse being to point out abuses in a movement which I respect and love. I would feel guilty of sabotaging the movement if I were to fail to do my duty in this issue.

* * *

I have seen your remarks about Fred D. Warren and consider you all wet. I have seen Warren’s testimonials, which show that this eczema salve has brought about real cures.

A testimonial has no standing in science or in any court of law. In every court case involving a patent medicine the proprietors never fail to bring in bales of testimonials from laymen who claim cures. Such “evidence” isn’t worth the paper it’s written on. No layman is competent to diagnose his ailments, however intelligent he may be. In a skin disease it is necessary to employ a specialist to do such highly scientific work... Also, the same layman, after diagnosing his disease, is not competent to write a prescription. This also is a matter for specialists. Finally, the layman, after diagnosing and prescribing for himself, is still unqualified to decide whether or not he has been cured. In the face of these simple facts a testimonial is merely the expression of a layman, ignorant of medical science, offering an opinion on a subject about which he knows nothing. Mr. Warren’s testimonials are no better than the
thousands of testimonials flaunted by Lydia Pinkham, Peruna or Father John's Eternal Elixir of Life, or whatever it is the priest offers. It is disheartening to see the great cause of Socialism injured by the commercial tactics of a Socialist leader and writer. Such conduct will bring harm to the movement, despite the fact that he can show testimonials for his eczema "cure." The patent medicine business is intended primarily to exploit poor men and women. The rich never fall for such unscientific concoctions. They are smart enough to avoid themselves of the best medical services. But the poor are up against it, so they frequently fall victims to the promises of advertisers who guarantee "cures" for cancer, consumption, diabetes, etc., via the good, old mail order route. Such methods would not be tolerated for a moment in a working class republic like the Soviet Union. They won't be tolerated here, when the workers gain control of society and do away with the profit motive. But what is one to say when the leaders of Socialism indulge in the profits of the patent medicine business? I say it's wrong.

Has the government ever taken action against Fred D. Warren's eczema company?

Yes. Socialist Warren's company is called the Mills Chemical Company, which, according to a report released on July 18, 1934, by the Federal Trade Commission, was called on the carpet and ordered to mend its ways. The report is as follows:

"Mills Chemical Co., Girard, Kan., selling a treatment for various skin disorders, the treatment being designated 'Cranolene,' agrees to cease averring that eczema may be 'healed' by use of Cranolene, described as a 'cranberry treatment,' and that Cranolene attacks and destroys the parasitic cause of 90 percent of all skin diseases, or draws the poison from the skin."

This is a subject fit for the superb irony of a Voltaire, Swift, Anatole France or Bernard Shaw. My typewriter is all too weak to measure up to the satirical possibilities of this delightful subject. Just get the picture—a Socialist leader and journalist writes endless reams of Socialist editorials attacking the capitalistic government in Washington because of its unfair treatment of the poor working class (boo-hoo, tears and sobs) and then the same capitalistic government turns around and tells Comrade Warren's patent medicine company to "cease and desist" selling the poor working class a concoction that doesn't do all that its advertisement claims. What a disgraceful exhibition of Wall Street ruthlessness—for a government of industrial piracy to put its strong hand on the shoulder of a poor, dear, lone, helpless Socialist and tell him to cut out this advertisement that says Cranolene will do certain things, when the government's laboratories, after exhaustive tests, are able to report that the claims cannot be substantiated. Down with Capitalism! It looks like persecution to me—another Mooney Case!

* * *

Why indulge in your attacks on our Comrade Fred D. Warren? He has to eat.

That is a strangely cynical argument for a Socialist who maintains the side of the workers in the Class Struggle. It happens that "Dr." Warren is by no means a poor man. From what I hear, he is in such shape financially that he has nothing to worry about the rest of his life, and yet he permits himself a chance to exploit the poor toilers with an eczema concoction that has been put under the severe discipline of the Federal Trade Commission, because of misleading and false claims in advertising the patent medicine. But even if he were as poor as millions of the workers who are on federal relief, would that be an argument in extenuation of such conduct, especially on the part of a famous Socialist leader who spends so much energy attacking the injustices and deceptions of Capitalism?

* * *

Your Warren paragraphs are unfair, in that they fail to mention
the fact that Warren could be immensely rich if he would sell his soul to the capitalists. Instead, he prefers to work for Socialism.

You have missed entirely the point I have been driving home. My complaint is merely this: Warren, as a Socialist, has no right to levy tribute from the sick and diseased workers and farmers who are made, through high-pressure advertising, to part with their meager funds for a patent medicine that even the capitalistic government in Washington exposed in a special bulletin. My criticism is a positive and constructive one. The fact that he hasn't levied tribute from the Wall Street capitalists is beside the issue. They are a pretty astute lot and not given to handing over the kale to every Socialist adventurer willing to switch over to their side. So far as I know, he has not exploited any capitalists with his government-discredited "cure," but I do know that he has taken in many a $5 remittance from old and sick widows and financially crushed tillers of farm and factory. I consider that even worse, by far, than taking gold from Wall Street, because the financiers can spare it, while sick workers can ill afford to buy "guaranteed cures" that are rejected by competent authorities.

* * *

Yes, Fred D. Warren sells an eczema cure, but you sell books on Birth Control. So where are you any better?

Birth Control is a scientific subject, advocated by such great figures as Bertrand Russel, Joseph McCabe, Havelock Ellis, Dr. Wm. J. Robinson, Mrs. Margaret Sanger, Bernard Shaw, Albert Einstein, Lenin, Upton Sinclair, Stalin, Marx, Bebel, Debs, and other men and women too numerous to mention. Birth Control is not a popular subject in conventional, puritanical, hide-bound circles, but I notice that even the severe Roman Catholic Church has wavered on the subject of Birth Control to the extent of endorsing the "Rhythm Method," and permitting books on this new theory to be published with "ecclesiastical approbation." I have issued a book on this meth-

od, from the pen of that great scholar and popular educator, Joseph McCabe, wherein this Free-thinker approaches the Catholic writers on the "Rhythm Method" with a critical analysis, though he grants the method has a certain amount of validity. To publish educational, scientific works on sex, marriage, morals, birth control and other subjects related to man's emotional life, is to do the world a real service. In the case of the Rhythm book, I took no money from you when you sent for it. You subscribed for The Freeman, paying only $1 for it, the regular published price. The book went to you as a premium, though I could easily have charged you an extra 50c for the volume. Publishing such literature is certainly not to be compared with advertising an "eczema cure" that is intended to take large sums of money from uninformed, ignorant, helpless victims of the system.

* * *

What is your opinion of the American Guardian?

I consider it unfortunate that this Socialist paper stoops so low as to print patent medicine advertisements. My other objection is the unfortunate fact that this periodical gives space to the writings of Fred D. Warren. It is my personal belief that a paper which appeals to workers and farmers should not give space to an individual who makes money selling this type of person a patent medicine that is without the slightest standing in the world of medical science. A Socialist who criticizes the unfairness of Capitalism should not indulge in the practice of getting wealth from a questionable "cure," however legal such conduct may be. It isn't a question of legality, but of ethics. Mr. Warren, who is a layman, certainly lacks the scientific training needed to approach the problems of skin ailments. There are great specialists engaged in this branch of medical science, and they agree to a man in dismissing patent medicine salves as unable to cure eczema and other skin diseases. Even a great medical specialist certainly could not diagnose such ailments
by mail and sell "cures" through the same medium. And if such a scientist couldn't do it, just where does a mere layman come in? My point is merely this: It is inconsistent and unethical for a Socialist leader like Mr. Fred D. Warren to complain about the injustices of Capitalism and at the same time be a partner in a business that represents Capitalism at its worst.

** Lay off Fred D. Warren. Our badly disintegrated forces surely need more, not less, nourishment. **

Thus speaks another Socialist critic. Are we to understand that we should tolerate any kind of commercial tactics because we all want to see the Socialist movement grow larger? May it not be a fact that one serious reason for American Socialism's appalling weakness is because of the kind of leadership it has attracted? Could one blame a worker, who has sent $5 to Fred D. Warren's eczema company for his "cure," if he were to say that he could not trust the future of Socialism to such leadership? I certainly would hesitate before I'd accept the cynical argument that the Socialist movement needs the kind of "nourishment" a Fred D. Warren's patent medicine record can give it. I don't blame any Republican or Democratic workingman for laughing at the Socialist party so long as he can point out even one of its leaders and show him up as one who gathers in the mazuma through a business enterprise that is not of good repute even under Capitalism.

** I have been more than interested in your comments on Fred D. Warren's dual role as Socialist leader and promoter of a patent medicine cure—all for victims of eczema, psoriasis, etc. As I know you have received many letters from your readers, I am curious to know how many approved your position. **

The letters fall into two groups. Those that came from Socialists were critical of my efforts on the ground of party harmony. It was their contention that nothing should be said about such an incident publicly for fear of alienating uninformed sympathizers from the movement. This purely pragmatic argument runs through all their letters, with a strong minority even going so far as to defend "Dr" Warren's commercial tactics, claiming that it is legitimate for a Socialist to make a living by any means so long as Capitalism endures. Of course, I have already given my reactions to so cynical and unethical a position. The second group of letter-writers consists mainly of Freethinkers, and they condemned "Dr" Warren to a man. If this is a fair test, it seems that Freethinkers have higher ethical standards than Socialists, though I should add, in all fairness, that many of these Freethinkers are also believers in Socialism. One Socialist even went so far as to argue that the U. S. issued a bulletin against Warren's patent medicine company because it wanted to embarrass him! I can assure the dear comrade that, from personal observation, I know that a thousand bulletins would hardly embarrass this eczema impresario and that everything written about him thus far in The Freeman has meant just nothing. Five dollars from an eczema patient is much more important than five columns of the ravings of E. Haldeman-Julius. I wouldn't have given five lines to the mess if I hadn't felt bound to an ethical obligation to my readers, many of whom are avowed Socialists and inclined to put their leaders on a pedestal, thus making them vulnerable to numerous forms of exploitation. I can say in all sincerity it has, by and large, been a thankless task, but I'd do it over again. The debunker always gets bumped from all sides—the interests that profit from bunk and the victims of bunk. But I have never permitted myself the questionable attitude of measuring my economic interests before taking a stand for truth, fairness, and business morals.

** I note what you say in criticism of the policy of Oscar Ameringer's American Guardian, which accepts medical ads for working class consumption. I came upon a statement in a recent issue of the Guardian which claims that its policy is
strict, rejecting three times as much advertising as it accepts.

The issue you mention contains advertisements for Cystex (to clean out acid in kidneys), McWethy's home treatment for weakness and irritation of the bladder, Boles' diabetic patent medicine, Peter's cancer cure (treatment free), etc. In the face of these ads one might wonder what was contained in the "rejected" copy. It would have to go pretty far down the list to beat these samples. A Socialist paper that attempts to educate the masses in the principles of economic emancipation and then permits itself to accept money from patent medicine interests that live by exploiting the poor is my notion of a poor specimen of Socialist journalism. The fact that readers will write in defense of such a policy is more than discouraging. Connecting this fact with the amazing exploits of Fred D. Warren's patent medicine eczema "cure," one is driven to the conclusion that the American Socialist movement is in serious need of higher ethical standards before it permits itself the luxury of criticizing Capitalism.

* * *

Is it dangerous to stimulate a child's growth?

Dr. C. M. McCay and Mary F. Crowell, of Cornell's Animal Nutrition Laboratory, claim that slow growth favors longevity. This ancient theory now has the approval of certain scientists, who warn us against feeding children and animals with a view to a rapid growth rate. There is sound economy in fattening steers for quick growth, because they will be slaughtered at the proper time, but it is urged that stuffing children with streams of vitamins, minerals and proteins (mostly advertised by business interests) can bring about stimulated growth, but at the cost of years of life. More than 2,000 years ago Aristotle wrote that "it is reasonable that the development of the long-lived animals should take a longer time." He was right, according to the latest researches of scientists. If anything, it is shown by actual experiments with rats, insects and fish that animals which are slightly retarded in growth live longer.

* * *

Are there any reliable methods or compounds that will make hair grow on a bald head?

Science has yet to discover the cause and cure of baldness. There are a thousand preparations on the market "guaranteed" to cure baldness, but they are all fakes. Don't waste a penny on them, regardless of the claims made in advertisements or booklets.

* * *

How many abortions are committed each year?

About 700,000, according to the estimate of Prof. F. J. Taussig, of Washington University. This condition is considered a strong argument for the legalization of birth control information. Americans spend yearly about $25,000,000 on contraceptive devices and preparations, mostly worthless.

* * *

How does America's death rate of today compare with that of 50 years ago?

In 1880, yearly deaths were almost 20 per 1,000 of population. In 1934 it was 11 per 1,000. An important reason for this marked decline is the fact that medical science has made possible a heavy decrease in the mortality rates for babies and children.

* * *

How many Americans catch syphilis each year?

According to Dr. Thomas Parran, Jr., formerly with the U. S. Public Health Service and now Health Commissioner of New York State, 500,000 persons in the United States get this disease yearly, most of whom could have avoided infection if they had been taught simple lessons in sexual hygiene. Gonorrhea and syphilis (clap and syph) are entirely preventable and could be wiped out in 25 years if the so-called good people (mainly church fanatics) would get out of the way with their puritanical, diseased minds and let science tackle this problem with all the powers of education, social approval and free circulation of information. We pay a fearful price in life and health because of our willingness to toler-
ate the obscenities of the religious-minded bigots. Religion is not merely a matter of foolish superstition; it is a matter of life and death for millions of people. Another serious source of needless suffering, because of the church’s opposition to birth control information, is the matter of 700,000 abortions yearly, causing about 30,000 unnecessary deaths each year.

* * *

What is your opinion of a man who goes to bed with a woman when he knows she has a dose?

He’s a fool. * * *

How is milk pasteurized?

Milk is pasteurized in order to kill dangerous bacteria, the process being merely to apply heat. The milk is poured into brine-covered storage tanks, where a temperature of 40 degrees or less is maintained. Later it is run through a heater which has a temperature of 143 degrees Fahrenheit, at which point it is held for a half hour. The milk is then free of bacteria and is run through coolers to bring its temperature down to 40 degrees or even less. Bottling follows.

* * *

Wasn’t the old family doctor of a hundred years ago superior to the modern specialists?

Not at all. In 1935 it takes, on the average, something like 12 years to become a doctor, in institutions supplied with vast laboratory and other facilities. A hundred years ago it took only 16 weeks to get an M. D. in New York State, and that was one of the strictest in the country. The doctors of a century ago were ignorant, unscientific and dangerous, as shown by the mortality statistics.

* * *

Can sickness and disease be totally prevented by a studied diet?

No. Diet is always of great importance, but that does not mean it can cure or prevent any kind of an ailment. There are many well-fed individuals who die each day from disease, regardless of long-practiced dieting. Proper food will help build up resistance to many diseases, but it certainly can’t prevent all illnesses. Given proper food, plenty of rest, cleanliness, peace of mind, etc., the individual is better equipped in the fight for health.

* * *

Does any country make it a prison offense for one person to infect another with a venereal disease?

Russia is the only country to do this, so far as I know. In that country it is a prison offense (three years is the limit) for one person to knowingly infect another. At the same time, the government medical service is conducting a campaign to eradicate this scourge, and from reports it would seem that real progress is being made. The Russians are not puritanical, so they approach this sexual problem in a thoroughly realistic spirit. In Christian countries there is still a great deal of squamishness and many millions of prudes still believe it would be bad for morality if venereal diseases were completely eradicated because this would be a motive for unbridled license! When such an idiotic attitude prevails why wonder that the disease persist? In Russia, the attitude is saner and more scientific. Here is a dirty mess that must be cleaned up, and with real gusto they get to work to remove the cesspool. That is sensible, and civilized people should work to see the approach become world wide.

* * *

Why have you never debunked the American Medical Association, probably the greatest and most devastating graft of them all?

The reason I haven’t debunked the A. M. A. is because I don’t consider this organization of doctors a “great” or a “most devastating graft.” I have scant patience with the political policies of the American Medical Association, but that doesn’t alter the fact that in its proper field, medicine, the Association is scientific and of great social value.

I know this is going to offend some of my readers. I have noticed on several occasions that the least word of praise for the organized physicians brings down on my head a flood of abuse. I’m sorry, but I honestly feel friendly to the A. M.
A. in its scientific sphere, and I'd consider myself dishonest were I to fail to mention this attitude, even to the extent of arousing the ire of many of my readers who are radical in religion or in politics, and therefore think that it is their duty to be "radical" in medicine. I put the word "radical" in quotation marks because their attitude toward medicine is not truly radical. They are merely eccentric or superficial. They throw over a vast store of organized medical knowledge only to follow the teachings of ill-informed, ill-equipped, incompetent pseudo-scientists who are usually classified as quacks and charlatans by persons with expert knowledge in their respective fields.

The entire world—both capitalistic and Socialist—recognizes the value of organized, scientific medicine. We in the United States, the British and the Russians have made immense contributions to the science of medicine. When the Russian proletarian took control of his country and his institutions of medicine, he was intelligent enough to retain the best scientists available, and that meant the survival of the medical doctors. Medicine, in Russia, is in a position of great honor, as it is in the United States. If anything, Russian medicine is on a higher plane than America's because the Russians have had the foresight to do away with the evils of commercialized medicine and capitalistic ethics, with friendly emphasis on the best scientific methods obtainable and a readiness to give this knowledge and service to the humblest and lowest of their people.

Quackery is an ancient evil. There are quacks in the A. M. A., but they are hunted down and ousted as fast as they are discovered. Once on the outside these quacks yell "trust" and "graft," because the Association did not give them a blanket endorsement in their aim to clean up financially at the expense of honesty, honor and human lives.

Did religion help advance scientific medicine?
Christianity retarded medicine for hundreds of years, holding that diseases were either the designs of the devil or the punishment meted out by an angry God. The Catholic Church held that only miracles could banish diseases, and these miraculous interventions were sold like so many bales of hay. Catholic shrines still offer miracles for sale to suffering ignoramuses, particularly at Lourdes. There are numerous instances wherein the popes and Catholic Orders and Councils declared against the science of medicine, particularly Pope Alexander III. The other churches were equally ignorant, the Church of England endorsing the cure of disease through the "royal touch," even going so far as to say in a prayer book: "They (kings) shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

This attitude (by both Catholics and Protestants) caused millions of unnecessary deaths. There were numerous waves of epidemics, some taking as many as 60,000,000 lives in a few years. Invariably the priests met these plagues with appeals for fasting and prayer, never for science.

The church opposed surgery and dissection because they interfered with the body's chances for resurrection.

What do you think of Chiropractic? How does it compare with Medical Science in preventing and curing disease?
Chiropractic has no standing in the world of science. It is based on a few dogmas that can't be accepted by real scientists. I have met a number of practitioners and have nothing but respect for them as individuals, but as scientists I can't see eye to eye with them. They all impress me the same way—hipped on a few ideas (mainly unsound) and trying to make their meager store of knowledge cover too wide a territory. There isn't a single phase of this "science" that impresses me as being worthy of serious acceptance, though I've noticed that many a neglected lady likes to hire a personable Chiropractor for a half hour or so to massage her in the best places, but in this my sympathies are entirely with the "professor," because I've noticed
that such patients aren't at all
good looking. Which puts such a
job under the heading of "forced
labor."

* * *

**What city has the lowest death rate in the U. S.?**

The United States Health Service has released figures compiled from 86 large cities. The honor of first place goes to the Borough of Queens, the residential section of New York City's white-collar work-
ers. The death rate for Queens was only 6.5 per 1,000 of estimated pop-
ulation for 1934. The 86 cities had an average of 11.4 per 1,000. The second best showing was made by Detroit, with 7.3. Third came South Bend, Ind., with 7.6. Other good showings were: The Bronx (New York City), 7.8 per 1,000; Yonkers, N. Y., 7.8; Milwaukee, 8.0; Flint, Mich., 8.0; Long Beach, Calif., 8.1; Akron, O., 8.1; Somerville, N. J., 8.5; Waterbury, Conn., 8.7; Brooklyn, 9.3. Queens and other centers that made good showings can cred-
it the following factors: good water supply; competent milk inspection; excellent housing conditions; ef-
cient health services.
Religion and Freethought

What was Lenin's view of the slogan, "Religion is a private matter"?

V. I. Lenin, head of the Bolshevik or Communist Party which took over the government of Russia in 1917, was a voluminous revolutionary publicist who discussed practically every phase of Socialism, Marxism and Capitalism. Naturally, he gave a great deal of thought to the problem of religion as it relates to the economic interests of the working class. Himself an out-and-out Atheist, Lenin discussed, in one of his numerous articles, the section dealing with religion in the Erfurt program, agreed to in 1891, wherein it was stated that "religion is a private matter." Lenin noticed that many of the Social Democrats (Socialists) of Germany seemed anxious to interpret this as a private matter even for their party and themselves.

Lenin goes back to original sources and makes the point that Engels, in 1890, attacked those who held this opinion. Lenin writes:

"Engels . . . thought it necessary to oppose them not in a polemical but in a positive form. This he did in a declaration in which he emphatically pointed out that Social Democracy regards religion as a private matter in so far as the State is concerned, but not in so far as it concerns each Social Democrat, in so far as it concerns Marxism or the workers' party."

Lenin, following Engels, held that the State has no right to persecute religions or select certain creeds for endorsement or support, and only in this sense is it correct to say that "religion is a private matter." Lenin continues:

"Marxism is materialism. As such it is as ruthlessly hostile to religion as was the materialism of the Encyclopedists of the 18th century or of Feuerbach. This is incontestable. . . . We must combat religion. That is the ABC of all materialism and consequently of Marxism. But Marxism is not materialism that has stopped at the ABC. Marxism goes further. It says: we must combat religion and to enable us to do that we must explain the sources of the faith and religion of the masses from the materialist point of view. The fight against religion must not be confined to abstract preaching. The fight must be linked up with the concrete practical class movement directed towards eradicating the social roots of religion. . . .

"The party of the proletariat demands from the State a declaration that religion is a private matter, but it does not by any means regard the question of fighting against the opiate of the people, of fighting religious superstitions, etc., 'as a private matter.'"

Lenin was careful to warn his party not to bring up religious questions when religious workers are on strike with non-religious ones, for to do so might result in putting a powerful weapon into the hands of the priests and capitalists, who would be glad of the opportunity to end the struggle between exploiters and tolerators and bring in its place a division into Atheists and believers. But once admitted into the party as members, the question of religion was to be treated solely from the viewpoint of Atheism and Materialism.

One finds a great deal of pussy-footing about these questions of religion among American Socialists, who seem more than willing to accept the vulgar interpretation of the phrase "religion is a private
matter.” Many American Socialist leaders even toady to the church, talk from pulpits and use language perilously similar to that used by preachers and priests. Such an approach can do nothing but harm to real Socialism. Socialism has always been atheistic, its leaders—from Marx to Debs—have been Atheists, and the victory of the working class will, according to the Marxists, result in the elimination of religious ideas, not through persecution, but through education. To win over a workingman to Socialism and have him continue holding ideas of superstition and mysticism, can result unfortunately, because such members will leave Socialism as fast as they came into it, once they come under the influence of some clever religious charlatan. Honesty and candor should prevail. No “converts” should be accepted under false colors. The fight is not only to destroy the powers of Capitalism in the economic field, but also to destroy the Gods of Capitalism, the religions that help keep men’s minds enslaved and in ignorance.

Please comment on the following, which is from an article by Oscar Ameringer, in the December 14, 1934, issue of The American Guardian: “Christianity survived a thousand wars because its ethical kernel—peace, brotherhood, and justice even to the bottomest man—is still the highest ideal of the human race.”

Such a statement betrays a woeful lack of knowledge of history and the place of Christianity in the institutions of man. It is nothing more than an echo of Christian apologetics, met a thousand times in the literature of the Fundamentalists and circulated for the “benefit” of the unthinking.

Christianity did not “survive” a thousand wars—as though wars came despite the wishes and desires of Christians—but rather provoked a thousand wars, and those which it did not provoke it blessed. Of course, the writer of the above morsel of bunk might claim, at this point, that he refers to “pure Christianity” and not its organizations, as one so often hears from the lips of defenders of the crimes of Christians. The answer is very simple indeed.

One does not judge a set of ideals by its words but by its deeds. Patriotism is a subject about which libraries of praise have been written—in poetry, song and oratory—but one doesn’t stop here, for to do so would betray a lack of historical values. Patriotism must be judged by its deeds, not by its pretty words. When we say it is “love of one’s native land,” one must add that in real life it is translated into hatred for those who are natives of other lands, into gas, bombs, grenades, bayonets, machine guns, tanks, disease germs, battalions, submarines, airplane bombers and all the other weapons that aim to destroy life. Historically, patriotism is entirely different from what it sounds like in poetry and song. And so it is in matters of religion, or more definitely, Christianity. One must judge it not by words but by its deeds, and its history is one long record of hatred, persecution, repression, torture, executions, massacres, religious wars, bigotry, deceit, malice, superstition and all the other manifestations of an institution bent on destroying the blessings of free inquiry, the glories of science, the fruits of intellect and the humanitarianism of true culture.

Christianity must be judged by its acts—through its institutions of Catholicism or Protestantism—and when we do that, what do we find? We find no brotherhood, but rather a St. Bartholomew’s massacre, in which something like 30,000 men, women and children are slaughtered by Christian fanatics. And when this terrible deed is committed we find the pope ringing the bells of St. Peter’s and ordering a medal to celebrate the “glorious” victory for the forces of Christian “righteousness.” We see scientists sent to the gallows or gagged. We see philosophers burned at the stake. We see battle banners blessed. We see hundreds of religious wars flooding Europe and other lands with the blood of ignorant men—victims of superstition and religious intolerance. We see medicine banned. Institutions of learn-
ing sealed against free inquiry. Free criticism denied. Tyranny protected. Priestly parasitism nurtured. We see justice denied and dishonored. We see persecution in the saddle and brotherhood laughed at by insane fanatics. As for the "bottomest man," he is taught to accept industrial, social and economic slavery as the will of God, with the added promise that there'll be "pie in the sky" when he dies.

Christianity has never been on the side of the "bottomest man," but always on the side of the slave-owner, the capitalist, the exploiter, the war monger, the crafty statesmen who plan and execute useless and destructive wars. What matters it if one meets here and there a few words about peace and good will among men when in action we find the religionists—Christians and all others—on the side of the war makers? Has the religion of Jesus—as expressed in the institutions of Christianity—ever failed to tell soldiers to meet glory in the battlefields? Has the priest or preacher ever failed to bless his own soldiers and damn those of his "enemy"?

So goes the black record of history, and Christianity, like other religions, must be judged by its history. As for the pretty words used by the Vicars of Christ, they are meaningless when one studies their actions. As for ethical expressions, one must remember that those we find in Christianity were expressed, centuries before the world ever heard of a Christian, by the philosophers and humanitarians of ancient countries like Rome and Greece. Christianity did not bring an ethical code; it merely picked up the phrases of philosophers and seers long dead, and repeated them parrotwise, while it went about the work of exploiting, robbing and deceiving the helpless victims of ignorance and depravity.

The real work of promoting genuine ethics and humanitarianism developed mainly during the past few centuries, after the birth of the scientific, skeptical, non-religious spirit of great truth-seekers. It can safely be said that as religion—Christianity—declined, true humanitarianism advanced. Man's conscience and decent impulses are truer today than ever before in man's history, and yet religion is weaker than ever since man emerged into civilization. The men who fought against slavery, obscurantism, ignorance, superstition, persecution, cruelty and war were mainly Freethinkers, not representatives of Christian, religious institutions. And when religion and Christian institutions are finally smashed, man will be rid of one of his greatest enemies. Man will then be free to advance to a really higher civilization. The hopes of man are connected with the elimination of all religion, Christian or otherwise. Therein lies the key to emancipation.

* * *

What was Luther Burbank's attitude towards religion?

This great botanist said: "As a scientist, I cannot help but feel that all religions are on a tottering foundation." At another time he described himself "as an infidel in the true sense of the word." While this great genius spent his life working to increase the world's supply of food, clergymen everywhere conducted a tireless war on him because of his heterodoxy in religion. He was criticized for "daring" to interfere with God's "order of things" in the plant world. He was described as a lunatic for believing that science could help man improve our supply of useful berries, vegetables and fruits. It would take many columns merely to list the contributions Burbank made to mankind. Take just one—the famous Burbank potato, which he sold to a nurseryman for only $150. From that tiny beginning the Burbank potato went into production and before he died it was estimated that something like a billion bushels had been raised.

Burbank's aims can be understood best by referring to his own words. Said he: "Every living thing is the result of two forces—the inherent constitutional life force with all its acquired habits, the sum of which is heredity; and the numerous complicated external forces, or environment. To guide the interaction of these two forces is the
sole object of the breeder of plants.” Burbank, who was born on March 7, 1849, at Lancaster, Mass., and died at Santa Rosa, Calif., in 1936, described his method in the following words: “Plant breeding is the intelligent application of the forces of the human mind in guiding the inherent life forces into useful directions by crossing to make variations, and then selecting the desired character, and sometimes by radically changing environments, to produce desired results.”

Burbank expressed many interesting and valuable opinions on religion, immortality, the Bible, etc., a few of which I list below.

On the question of the divinity and miraculous conception of Christ, Burbank held “there is no proof of it, either natural or otherwise.”

Asked if prayer is answered by an intelligent being from without, Burbank replied: “I do not believe that prayer has been or ever will be answered by any intelligent being from without. There is absolutely no proof whatever of this, though it may be very comforting to some to believe this myth.”

Regarding what science has taught on the question of whether or not heaven and hell exist, Burbank held: “The common orthodox heaven and hell do not exist. They could not exist if there were an all-powerful and just ruler. No criminal could be as cruel as the God who would consign human beings to a hell.”

To the inquiry as to whether or not he thought the Bible is the word of God or man, Burbank wrote: “Without the shadow of a doubt the work of man, being a history of the lives of ancient tribes reaching up towards civilization, and constructed mostly unconsciously by men, both good and bad.”

When he was asked, “Would you say that matter and force govern the universe rather than a supreme being?” Burbank answered: “Matter, which in its last analysis is force, governs what we know of the universe.”

“Have your labors in the field of science and research caused you to alter your earlier opinions on religion?” This question was answered by Burbank, as follows: “All my work in the field of science and research has come through a change in my earlier opinions on religion. Growth is the law of life. Orthodoxy is the death of scientific effort.”

Coming to the question of immortality, Burbank held: “It has never been proved or disproved, but it is rapidly, in my opinion, being disproved and so accepted by most intelligent people.”

Asked “what, in your opinion, has given rise to religious beliefs,” Burbank said: “Probably two things: First, the desire to extend our present life; and second, the desire of its teachers to be supported by those who labor.”

A study of Burbank’s opinions on religion causes one to cease wondering why he had to endure so many brutal attacks during his long lifetime at the hands of those “teachers” who desired “to be supported by those who labor.”

* * *

On which emotion is religion based?

Anthropologists are almost unanimous in claiming it came from man’s fear of the unknown.

* * *

Please comment on the following, which I found in a modern work: “Nobody ever saw a dead soul; and till he sees the phenomenon, a psychologist ought in conscience to refrain from proclaiming the soul’s mortality.”

By this same logic one might say that since no one has ever seen a live soul, immortalists should in conscience refrain from proclaiming the existence of a soul or its immortality.

* * *

Granting that organized religion is bankrupt, doesn’t this prove that we need a new religion, instead of the elimination of religion?

In the world of religion, it is only organized religion that is worthy of consideration. A personal, individual, intimate religion has no social implications. No one cares to move a finger against such personal beliefs about a god, immortality, revelation, supernaturalism,
miracles and all the other silly trappings of religion.

Religion, as a social institution, must be judged in its organized state, for in that form it is in a position to impose itself on the community whenever it finds itself in control of sufficient power. And if it is organized religion that is bankrupt, then the real essence of religion, the core of the whole rotten mess, is busted.

I agree with those who claim that organized religion is bankrupt, but I hold at the same time that any new form of organized religion (if such a thing is possible) would soon go the way of the old. Organized religion is not only condemned by its amazingly childish beliefs, but it is completely discredited by its history. It can parrot its pious psalms about its lofty idealism, its perfect ethics, its pure character building, but such words mean nothing, for we must judge an institution by its history (deeds) and not by its poetry.

The church's history is the blackest in the human record. It has been man's worst and most insistent enemy. It has been on the side of social backwardness, human slavery, mental darkness and brutal persecution. It has caused countless millions of deaths. It has tortured the non-believers and has been intolerant towards those of a different form of belief. It has burned, destroyed, suppressed, maimed, lied, slandered and robbed.

The church has always been on the side of man's meanest exploiters in the fields of industry and politics, and on the side of the militarists in every war in history. It is now allowing a measure of free speech to a minority in the church, who are talking solemnly about social justice and international peace, but the church itself is committed to its vile history and cannot escape its true character. At the first sign of war, it will again rush to the support of the militarists, and as for the demands for social justice, they are loaded with insincerity and hypocrisy.

Bankrupt, without its former public power, without its recent prestige and respectability, with its treasuries empty and its membership dwindling, it is looking around for something on which to stage a return, but it is too late. The secularists and freethinkers of the world—and they are mainly Socialists and believers in socialized industry—are not going to stop at this late date to join these intellectual lepers in their mouthings about Jesus and Jehovah.

Let the dead stay dead. Let the living bury the dead, and forget about them. No, let us not forget! Let us always keep fresh the memory of the thousands of years of organized religion's vile and inhuman rule. Let us keep those pages of history ever before our young, so they may be warned against reaction and the reestablishment of such a disgraceful regime.

A new religion? What can a new religion do that will undo the dark deeds of the old religion? A new religion will only multiply our troubles. Karl Marx was right. Religion is the opiate of the people. It is the dope that drugs the millions into an acceptance of blatan Ignorance, cruelty, anti-social conduct and crimes against humanity. A new religion would merely mean a new opiate. Beware of such a move.

The old religion is bankrupt; it is soon to pass from the scene. Let it go, and see that it stays away. Man has great duties to perform. He has gigantic problems to solve. He must set his economic and industrial house in order. He can do these jobs better without returning to the disease-breeding ideology of the religionists.

Man's new weapon is science. His new ideal is truth. He is through with superstition. Man is on his way to a new day. He dare not hinder his progress with the dead weights of supernaturalism. He must tear the priests and preachers and rabbis from their shaky positions of social power. The world is waiting to be remade, but we dare not risk the outcome of chaining ourselves to a new religion after we have seen the appalling results that came from the criminal and beastly activities of the old.

Our local preacher broadcast re-
cently that Hauptmann, Lindbergh baby murderer, is a product of German Atheism. Please comment.

On February 14, 1935, Bruno Richard Hauptmann, interviewed in his cell after the jury found him guilty, was asked, by a reporter for the International News Service, whether he was religious. He said: "I did go to church... I am a Lutheran. I will always be a Lutheran... I pray... Get this right. It isn't since I have been here (indicating his cell with a wave of his hand) that I have prayed. I always have prayed. It has been in my heart."

That's a funny way for an Atheist to talk. The man is obviously a believer but this doesn't hinder preachers of the type you mention from trying to pin this terrible deed on Atheism. One almost gets used to such dishonest methods.

If you would substitute the word theology for religion I could agree with everything you say in your educational work for Freethought.

This I can't do, because it would mean a compromise. Theology is the effort of the religiousist to put his notions in an orderly, logical way. If there were no religion, there would be no theology. Theology is merely one of the window dressings of religion, and I refuse to be side-tracked. I do, on occasion, have my say about theology, but I never forget that it is religion per se that has been the steady, relentless, ruthless enemy of civilization, culture, science, decent living, truth, tolerance and humanity.

1. Is it true that, after issuing a challenge a few years ago to all the world to debate the question of theism, and after accepting W. L. Oliphant as an opponent, you backed out of the debate and dropped the subject of the challenge?
2. Are you willing to repeat your challenge to debate the question of theism, and, if so, to specifically state just whom you preclude from entering the debate?
3. Why did you, in your former challenge of a few years ago, attempt to designate a very small class with whom you would hold the debate, knowing that the class designated would not likely care to enter into a controversy?

1. My challenge a few years ago was accepted by the Rev. Oliphant, and we arranged all the details of the debate. The compensation I offered the Rev. Oliphant (who is something of a figure in religious literary circles) was accepted as satisfactory and we then settled down to the big scrap. He wrote a 5,000-word opening statement, which I printed on the front page of The American Freeman. I answered with a 5,000-word statement of my position against theism, which was also printed in The Freeman. The agreement had it that the Rev. Oliphant was to reply with a 2,500-word rebuttal, and that I was then to have my say in negative rebuttal for 2,500 words, but, alas and alack, the Rev. Oliphant never came in with his 2,500-word rebuttal. He acknowledged the receipt of the printed copy of his and my opening statements—a most courteous note—but I couldn't get the gentleman to answer my argument. Whether it was a case of my argument being too strong for him, or that I was just too dumb to be worthy of further notice, I am unable to say. The gentleman closed up tight and has been that way ever since. He didn't even ask for the money I was to pay him, though I don't see how he could, considering that he was to be paid only at the conclusion of the debate.

2. I always enjoy a good debate on theism versus atheism, and wouldn't mind getting into one now, but, as before, I don't want to waste my time with amateur, non-professional religionists. The world is full of them, and a debate with one would have little or no meaning. I'd expect my opponent to be someone officially connected with the church, and one of considerable standing.

3. I didn't make the challenge with a view to making acceptance impossible. I invited debate in good faith, but, as stated above, I wanted to cross lances with a foe who stood somewhere in his church. I also specifically stated that I would debate with laymen of the
scientific standing of a Millikan, a Jeans or an Eddington. In addition to the Oliphant acceptance, I was called to defend my side in Kansas City, where I debated the question, "Is Theism a Logical Philosophy?" with the famous Burris A. Jenkins, of the Linwood Avenue Christian Church. The debate was reported stenographically and appeared in book form, and, by the way, the book is still in print. This volume has attracted some attention in numerous countries, and, modesty aside, I have received hundreds of letters from preachers and atheists, all agreeing that I whipped Jenkins all over the lot. He put up such a feeble argument that I understand he hasn't been doing anything since that fatal night but read and read in order to strengthen his position. The gentleman is a charming person, and I more than like him.

* * *

I have heard a famous preacher refer to Professor Albert Einstein as a religious man and a pillar of the church. Please comment.

Undoubtedly this preacher did not know that Einstein is an Honorary Associate of the Rationalist Press Association, England's most famous organization of Freethinkers. The church is in a panic to conceal its intellectual bankruptcy, which accounts for its pathetic efforts to tag every famous scientist with the symbols of the church, but with practically no success. Currently they are elated over the dubious support they are getting from Sir James Jeans, an able mathematician, who gave endless comfort to the clergy by his argument to the effect that since there is evidence of mathematical principles in the universe it must follow that God—like Sir James Jeans—is a mathematician. One is reminded of Ingersoll's witty observation that men have always made God in their own image.

* * *

Was Socrates an Atheist?

Instead of being an Atheist, Socrates was one of the greatest Theistic thinkers in all history. Plato's reports of his master's ideas are filled with arguments in support of the God-Idea, but nevertheless, Socrates, after his arrest, was charged with Atheism and put to death. Socrates cried: "O Athenians, I believe in God, but my belief is beyond the understanding of my accusers." It is a common practice for religious fanatics to charge Atheism against anyone who doesn't happen to accept their notions. Voltaire is another thinker who is frequently charged with Atheism. He was a Deist. He believed in Theism, but he rejected revealed religion, supernaturalism, Christianity, theology and the social value of the spokesmen of organized religion. Thomas Paine, another great Freethinker who rejected Christianity and the Bible, was also a Deist, so that Theodore Roosevelt's charge that Paine was a "dirty little atheist" stands as another piece of ranting, for Paine wasn't dirty—he was scrupulously clean; he wasn't little, because he was above middle height; he wasn't an Atheist, because he said, on the first page of his immortal book, the "Age of Reason," "I believe in God." (For the sake of those who claim that Theodore Roosevelt never really said those three untrue words about Paine, I refer my readers to Roosevelt's book, "Gouverneur Morris," page 289.) (Here I must again ask my readers' pardon for my wandering—beginning with Socrates, stopping for a chat about Voltaire, defending Paine and quoting Roosevelt, but it happens that this paragraph dispenses something like six questions from my readers, which is my sole justification for this example of meandering.)

* * *

Thomas Paine is commonly spoken of as an ignorant man. Please comment.

It is the habit of church apologists to call their opponents "superficial," "ignorant," or, to clinch the issue for all time, to refer to that famous line in the Bible which describes all who reject the God-idea as "fools." Such methods seem to be effective among the propagandists for religion, but the shallowness of it all is apparent to the person of fair education. Thomas Paine was not an intellectual giant, but to call him "ignorant" is to
give expression to a howler. Paine was a brilliant pamphleteer—one of the greatest in the history of literature. As a writer, he was clear, simple and persuasive. He fought fairly, intelligently and with scrupulous honesty. His “Age of Reason” was written while in prison, without access to any of his sources—not even a copy of the Bible. I leave that fact to be evaluated by his critics. The “Age of Reason” is still worthy of the most serious consideration, even though it was written a century and a half ago. The book is still distributed in huge quantities, as I can prove by my own experience as a publisher of some of his works. It is a source of amazement how such works as the “Age of Reason” continue to circulate. The reason is simple to find—it’s a good book, a great book, one of the few books that have moved the world. Thomas Paine never posed as an original, creative philosopher. He was a popular educator, a gifted pamphleteer who wrote in a style that is still admired by students of the language. Thomas Paine’s case against the Bible still holds, while those who called him “ignorant” are forgotten.

Please comment on this statement by C. E. M. Joad: “Religion, and religion alone, gives the driving force which impels men to change things... and progress.”

To claim that religion is an instrument to advance humanity—in economics, politics, art, literature, education, science, ethics, etc.—is to shut one’s eyes to the plain lessons of history. The recorded story of man shows religion to be a reactionary force, a restraint on man’s attempts to conquer nature, achieve masterpieces of thought and humanize the relations of man in the direction of civilization. Religion pulls man back, or at least holds him where he is. It is no weapon in the war for freedom or economic emancipation. Religion has done nothing to help man build gigantic systems of thought. Religion for centuries taught man all worldly efforts were vain because Jesus so plainly warned the people that this world was soon to come to an end. Why work to improve the world when the world itself would be destroyed by God? This notion, for centuries, held man in a pig-sty. It was only after man rejected this, and other, religious notions that he began to move forward. Now, as we approach new social and cultural victories we find the leaders of thought and science more lacking in religious faith than ever before in history. As man grows more atheistic progress takes quicker steps. When religion is finally disposed of, man will find himself able to make still greater headway, because he will no longer have to carry this cruel burden of superstition and obscurantism. * * *

In “Liberty,” September 15, 1934, Maxine Davis, in an article on Father Coughlin, says: “In times of stress men naturally turn to religion.” Please comment.

I fail to see any “natural turn” to religion in our present economic crisis. Rather do I see millions of men turning their minds to the sciences of sociology and economics. Instead of talking in terms of Jesus and God, men and women are discussing practical questions like the place of machinery in production, under-consumption, diminished purchasing power of the masses, unionism, strikes, Upton Sinclair’s EPIC, Roosevelt’s New Deal, U.S. government-owned factories under FERA, farm relief, shelterbelts to fight droughts and erosion, unemployment insurance, old age pensions, democracy in industry as well as politics, Socialism, Communism, Fascism, and so on. This shows that the people expect no help from a God in the skies. They are looking to sane, workaday remedies for their economic ills. Science is being applied to industrial and financial problems. Before the days of scientific research it is true that the illiterate masses turned to superstition and miracles for “relief,” which, of course, never came. The priest then did a rushing business in “selling” his incantations, but today the churches are withering and science is growing in prestige and power.
In the old days of religious obscurantism, a plague was met with prayers, and “sinners” were burned in order to placate an angry God. Today, an epidemic is met with scientific methods—hygiene, medicine, serums, social engineering and the other weapons of an enlightened people. No, the people today are turning to scientific economics, instead of religion. They are making many mistakes, but they can be corrected, because they are based on verifiable information.

**Was the Poet Shelley an Atheist?**

He wrote a book, called “The Necessity of Atheism,” and one of his greatest poems, “Queen Mab,” repeats many times the line, “There is no God.” But the fact remains that Shelley was no Atheist. He was an anti-Christian skeptic, a Deist, like Voltaire and Paine. In his own words he wrote for “Queen Mab,” Shelley referred to his line, “There is no God,” as follows: “This negation must be understood solely to affect the conception of a creative deity. The hypothesis of an all-pervading God, co-eternal with the universe, remains unshaken.”

**Preachers, rabbis and other defenders of religion claim that Millikan supports their position. Please comment.**

I have already shown just what there is to this assumption that our great scientific men are rapidly turning to religion. In the case of Robert A. Millikan, physicist and Nobel Prize winner for 1923, we find a name frequently on the lips of those clergymen who are beginning to worry over the future of their mystical racket. Millikan, they claim, is a devout worshiper, and that’s that. Religion is safe; the church mortgage will be paid, maybe, and let’s pass the collection plate for a bigger and better offering.

I do not deny that Millikan is a Deist, but I claim that his religiosity gives little comfort to a Christian or any other believer in a formal religion. We must ask Dr. Millikan what he means by God, and if he answers that his God is interested in man’s struggles, man’s fate, man’s future, man’s problems—if, in short, God rewards his little children for duly worshiping him and punishes them for disobeying his commands—then, of course, the preachers have something to blow about. But what does the record show? We must let Dr. Millikan speak for himself.

Dr. Millikan says that science shows a “universe that knows no caprice, a universe that can be counted upon; in a word, a God who speaks through law. . . . The God of science is the Spirit of rational order and of orderly development.”

Dr. James H. Leuba, Professor of Psychology, Bryn Mawr College, commenting on this passage calls attention to the interesting fact that it is “substantially what the great philosopher of the 17th century, Spinoza, had said.” Spinoza’s words were as follows: “By the help of God I mean the fixed and unchanging order of nature.”

Now what is there in these two quotations to give comfort to the defenders of Christianity or Judaism? As Dr. Leuba says, Spinoza was “persecuted for Atheism, while the modern scientist is acclaimed as a defender of religion!”

This shows to what depths the clergy will go in order to maintain the semblance of intellectual respectability. They grab at anything and everything that can be twisted into substantiation for their wobbly position. Of course, very few great scientists even give the Christian religion the seeming support that a Millikan gives, but that is another argument which I have treated in its proper place.

Verily, aye verily, I tell unto ye, the crusaders for God’s holy kingdom are becoming isolated in their mental vacuum.

**Professor Millikan refers to God as “the integrating factor in this universe not merely of atoms but of ether and of mind, ideas, duties, and intelligence.” Please comment.**

This famous American physicist carries a religious hangover, but it shouldn’t give much comfort to the pious because his idea of God leaves out all the concepts of the God-idea held for many centuries by the
religiously inclined. In fact, a little change in emphasis would make Millikan’s definition reasonable even to an unbeliever, for an Atheist is always ready to admit there are integrating forces in the universe. The fact that things in nature work together does not mean that a God decided on the routine, but merely that there are elements or forces in nature that produce results cooperatively.

* * *

In what manner did Max Muller and Herbert Spencer disagree regarding the origin of the God-idea? Muller held that the God-idea developed from primitive man’s view that the great powers of nature could be personalized and worshiped. Spencer’s position was that it came from the desire to make God-like figures from the spirits of their ancestors. It seems more reasonable to accept the conclusion that both opinions contributed to the growth of the idea of God. But one should not stop even here, because there are even other reasons that should be included. There was the element of the dream, which puzzled primitive man. In such dreams persons who were dead seemed to come back to life, giving the idea of immortality and the soul. There was the “mystery” of the shadow, which primitive man could not explain naturally. There was the element of mystery connected with seeing one’s reflection in the water. Also, there was animism, or the idea that different Gods inhabit the world, making leaves move, water flow, clouds float, etc. Instead of taking one of these reasons for the development of the God-idea, it strikes me as scientific to include all of them as contributing factors.

* * *

I have been informed that research work, and works of humanitarianism, have been carried on by religious men; and that skeptics are negative in this degree, insofar as they are outnumbered by the men who believe in religion. Please comment.

A glance at history is sufficient to answer this claim. When the Catholic Church was in complete control of most of Europe—from the 5th to the 15th Century—what contributions were made to research and humanitarianism? For more than 500 of these 1,000 years the world lived in appalling darkness, with every form of education suppressed and hated. Science was dead. Inquiry was forbidden. The ruled were clods and the rulers were barbarians. Popes forbade anything but religious instruction among the people. Ninety-five percent of the people were illiterate. No wonder history has decided to call that period the Dark Age. The mind of man was veiled in the darkness of ignorance, bigotry, persecution and malice. Scientific research and humanitarianism were unknown. And later, when men began to make inquiries, to study, to think—what happened? The Catholic Church struck at them with all its might. It burned Giordano Bruno at the stake, because he refused to look into questions of philosophy through the eyes of the Church. Galileo, who asked and answered questions about the stars, was denounced by the Inquisition, held a prisoner of the Pope, and, in his old age, feeble and friendless, he was forced to recant or take the consequences—the stake. It was only when the powers of religion were deprived of absolutism that man began to think, to feel, to study, to ask questions about the nature of life. Humanitarianism and scientific research advanced in direct ratio as religion declined. Today we have more research and humanitarianism than at any time since the foundation of the Catholic Church. And at the very same time religion is at its lowest ebb. Never in 1,500 years has religion been as weak and puny as it is now. Five hundred years ago the Church would have met a period of universal want with the claim that it is God’s will that man suffer for the sins of Adam and that those who bear their burdens calmly and “spiritually” will be rewarded in heaven. That was the reaction of religion to human need. Rationalistic humanitarianism was not satisfied with ple-in-the-sky. It demanded action here and now. And that humanitarianism was in defiance of the
edicts of the Church. The Church dabbled in a penny's worth of charity and tolerated crimes against humanity, that aimed at preventing man conquering disease through science, harnessing nature to industry and inaugurating social justice through scientific sociology. Today the Church crawls along, trying to keep at the tail of the procession and then saying if there were no religion there would be no procession! The great benefactors of humanity have been, in the main, skeptics and rationalists. The subject is vast, but the facts are all available in authoritative history and biography. Science, humanitarianism, social progress—all these boons came in spite of religion, not because of it. From now on progress will be faster, because the powers of research and humanitarianism have won the right to be heard, and they are not on their knees begging divine sanction from priests, preachers and rabbis.

* * *

Who was it argued for his religion in the following words: "It is certain because it is impossible"?

That famous line comes from Tertullian, the great Church Father.

* * *

Will religion ever die?

I think so. I base this conclusion on the assumption that man intends to continue his progress in the direction of education, scientific achievement, truth-seeking and candor. The average of intelligence is very slow in progressing, but there is direct evidence of steady progress throughout the centuries. We have a long way to go before we achieve universal culture, but we seem to be looking in the right direction. As education and intelligence grow, religion declines. This is the lesson of the past 500 years. Why not say that more intelligence will, in time, eradicate the wavering remnants of religion? I look forward to a world without religion, which means a world inhabited by intelligent, realistic, rationalistic men and women, unafraid of life, avid for truth, enemies of hypocrisy and superstition, lovers of justice and upholders of the banner of justice. It may take a long time to reach such a goal. I set no date. History will tell.

* * *

Is it true that Robert G. Ingersoll, on his death-bed, called on the Lord to forgive him his sins?

Pulpit pounders have long made use of infidel death-beds, in order to scare their moronic congregations. In the case of Ingersoll, the yarn is particularly unfortunate because it happens that Ingersoll didn't have a death-bed scene, having died suddenly of a heart attack. But this doesn't stop the Bible thumpers from telling their dupes how Ingersoll called on the Great Gaud Jehovah to forgive him and accept him as a candidate for immortal harp-tickling among the angels.

* * *

What is the attitude of John Dewey towards churches?

He has described them as "milestones about the neck of society."

* * *

Are Prof. Rexford Guy Tugwell, Frances Perkins, Donald R. Richberg and the other brain trusters of the New Deal Atheists as charged?

I have seen no such charges. The 1934–35 Who's Who gives no religious affiliation to the three you mention, but this does not mean they are Atheists. They may be indifferentists. There is nothing to quote from any of these brain trusters to show them to be Free-thinkers, but it may be they privately hold to liberal or radical ideas on religion, as many politicians do nowadays, but who are always careful to keep such opinions from reaching the public. When "put on the spot" publicly, a politician, regardless of private scruples against religion, will usually make a gesture of friendship to the church, paying it an empty compliment. Such maneuvers mean nothing. For example, the supreme head of the brain trust—the great, divinely-begotten F.D.R. himself—has visited church only three times since becoming President. He claims to be religious, but seems careful to avoid showing much of the taint of supernaturalism. Being a superb politician, Roosevelt gives the
church an occasional nod, for consumption among the yokels in the sticks. I feel sure that Roosevelt and practically every member of the so-called Brain Trust are too intelligent to accept the monstrous superstitions of the Christian, or any other religion, but are careful not to antagonize the religious fanatics, though I recall having seen during the past few weeks a strong protest from a religious leader against Roosevelt’s failure to kowtow to the church more than three times in almost two years of the presidency. It is almost safe to say that Bryan was the last of the pious politicians. Any Washington politician who gave emphasis to religious notions would be laughed at in these more realistic days, not openly, of course, but behind one’s hand. It would be considered quite a joke, as indeed it would be. Politicians will, when called upon, tip their hats to Jesus, but that gesture can’t mean much. Religion isn’t as respectable as it used to be. It is practically dead at the top, and it is only a question of time before the lower elements let such primitive beliefs die a quiet, unlamented death. Ideas, as history shows, begin at the top and work down. The great leaders in thought, science, learning, and the arts, see the truth of an idea or philosophy long before the masses even hear about the problem, and then follows a long period in which the ideas receive slow acceptance more generally. It was hundreds of years before the average man permitted himself to accept the heretical notion that the world is round, though the intelligent minority accepted the proofs readily when they were first propounded.

* * *

Who is Karl Barth?

This German is one of the world’s greatest theologians. One of the most important planks in his religious platform is the idea that “religion has nothing to do with thinking.” Skeptics and rationalists have long said the same thing, but it’s nice to see the charge ratified by a famous theologian. Barth explains this point by the further claim that religion must concern itself only with “revealed truth,” and, of course, such “truth” is not debatable or subject to thinking. The delicate question then arises as to what constitutes “revealed truth,” and here no two theologians agree. With something like 600 different Christian religious bodies one must wonder just how much “revealed truth” there is in the world. The realm of thought never concerns itself with “revealed truth,” because there is no evidence of such a bizarre phenomenon. Real thinkers know only about verifiable truth, which fits into this scientific world.

* * *

What is syncretism?

When a “new religion” is formed the founder usually draws on other religions, taking a notion here, a ceremony there, merging something from one with a bit from another, modifying this and emphasizing that, combining, editing, revising, appropriating. This is described as “syncretism.”

* * *

What is Santayana’s attitude towards religion?

This famous philosopher says he considers religion as poetry “mistaking itself for science.” He is a Freethinker.

* * *

Is Freud religious?

Dr. Sigmund Freud, discoverer of the principles of Psycho-analysis, is an Atheist. In his published writings he shows himself to be a thoroughly anti-religious thinker, taking the position that all religions are nothing more than illusions “with an emotional foundation.”

* * *

Did Karl Marx have any religion?

Marx, the founder of scientific Socialism, was an Atheist. His most famous sentence is “Religion is the opiate of the people.”

* * *

Ingersoll is frequently referred to, even by his professed admirers, as a shallow thinker. Please comment.

Ingersoll was made to serve as a target for the barbs of his clerical enemies, and they, of course, could find nothing better to say about him than to call him “shallow.” Ingersoll was so “shallow” that he dug into religious superstitions and helped blast them to smithereens.
That's proof of shallowness! He was eloquent, human, witty and wise. He wrote beautiful, poetical prose. His sentences ring with moving phrases. He helped liberate millions of minds. And think of calling such a man "shallow!" I don't know any of his admirers who join in this chorus. Joseph McCabe certainly never called him shallow. He wrote a little book about Ingersoll, which I still have in my list, and it is filled with expressions of praise and gratitude for that brave fighter's efforts in the war to break the chains of mental slavery from the minds of the victims of clericalism. That isn't the kind of work a "shallow" thinker seeks out. It is a sign of real shallowness when one refuses to break away from the "authority" of orthodoxy and "revealed" knowledge, when one takes his ideas ready-made from so-called sacred books, when one quotes from "infallible" sources—and who but the preachers (who are also the critics of Ingersoll) resort to such shoddy intellectual practices? Ingersoll wasn't shallow—he was all too deep for the comfort of his enemies—and that's what hurts.

What is the difference between K. K. K., anti-Catholicism and radical anti-clericalism?

Anti-Catholicism in the U. S., as propagated by the Ku Klux Klan and other fascist organizations, is entirely superficial. It is based on hatred of foreigners and a desire to switch clerical powers from priests to Protestant preachers. Anti-Catholicism would strip the priests only to clothe the preachers. Like anti-Semitism, such anti-Catholicism is actuated by financial motives, the aim being to oust such "aliens" from public and private jobs and give them to "good" Kluxers. Such an attitude proves that American anti-Catholicism is blind to the anti-labor, anti-liberal, anti-democratic reactionism of the Catholic Church.

Anti-clericalism, as expressed in radical movements in Spain and other countries of Europe, goes to the roots of Catholicism. It strikes at the economic basis of the usurpations of the Catholic Church. It counters the Church's attempts to introduce Fascism, destroy labor unions, and strangle Socialism. It destroys the influence of the hooded monks in the world of education. It strikes back at the anti-democratic conspiracies of the Jesuit orders. It strives tirelessly to level the institutions that permit the workers to be exploited by the capitalistic Catholic Church. Catholicism, in Spain today and in Russia only a few decades ago, was part and parcel of capitalism. To hit at capitalism it was, and is, necessary to hit at Catholicism. A radical movement hasn't a chance to inaugurate its policies of political and economic emancipation so long as the Catholic Church is permitted to retain its vast powers and interests.

In Spain, for example, the Catholic Church was a great owner of property, which it ran along the approved methods of capitalistic tyranny and profiteering. Catholicism in Spain was a carry-over of feudalism, when the Catholic Church was the largest landowner in Europe and the greatest owner of slaves. It has been estimated, too conservatively, that the modern Catholic Church in Spain owned $500,000,000 of capitalistic property, with tremendous holdings in dividend-paying corporations, utilities, etc. In proportion to population and national wealth, this means that the Catholic Church in Spain owned more wealth, proportionately, of course, than Ford, Morgan, Rockefeller and Mellon combined. This estimate is too low because of the church's cleverness in hiding its wealth. For example, when the Jesuit orders were outlawed in Spain, the authorities found practically no property to nationalize, because the Jesuits had concealed almost all of it, through dummy corporations, fake deeds and hidden deposits.

No radical cares to call himself merely anti-Catholic, because this term is too limited. He leaves such for the K. K. K. type of antagonist. Anti-clericalism is more accurate, because it strikes not only at the priesthood, but at the Protestant preachers and the rabbis. Anti-clericalism also includes Free-thought, which is foreign to the
ideas of an American Kluxer. Freethought, anti-clericalism and economic radicalism go hand-in-hand in Spain and other countries cursed by extreme capitalism and Catholicism. The spokesmen of the Catholic Church in Spain make no effort to conceal their hatred for all progressive and humanitarian ideals. They are out-and-out fascists, with a formal fascist organization called the Acción Popular, and led by Gil Robles, legal adviser to the Jesuits and editor of Catholic periodicals. This clerical Fascist movement is anti-Semitic, as well as anti-working class, with a great dose of anti-Masonism thrown in for good measure. This outfit is frankly out to destroy the Republic and all forms of parliamentarism.

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Have any of our orthodox religionists ever explained what people will do with their teeth in heaven when there won't be any need for them, eating being such a worldly chore?

This question, like many another, has received the most elaborate consideration at the hands of the pious. An early Church Father stated, after the most thorough examination of God's will, that the teeth will be absolutely necessary in heaven so that the ecstatic smiles of the saved will be properly set off against a background of pearly teeth. Also, those who go to Hell will need their teeth in order to make a good job of gnashing their teeth when going through the ordeal of stoking the devil's boilers and themselves sitting on them when they reach the proper temperature.

* * *

Can an Atheist be a bigot?

Of course he can, if he closes his mind to every opinion but his own and then would force his preconceived notions and prejudices on others, who may want to differ with him. But atheistic bigots are rarities, because the philosophy of Atheism is based on strict rationalism. I don't know of a single leader of atheistic thought who could honestly be described as a bigot, meaning, of course, such men as Diderot, d'Holbach, Robertson, Ingersoll, Bradlaugh, Chapman Cohen, Joseph McCabe, Clarence Darrow, Haeckel, Bertrand Russell, Llewelyn Powys, Harold Laski, and many others. There are no popes in Atheism. Here is a philosophy that knows no sacred book. It doesn't aim to conquer by force or terror, but by reason and argument. Its leaders would be the first to reject infallibility. They respect logic more than authority, facts more than mere wishes, constructive thinking more than emotionalism. They would never suppress an opponent, but they would never hesitate over exposing the weaknesses in his intellectual methods. No true, intelligent, understanding, informed Atheist could ever be a bigot.

* * *

Being of Canadian citizenship and wishing to become a citizen of the United States, please let me know if the fact that I am an Atheist will present any difficulties.

It shouldn't. If your case comes up in a Federal Court, it will be impossible for the court to even ask you any questions regarding your religious or anti-religious ideas. The Constitution is very clear on this score. In state courts you will also be protected from any sort of an inquiry into your religious beliefs, except in a few states like Arkansas and New Jersey, where only the religious oath is recognized. Such states belong in the Dark Ages, and it is to be hoped that before long they too will give citizens the right to affirm instead of swearing to a religious oath. Secular ideas are moving forward in this country, much to the chagrin of the priests, rabbis and preachers. They still hold a few outposts, but they too will be lost to superstition before long. The future belongs to Freethought and Rationalism in the world of religion, and socialization in the world of industry.

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The Russian Communists call themselves Atheists, but is it not a fact that they have turned Communism into a religion, thus making themselves religious in that sense?

I have seen your viewpoint ex-
pressed many times. It has become one of the favorite platitudes of the clergy. You notice that it is almost invariably a spokesman of the church who gets off this sacred piece of bunk about Communism turned into a religion by the Communists of the Soviet Union. Every broken-down preacher, every "intellectual" "religionist," every believer in superstition waves aside this great movement of anti-religious materialists with the stupid remark that after all religion is natural to man, that religion is a part of man’s nature, and if one denies it in one direction it pops up in another.

If the Russian Communists are so religious, then why does the Pope worry so much over their fate? If they are real believers in religion, why does every Theist boohoo over their open atheistic propaganda?

It is true that they have substituted Communism for Christianity, but this does not make them religious—in fact, the opposite is the exact truth. They have kicked out faith, one of the corner-stones of religion. They have faith in this life, faith in man’s ability to solve his material, physical problems, but this is a part of applied Atheism, rather than an expression of man’s so-called “religious instinct.”

To be religious a person must believe in some sort of a God. Communists don’t.

To be religious a person must accept immortality as a valid inference. Communists don’t.

To be religious a person must believe in the supernatural. Communists don’t. They do not accept the Christian’s notions about a system of rewards and punishments in “the life to come.” They don’t believe in Jesus, or any other messiah. They don’t accept the Bible, or any other “sacred” book. So how are they to be classed as religious?

Ah, here comes the religious propagandist, with a bland smile and an air of endless patience: “They are full of zeal; they are ready to die for their ideals; they believe in the final victory of their cause; they have faith in their philosophy; Karl Marx is their saint; Lenin is their Pope; they overflow with missionary enthusiasm.”

All of which is that much baloney. One can be zealous for the Democratic Party or the Fascism of Hitler. Does that mean religion?

A Wall Street broker may be ready to die for the safety of his bank account. Is that religion?

An army general may be absolutely certain that he will win his battles. Is that religion?

An astrologer may be sure about his crazy notions of the stars and their influence on man’s future. Is that religion?

Herbert Spencer was one of Individualism’s greatest philosophers. Does that make him a saint, in the sense of sainthood as held by the Catholic Church?

Thomas Jefferson believed in Democracy as firmly as Lenin believed in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Does that make Jefferson a Pope?

Communists are not the only ones who overflow with missionary zeal. I met a crap-shooter the other night who was as enthusiastic about a game as the Pope is about his graft. Does that enthusiasm presuppose religion? Of course not.

Devotion to one’s ideas or ideals can be considered religious only when it is connected with religious ideas. And when that devotion is concentrated on the things of this world, when it denies an after life, when it exalts science and materialism, when it tells man to have faith in himself, when it rejects all spiritual notions and embraces physical facts—when, in a word, every action of the Communists implies direct, immediate Atheism, it is simply nitwitted to brand such behavior as religious.

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What is Kautsky’s attitude towards the church?

Karl Kautsky, who for a half-century has been a Socialist of international influence, expressed himself in the following vigorous sentence:

“The less Labor as a whole has to do with Church questions and the less it is interested in the churches, the more
successful will be its strife for emancipation.”

Does the U. S. Constitution mention God, the Christian religion, or any religion?

The U. S. Constitution is strictly secular and does not mention God, Jehovah, Allah, Jesus, the Holy Ghost, or anything else connected with religion or the church. It is a realistic document and should be kept that way.

If religious people really believe in an immortality of heavenly joy, why are they so reluctant to kick off?

I wonder, at times. I’m reminded of this remark of a devout deacon: “I know I’ll enjoy eternal happiness, but let’s not dwell on this morbid subject.”

Is Atheism taught openly in the Russian public schools?

Yes. Religion is tolerated, but irreligion is encouraged. From the time the children are able to give their minds to the problems of religion they are taught carefully to look on religion as a means of keeping the masses in intellectual darkness. They are taught to look on Atheism as a brain-cleansing course, that is intended to enable them to approach problems of the world with clear, logical minds, without recourse to supernaturalism or organized superstition. Clericalism is condemned as a weapon of social exploitation. Priests are denied the right to vote and must make their living from the voluntary contributions of those who wish to support them, without a penny of state support. Religion is looked upon as a poison gas that keeps the working class from approaching life realistically. Russia’s attitude on religion is sane, intelligent and civilized. It is one of the best things about the Soviet system. The workers in capitalist countries will learn, in time, that they too will have to shed all religious obscurantism if they expect to free themselves entirely from the clutches of physical and psychological enslavement. The church has always been the sworn foe of the tollers. There are a few preachers today who talk about social justice, but the major organizations are true to their black traditions, particularly the vast Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic hierarchy is now hard at work cooperating with fascist enemies of democracy, in an attempt to ward off the spread of Socialist doctrines. The Catholic Church will mouth phrases about “fair wages” and “Christian morals” but when put to the test it supports Capitalism, and when the the Capitalist system is in danger it supports the wild barbarities of Fascism, as shown in Germany, Austria, Italy, Poland, Yugo-Slavia, etc. Today, in Spain, the Catholic Church is putting its full strength into the war on the Republic. All these simple facts should convince the intelligent workers that they must learn to look at religion realistically and meet the anti-social conspiracies of clerical organizations with firm and uncompromising opposition.

I was interested in your statement that it was Mohammedanism that made the quickest headway in getting started. Will you give a few facts in support of this?

Twenty-five years after the death of Mohammed (570-632 A. D.) his followers (the Arabs) controlled Persia, Egypt, Babylonia, Palestine and Syria. After another 50 years, Mohammedanism was the religion of all of northern Africa and a great part of Spain, with southern France as the next objective. By 670, there were 10,000 mosques.

I have been presented with the argument that Jesus must be an historical character otherwise there could be no calendar based on B. C. and A. D. Please comment.

Such an argument could come only from the more ignorant apologists of the church, for even Christian propagandists of the most evangelical fervor should (and frequently do) know that the system of figuring time from the birth of the so-called Christ was introduced by the Christian Calendarographer, Dionysius Exiguus, at about 525 A. D. Naturally, his decision was arbitrary. This, however, does not prove the historicity of Jesus; it
merely means that something like 525 years after the birth of Jesus someone introduced B. C. and A. D. into our calendar. One might as well argue that because our money says "In God We Trust," there must be a God.

Has the depression tended to strengthen or weaken the institutions of religion?
In less scientific days, catastrophes of nature or society drove the ignorant masses, and their almost equally ignorant leaders, in the direction of religion. But this attitude no longer prevails. The forces of scientific and rationalistic education have been at work too long to enable the religionists to regain lost power and prestige at the first signs of serious economic or social distress. The attitude is generally one of reliance on man-made organizations, without recourse to supernaturalism or divine intervention. The attitude is generally that every mess we are in will have to be met scientifically and materialistically, bringing relief through secular rather than divine instrumentalities. In the depression today we do not chitter about God's wrath, or man's sinful nature, nor do we seek a sign in the heavens that will lead us from the darkness of economic despond to the light of an angel-inhabited paradise. Instead of seeking for Jehovah's omens, we analyze industrial conditions, study the problems of the concentration of wealth, the exploitation of wage labor in the strongholds of capitalist monopoly, the case for and against a system of socialized industry. Such approaches are strictly rationalistic and are a sign of the time. According to an article in the April, 1934, Harper's, the Rev. Albert C. Diffenbach is quoted as having said recently that, "contrary to claims, there has been no increase in church attendance in this country during the depression years."

I shall be glad to know how and where Atheism ever did any good?
Religionists frequently ask your question, with an air of pompous dignity, little knowing that it is merely rhetorical. What is Athe-

ism? Is it a code of morals? Of course not. In brief, Atheism is merely this: It is a critical examination of the philosophy of Theism, the God-idea. That's all it is. If Theism is true, then Atheism's examination must, of necessity, be all to the good, for it will serve a useful purpose. If Theism is false, then Atheism's critical examination must, again of necessity, be all to the good, because it will be helping in the great, vital work of adding to man's knowledge. Anything that adds to knowledge is good, from the viewpoint of those who love wisdom. Of course, those who have a mercenary interest in Theism—the priesthood—hate Atheism whether it be true or false, because it interferes with a long-established, respectable racket. With such a viewpoint one cannot argue; one merely smiles and passes on to other, and more useful, individuals.

Would you ask what good the theory of Evolution ever did man? Such a question would be silly, because Evolution is a branch of science and as such is dedicated to the great work of achieving new truths. You don't ask: Has evolution done good or evil? You rather ask, if you are intelligent: Is Evolution true? So with Atheism. Is its case against Theism sound and true? That's all you can ask of it.

There is no reason why the philosophy opposing the God-idea of Theism should build orphanages, or schools, or movie palaces. And yet, people of religious ideas will ask this very question, wondering why it is that there are no Atheist orphan asylums, as though a purely negative philosophy had to justify itself by institutional, social work.

While it is true that Atheism does not concern itself with philanthropic projects, it remains a fact, proven by history, that Atheists themselves are high-minded humanitarians, anxious to bring about social, economic and political changes that will work to the benefit of the poorest citizens. But they achieve their goal through secular means—that is to say, they work through national, state or municipal instrumentalities.

A study of the contributions of
Freethinkers during the last two centuries will prove that they have had a hand in the development of practically every humanitarian enterprise, from free public schools to public libraries. The subject is vast, but it has been covered amply by such thorough, able, trustworthy historians as Bertrand Russell, Joseph McCabe and others. As an Atheist, I expect my philosophy to serve me only to the extent of enabling me to examine the philosophy of the God-idea. When it comes to doing social and economic good, I work through other channels, mainly governmental, and therein lies the explanation of why I am so consistently in favor of a society based on socialized industry.

Please let me stress at this point the reason why I want to be considered a private, free lance, rather than an official spokesman of any political party. If I were tied up with a political organization officially, I could not discuss various subjects with complete ease and freedom, because of the fear that my remarks might jeopardize certain interests that otherwise might be won over to my side. A love of truth forces me to speak honestly on Atheism as well as a higher economy. I should hate to feel compelled to ignore a question like the above, or treat it evasively, because of a dread of provoking political antagonism. Being a free lance in journalism gives me the right to speak honestly and directly on any subject that I feel able to discuss.

**What is Turkey doing with religion?**

Mustafa Kemal started his gigantic program of modernization with complete separation of church and state. By this one stroke he stripped the Moslem church officials of their immense powers. Turkey, now closest in ideology to the Soviet Union, is unbelievably fearless in its treatment of the ancient problem of clerical usurpation.

From Istanbul comes a report that the leaders of modern Turkey, particularly the press, are in favor of a powerful anti-religious educational campaign. It is urged that an anti-religious museum be opened for the public, in order to expose the history and practice of the Moslem clergy, and "where all the turpitudes of all the religions will be exposed and all religious superstitions held up to ridicule."

Among other proposals, the government (controlled entirely by Freethinkers) is urged to prepare an anti-religious catechism for use in the public schools. The editor of Torch, in an editorial that made a profound impression, urged this catechism and concluded: "Thanks to such methods of persuasion, we shall in a few years be able to see the people who wasted their time at devotions spending it profitably in self-instruction."

The same Torch editorial said that "religion is a cause of civil and of international war, and if only for this reason must be pulled out from the hearts of men." It continues: "If this country is to progress, we must launch a pitless fight against the black-frocked imperialists. The history of the Turkish revolution shows that it was they who opposed all reforms."

The religions of Mohammedanism, Catholicism, and other powerful bodies of orthodox propaganda, show themselves always on the side of reaction and oppression. But there is an awakening, and now Turkey is beginning to take her place in the vanguard of nations. Turkey was called "the sick man of Europe" only a few years ago, but reports agree that the patient has recovered and is on the way to better days.

**My only criticism is your stand against religion. We do not want to forget that people are often slow in giving up old beliefs. It is better to get people to see the beauties of Socialism and let them find out for themselves later where the opposition comes from. These people look on their beliefs as sacred.**

The above is typical of scores of letters I have received. Most of these writers are Freethinkers themselves, but they seem to have the notion that attacks on theism, Christianity, Catholicism, etc., should be kept out. Personally, I prefer always to speak frankly on
the menace of religion, as a weapon of reaction, fascism, militarism, imperialism and exploitation. These questions are not merely academic. They strike to the roots of the social order. But at the same time I wonder how the main body of readers feel about this matter. Would they prefer to have me keep quiet on the evils of religious obscurantism, clerical usurpation, ecclesiastical conspiracies against progress? Would they have me attack capitalism and at the same time pay no attention to one of capitalism’s most effective weapons? Would they have me ignore the obvious fact that as soon as a Hitler or a Mussolini establishes fascist control, there is an immediate tie-up with the Vatican? Are capitalists, imperialists and dictators to be attacked, but priests, preachers and rabbis to be exempted?

What is the value of church property that goes untaxed in the U. S.? $8,000,000,000.

What is the Creationist Theory? It is the notion advanced by Theology that something can be created out of nothing—a proposition foreign to every rule of reason. The Creationist Theory is nothing more than an assumption, without an iota of evidence. Bringing in an all-knowing and all-powerful God to do the job of making nothing turn into the universe does not help the theologian, for it would be necessary first to prove the existence of this uncaused First Cause, which is a logical impossibility. The discovery of the evolutionary process played havoc with Creationism.

The Jewish people, as you perhaps know, think nothing of exploiting gentiles, for it is even stated in the Talmud that gentiles (any other race but the Jewish) are but swine, and that the Jews alone are real people.

In systems of trade, commerce, industry (in short, Capitalism) exploitation (which means doing business at a profit) will be found true of all races, creeds, colors, etc. A Jewish department store-owner tries to sell at a profit, regardless of whether that profit comes from Jewish or non-Jewish customers, in the same way that Baptist Rockefeller’s Standard Oil takes profits from black, brown, yellow and white men. One exploits a mine, farm, factory, store, mill, etc., because that is the way wealth is produced and distributed under Capitalism, but it is unrealistic to say that this is typically Jewish in origin or current practice. The expression, “I’m not in business for my health,” is heard from Catholics, Protestants, Christian Scientists, Atheists, Jews and others. To take an insignificant minority (the Jews are such a tiny minority) and blame them for the system of Capitalism that has taken centuries to evolve is to resort to the shoddy thinking of a Hitler or a Coughlin. If Jews resort to unfair business practices, and there’s no doubt they have their proportion of dishonest individuals, they are, in this, no better or worse than the run of non-Jewish individuals. There’s no race that has a monopoly on goodness or badness. If one is going to persecute or discriminate against the Jews in this 20th Century because of some quotation that may be picked from some remote or obscure source, the door is opened for endless sources of intolerance. There’s no telling where such a thing can stop. During the Age of Faith (called by others the Dark Ages, or Medievalism), the Catholic Church caused the deaths of perhaps a million men, women and children, because of the few words picked from the Bible, as follows: “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” It was then left to the church officials and later the Inquisition to define and punish witchcraft, with the result that hundreds of thousands were executed on the mere say-so of the Catholic authorities. Most intelligent, educated Jews do not go to the Talmud for their ethics or philosophy, preferring, instead, to draw on science and modern thought. If Jewish religious fanatics, past and present, described non-Jews as swine, they were, of course, only guilty of committing what has been a common habit
among the religious-minded, for Catholics hate Protestants, Protestants hate Papists, Mohammedans despise the "infidel," the believer would destroy the unbeliever, the orthodox would massacre the heterodox, and so on down the bloody, cruel pages of religion. This is one of the penalties the race must pay for enduring an intellectual attitude which holds that "my" religion is right and "your" religion is evil, and since I'm stronger I'll cut your throat, or put you out of business, or drive you out of our community. History shows what such a view can produce. The truth is that all religions are nothing less than mental diseases, and when we get rid of them—Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan—the world will be a better place to live in and sanity will rule. If there are Jews who think they "alone are real people," they must be steeped in ignorance and superstition, for science plainly teaches, through its great anthropologists, that all races—black, white, yellow—have equal biological equipment.

* * *

In all the years that I have read your literature, and your vilification of religion, I have never heard you rail against the Jewish faith. Why?

I don't recall ever having vilified any religion. I have criticized religion freely, but of course any sort of criticism is vilification in the mind of a church supporter.

I have not railed at the Jewish faith because I do not rail at any kind of faith. If you will refer to my answers you will find that I frequently lump the clericals into the following: "priests, preachers and rabbis." I do this because I find that when I criticize religion and speak only of the priests, my Protestant readers are tickled, while a reference to the preachers tickles the Catholics, and so on.

As a Freethinker I have no use for any kind of religion, be it Christianity, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Judaism and all the other expressions of superstition and mysticism.

There is little occasion for singling out Judaism for criticism, because there is so very little of it in the world. Catholicism is a much more dangerous phenomenon, because it has such far-reaching political manifestations, as shown in Central Europe today, where it is in a conspiracy to establish fascism as a world-power.

My contacts with Rabbis lead me to the opinion that they are just about as liberal as Unitarians in matters of theology and economics. They are usually inclined to lean a little to the left, while the orthodox institutions of Catholicism and Protestantism incline more to the right, with the Catholic hierarchy at the extreme right of conservatism and reaction.

As for the theology of Judaism, I waste no time criticizing it, as I waste no time on Catholic or Protestant theology. The religious rigmarole of the various churches bores me. I usually try to devote myself to a discussion of the social, political, economic and philosophical aspects of the problem of clericalism. These subjects are much more important. A mere dissertation on creeds and tenets would tire me and put my readers to sleep.

But have no doubt about one thing: There isn't an iota of Judaism that I accept. As a Freethinker I reject Judaism with the same candor and vigor that I show towards other religions. I consider all religions as symptoms of diseased minds.

* * *

Churches justify themselves by claiming they strive to make the country moral. Please comment.

I have treated this subject several times, but here goes again. I deny most emphatically that the churches—Protestant or Catholic—are moral forces. If anything, they are instruments for immorality. In matters of sex, the churches take a puritanical position and then blandly believe they are advancing civilization. For example, consider the Legion of Decency, through which the Catholics, aided by preachers and rabbis, are trying to boycott the movies. But here we find a healthy difference of opinion. The intellectual leaders of the world do not agree with these puritans; they reject the false assump-
tion that a liberal attitude towards sex is immoral. Furthermore, they give the word "moral" its scientific definition—applying not only to sexual behavior but to all expressions of anti-social conduct, such as lynching, racial persecution, exploitation of the helpless, profiteering, speculation in social necessities, lying, misrepresenting, cruelty, injustice and other forms of behavior that are far more serious socially than mere straying from an unnaturally severe sexual code. The Catholic Church goes into a frenzy over a so-called obscene movie, but what has it done about lynchings in the United States? Has it ever organized a Legion of Decency Against Lynching? Lynching is a live, serious subject, and the Catholic Church won't touch it with a 10-foot pole. War is a great social crime, an extreme form of immorality. Has the Catholic Church organized a Legion of Decency Against War? Fascism is a menace to social and political progress. Has the Catholic Church organized a Legion of Decency Against Fascism? A great institution—Protestant and Catholic—that claims to have moral ends, and keeps its hands off the really important moral questions that distress humanity, can be considered only an obstacle in the way of social improvement.

Did the U. S. exempt from the World War draft those men who claimed they had religious scruples against war?

The draft law allowed exemption to all religious conscientious objectors, but when put to the test the government refused to abide by its law. The prisons of the military forces were filled with Quakers, Mennonites and other religious objectors to war. This was done in the face of the fact the Draft Law was clear in its recognition of religious objectors to military services. The questionnaire filled out by men subject to the draft had questions covering the beliefs of those who were conscientious objectors, but they soon found themselves persecuted in the same way that Socialists and other economic objectors to war were hounded and imprisoned. Wilson's conduct was reprehensible. He showed himself to be a hypocrite and a falsifier in this issue, as in so many others.

It is claimed that religion is a unifying force and therefore is valuable. Please comment.

It would be difficult to prove this claim. Instead of uniting, religion deliberately causes disunion and discord. The Catholic synod of Odo ordered its laymen to have no "commerce with Jews, sell to them or buy from them, for, where religions differ, there ought to be no community of spirit." Not much of a unifying force there, except to unite its following, under penalty of excommunication, in persecution. It might be said that this unity works when there are no rival religions. But there has never been a time when only one religion prevailed, except during the Dark Ages, when most of Europe was under Catholic domination. Was there unity then? What about the constant wars, religious and otherwise? Or take today—Catholic dictators like Mussolini, Hitler, the late Dollfuss, always fighting one another. History shows that religion as a force for unity is just one more of those myths.

Is it not true that it is possible to get mass acceptance of any set of ideas if only they are pounded and repeated often enough?

At first thought repetition is accepted as a means of forcing general willingness to believe anything. Advertisers call it "cumulative effect," a much over-rated notion, to my way of thinking, and I speak here as an advertiser. The best argument against your theory of "mass acceptance" is the history of religious literature and propaganda. It is pretty safe to say that religion has 25 books to any other subject's one, and yet religion is weaker today than it has been at any time in recorded history. With a million Catholic priests and perhaps several million other professional propagandists for religion pounding, repeating, yelling, threatening, cajoling, imploring, arguing and explaining—with all the ballyhoo of claims and counter-
claims, religion slips back each year, its influence declines and its assumptions are either ignored or questioned.

**Which religion in history made the most rapid progress?**

The palm for speedy acceptance goes to Mohammedanism. It spread like wildfire. But it, like all other religions, is declining in these more critical, skeptical, scientific times, thank God.

**Don't you believe it would be better to lay off religion?**

I let my readers answer this quest­tion last year, and the response was emphatically in favor of continuing the policy of discussing superstition, blind faith, and ridiculous notions about God, im­mortality, the soul and the other trappings of the religious. I can't improve on the thought expressed in the following lines of a poet whose name I don't know:

- Blind faith, which holds in bondage reason,
- May, by a question aptly posed,
- Be put to flight,
- And superstition's strangling clutch
- From progress' throat be loosed.

**What is the “Theology of Gaps”?**

This describes the attitude of theologians who "preserve" the God-idea by installing their God wherever there is a gap in verifiable, organized knowledge, or Science. The sure discoveries in biology, astronomy, geology, psychology and anthropology, to name only a few of the sciences of the evolutionists, keep the theologians moving their God further and further from reality, but as there are still numerous gaps in knowledge, these same religionists hug these gaps as perfect habitats for their notions, thus accounting for the derisive phrase, "Theology of gaps."

**Did not Martin Luther fight for the rights of the peasants at the time he was fighting against the powers of the pope?**

He did not. The record of history is plain. When the peasants of Ger­many revolted against the feudal masters who held them in serfdom, Luther told them to accept without protest the conditions laid down by their rulers. He also wrote to the nobles, as follows:

"A rebel is outlawed of God and Kaiser, therefore who can and will first slaughter such a man does right well, since upon such a common rebel every man is alike the judge and executioner. Therefore, who can shall openly or secretly smite, slaughter and stab, and hold that there is nothing more po­isonous, more harmful, more devilish than a rebellious man."

**Do you look on that extremely popular play, “Green Pastures,” as a constructive force for religious propaganda?**

I saw this delightful concoction in Kansas City, a few years ago, and enjoyed every moment of it, from the opening scene (a Negro fish-fry in heaven), the appear­ance of “de Lawd” to the com­mand: “Gangway for the great God Jehovah”: from the adventurous sailing of Noah, to the scenes in heaven where “de Lawd” hurls his thunderbolts at sinners in this world and accepts, or hands out, 10-cent “seegars.” I reacted to this show as did the audience—with full-throated laughter. The public takes this spectacle as a comedy, and that kills the play so far as religious propaganda is concerned. Here and there a timid soul will breathe sad words about hoping to see the world reaccept the Chris­tian fables as do these simple, primitive, poetical Negroes, but the world is far beyond all that. It laughs. It shrieks. It applauds. It admires brilliant acting and witty lines. And once the world laughs at a religion, its day is done. Laughter is one thing a religion can never tolerate. And as the world laughs at “Green Pastures” it can never be moved by it as our pious folk might hope.

**On what grounds do you hold that religion is man-made?**

Religious ideas have evolved, like everything else. Scholars have given much attention to the gradual development of religious notions, and all who approach the problem
realistically agree that religion is a development in reply to man's wishes, usually led by the specialists in religion whom we may designate by the single word Priest. A striking proof of religion's man-made origin and continuance is found in the simple, unchallenged fact that the world is crammed with all sorts of religions, each contradicting the other and all agreeing that their own religious ideas are the only true ones. There are more religions than we can count. In this country alone you will find more than 600. If religion were divinely ordered it stands to reason that there would be only one religion. The fact that each religion claims divine sanction should in itself cause suspicion even among the unthinking.

* * *

Is Sinclair Lewis religious?
No. He is an Atheist. In Will Durant's "On the Meaning of Life," Sinclair Lewis says: "It is, I think, an error to believe that there is any need of religion to make life seem worth living."

* * *

Was Swinburne religious?
He was a singing pagan. This great poet—one of the mightiest voices in English literature—loathed Christianity. He said it was unnatural and urged the modern spirit to make war on it. He was an incorrigible Freethinker. Had he lived 500 years earlier he would have been burned at the stake. Were he alive in Germany today, he would be mopping latrines in a concentration camp. For Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837–1909) was a thorough-going republican. Kossuth, Mazzini and Garibaldi were his heroes. When death hushed his singing voice, England could find no place for his bones in Westminster Abbey, lest he contaminate the pious souls resting there. He had written too many fiery poems to liberty. He had condemned the Czar’s government for the barbarous treatment accorded the Jews. But, let the full truth be told. In his old age, he attacked the Boers, forgetting that they, like the Italian republicans, were fighting for independence. A younger Swinburne could never have done such a thing. But in his opposition to religion he never wavered or compromised. To him, God was "the supreme evil." He cried: "Glory to Man in the highest! for Man is the master of things."

In his "Before a Crucifix," Swinburne speaks boldly of "this their carrion crucified."

No wonder he didn't become England's poet-laureate after Tennyson died!

* * *

What religion has provoked the greatest amount of persecution?
The record of history is clear. It is Christianity.

* * *

By what authority do you claim that Freud is an Atheist? I understand he has devoted himself only to psychology and his own discovery, Psycho-analysis, and never expressed an opinion either way about religion and Atheism.

You are seriously in error. Dr. Sigmund Freud wrote a book, entitled "The Future of the Illusion of Religion," which was translated into English and published in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1928. In this long essay, Dr. Freud made a tremendously powerful attack on religion and claimed that the future of civilization depended on the uprooting of religion and the establishment of Atheism. I happen to have a copy of this Freethought masterpiece in my library and I hope, since I consider it a work of the first significance, to publish it before long. I'd be more than proud to be able to make this supremely effective expression of Rationalism available to the American public that is not afraid to read books that really say things. In this work, Dr. Freud gives himself the big task of proving that "religion is the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity." I'll keep this volume in mind, and the first time my treasury permits me to indulge myself in another publishing program I'll be sure to give it a place. There are so many things I want to do, and so little money available, but I try my best, and, considering the results, I believe I haven't made such very bad progress at that. To have published almost 2,000 small books and something like 500 large
books, in less than 15 years (to say nothing of weekly and monthly periodicals) isn't so meager, but I must confess that what I have accomplished isn't even one-tenth of what I hoped, and still hope, to do.

* * *

**Does history show any records of the life of Jesus? What scientific evidence is there of his life?**

There isn't a single contemporary document regarding the life of Jesus. Josephus is supposed to mention him in his history, but the passage has been exposed as spurious. Something like a century after Jesus is supposed to have lived, several authors are said to have mentioned either Jesus or small Christian sects, but they came so late after Jesus' time that they have no value as proofs of the historicity of Jesus. As the problem stands today, scientific history offers nothing to those who accept Jesus as an historical character.

* * *

**Is not the Christian religion opposed to slavery?**

The record tells the awful truth. The Christian churches always supported slavery, right down to the middle of the last century, and even today there is human slavery in Christian Abyssinia. A pious Christian authority like the "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics" says:

"There is no explicit condemnation in the teaching of our Lord . . . It remains true that the Abolitionist could point to no one text in the Gospels in defense of his position, while those who defended slavery could appeal to the letter of the Scripture."

An interesting fact to remember, when preachers lie about history and claim opposition to slavery, is the estimate that preachers and church members of the South owned almost 700,000 slaves.

* * *

**Why do the priests find it so hard to make our world accept religion when only a few generations ago they had such easy sailing?**

The answer, I believe, is found in the fact that this modern age refuses to be attracted by promises of a happy eternity if only it will be content with present miseries. In the past, when the masses were illiterate and science was weak, it was easy for priestcraft to instill humility and acceptance of poverty as a prelude to paradise for all time after death. Today, the world smiles at such priestly mouthings. It is practical and wants results in this life, and knowing that religion is infantile when faced with the problems of economics, politics and security, it turns sanely to worldly philosophers and measures of good sense.

* * *

**What church did Abraham Lincoln attend?**

Lincoln never joined a church during his entire life. Though he made a few deistic utterances during his life, he was mainly a Free-thinker. I would be willing to pay anyone a reward of $10,000 if they could produce a single bit of evidence that would prove that Lincoln was ever a member of any church.

* * *

**Will you admit that the churches—Catholic and Protestant—sincerely teach and practice alms-giving?**

They have done this for centuries, and it should be plain to the simplest mind that this method is socially unscientific and reactionary. It serves to give added life to economic injustice, privilege, poverty, exploitation and inequality. What the world needs is an end to alms-giving and a sincere and intelligent attack on the social conditions that produce unemployment, insecurity, poverty and mass misery.

* * *

**Where there is Law, there must be a Law-giver; and that Law-giver is God.**

Your argument comes up frequently in discussions on Theism. In my debate with the Rev. Burris A. Jenkins, considerable time was given to this point, and those who are interested in its philosophical validity are referred to the printed report of that discussion, under the title, "Is Theism a Logical Philosophy?" Joseph McCabe and Bertrand Russell have riddled this Law-giver argument to shreds. Now comes proof that even the Theists
are beginning to doubt the usefulness of this argument. The Christian Century, for December 12, 1934, contains a long editorial on "The Philosophers and God," in which this argument is repeated, as follows: "The universe is a universe of order, of law; there must therefore be a law-giver, an intelligent Creator." The editorial then admits that this type of reasoning is "congenial to the minds of those religious people who have not come strongly under the influence of modern scientific method, especially of that application of scientific method called psychology." The Christian Century then admits that this type of argument is "suspect, if not already condemned." It is plain that this argument about a Law-giver, after centuries of use by theologians, is being scrapped by the more intelligent Christian thinkers, along with the argument of the First Cause. The same editorial admits the complete defeat of the so-called Pragmatic Argument for God, which The Christian Century describes as follows: "Man is so constituted that he can fulfill his highest possibilities only by the help of a higher power; he needs a God; therefore there must be a God." This shoddy piece of reasoning is disposed of, by this Christian periodical, as follows: "observing so many human 'needs' for which life provides no satisfaction, they are unable to see that a belief in God based upon our 'need' of a God is anything but wishful thinking." If one were to refer to the files of The Christian Century one could see thousands of articles supporting the God-idea with the above two arguments, which now are admitted to be worthless. Progress is slow among the clergy, but even there one meets up with it.

* * *

Are church statisticians reliable? The best answer I can make is to quote Walter Bagehot's deathless jibe: "There are lies, damned lies, and church statistics." The more intelligent religious editors and writers frequently make fun of their church statisticians. Writers like John Haynes Holmes, Claris Edwin Silcox and Galen M. Fisher reject church statistics because they are "incomplete and inaccurate."

* * *

Mathews writes: "The word God is the term which we used to describe those personality-producing activities of the cosmos which constitute a part of the environment conditioning the development of humanity and with which men must live personally." Please comment.

This sentence, taken from Dr. Shailer Mathews' recent book, "Christianity and Social Progress," presents a somewhat familiar theistic argument. The dean emeritus of the University of Chicago defends religion and theism because God created personality. When personality was a great deal more of a "mystery" than it is today, this argument carried a certain amount of authority, though its weakness was apparent to many thinkers even in those days. But since the development of the sciences of biology and psychology, and the firm establishment of the fact of evolution, the elements of "mystery" have been dissipated.

Personality isn't a "mystery" any more. Its development in the evolutionary scale is being studied ceaselessly, so that it is fairly safe to say that before long the "secrets" of personality will be as well known as are the facts of physics and chemistry. We know that personality isn't a gift from something outside or beyond nature, or a separate creation of some cosmic First Cause. We know definitely that it is a development, responding to materialistic things like food, shelter, security, education, conditioning, heredity, environment, etc.

We know that good conditions and blood will make for good personalities, while decays of personality can result from bad blood or conditions. We know that the qualities that make personality fascinating—love of truth, justice, fairness, kindness, humor, beauty, wisdom, sanity—are not "put into" humans. They grow, as results of education, good material conditions, protection, mutual aid and the like. We also know how evil forms
of personality—brutality, superstition, cruelty, persecution, intolerance, deception, etc.—are also expressions of environment and miseducation. So where does personality make room for a God?

And let us not forget that while personality can be developed and evolved under good conditions, there are also conditions in nature that make for the destruction of personality—violence in nature, disease germs, catastrophes, decay, destruction, chance and blind, ignorant animalism. Personality is obviously a thing of beauty or terror, as the conditions making for great or inferior personalities function. It is a natural thing and once we grasp this fact we learn to look to ourselves for "the development of humanity," through struggles for truth, justice, economic fairness, industrial opportunity, real education, proper food, clothes and shelter, contacts with the beautiful creations of man's artistic impulses in the world of art, literature, music, thought, architecture and the like.

Personality has developed because man has progressed. The world today, with all its faults, is immeasurably better than it was 600 years ago in Europe. It is better than it was 50 years ago. It is fairly safe to assume that it will be still better a century hence. And if it is better—if personality-creating forces continue to function—the credit will not go to a mysterious stranger called God, but to the intelligence, determination, humanity, and sanity of man.

The problem is not a simple one. It is tremendously complex. But it is not insurmountable. There will be temporary set-backs, reactions and minor victories for the forces of obscurantism. But the tendency is in the direction of social and cultural advancement, and what makes it all seem so certain is the materialistic, secular, worldly manner in which man insists on approaching the problems that perplex him in these days of economic, intellectual and political struggle.

The fault is not God's, if things are wrong. We are to blame. The remedy is not to appeal to a "personality-producing activity" (God), but to buckle down intelligently and honestly to an understanding of what's wrong and what's needed to make it right. We thus find in the very personality of man (of which Dr. Mathews makes so much) a denial of reliance on supernaturalism and a rejection of the possibility of help and guidance from a Great Spirit (whatever that means) that will turn out newer and better personalities as Henry Ford turns out new motor cars.

* * *

Is it true that it was the clergy that made public education possible in England?

The famous Education Bill was introduced in the House of Lords in 1819, at which time there were 18 bishops in that body. When the Bill came to a vote only three bishops supported it, while 15 bishops voted against it. Public education came, in England, not because of, but in spite of, the clergy.
Odds and Ends

Who is the most popular movie star?

Mickey Mouse. In 1933, it was estimated that 468,000,000 bought tickets throughout the world to see him. I understand that more than a half dozen Mickey Mouse reels are shown in a single performance in some foreign countries, which strikes me as a terrible way to spend an evening. One is plenty in any show.

What's the difference between "shall" and "will"?

I used to know, but it's been so long since I've used "shall" that I've forgotten. Writers a generation ago were sticklers for the difference (whatever it was) but now very few care a rap. Don't let it bother you. Do as all of us do today—make "will" do the work of both. I shall continue along this line.

What is tequila and how is it drunk?

Tequila is the famous Mexican whisky made from the juice of cactus. It is similar in appearance to gin and vodka. This watery looking "delicacy" carries a terrific wallop. I tried to sample it a few months ago, while in Joplin, Mo., but had to admit I was too much of a sissy to be able to handle the dynamite. I saw a hula dancer put down glass after glass of the mighty concoction and wondered what her insides were like. According to a new book, "The Wine Cook Book," by Cora, Rose and Bob Brown, the proper way to drink tequila is as follows: It is downed with the aid of salt and lemon (but here I want to add that the woman I watched gulped her ounce and a half portions straight, as a high school girl manages her "coke"). The Browns write that "the back of the left hand, in which a quarter of a lemon is held, is politely moistened by a lick of the tongue, and salt sprinkled on. The lemon is sucked quickly, the tequila gulped down and the salt licked off the hand."

What is the standing of torch-singers in the musical world?

I can't improve on Deems Taylor's description of a torch-singer as a "woman who has lost her voice and insists on bewailing the fact in public."

Please comment on this: A Newark, N. J., priest complained to the police that someone had left a counterfeit dollar bill in his collection plate.

I have felt, in my more whimsical moments, that it would be a good stunt for utopian social order to legalize counterfeit money to the extent of permitting persons to use it in paying for counterfeit services. Thus, a theologian, astrologer, palmist, crystal reader, Christian Scientist, Billy Sunday evangelist, phrenologist, numerologist, and every other species of bunk-shooter, could be listened to soberly and then quietly rewarded with a counterfeit. The size of the bill would register the specific gravity of the bunk offered for consumption. Such counterfeits could be made to do great good in the service of truth. Let some one suggest the plan to Roosevelt.

Was it ever a crime to burn coal?

The British parliament, in the 14th century, passed a law declaring the burning of coal to be a nuisance. This prohibition, like our repealed 18th Amendment, did not work.

Was Gen. Robert E. Lee ever pardoned?

No. At the time of his death, in 1870, Lee was still on the record of the government as a paroled Civil
War prisoner. His citizenship was not restored. It is reported that an attempt will be made to have Congress change the record by authorizing a pardon.

* * *

Who coined the words: "the United States of America"?
Thomas Paine. He also was the first man to suggest a continental conference to draw up a Constitution.

* * *

Did any ancient country ever take a census of its population to find out the proportion of slaves to members of the ruling class?
This was done in Athens, in 309 B.C., which showed the following: citizens, 21,000; foreigners, 10,000; slaves, 400,000.

* * *

What was the extent of the Roman Empire under Julius Caesar?
Its territory was large, being bounded on the east by the Euphrates, Taurus and Armenia; on the south by Ethiopia; on the north by the Danube; on the west by the Atlantic Ocean.

* * *

What was the population of the Roman Empire under Caesar? How strong were his military forces?
Gibbon is still the best authority, and he said, in his immortal "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," that there were 110,000,000 inhabitants in Caesar's empire. There were only 250,000 men in the army and navy, a surprisingly small force.

* * *

I like to read, especially the works of Joseph McCabe and other Free thinkers and radicals, but find myself handicapped by a limited vocabulary. Is there a remedy, considering that I haven't gone beyond grade school?
The remedy is simple. Get yourself a good dictionary, preferably Merriam's Webster's New International, which is the best for the average reader. Then, when you meet an unfamiliar word while reading, stop immediately and learn its meaning. You will find that a definition learned under that condition will plant it in your mind as a permanent possession. Keep that up consistently and you will be surprised at the speed with which your knowledge of words will grow. There is nothing difficult about this suggestion. It's simple, direct and certain. Don't ever try the stupid method of deliberately studying the dictionary and trying to memorize strange words. That's dry, dumb cramming, and will do you no good. It's like trying to learn history by memorizing dates, instead of surveying man's social, economic, political and cultural movements. Better learn 100 new words by-products of your regular reading than try to swallow the dictionary and get indigestion from the unnatural absorption of 1,000 words unrelated to your intellectual interests.

* * *

Can you explain the average man's prejudice against male adagio dancers?
I've often wondered at it, and the only explanation I can offer is an inferiority complex. The average man is less than handsome, while the average adagio dancer is more than handsome—he is positively beautiful, graceful; a living Greek statue. Jealousy results. Instead of admiring the artistic dancer's superior physique, the average man makes sneering remarks, as though to imply that the handsome dancer is not as manly as the critic, when the opposite is the truth. I've heard several of these critics call such dancers "sissies," and in some instances "pansies." Of course, some adagio dancers are pansies, as are many of the unbeautiful men among the average. But anyone with half an eye can see that a real dancer is not a sissy but an athlete, with a beautiful body kept in perfect condition. So I put it all down to sexual jealousy. The dancer can "make" a beautiful woman easier than the average man, and that's a helluva blow at masculine pride.

* * *

What do you think of grammar?
I rarely give it a thought. I used to pride myself on knowing quite a few grammatical rules, but I forgot them long ago and never miss them. I do a great deal of writing,
but so far as grammar is concerned it's all written by ear, and not by rules. If what I write is grammatically correct, the credit doesn't go to my teachers of grammar (or their unwilling pupil) but to the simpler fact that I happen to have a fairly nice ear for what sounds clear and orderly in English usage. In other words, I'm not a purist. Purism (a fanatical regard for the rules of grammar) doesn't appeal to me. I prefer a liberal attitude towards correct English, even to the extent of a split infinitive. Let us remember that grammar is only 200 years old, while the English language has been spoken for 1,500 years. Our language grows—evolution applies to language, too—and it can't be bound down by cut-and-dried rules as rigid as steel. I like good usage, but that doesn't necessarily mean strict grammar. Clarity—that's the goal in speech. To be understood, easily. If grammar makes speech more difficult, let's give it the boot. But grammar isn't all bad, by any means. Most of our grammar is a code that fits into the needs of the people who do the work of the world.

Why does Knickerbocker stand as the personification of New York?
The credit goes to Washington Irving, who created Diedrich Knickerbocker as the supposed author of his famous burlesque, "History of New York." The gentleman with the queer cocked hat and short pants is almost as familiar as Uncle Sam. Father Knickerbocker, born in the brain of one of our fine authors, has become an immortal figure, a living symbol of a great and beautiful city. And, by the way, our Irving was greeted by the great Thackeray as "the first ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old." Rip Van Winkle, as well as Knickerbocker, is another character sired by this genius. Washington Irving was named after George Washington, of whom he wrote a biography.

Is the harmonica a musical instrument?
I didn't think so until I heard Borrah Minevitch's band, and now I'm ready to change my mind. The Musicians' Union denies harmonica players admission to membership on the ground that the harmonica is not a musical instrument but a toy. But it's my notion that a few more Borrah Minevitches may get the union to reverse its policy.

Did the ancients know the size of the earth?
The Greek geographer, Erastosthenes, put the earth's circumference at about 24,662 miles. This was surprisingly close.

What do you think of Cross-Word Puzzles?
I think they're terrible—a waste of time, energy and intelligence. They indicate decadence, moral corruption and turpitude. I know what I'm talking about, because I've done at least two each day for the past decade.

What did the ancients consider to be the brain's function?
Aristotle was a student of anatomy and practiced dissection. He held that because the brain was "so cold" it was used to ice the blood, which puts it somewhat on a par with our air-conditioners! The Bible writers never mention the words "brain" or "brains." According to Proverbs (23:7) the heart was supposed to be the organ of thought. The ancient Babylonians made the liver do the thinking.

Do big men make the best soldiers?
No. The greatest military experts now claim that the ideal height is five feet, five inches. Big soldiers look handsome on the parade grounds, but it's the medium-sized fellow who makes the best fighter.

Do you answer all the questions you receive?
By no means. That is impossible. Many questions are impertinent; others are personal; some are insulting; quite a few are stupid. In addition, many questions lack general interest, so I am forced to pass them up. I try to avoid answering queries dealing with subjects covered thoroughly in ordinary books of reference. I estimate that I accept about one-fourth of the ques-
tions submitted. This policy pleases most readers, but there's no denying the fact that some readers become violently offended because I failed to answer their particular set of questions. There never was an editorial policy that pleased everybody.

* * *

What is an "Icarian Flight"?
If you go off half cock, you are taking an Icarian flight. Do not jump in and do something for which you are ill-prepared, for when you come a cropper you have taken an Icarian flight. The phrase comes from a Greek legend. Icarus, in prison, tried to escape by attaching to his body wings sealed by wax. When Icarus got too close to the sun, the heat melted the wax and he fell down.

* * *

I notice that my laundry charges me 1c per bundle for insurance. Please comment.
Most laundry customers do not notice that innocent line at the bottom of each bill—"1c for insurance." It is nothing less than a racket. Several states have held that no laundry has the right to engage in the insurance business without a license, but the companies get around this by claiming they are merely "agents." This 1c charge is an outlandishly high insurance rate (granted that the penny really goes to that end) and about the only remedy I can think of is for customers to complain to their Secretary of State or plainly say that they won't pay the draft. As it is, a 25c package of laundry pays the same "insurance" as does a $25 delivery. The small laundry user pays out of proportion. If the insurance is real (and this is questioned) it shouldn't be more than a tenth of the amount assessed.

* * *

I find that it takes me too long to read. Is there any way to speed up?
It is important to remember that the eye sees only when it pauses, and not when it is in motion. If, in reading, you pause at each word, you naturally hold yourself down to a slow pace. It is just as easy to train yourself to see three or even more words each time your eyes come to a pause. If you will go about the job in an orderly manner, keeping time and remembering to make each pause of the eyes take in more and more words, you will find yourself able to make better time. It's all a matter of self-training.

* * *

Why is it publishers charge so much for scholarly books?
Publishers of learned books usually get rather small distribution for such works, with the result that prices are high. In 1927, when a study was last made, it was found that commercial publishers and the presses connected with great universities were charging about $1 per 73 pages. Today one or two charge $1 per 90 pages, which is still too high. Such high prices do not prevail with us, because we charge the same for a learned book as we do for a popular volume. We average something like 300 pages per dollar, which explains our great reputation for selling literature at amazingly low prices.

* * *

Are you not a little too anxious to advertise and sell books cheaply?
I plead guilty. As long as I am an editor and publisher I hope to be able to succeed at the work of advertising and selling good literature at very low prices. You may call this mercenary, if you please. I don't. I must have money to pay for labor, material, power, transportation, taxes, interest and all the other expenses of a modern publishing plant, but my motive is to spread good literature, teach people how to look for a bit of the truth, show the victims of superstition how they are being exploited by priests, preachers and rabbis, warn the masses against the system of robbery that is a part of the great capitalist social order. Then I like to publish a certain amount of material that is intended to be purely entertaining, because I don't think every word one reads should be strictly serious. Also, I like to publish enlightening books on personal, emotional problems, especially in the fields of sex and marriage. I have always used the printing presses, primarily, as weapons with which to fight the forces of reaction and terror. I do not know
how to do otherwise. To promote such enterprises requires a certain amount of salesmanship, and I cheerfully admit that I never intend to miss a chance to make effective use of such promotional efforts. If I didn't think about sales, sales and still more sales, how long would this plant remain out of the hands of the sheriff? It is commercial, I grant you, but just try to get along without that element and see how long you remain at the head of a business. I suppose when my epitaph comes to be written (granting that anyone takes the trouble to compose one) it may be said: "He was a writer, publisher—and salesman."

* * *

No Personal Services.

Some of my readers are turning to me for different personal services, which, needless to say, I cannot give. Here is a letter from a young Negro, in Nigeria, Africa, by the smacking name of Samson Okoro Okunbor, as follows:

"I have the honour most humbly and respectfully to ask you to get me an invisible ring which will bestow on me success in all undertakings. I wish to be successful in these below headings:

"1. I wish to succeed in any examination with credits.
"2. I wish to be very lucky in games, raffles and sweepstakes.
"3. I wish to come to a great old age, wealth and prosperity, with children.

"4. I wish every one to love me.
"5. I wish to be an astronomer and fortune teller by sight."

Okunbor, in far off Africa, seems to have the same ambitions of people closer to home, though he has his own way of reaching his objectives. I'm afraid I won't be able to send the gentleman an invisible ring, because I have only one and need it for myself.

* * *

Please give opinion of typical European estimate that America is a land of uniformity in goods, habits, behavior, and ideas.

I have read no end of statements by European leaders, editors, politicians and the like to the effect that we are a land of mechanized robots, with mass production of machine-made articles—everything alike; in short, that we are just so many machines. The criticism sounds silly when one has a chance to observe the lands of the critics and the land of the people they malign.

The typewriter on which I am composing this editorial note was made by machinery, through mass-production methods. It is a good typewriter and I am proud to own it. I fail to see that the use of a machine tends to corrupt or standardize one. This machine may not strike an esthete as an artistic sight, though this is a subject on which many good authorities disagree, and I prefer to join those who claim that a typewriter is a thing of beauty, especially when its ribbon works smoothly.

We have tens of millions of automobiles, millions of bathrooms, telephones, radios, concrete highways and all the other products of a machine civilization, and yet I see the most pleasing diversity of opinion, the freest possible expression of viewpoint and a tolerance that puts us among the freest nations in the world. We not only permit minority views but we protect them. For example, the Communist daily newspaper, The Daily Worker, receives a yearly subsidy of many thousands of dollars from the treasury of the United States government, because it is a part of the law of the land to protect and nurture the principle of a free press. This subsidy comes from a government that is not committed to Communism, that is, in fact, opposed to the doctrines of a Marx or a Lenin, but with admirable consistency it says that a minority has a right to its press and as such is entitled to its financial subsidy, which, by the way, the liberty-hating Communists accept without batting an eye.

We have the absolute right to print and circulate any truth, or platform, or policy. That doesn't sound very much like a machine-made civilization. We can think, speak, meet, print, agree, disagree on any subject that comes to hand, and the Constitution is there to protect us in that right. Socialists therefore say that bringing about
socialized industry in a country like ours is a matter of education and mass organization, without the slightest need for resorting to violence. The Socialists say they will protect the best features of the Constitution, instead of destroying them, as would happen if the Communists were to take over the country and introduce a policy of suppression, terrorism and dictatorship.

These Europeans who criticize America's standardization should look into their own lives before throwing stones across the Atlantic. Just what is there about Germany, Italy, Austria, Poland, Yugo-Slavia and other centers of fascism that makes for diversity? They have suppression of speech. In Italy the Black Shirts feed pints of castor oil to dissenterers. Germany rushes its non-conformers to concentration camps. The press is censored. The mind is muzzled. The best professors have been thrown out of the universities. The books of the greatest authors have been burned. Members of minority races have been murdered, robbed and persecuted.

If one wants to meet a really machine-made civilization one must go to these European countries. And yet, these creators of tyranny and medievalism have the gall to make faces at America!

I have been puzzled by the expression "barnyard guff." What is it?
Horseshoe pitching.

Where is rain most plentiful?
Cherrapunji, India, has an average yearly rainfall of more than 400 inches, which, so far as I can find, is the top record. Forty inches of rainfall, during a year, would be considered more than ample, and this is what New York City gets normally. In 1928, Yuma, Ariz., got only 0.47 inch, and this is by no means the bottom figure for other places. It has been found that the average cost of our water is only 5c per ton, as against $500 per ton for meat, $150 per ton for bread, $40 per ton for gasoline, $120 per ton for milk, and $5 per ton for coal. The people of the United States top the list as water users, our per person average daily requirements being 100 gallons, as against 30 gallons for Italy, less than 40 gallons for Holland, and less than 50 gallons for Germany, England and France. As to how small an amount it would be possible for a consumer to get along with, the lowest record I can find, in modern times, is one pint per day per man for the soldiers in General Allenby's army when they were undergoing forced marches against the Turks during the World War. The largest amount used daily is in Beverly Hills, Calif., a per capita of 400 gallons, which, of course, includes the needs of private swimming pools, lawns, bathing, etc. It may be said in all seriousness that the higher the standard of living, the greater is the use of water.

Are all horses vegetarians?
The desolate country of Tibet has meat-eating horses. Sven Hedin, in his book on Tibet, says he saw horses eating strips of dried meat, the only kind of food able to keep them alive.

Can the eagle be domesticated?
This bird is absolutely untamable.

Having resided in your country only a few months I find myself more than bewildered by an expression I frequently hear on the streets, something along the lines of this: "Is it hot or is it hot?" Please enlighten me.
That's a moron's way of saying it's hot.

How many bones and muscles are there in the human body?
Bones, 200; muscles, 260 pairs.

How many people, throughout the world, die each year?
About 36,000,000.

How much actual space does man occupy?
Hendrik Willem Van Loon, in his book on Geography, figured that the 2,000,000,000 humans on this globe, each six feet long and about 18 inches wide, would fill a packing case that is only a half mile in size,
in each direction. That's pretty small. Prof. Eddington goes this author one better. He says in one of his books that if the spaces were removed from a man's body he would be so tiny that the strongest microscope would make him look no larger than a dot. You see, we biological creatures are built on a "scaffolding" of space. If you took the spaces out of all of us, leaving us as solid matter, the whole human race wouldn't be as large as an ordinary football.

* * *


1. 12 miles per hour. 2. 143 miles per hour, by Kruckenber's Zeppelin car. 3. 272.108 miles per hour, by Campbell's Blue Bird, on the Florida sandy beach. 4. 124.915 miles per hour, by Gar Wood's "Miss America." 5. 440.5 miles an hour, by Agello, in his streamlined seaplane.

* * *

How large was Shakespeare's vocabulary?

Anderson M. Baten, of Dallas, Texas, who has just finished "A Complete Dictionary of Shakespeare" (a monumental work that is soon to be published in Philadelphia), says Shakespeare had a vocabulary of 15,000 words, as against John Milton's 8,000 and the Old Testament's 5,642. He adds the interesting fact that Shakespeare used the word "love" 2,559 times, while the word "hate" was used only 228 times. He also used variations of the verb "to be" about 30,000 times.

* * *

What does it cost to run a modern prison?

Sing Sing—one of the most famous prisons in the world—holds 2,070 prisoners and spends $1,094 per day for everything from food and clothes to personal service and watching. It costs only 20.3 cents per day to feed a Sing Sing prisoner. A few of the other items of expense, figured on the basis of cost per man per day, follow: personal service, supervision and watching, 18.6 cents; clothing, 6.3 cents, medical attention, 1.5 cents; general administration, 1.6 cents; office expenses, 1.2 cents; repairs and upkeep, .02; departure fees, 1.3 cents.

* * *

What is man's top speed under his own power?

A man on a bicycle is the fastest, with a record of 35 miles per hour.

* * *

How many men did the various great powers mobilize during the World War?

U. S., 4,355,000. Russia, 12,000,000. Italy, 5,615,000. Germany, 11,000,000. Great Britain, 8,904,467. France, 8,410,000. Austria–Hungary, 7,800,000.

* * *

How many people visited Chicago's Century of Progress?

35,000,000.

* * *

At what speed is a motor car most economical?

Thirty miles per hour.

* * *

How many cars are stolen yearly?

About 250,000 cars are stolen each year in the U. S., worth something like $75,000,000.

* * *

How fast can a deer run?

45 miles per hour.

* * *

How much of the land area of the earth is available for human living conditions?

About 40,000,000 square miles.

* * *

What was ancient Rome's greatest feat in road-building?

The Appian Way, 350 miles in a straight line, was built 22 centuries ago. It remained in good condition for eight centuries. Parts of the original road may still be seen.

* * *

When was the city of Rome founded?

According to Varro, it was in 753 B. C. But there are other dates given, as follows: 751, Cato; 750, Polybius; 747, Fabius Pictor; 728, Cincius.

* * *

What is the meaning of the word "intelligence"?

It comes from inter (meaning
between) and legere (meaning to choose), therefore the ability to discriminate means intelligence.

Is gas warfare new?
The ancient Romans sometimes made use of the fumes of sulphur as a fighting weapon.

I frequently meet the expression "true fact." Is it correct?
No. If something is a fact, it's true, so why slip in that word true?

Is "most unique" correct?
No. A thing that's unique is unlike anything else in the world, which makes the word "most" wrong usage.

Is the banana an ancient fruit in civilized countries?
Europe began eating bananas in 1841. I don't know when the United States took up this luscious, delicious article, but I assume it was about the same time.

Did the ancients have sugar?
Sugar did not come into use, in Europe, until 996 A.D.

How does Japan's land area compare with ours?
We have 10 times as much land.

How much labor power did it take to build the great pyramid?
A hundred thousand slaves worked 20 years.

What is the pronunciation of the last letter of the alphabet?
We pronounce it "zee." However, the Oxford dictionary calls it "zed," though I must admit I never heard it used that way, and if I did I'd probably begin throwing things.

How many Americans patronize our public libraries?
There are 24,000,000 registered borrowers. When the depression began, late in 1929, there were 20,000,000. Enforced idleness has given a great impetus to reading, though it is regrettable that the libraries have not been getting sufficient funds during the past five years to keep their books up to date. In addition to the 24,000,000 registered borrowers there are millions of unregistered readers who use the reference and other facilities of our public libraries.

What is the size of the Girl Scouts organization?
There are 14,000 troops in 4,000 communities. The membership is 356,000.

Compared to the U.S., how much larger is Russia?
Two and a half times.

If Hitler and Mussolini were to die would Fascism disappear with them?
The best opinion agrees that Italy's Fascism is a personal reflection of Mussolini's will, and should Mussolini die his regime would go with him. On the other hand, Hitlerism is more than Hitler. If Hitler were to die it is fairly safe to conclude that German Fascism could be continued by fanatics like Goebbels, Goering and a large number of other maniacs. Hitlerism has itself tied up with powerful mystical elements, racial prejudices, brutal medievalism and other expressions of reaction and obscurantism. It is more powerful than Hitler. However, it is possible that if Hitler were to die his lesser leaders would get into a grand fight among themselves and proceed to kill one another off. Mussolini's popularity in Italy is declining rapidly. Great sections of Italy express no enthusiasm for the leader of the Black Shirts. Hitlerism has a stronger hold in Germany, but it is meeting the shock of economic crises with decreasing resistance, so that it is not impossible for the whole system to collapse before long in the throes of industrial chaos, with civil war as a consequence of mass starvation.

As fascism in Italy, Germany and Austria depends on private armies, what can a democratic government that believes in the rights of protest, free speech, free assembly and free press do to preserve itself?
There is only one logical stand to take: No democratic government should permit privately organized gangs, drilled, disciplined and arm-
ed. There is no denial of civil rights for a democratic government to say to a threatening minority: "You have the same rights that are enjoyed by other groups, be they of the minority or the majority. You may speak, petition, print and meet. But we absolutely deny you the right to carry arms or in any other way militarize your organization. Such methods are illegal and will be met sternly with the fullest powers of the people's government."

Such an attitude should have prevailed in Germany and the other fascist countries. It wasn't Hitler's speeches and propaganda that crushed the republic—it was Hitler's armed mercenaries, young hoodlums who were gathered together to pool their powers of destruction against the civilized institutions of a democratic state. No minority group should be permitted to pursue a policy that aims at the violent destruction of the majority's rights.

Is the American Legion a fascist organization?

If it isn't, it's perilously close. At its recent California convention, at San Francisco, the American Legion passed a resolution recommending death for those advocating Communism. Remember, this is for Americans, not for the slaves of Hitler. The Legion also asked for a U. S. Siberia or Devil's Island, to be established on one of the islands off Alaska, where those guilty of "treason in the second degree" can be held "up to 100 years." The Legion defines this kind of treason as being covered by the mere distribution of literature "advocating class antagonism," or the promulgation of any "doctrines inimical to the state," or the gathering of three persons or more for the purpose of discussing or teaching such doctrines. This is the worst kind of Fascism. It opens the door for the wildest persecution.

* * *

It is claimed that California vigilantes attack Communists only because they advocate violence. Please comment.

It amounts to this: Your vigilante Fascists say: "Because you Communists believe in violence we are going to crack your skulls." In other words, the patriots practice it while the Communists only talk about it.

* * *

Which is more radical, a Communist or Fascist?

A Communist, because he aims at the elimination of capitalism and the inauguration of Socialism, while a Fascist aims merely at the preservation of capitalism, with a few side excursions into racial and religious dogmas.
Sociology and Anthropology

What is human nature?
Lester F. Ward defined it as "the natural animal constitution of man."

* * *

In attacking Mussolini and Hitler you protest against the barbarous treatment accorded Socialists, Communists, Pacifists, Freethinkers and Jews, but you never say anything about women. What about the treatment they have to endure?

I believe I have mentioned Hitler's mistreatment of women, though I confess I should have said a great deal more than I did. Both Mussolini and Hitler have put women back to the status of the Dark Ages, when the Catholic Church was in complete control of Europe. In Italy and Germany, women are now denied the right to be engaged in business or professional pursuits. They have been relegated to the position of breeding machines.

Both Hitler and Mussolini want their millions of women to breed babies, and breed them fast and often. They will see to it that their boys are given opportunities to die for the greater glory of tyrants in Rome and Berlin. All the glorious work for feminism—work and struggle that required centuries to take effect—has been wiped out, and women have lost their political and economic victories with one sweep.

It is ironical to see a homosexual like Hitler—who hates and fears women—tell the women of Germany how important it is for them to marry right away and get busy having babies. Remember, Hitler himself is a bachelor who has never been known to have had an affair with a woman. Mussolini here is at least consistent, for he is the father of five children.

It is one thing for Hitler and Mussolini to cry for more children and another thing for the women to oblige. With all Mussolini's propaganda against birth control, with all his bonuses to mothers of families of 14, with all his cries for more babies, the fact remains that Italy's birth-rate has not gone up during the past 10 years. In fact, it has slipped down a little. At that, Mussolini still has 40,000,000 Italians in his domain, so he won't lack for soldiers when he gets ready to make the Mediterranean an Italian sea, as he promised. With such a vast population in so small a land area, one wonders what he would do with more people, especially in view of the fact that Italy is cursed with a terrific burden of unemployment, but the wish for war explains everything.

The women of Germany and Italy aren't saying much, so far as we in foreign countries can hear, but what little we hear indicates that there is quiet, stubborn opposition to the brazen claim that it is the duty of women to keep their despots supplied with all the cannon fodder they can use.

* * *

What do you mean by "history"?
I define history as a record of man's behavior.

* * *

What is the economic motive behind Hitler's ethnological philosophy?
The racial theory of Hitler, which raises the blond "Aryans" to glory and condemns Jews and other "non-Aryans" to persecution, is nothing more than an attempt to destroy class consciousness by emphasizing race consciousness. It worked in Czarist Russia for a while, when the Black Hundreds massacred countless thousands of Jews in government-inspired pogroms. This was done in order to take the minds of the masses away from miseries that resulted from economic and governmental oppres-
sions. In Germany, the Nazis are trying to save capitalism by destroying the workers’ consciousness of class. It won’t work in the end, because the class struggle is real, while the race struggle is hokum.

* * *

Is not wheat the oldest grain used as food?

No. Barley was eaten by man thousands of years ago. Rye came much later, at about the time of Homer’s Iliad, something like 800 B.C. Wheat, as food, is a recent addition to man’s menu, some saying it was hardly more than a century ago. With barley the oldest, having become an article of primitive man’s diet something like 8,000 years ago, lentils come next, about 5,000 years ago. Beer was brewed about 3,000 B.C. Cabbages and beans are our oldest vegetables, but nowhere near as old as barley and lentil.

* * *

Why is Hitler so anxious to paint his Germans as the “best” of all races?

It is an apt weapon for a demagogue. The whole racial theory is without validity and finds no support among the best, recognized professors of anthropology. It is worth considering one historical angle. It happens that the Germanic people were the last to become civilized in Europe. While the Greeks, Romans, Jews and Arabs were making mighty contributions to civilization, the Germans in the north were only one step from savagery. This condition is known to all students of history, and the Hitlerites, smarting under the accusation of this simple fact, upset the applecart by deriding members of other races or by attempting to “prove” that the important things that came from Greeks, Romans and others were under the influence of German culture or indebted to German blood! The thing is almost too weird for words, but one grows to expect any intellectual monstrosity when listening to the racial vaporings of Hitler and his deluded, ignorant followers.

* * *

Is there such a thing as an Aryan?

Science doesn’t know the classification. It is typical of Hitlerism to establish a branch of mankind that is unknown to all students of anthropology.

* * *

Please discuss some of the features of Hitler’s racial theories.

I have already given several answers along this line. But it would not be amiss to give space for a few paragraphs from my notebooks which relate to this subject.

Germans, particularly Herr Woltmann, attempt to claim every genius in other races as members of their own race. This is so absurd that it becomes funny. He even goes so far as to claim Voltaire, Dante, Velasquez and Leonardo as Germans! An examination of his evidence proves him to be guilty of wish-thinking—he wishes it were true, so he says it is so. That is typical of all second-rate minds. By the same logic they have turned Jesus Christ from a Jew into a Nordic! They “prove” this by his blond hair, though it is accepted by students that every picture of Jesus is without the slightest authority in history. Jesus with blond hair is a creature of church artists, who cannot give an atom of evidence for their conception.

If Herr Woltmann (one of the seers of Hitlerism) were an honest investigator, he would give credit to various races for their contributions to civilization and culture—particularly the English, French, Italian, Jewish, Moorish, Arabian, Chinese, and Spanish, in the modern world, and such mountainous sources of culture in ancient times as the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Asians, and others. He would also include the Negroes of Africa, for anthropologists who are sincere do not neglect Negroes nor do they dismiss them as negligible. It is pretty well settled that the city is the Negro’s great contribution to civilization, for it was in Africa where the first cities grew up. The Negro has also done great things in music, instruments, and many useful inventions.

The fact of the matter is, there is no really superior race. All races have done wonderful things, and
those who have done more than others have been fortunate because of peculiar conditions of contact, commerce, climate, opportunity, etc.

It has been shown by the anthropologists that a savage can be taken from his tribe and civilized in a few years, if treated by intelligent and sympathetic instructors. Also, mental capacity has been shown to be very strong among savages, who, in known instances, have been raised in a few years from barbarism to a position wherein they were almost fanatical in their love of and aptitude for deep and serious learning.

If it hadn’t been for the Jews and the Arabs, there would have been no way of continuing the tradition of Grecian culture, for it was they who carried on the great work after Christianity had crushed the pagan world and lighted the faggots of bigotry and ignorance.

Modern civilization did not spring from one pure race. It came from many. Civilization itself was cradled in that small area which covers northeastern Africa, southwestern Asia and southeastern Europe. If you will look at the map, you will see that the three continents converge there as though there were three necks of three bottles pointed at one place. That position in geography was a great thing for civilization. It was a meeting place for the peoples of various lands. There was a great exchange of knowledge, commerce, experience. Where there is great variety of contacts there one finds intellectual, artistic and commercial advancement. So it is strictly accurate to say that civilization is really a hash. It is a mixture of many ingredients, and that is what makes it so charming and interesting.

Looking further, we find that contributions to civilization have come as follows:

1. The Jews, Italians, Englishmen and Spaniards helped develop trade, commerce, exporting and importing, and thereby laid the foundations of the present capitalistic system, which, in itself, has been an invaluable contribution to civilization, for it has been the first system in social history to apply science to production.

2. Italians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans and Jews helped develop the great science of mathematics.

3. Italians, Englishmen and Dutchmen fathered physics before the last century. Later they were joined by the Germans and Jews in bringing modern physics to its present solid standing.

4. Englishmen and Frenchmen built the science of chemistry, to be followed later by the invaluable help of the Germans of the last century.

5. Where did modern biology begin? In Italy, two centuries ago. Then along came Germany, Holland and England at about the same time. The credit for this great science belongs, of recent years, to France, England, Germany and the United States.

I could go on this way for columns. It all serves to prove that only an ignorant egotist would take one race—like the Germans—and give it credit for superiority, in the face of evidence which proves the universality of culture. If you took the Jews out of philosophy, mathematics, music, literature, physics, chemistry, medicine and commerce, would the world be better off? If you took the Laplaces, the Faradays, the Pasteurs, the Lobatchevskys, the Bolyais, the Minkowskis, the Einsteins, the Darwins, the Huxleys, the Maxwells, the Hertzens and the Marcons out of their respective fields, would not civilization be the loser?

Is there no intelligence among these racial fanatics who would dismiss all other races in order to glorify their own? What is this but an acute case of inferiority complex?

I am puzzled by your repeated statements to the effect that there is no such thing as an Aryan race. Then what does the word mean?

The Hitlerites, in their crass ignorance, use the word “Aryan” in a sense that is unacceptable to anthropologists. The world’s leading students of the race deny there is,
or ever was, an Aryan race. The word Aryan describes an ancient language used by people who belonged to different racial stock. In this country we have English spoken by persons who are white, black, yellow, etc. Could one base a racial theory on the use of English? Well, the same applies to Aryans. Anthropologists, who are experts in this realm of science, say there are three main races in Europe—Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean. They do not know anything about an Aryan race. And they are experts. What should annoy the Hitler, if they were sensitive enough to be annoyed about scientific absurdities, is the fact that these three European races come from the original white race—the Caucasian—and that means Jews and Arabs are represented in the blood strains of the three races just named. All of which means that Nazism has invented a racial concept that is without authority in science, but that doesn't seem to bother them any. They go right on with their racial nonsense.

* * *

In the report of a speech by Hitler I find him quoted as saying that feminism is only a "product of decadent Jewish intellectualism." Please comment.

As Hitler is never bothered by facts when he discusses his erratic racial theories, it is difficult to comment on this choice morsel of Hitleristic bunk. The philosophy of equal rights for women is not of Jewish origin. Great feminists—Wollstonecraft, Susan Anthony, Lucy Stone, Jane Addams, Bertrand Russell, Carrie Chapman Catt, Hume, John Stuart Mill, Mrs. Pankhurst, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lenin, Stalin, Eugene V. Debs—were, or are, not Semites in any degree. Feminism is one of the finest growths in modern ethics, the flower of rationalism, justice, decency, humanitarianism and good sense. Orthodox Jews are notorious anti-Feminists, as may be seen by the manner in which women are excluded from religious activities or are hidden behind screens in segregated parts of the synagogue.

Jewish intellectuals reject such inhuman discrimination, which is to their glory. They can turn to dozens of great non-Jews—a few of whom I have listed above—for intellectual and moral support. But why bring up these names in answer to Hitler? He wouldn't know them from Hottentots. Like all ignorant men, Hitler is at his most effective powers when he is undisturbed by facts or accurate knowledge.

* * *

Please explain what science says about the racial theory that strives for "pure strains," along the lines of Hitlerism.

The theory has absolutely no validity. More than 30 years ago, Lester F. Ward exploded the idea when he showed that "progress results from the fusion of unlike elements." Racial Hitlerism amounts basically to inbreeding. Enlightened civilization seeks, and thrives, on cross fertilization.

* * *

Is it true that Jews can trace their ancestors back to their original tribes of ancient times?

This is clearly impossible. The Jewish historian, Josephus, who lived in the first century, A.D., writes that when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, all records, civil and priestly, were burned.

* * *

Are there more Jews today than there were in the days of Christ?

Some authorities say there are slightly fewer Jews; others say the number is about the same. I can find none who claim an increase. Almost 2,000 years of Christian persecution has tended to hold down their numbers.

* * *

What is a Jew?

One hears frequently that so-and-so must be a Jew, because he, or she, has a hook nose. And yet, how this notion blows up when one takes a look at a few facts. In New York City, 2,836 adult Jewish men were studied by scientists, with the following results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Nose</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jews with straight noses</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews with snub noses</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews with flat, Negroid noses</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jews with hook noses

It is therefore a fact that the aquiline, "Jewish" nose is an 86 percent myth. You will probably find about 14 percent of Nordic blonds, K.K.K. 100 percenters, Irish Catholics or any other non-Jews with what is commonly accepted as a "Jewish" nose.

Jews have black, curly hair and black eyes? In Germany, a study showed 32 percent of the Jewish students in grade schools were thatched with a crop of blond hair, and 46 percent had blue or gray eyes.

Jews have a peculiar religion? What about Jewish dissenters—from Spinoza to Einstein? Spinoza was excommunicated by the rabbis of Holland. Einstein believes in some vague sort of Theism, but he doesn't accept a single tenet of the orthodox Jewish religion. There are Jewish Atheists, Agnostics, Rationalists, Freethinkers, Religionists, Rabbis, Ethical Culturists, Liberals, Reformers, Orthodoxists, Heterodoxists, and every other shade of religious or non-religious opinion.

Jews are great money makers? Then why are so many of the world's 16,000,000 Jews so wretchedly poor? Ninety-nine percent of the Jews in the United States live in cities. Go to their quarters and peek into their homes. You can see they are mainly poor, all too poor, people.

After 20 centuries of persecution, pogroms, assimilations and inter-marriage, it is agreed among Anthropologists that there is no such animal as a pure Jew, granted there ever was one. The Jew is a mixture of the good and bad of human stock, as is the "racially pure" German. In fact, it is just about impossible to find a "pure" race anywhere. So, what is a Jew?

There's no denying that there is a seemingly different people who are known for their "differentness," but it would be impossible to get 10 Jews to agree on what those differences are. So after having talked much, I pass the question back to you.

That a people declines, we know as a common historical fact, but has it ever happened that a people died out entirely?

There isn't a single Hittite or Babylonian left in the world. It would be difficult to prove that the Greeks or Italians of today are in any sense the same as the Greeks in the days of Athens' glory or the Romans in the days of the Caesars.

* * *

How far back can one go in tracing one's ancestors?

Not very far. Some Americans, mainly through the records of ownership of land, can go back to revolutionary, and sometimes colonial days, but beyond that one soon gets lost in the maze of European ancestry. The best authorities on genealogy assert that it is impossible even for nobles and members of royalty to go beyond the Middle Ages. Rome, the seat of Europe's oldest families, has only one (the Gaetini) that can reach back 900 years. Another Roman family (the Colonnas) can go back to 1100 A.D. The Orsini family dates back to 1190. Italians who claim ancient Romans as ancestors have merely employed obliging genealogists. Americans who go back to William the Conqueror or Alfred the Great are kidding themselves, for even the present Windsor (King George V) can't make a clear claim to descent from even William the Conqueror, let alone Alfred the Great. The ex-kaiser (a Hohenzollern) can't go back further than the 17th century. It is only in comparatively recent times that most men took family names. In the old days, most persons were satisfied with a single name. John's son would become Johnson. A Smith's son would become Smithson. Many were known only by their trades—Smithy, Carpenter, Turner, Silversmith, Goldsmith, Shoemaker, Taylor, Farmer, Coppersmith, Cooperersmith, Painter, and so on. However, in India a few Brahmins, through their caste system, can trace their ancestry several thousand years. There is no real evidence to support the present Mikado's claim that he is the descendant of a line of 225 royal ancestors. The other day I read a press re-
port about a woman who claimed she could trace her ancestry back to Adam!  

Is our Indian population as great as it was at the beginning of the republic?

Today there are, in the United States and Canada, 443,365 Indians. At the time Columbus discovered America there were from 750,000 to 1,000,000 Indians on the continent, though, this, of course, cannot be more than an estimate. About 100,000 Indians were wiped out in the great small-pox epidemic of 1781. Our guess is that the Indian population of 1780 was hardly more than 750,000. In 1865 the U. S. Indian population was only 294,574. In 1891 their number reached an all-time low for the past four centuries, but since then they have been increasing steadily. The Indian wars had a great deal to do with keeping the Indian population down. Disease was also a great factor. Even today, tuberculosis strikes hard at the Indian population, especially the young. But the figures do not warrant our saying the Indians are a "vanishing race."  

Where did the American Indian come from?

Dr. Franz Boaz, head of the Department of Anthropology, Columbia University, suggests that the ancestors of our Indians came from Asia. It is supposed they entered this continent by way of Alaska, a branch of them remaining in the Arctic, becoming the Eskimo. According to this high authority, the Eskimo and Indian are both Mongolians.  

Writing in the April, 1934, "Living Age," Egon Friedell, under the caption "Notes on Pre-History," says that the Cro-Magnon artists were in many respects superior to any that have lived since. Please comment.  

Such exaggeration is frequently met with when certain kinds of uninformed writers discuss periods with which they are only slightly familiar. The Cro-Magnon man lived something like 25,000 years ago, and all we know about his "artistic ability" is what we have found on a few cave walls—pictures of deer, bears, wolves, bulls and the like, that show something of a happy talent but are by no means great expressions of art. To compare such crudities with the masterpieces of a Michael Angelo, a Leonardo da Vinci, a Rodin, a Whistler or a Rembrandt is to utter the sheerest tommyrot.  

Is man's height determined by environment or heredity?

According to Dr. Franz Boaz, Anthropologist, Columbia University, behavior (environment) has a great deal to do with this. He claims that during the past 60 or 70 years the average American's height has increased about two inches above normal. The immigrants of two or three generations ago were small of stature. By reason of improved food and general conditions of living, their second generation descendants reached greater stature, the credit for this, naturally, belonging to environment. He predicts further increases should economic and social conditions improve.  

In your opinion, are African Negroes capable of the civilized white man's cultural powers?

Instead of answering your question with an expression of my "opinion," I prefer to turn to the distinguished J. B. S. Haldane, Professor of Genetics at the University of London, who spoke before the Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, in London, on August 3, 1934. He said: "Whatever innate differences in ability may exist between races they are clearly of an overlapping type. If South African Negroes are ever afforded equal cultural opportunities with whites it may be found that a smaller proportion of them can reach a given standard. But it is already certain that some Negroes can reach higher cultural levels than most of the whites. "The doctrine of the equality of man, although clearly untrue as generally stated, has this much truth—that on a knowledge of their ancestry
we cannot yet say one man will and another will not be capable of reaching a given cultural standard.

"The so-called races within Europe have a much more dubious status. In respect of physical characters they overlap to a considerable extent. Any population may be "racially homogeneous" in the sense that its genes have been thoroughly mixed by random mating, but there is no reason to believe such populations differ in any but a statistical sense—the same genes being found throughout, though in different proportions."

** * * *

** Did not the army's intelligence test during the World War show that the Negro's intelligence was lower than the white's? **

That much-discussed "test" was scientifically inadequate, but even then it showed that the Negroes from places like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland and other places, that give Negroes better educational facilities, were superior mentally to the average whites from southern states like Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and Kentucky. So what? It simmers down to this simple fact: The Negro is not "naturally" inferior to the white man. But if you keep the Negroes down, pay them lower than average wages, deny them real schooling, shut them out of higher educational institutions, ostracize them, persecute them and deny them access to the ordinary things that belong to civilized human beings, you must expect "intelligence tests" to show the results of such discrimination. Those who insist that the Negro is the white man's intellectual inferior can't get around the fact that the northern Negro is, on the average, not only superior mentally to the southern Negro but to the average southern white as well. According to tests conducted at Columbia University by Otto Klineberg, and described in his book, "Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration," the northern Negro's intelligence ratings are so close to those of the northern whites that it is difficult to measure any real difference, and that tiny difference must be blamed not on "inferiority" but on the fact that the North continues certain discriminations, particularly economic and educational, though by no means on the scale found in those southern states that are notorious for their inhuman treatment of an oppressed minority. Racial prejudice dies hard, but we can't consider ourselves fully civilized until we uproot every vestige of this reactionary and vicious attitude, so long kept alive by economic, political and religious interests.

** * * *

** How many black and white legally married couples are there in the U. S. A.? **

According to that great authority on miscegenation, George S. Schuyler, who is a famous Negro journalist and is himself married to a beautiful white woman, there are 10,000 such couples in this country. There would probably be a great many more if there were no laws against such marriages in many states.

** * * *

** Has science ever estimated the earth's population in pre-civilized times? **

About 10,000 years ago (which was before the time man discovered agriculture), there were about 8,000,000 human beings in the entire world, according to estimates, as against 2,000,000,000 today. Without the aid of agriculture, it required about one square mile to support one person, granting that the locality was productive, and if not, it is possible there was need for as much as five square miles per individual. A tribe, in those days, needed a great deal of room in order to wrest a living from nature. Taking an average of five square miles to the person (which allows for sections only meagerly productive) we reach the figure of 8,000,000 population. Today, according to Sir Arthur Keith, from whom I have taken the facts just quoted, it is possible "in the modern state of agriculture" to produce "food sufficient for the needs of
250 people" from five square miles.

Can it be shown scientifically that there is a difference in the brains of different races?

Earlier anatomists claimed different brain structures in various races, but they were moved more by prejudice than by a disinterested scientific approach. During the Middle Ages, doctors, probably anxious to uphold the sacredness of the Bible, claimed that all men go through life with a missing rib. (Page Adam!) It took centuries before it occurred to some heretic to actually check up on such a statement. Before and after our Civil War, some anatomists, so-called, in the South claimed the Negro had an extra layer of skull. The claim went unchallenged for decades, until someone—probably an incipient Bolshevik—decided to look carefully at a Negro's skull. In the matter of brain structures, it is now definitely known that there are no variations, the knowledge having been firmly established after numerous dissections by a commission of famous Russian physiologists and anatomists. Anatomically the brains of all races are the same. That is a scientific fact that applies to an Eskimo, a Chinese, a Negro, an Indian, Zulu or an American. The fact that brains do different kinds of thinking—superstitious in one place, crazy in another, scientific here, muddled there—is because of training, opportunity, education, environment and social conditions and customs.

How many languages are there?

The French Academy of Science has studied this subject, and its report shows there are 2,796 languages in use today. There are 3,964 dead languages. The most widely used language is English. Then comes German, followed by Spanish and French.

Has man anywhere ever included insects as a part of his diet?

Yes. Australian natives just dote on green caterpillars. They are roasted briefly and eaten half-raw. Their hairs are poisonous, but the short exposure to hot cinders singes the caterpillar and prepares him for epicureans who go in for such delicacies. The same natives roast the larvae of a large-sized night-moth. This dish is said to taste like scrambled eggs, but somewhat sweeter.

Where did agriculture begin?

Prof. J. B. S. Haldane writes that "our earliest records of it are in Egypt, Iraq, and the Indus Valley, and it has been suggested that it began there."

Which animal did man first domesticate?

It was the dog, according to Dr. Walter Hough, head curator of anthropology, U. S. National Museum. At first, the dog was a tolerated animal which kept close to the outskirts of camps as a consumer of refuse. Even then the dog was useful to man, because it warned the camp of approaching enemies, particularly wild animals. It is supposed that the dog gained admission to the camp through the pet approach.

While it is granted that the getting of food is a basic social question, is it not also true that the manner of eating has real significance to students of sociology?

It most assuredly has. Of course, I am taking for granted that you are using the word "manner" in its scientific sense, and not merely the table manners of the eaters. Lester F. Ward, following the lead of Dr. Simon N. Patten's "pleasure and pain economy," and using facts mentioned by Herbert Spencer, shows that animals eat according to the "pain economy," while highly civilized men eat according to the "pleasure economy," which sounds a little involved but is, in reality, very simple. A dog gulps his food quickly, almost shooting it from his mouth to his stomach. Primitive men do the same. The element of pleasure doesn't enter into their eating. It is purely an act to avoid the pain of hunger. On the other hand, civilized men eat not only to satisfy hunger but to provide pleasure, cooking their
food, preparing it artistically with an eye to pleasure. Good food is kept in the mouth and masticated because that adds to the pleasure. Ward writes: "It might almost be said that the length of time it requires for food to pass from the lips to the stomach is a measure of civilization."

* * *

Please comment on Aristotle's explanation of the savages.

It was his notion that savages were civilized men who had degenerated. In this he anticipated the somewhat similar superstition of the Christians in the matter of "The Fall of Man." Unfortunately, Aristotle and the Fundamentalists lacked knowledge of evolution and the great science of ethnology. There isn't a scientist in the entire world who rejects the fact that the real steps were upward from savagery to barbarism, to primitive civilization, and ultimately to enlightened civilization.

* * *

In comparing savage men to civilized men, is it true that the latter's mental superiority is bought at the expense of physical inferiority?

It is not true that civilized man is physically inferior to the savage. Biologists like Charles Darwin, in his "Descent of Man," noticed and commented on this odd fact. I quote the following interesting and valuable sentences from Darwin's great book:

"Although civilization thus checks in many ways the action of natural selection, it apparently favors, by means of improved food and freedom from occasional hardships, the better development of the body. This may be inferred from civilized men having found, wherever compared, to be physically stronger than savages. They appear also to have equal powers of endurance, as has been proved in many adventurous expeditions."

* * *

Has the public ever been given a chance to vote for or against censorship of movies?

It is safe to say that the public is strongly against movie censor-

ship, and if a vote were taken in censorship states like Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and New York, sentiment would be more than two to one against censorship. In 1922 the voters of Massachusetts passed on a referendum offered by those in favor of censorship and the popular vote against censorship was 547,000, while those who favored the proposed bill numbered only 207,000. Newspapers, magazines, books and the stage are not censored, and yet they may be brought before the courts in cases of obscenity. The same method should apply to the movies. Censorship is un-American. There are ways of protecting the public against obscenity without resorting to bigotry and medievalism.

* * *

Man and all animals being related, in the biological scale, wherein does he differ from them in a fundamental sense?

Man's vast superiority to the other animals is demonstrated scientifically. In fact, man is unique in being able to do two things: he is able to adjust himself to his environment and at the same time adjust environment to his real or fancied needs. All other animals can, at best, only adjust themselves to their environment, and failing to do this they die. Just how man changes environment is too vast a subject for adequate treatment here. Suffice it to say, by way of simple illustration, that man's eyes (good as they are in their natural state) are not good enough for his prodigious ambitions, so he casts and grinds a 200-inch lens that enables him to see what a thousand natural eyes combined in one could not see. Only man can do that. The illustrations could be listed almost without end. By controlling and changing environment, man, in a few short years, learned to fly better and faster than did the birds after millions of years of mere adjustment. A lion can roar louder than a man, but man, through environmental manipulation, is able to hurl his voice around the globe through the radio. An elephant is strong enough
to move tons, but man's steam locomotive can move what a thousand elephants could not budge. Man has his natural tools—teeth, nails, fingers, toes—but how insignificant are they compared to the tools his genius has fabricated.

* * *

Which is more important, environment or heredity?
There is honest, impressive authority for both. The best experts are divided as to just how to apportion environment and heredity in individual mental and physical existence. Some put a bit more emphasis on one, some on the other. The problem is so difficult in our present state of knowledge that it is perhaps better to take a middle position and grant equal value to both elements.

* * *

What is the attitude of social science to Charity?
Charity is dismissed as socially useless because it is unscientific. The giving of charity is an emotional reaction and not a rational approach to the problems of poverty and other social maladjustments. The giver of charity knows that it is not a remedy, because it does not eliminate the necessity for repetition of the same process. If charity were scientific it would solve the evil of social inequality or economic injustice. What would you think of a mechanic who repaired a motor car on the assumption that it is his job to tinker with the engine only enough to make it go another five miles? That's charity, as applied to the social engine that is out of whack.

* * *

Newspaper publishers, in opposing the proposal to eliminate child labor in the sale of newspapers, claim that such work is character-building and that it prepares the boys for important positions in commerce, industry, public life, etc. Please comment.
This is typical of the attitude of newspaper publishers, probably the greediest and most anti-social employers in the entire industrial scene. There is no doubt that some very prominent men began as newsboys, but this argument is weak when one gets a better view of the picture. Warden Lewis E. Lawes, of Sing Sing, has issued some figures that blast this piece of poetry into smithereens. He reports that he took a census of the 2,300 men in Sing Sing, "to determine the number of inmates who had sold newspapers in their youth." He found that over 69 percent of the convicts in his institution had been so engaged. To keep children under 14 years of age selling newspapers will mean not more captains of industry but more convicts. Instead of "building sturdy characters," as the publishers claim, they build criminal records, because such work often proves to be an opportunity for education in crime.

* * *

What is the cause and cure of the kidnapping and hold-up epidemic?
There probably will always be crimes of passion, emotional outbursts beyond the powers of society to control. However, even such crimes may be diminished greatly by the establishment of sane social conditions, in which men and women will be permitted to live sane, normal, healthy lives. Such personal crimes always will be with us, but in lessening degree as humanity grows more humane and civilized.

This leaves us with the problem of crimes of violence, mainly against individuals in an attempt to gain illegal ownership of property. Our present "wave" of kidnapping is the direct result of our insane social system, which established insane contrasts of wealth—millionaires on the one hand with far more wealth than they know what to do with, and on the other hand millions of half-starved workers and three-fourths-starved unemployed. Such a social system encourages acts of violence as a measure of self-preservation. By doing away with these vast contrasts, by solving the problem of the concentration of wealth through a scientific redistribution of wealth based on a plan of useful rewards to useful workers, by placing society in complete ownership and control of the large industries, by guaranteeing each worker an income for useful
labor—by doing these necessary things we make kidnapping a thing of the past.

Establish a classless society and you practically solve the problem of crimes against property. When we have economic equality, in the sense of equality of opportunity to earn a decent living, we make kidnapping a thing of the past.

Did you ever hear of a gang of kidnappers taking away a member of the CWA for ransom? Did you ever hear of kidnappers going into a shop and kidnapping a mechanic in order to get a large sum of money from the victim's family? Did you ever hear of kidnappers even giving a thought to people of moderate means? Of course not. If we did away with vast social castes, if we wiped out the two extremes of extravagant wealth and appalling poverty, kidnapping would disappear immediately.

Today, we play with the problem of crime by punishing the victims of the system of capitalism instead of erasing the cause of crime—capitalism. Do away with social exploitation and you do away with practically every manifestation of anti-social conduct, though, as I stated in the beginning, we will always have a certain amount of it, considering that certain types of human beings cannot adjust themselves to social behavior. The bulk of crimes that are provoked by immediate economic conditions will disappear.

Under a sane social order, in which the people will be in control of the means of making a living, criminals will be treated as sick patients in a public hospital instead of torturing them with punishment in an institution of horrors called a modern prison.

* * *

Has any branch of science ever tried to account for man's stubborn resistance to change?

The tremendously important science of Sociology has given this question no little thought. Herbert Spencer recorded the interesting observation that the more primitive (and ignorant) the man, the more emphatic is his conservatism. The common run of men are quick to resist an improved method. Even a "new kind of food is usually disliked." The uncivilized man "is still less able to take on a modified mode of action." The desire for progress and reform comes with the greater development of reason, logic, education and the civilized viewpoint. The desire to welcome progress (whether social, industrial, economic, artistic or intellectual) expands in proportion to the growth of enlightened civilization.

* * *

What social force brought about the institution of human slavery?

Militarism. At first, wars were fought to annihilate the enemy. Later, the conquerors realized that it was better and wiser to kill enough of the enemy to win, and then put the rest to work, thereby making a victorious war worth something. Usually, the conquered had nothing worth taking, but they had the power to labor, and this could be utilized. Thus came slavery.

* * *

What do you consider to be man's outstanding characteristic?

Animal life generally is the slave of environment. The environment works on the animal, which, in turn, tries to adjust itself accordingly, with the result that it survives if it does and is exterminated if it doesn't. On the other hand, enlightened man strives to master and change his environment, frequently with prodigious success.
This is gloriously admirable. Puto-

ting it scientifically, what are Rus-
sia’s men and women attempting? In
short, to change their environ-
ment. By using reason, science,
courage, energy, enthusiasm and
intelligence, they are creating an
environment of industrialism, as
against a recent environment of
economic backwardness.

* * *

How did primitive man explain an
eclipse?

Primitive man, past and present,
considered an eclipse the result of
a demon attacking the sun, or a
gigantic animal attempting to de-
vour it. It was usually thought that
the sun could be helped by making
noises to scare away the demon.
As the eclipses always were of short
duration the harum-scarum yelling
was considered helpful in the emer-
gency.

* * *

How far should society go in the
matter of individual liberty?

In his essay, “Freedom in So-
ciety,” Bertrand Russell says the
individual’s liberty “should be re-
spected where his actions do not
directly, obviously and indubitably
do harm to other people.” That
sounds all too simple, but if it were
put into practice we’d be surprised
at the number of moral taboos, so-
cial conventions and puritanical
prohibitions that would disappear.

* * *

What are the fundamental min-
umum wants of the average hu-
man?

Karl Marx and many others put
it at food, clothes and shelter, but
Bertrand Russell adds drink,
health, sex and parenthood. I think
the list should include entertain-
ment.

* * *

I am serving a sentence at Lansing,
Kansas, which means that my body
is, figuratively, in chains, but
what makes it worse is that my
mind is being kept locked up by the
chaplain, who won’t permit me to
read any of your writings.

I’m quite familiar with the con-
duct of Chaplain H. H. Fowler, of
Kansas State Penitentiary, Lan-
sing, Kansas. This man, like most
other prison chaplains, has set
himself up as a censor, denying
prisoners the right to read liter-
ature which, in his opinion, is
“harmful.” I happen to have a most
interesting case of Fowler’s behav-
ior. Prisoner James Reed sent for
a package of my little books, for
which he paid out of his meager
hoard. When the books arrived, the
Rev. Fowler pounced on them and
denied Reed the right to receive
what he had ordered and paid for.
The 20 booklets might be thought
to contain highly immoral writings,
such as one might find in a con-
fession or a pulp magazine, but an
examination of Reed’s order indi-
cates that this prisoner is both the
moral and intellectual superior of
his oppressor. (I use the word “op-
pressor” deliberately, because it is
a form of oppression for a chaplain
to hold that a prisoner’s mind is
not free because his body is a
possession of the state.) Let us look
into the package of books which
Prisoner Reed was forbidden to re-
cieve. Here are the titles:

1. Problems of Old Age Depend-
ency. 2. Tales of the Monks. 3.
Frank Harris’ Daughter of Eve. 4.
Tales of Life. 5. Introduction to the
Science of Heredity. 6. Balzac’s
Story of a Woman’s Life. 7. Barry
Pain’s Short Stories. 8. Spanish
Self-Taught. 9. Spanish—English
Dictionary. 10. Good Habits and
How to Form Them. 11. Riddle of
Human Behavior. 12. The Problem
of Self-Development. 13. Arithmetic
Self-Taught. 14. How Glands Af-
flect Personality. 15. The Way of
All Flesh—a Story of Human Be-
havior. 16. Darwinism and the Fit-
ness of Life. 17. Life in New York’s
Harlem. 18. As the Intelligent
Younger Generation Looks at Life.
19. The Problems of Marital Life, as
Viewed by Science. 20. How to Be
Happy Though Married.

What a picture one gets of the
censor’s mind when one examines
Prisoner Reed’s list of intelligently
selected books. Reed, it is plain, is
a serious reader, interested in the
study of foreign languages, science,
social questions, heredity, mathe-
matics, Darwinism, emotional prob-
lems, etc. And yet, Chaplain Fowler
has the power (and uses it) to
crush Reed’s intellectual curiosity
about subjects of serious importance. Only a few years ago, the Fowler mind had the right to suppress the literature intended for persons outside prison walls. Progress has killed that tyranny. But within prison cells, where men's bodies are kept cooped up, the clerical mind is still able to reach in and tyrannize the intellect. Whenever one finds organized cruelty, blindness, bigotry, fanaticism, fiendishness, hatred of culture, malicious obscurantism, look carefully and you will find a preacher, priest or rabbi, or someone suffering from a case of religious hangover.
Bits of Bunk

Is there any truth to reports that seeds found in ancient Egyptian tombs can be made to grow?

These sensational newspaper stories are all false. So many people have come to believe this yarn that fakirs have been selling “ancient seeds” to growers who want some of them to sprout in their gardens for the effect it will have when the amateur gardener shows off before company. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, of the British Museum, is an authority on this subject. He planted seeds taken from ancient tombs and the results were disappointing, for not a single grain took life and sprouted. They were dry and hard when obtained, but once put into the ground they rotted away. Equally distinguished authorities claim there is no evidence to show that any seeds over 150 years old have been made to grow. These successes were very rare. They even go so far as to state that grain more than 20 years old shows vitality only rarely. When you are offered “genuine” seeds from an ancient tomb, try hard not to be a sucker.

Please comment on following line from Homer McKee’s prayer: “Blind me to the faults of the other fellow, but reveal to me mine own.”

I can’t see much sense in that. Only a sucker would want to blind himself to the faults of others. It is wiser to look for faults as well as virtues.

I have read a great deal about England’s psychic girl and her uncanny predictions. Is this merely unreliable news reports, or is there such a thing as a “psychic mind”?

This young woman hails from Atchison, Kansas, where she predicted that Babe Ruth would put over his team in one of the world series. Atchison men and women gambled on Babe Ruth’s side of the fence, with the result that they lost their shirts. The thoroughly discredited young “psychic” then went to England, where she “guessed” which horse would win the sweep-stake. Her guess worked out and some bettors cleaned up. But does this mean anything other than the fact that she guessed wrong in Atchison and guessed right in England? There are minds more sensitive than others, but to credit any mind with “psychic” power, to tell what is going to happen in the future, is to show oneself as a gullible boob. All these psychics are the bunk.

Who are the Koreshans?

They are a colony of nuts who live at Estero, Florida, where they publish a goofy magazine called “The Flaming Sword.” in which they propagandize the “scientific fact” that we are not living on the outside of this planet, but rather are on the inside—that the earth is concave. Since the unborn chick lives on the inside of the egg shell, why doubt that we humans are living on the inside of the earth?

What do you think of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood?

This outfit at San Jose, California, has a clever mail-order scheme. The whole racket sounds high-minded, but when examined it is found to be pure, unadulterated salesmanship. With easy profits as the big goal. Everything is wrapped in mystery—worlds within us, Scribes instead of plain treasurers, sealed books, secret lore, unlimited powers for health and wealth—all done in the manner of a little esoteric group of nuts, but really a mass-production idea for getting the spondulicks. The so-called society advertises in all the pulps and the slicks, invites inquiries and then shoots a series of follow-ups that are handled in the best ap-
proved methods of high-pressure salesmanship. The whole thing is racketeering. Only boobs would fall for this piffle.

* * *

Can Graphologists read character from handwriting?

There isn't even a hint of science in the nonsense of Graphology. Graphologists who claim to be able to analyze handwriting for honesty, decency, idealism, ethics, morality, truthfulness, mentality, leadership and other traits are merely crass deceivers. They are without standing in the world of learning. They follow their racket among the ignorant and the gullible. If Graphology were a science, then we would see psychologists taking charge of the classes in penmanship in the public schools, where they could control the future traits of their pupils through being conditioned in certain forms of penmanship. It would be all too simple. As it is, children learn to write from the plodding efforts of rather commonplace teachers, who usually show more patience than humans are credited with having. As a result, most of their pupils graduate with a handwriting that is almost completely uniform, yet the pupils are not uniform in adaptability, honesty, intelligence or ability. According to this fake “science” of Graphology, teachers of penmanship could take bad writers and carefully turn them into good ones, with resultant changes in character. The whole thing is a brazen fraud. When I look at a letter (and I receive thousands) I can detect a careless writer here, a neat writer there, a bad speller, a slovenly penman, but these qualities have nothing to do with character. I judge a writer by what he says and not by the way he writes it.

* * *

What is your opinion of “Psychiana”?

You refer, of course, to the heavy advertiser, “Dr” Frank B. Robinson, in Idaho. At present, his ads carry the following headline: “Man Can Talk with God, says Noted Psychologist.” This “Dr” who labels himself a “Psychologist” offers a “new Psychological Religion,” at so much per spasm. He may be religious, but he certainly is no Psychologist. There isn’t a professor of Psychology in any university in the world who would say “Dr” Robinson, of Moscow, Idaho, is an expert in that branch of science. Like all dealers in quackery, Robinson calls himself a “scientist,” but he is nothing more than a half-literate intellectual ham out to scalp a lot of yokels who are foolish enough to buy his new religion on the installment plan. He hasn’t anything scientific to offer the public, but being himself a high-grade moron he knows how to cater to the low-grade morons, and they respond best, financially of course, to those who are only a grade above themselves in ignorance. “Psychiana” is just another of those numerous rackets that are perfectly legal but intellectually unsound. He is a shrewd, clever advertiser and knows how to rake in the coin, but as for his services to science and the cause of truth, the man might as well have been born in the 11th Century.

* * *

Can you tell how far removed, if at all, from humbug is Psychiana, the new psychological religion?

The great, distinguished, incomparably intellectual Frank B. Robinson claims to be able to give his customers the exact meaning of the words of Jesus, which in itself is a feat of genius when one considers that over 600 different Christian sects are fighting over these words, millions of heretics have been burned, tortured, persecuted, thousands of scholars have fought and bled to get some degree of clarity out of his words—and all to no avail, for the words of Jesus are still sources of dispute and disension. But that is all of the past. The Big Shot of Moscow, Idaho, will give you the low-down on Jesus—and for a mere $25. Who can resist? And money (just how much, I forget) will bring you the G-r-e-a-t LAW of the Universe, which Mahatma Robinson discovered all by his lonesome in the foothills, or is it mountain fastnesses, of Idaho. Rush in your order for the New Dispensation. Learn all about your
inner power for health, wealth, success, sex appeal and Napoleonic conquest. If you don’t buy, the fault’s your own if you continue suffering in darkness and despair.

Is it true that elephants, sensing approaching death, travel to a common “dying ground”?

This is a myth that refuses to die. Some months ago I saw a popular movie in which the main characters went in search of the elephants’ dying place, in the hope of getting millions of dollars worth of ivory. Towards the end of the film we were permitted to see such a place, with thousands of elephant skeletons scattered about. The whole thing was pure fiction. No important zoologist would endorse such an unscientific, unfactual notion.

* * *

Writing in the Kansas City Journal-Post, Sept. 10, 1934, Marion Elet says: “The religious instinct is a potent one.” Please comment.

Scientists—particularly psychologists—devote a great deal of attention to man’s emotions and instincts. If there is such a thing as a “religious instinct” why is it that there isn’t a single professor of psychology who knows anything about it? Psychologists ought to know, and they are mum. The fact is, of course, that there is no such “instinct”; it is the creation of loose thinking. If religious instincts are realities, why is it that so many millions of intelligent people can get along without them so well? Also, if there is such a thing as a “religious instinct” why is it necessary to employ 200,000 preachers in the U.S. alone to keep their followers true to the “religious instincts”? Writers betray themselves when they express such thoughtless nonsense. For any student knows that if the Catholic Church were to discharge its million priests, if the other churches were to put their preachers and rabbis at non-religious tasks, the people would soon forget about religion.

* * *

Recently an evangelist swooped down on our town and argued that people who are not religious are really subnormal. Please comment.

This, of course, is an old argument, which crops up regularly. There’s something charmingly human about the claim. If you’re not like me it follows you must be inferior. So runs the aria, and one hears it in religion, politics and whatnot. Subnormality is a branch of an important science—psychology. Can our evangelist name a single important psychologist who will maintain in all seriousness that a person who rejects theism, or the theory of the soul, or immortality, is necessarily an inferior person, a subnormal? If he were to make inquiries he would be astonished to find that these great scientists, to the extent of more than 95 percent, reject all ideas of God, soul and immortality. Are they subnormal? I doubt it. An evangelist might be sure that you and I are subnormal, because he wishes to think so, but he is not competent to judge in the way that a psychologist goes about deciding such an important issue.

* * *

“He has always been a religious man, and I know it was that which brought him through safely,” said the wife of the captain of the Nantucket lightship, who was saved after his ship was rammed by the Olympic. Please comment.

This quaint turn of mind crops up frequently after disasters in which some are saved. It speaks volumes for the God who picked out the captain of the Nantucket and then let a half dozen or more lightship tenders go to their death. Were all the losers “bad” men, and therefore punished for their “sins”? Is God always careful to pick out the “good” and the pious when he sends some terrible mishap our way?

* * *

It is claimed that the science of Mathematics gives support to the idea of Immortality. Please comment.

I have seen this pretty piece of “logic” several times, especially from the pen of David Eugene Smith, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics, Teachers College, Columbia University. The argument runs
like this: Mathematical laws are eternal. There is no limit to Mathematics. The immortality of mathematical law prevails—"yesterday, today, and tomorrow." Therefore, since there is immortality in Mathematics why not assume there is immortality with regard to the soul of man?

It's that cute and simple. Let's look at it a minute. There are several sweet assumptions here. The first is that of man's "soul." Would it not be a good job for these mystical Mathematicians to try to prove the existence of man's "soul" in the same way they go about the job of proving a problem in figures? Of course, it couldn't be done, because the idea has never been supported by a dot of scientific evidence.

You believe the idea—on faith. If you have faith, you have a soul. If you haven't faith, you can't accept the notion of immortality. Well, there are tens of millions of us who lack this faith—we refuse to believe what is beyond the power of the mind to prove. If we have no evidence to support an idea we are willing to dismiss the idea as being without validity.

There is still another queer spot in this argument. Did man's soul live before he was born? Surely not. I have never known a formal theologian to expound such an idea, though there are some mystical cults out of India that say otherwise. The great theologians (who try to make a "science" of religion) claim that the soul comes with birth, perhaps when the egg is impregnated, perhaps when the embryo quickens, perhaps at the moment of expulsion from the mother.

Taking that more general view, it follows that the human "soul" did not exist for countless billions of years before the birth of any given individual. It is here that the argument for immortality falls down. Immortality is set going at a beginning, and how can something immortal have a beginning? We are then told to assume that immortality begins at the moment God puts a "soul" into little Michael's gizzard. But mathematical laws do not begin to be true at a certain time—say at the time you or I learn about a certain proposition in Mathematics. Two suns here and four suns there make six suns, whether it was last year or a thousand trillion years before there was such a thing as a man in the universe.

No one made these "laws." They are not laws in the sense of man-made laws. They are descriptions that always apply, whether or not we are there to do any computing.

Mathematical laws are subject to verification. We do not believe that two and two make five because some Pope said so. Rather do we say that the Pope was wrong on his figures. We do not accept Mathematics on faith. But Immortality of the human "soul" is faith, and nothing else. We can't verify the idea. We can't test it. We can't describe it. We can't outline its functions. We just say it is, and let it go at that—if we have the necessary faith.

What is your reaction to that preacher who let a rattlesnake bite him?

Albert Teester, preacher of the Holiness sect, in Sylvia, N. C., let a rattler bite him in order to prove that Jehovah would "take care" of him. Although his arm swelled twice its normal size, he eventually recovered. Of course, Hillbillies will make much over this "miracle," but medical science notes that the snake bite had its bad effect, as shown by the swelling, but that nature was able to develop resistance and save the fool. It is a fact that only 15 percent of rattlesnake bites are fatal. Teester was lucky enough to be one of the 85 percent who get over the reptile's bites. Other religious fanatics will repeat the idiot's test of Gawd's powers. Some of them—the ones who are big and strong, like Teester—will recover, and they will give testimony to Gawd's great love. The world is still full of fools.

The World Tomorrow uses the phrase "materialistic metaphysics." What does it mean?

I give up. This Christian Socialist paper is guilty of fancy muddle-
headedness, but it takes the prize with this whopper: “Materialistic
metaphysics.” One might as well
speak of “militaristic pacifism,” or
“wealthy poverty,” or “vaporous
solids,” or “round squares.” It
takes a brand of “Socialism,” that
is confused with religious obscur-
antism, to cook up metaphysics—
which is above, beyond, and inde-
dependent of any kind of material-
ism—and dish it out as material-
istic. James Oneal, editor of The
New Leader, first called attention
to this philosophical howler.

* * *

Did Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy con-
demn bathing?

In 1875, Mrs. Eddy, founder of
Christian Science (a hodge-podge
of quack healing and mysticism)
wrote: “The daily ablation of an
infant is no more natural or neces-
sary than to take a fish out of
water and cover it with dirt.”
The Christian Science racketeers
don’t like to see these things
brought up. Her fulmination
against bathing is no more curious
than her denial of the germ theory
of disease, her espousal of the no-
tion that all ailments are mental,
or the “philosophical” howler that
there ain’t no such animal as mat-
ter.

* * *

In the New York Times, May 7,
1934, the Rev. R. C. McQuilkin, in-
structor in the Columbia Bible
College, S. C., speaking at Calvary
Baptist Church, N. Y. C., said: “We
are the stewards of money in the
meaning that not one of us owns
a dollar . . . Our money does not
belong to our neighbor but to God.”
Please comment.

This is typical of what one may
expect from the clerical mind when
it comes to grips with the prob-
lems of modern economic life. It is
merely further evidence of the in-
tellectual bankruptcy of the
church. I saw in the Kansas City
Star, May 8, 1934, that Andrew Mel-
on, answering a complaint before
a federal grand jury in Pittsburgh,
reported a gross income of $9,212.905.21
during 1931, a depression
year. This means that Mr. Mellon’s
income, during 1931, amounted to
slightly more than $25,000 for each
day of the year. It would be pretty
hard to convince the 10,000,000 or
more unemployed, who are living
on the dry crusts of shameful
charity, that it is God’s will that
they shall have no income while
Mr. Mellon is made steward of $9,-
212,905.21 gross income in a single
year. What kind of a God is that?
A moron could invent a better one
in five minutes.

* * *

What is “Intinction”?

I don’t usually care for questions
of ritual or theology, but intinction
is so weighty, so fraught with his-
torical potentialities that I must
put aside economics, politics and
international affairs long enough
to settle this great issue that is
shattering the dignity of the
Episcopalians.

For some centuries the Episco-
palians have been drinking their
Lord from a common communion
chalice. At last, the churchmen
have found out about germs, so
there is an agitation to do away
with this dirty practice. They dis-
cussed this tremendous issue at
their general convention in Atlantic
City in October, 1934, and gave con-
sideration to “intinction,” which
means that the communicants
will have their wafers dipped into
the wine or grape juice (or is it
tomato juice?) and then gulp the
moistened wafer, thus avoiding
contact with pious brethren suf-
fering from halitosis or rank arm-
pits.

But as a strict theologian I can-
not grant my approval. The scrip-
ture plainly says: “Drink ye all of
it.” Swallowing a moistened wafer
certainly isn’t drinking, so I for
one want to let the convention know
that the dirty, old chalice, with
ergms and goo, is better than jeop-
dardizing one’s immortal soul
through the unkosher application of
false pooh-bah.

* * *

Comment is requested on the fol-
lowing statement by Gutzon
Borglum, sculptor: “Renaissance
always comes out of depression.
Man’s soul is strengthened by suf-
ferring. Now is the time to begin
the American Renaissance.”

This is another of Borglum’s
Questions and Answers

howlers. He should stick to monolithic art and leave history alone. The statement that renaissance (artistic and cultural awakening) always comes out of depressions is without the slightest authority in the entire history of man. In fact, it is plainly evident that it is prosperity that brings cultural progress. The great renaissance in Italy was the result of the vast commercial progress of a number of free cities, particularly Florence. With great fleets visiting numerous countries, with trade lively and profitable, with business active and humming, man used his prosperity for amazing progress in architecture, education, art, science, literature, etc. The same is true of England, where the tremendous expression of man's genius in the Elizabethan period (headed by Shakespeare and Lord Bacon) came with England's gigantic commercial achievements. Man's soul is not strengthened by depression; it is diseased. Depression is bad for the body and bad for the mind. It is not the mother of art; it is the slayer of culture. If we want to begin a great American renaissance, let's first get rid of the causes of depression. Let's do away with poverty and unemployment and imperialism and then watch how humanity will go forward to new achievements in the worlds of beauty, art, and thought.

* * *

Gutzon Borglum, noted sculptor, says: "We have been concentrating on the banks, business and our bellies. We have neglected the spiritual and cultural. It is because Rome and Athens neglected these things that they fell." Please comment.

Borglum is a good sculptor, but a bad historian. The point is that we are in social distress because we have failed to concentrate on the banks, business and our bellies. We are only beginning to face these material problems honestly and intelligently. Instead of neglecting the "spiritual," we have given too much attention to such moonshine and mythological tommyrot, and the sooner we get away from the mysticism of religion and theology, the sooner will we be able to adjust our lives so we may live like decent human beings. As for the cultural, it will blossom and bloom when we dispose of our economic ills. The notion that Rome and Athens fell because the "spiritual and cultural" were neglected is an astonishing piece of ineptitude. If anything, Rome and Athens gave endless attention to the cultural. They were tolerant towards religion, and in culture made contributions to civilization that will always be appreciated as sources of progress and inspiration. The subject of Roman and Grecian creativity in culture, art, philosophy, poetry, literature, ethics, and the other expressions of man's higher nature, is so vast that it is impossible for me to give even a bare list of their contributions to the best that we have in thought and beauty. The reason these ancient countries fell is because of their lack of materialistic science. If they had had materialistic science they would have been able to preserve themselves against the forces of reaction and barbarism. So, instead of saying that Rome and Greece fell because of too much materialism, Mr. Borglum should have said that it was the lack of this branch of knowledge that helped cause the collapse.

* * *

Your ridicule of phrenology makes me think of a friend of mine who spends all his time studying palmistry, physiognomy, graphology, numerology, vibrations and other occult subjects. Will you please tell me what scientific merits these subjects have?

There isn't an ounce of merit in all of them put together. They are all creations of ignorant fools or shrew charlatans. Usually, it is the charlatan who does the creating and the fool who do the believing—and paying. Palmistry is like phrenology—a plain, unmitigated fraud. The palm of your hand means only one thing—that your hand has a palm. It doesn't tell you how long you will live, whether you will marry a blonde or a redhead, or whether your uncle will elope with his wife's maid.
Palmistry is merely a racket which pays dividends to heartless fakirs. Physiognomy hasn't the support of a single scientific mind in the entire world. You cannot tell character by the face. Tests by competent psychologists in our great universities establish the fact that physiognomy is nothing less than a fraud. Faces of criminals were taken to be saints, and geniuses were described as morons. The honest face was that of a swindler, while the murderer was that of a poet and idealist. The notions of the physiognomists are without scientific validity. Graphology is also pure, unadulterated bunk. Your handwriting does not reveal character. It merely shows how you were taught, or mistaught, when you took lessons in penmanship. Your writing merely shows that you are a good or a bad penman. It has nothing to do with your character. There isn't a psychologist in the entire world who will say a good word for graphology. Numerology is even worse. This is bunk, without even the pretense of scientific hokus-pocus. Numerology is a tool to extract money from gullibles and fools. The same goes for vibrations. Beware of anything that smacks of the occult. Learn to have respect only for realistic knowledge, for facts, for verifiable information. Demand that everything claimed be proven under scientific test conditions. Naturally, these fakirs cannot do this. They avoid honest, intelligent folk, because their charlatanry is obvious. The bunk-shooters can ply their crafty trades only among the ignorant, the superstitious, the credulous and the subnormal. Some of their victims, many, in fact, are well-dressed and with plenty of money and social position, but that doesn't alter the cold, bitter fact that they are morons nevertheless. From such fools flow millions of dollars to shred, clever fakirs. No fakir has ever been known to give up his graft because intelligent people see through the bunk. The fakir merely asks: Is there money in this hokum? If there is, well and good. If not, he turns to something else, equally shady.

* * *

Can I accept literally the advertising slogan of a local clothing company which has it that a suit of their clothes "will make you look 10 years younger"?

Why not buy two suits and look 20 years younger?

* * *

The use of the words "bunkistic quackery" in describing phrenology has brought a number of letters from defenders of this so-called science, many of them expressing shocked amazement over the writer's astonishing, brazen and crass ignorance.

My description of the system of phrenology, started around 1800, by F. Gall, was not unstudied. If phrenology devoted itself to the study of the brain, it would cause no complaint, for here it would serve the science of psychology. But it goes into the clouds of speculation and guesswork by assuming to be able to read character by a study of the bumps and dents on one's dome, sometimes described as "solid ivory." Here the phrenologists are without scientific support. There is no evidence to prove that the brain is divided into a series of sharply marked "departments." While it is true that the inner side of the skull follows pretty closely the outer form of the brain, there is strong evidence that the outer side of the skull does not invariably follow its inner shape, there being marked variations because of a long string of reasons. The bump on your head proves only one thing—that you have a bump on your head. It has nothing to do with amativeness, acquisitiveness, reason, combative-ness, destructiveness, secretiveness, self-esteem, cautiousness, veneration, conscientiousness, believing-ness, firmness, hope, wonder, wit, imitation, and all the other manifestations of character. Before the real science of psychology made its great progress in studying the marvelous machine that thinks, there was a great to-do about phrenology, with many otherwise first-rate minds deceived by its
pretensions, but during the past 25 years it has gone into steadily growing disrepute. Phrenology is to psychology as astrology is to astronomy, or alchemy to chemistry. It is bunk.

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What is "America First! Inc."

This is a new red-baiting-for-pay outfit, organized in Washington, D. C., to "save" the country from the Communists and other "proponents of alien doctrines." It sees a "Red" under every bed. Its formal statement of purpose guarantees "to give the New Deal an X-ray exposure intended to protect the Constitution from subversive attacks through all future generations." The president of this new racket is James True, who has made a specialty of scaring the rich with the bogeyman of Bolshevism. He has even charged that there are "two Communists in the President's cabinet!" Of course, no evidence is offered to support this wild charge, but it ought to be good for some additional money from the elements who are shivering over the prospect of Stalin taking charge in the U. S. Mr. True is surrounded by a shrewd crew of red-baiters who have been making this new profession pay fat salaries. When everything else fails, start a patriotic society and tell the owners of the nation's money bags that you are out to save them in their graft, provided, of course, that Mr. Money Bags hands over a fair portion of what he owns.

* * *

What do you think of The Revealer?

This paper, edited by the Rev. Gerald B. Winrod, Wichita, Kansas, is playing up the Communist scare with "fax 'n' figgers" that look as though they were made to order by the chief nut in the screwiest ward of a booby hatch. For example, we are told to shiver over the news that there are 6,000 paid Communist speakers in the U. S. "Besides there are over 35,000 paid organizers who devote their time to the same cause." As the Communist party hasn't even 25,000 members, it looks as though the "35,000 paid organizers" are getting money under false representations. But that isn't all. Pipe this: "All this pernicious propaganda is backed up with more than 7,000 publications of the daily, weekly and monthly variety." The nearest I can count is about seven Communist publications in the U. S., and if I missed any it couldn't be more than four or five. These red-baiters have to spread it on thick in order to scare their following and get the money they're after. Winrod is the type of rabble-rouser who can make a big splash with anti-Semitism, anti-Communism and anti-free-thought. He is a demagogue of the first caliber.

* * *

What is the attitude of western magicians to the Hindu rope trick?

They agree unanimously that it is legendary. The London Society of Magicians has a standing offer of $25,000 for anyone who can do the trick, with no takers in sight. The award will never be claimed.

* * *

What is your opinion of the National Geographic Society?

This is just another one of those polite, respectable, shrewd rackets. The backers of this organization are geniuses in the art of getting money from the public, surrounding themselves with an air of sacred respectability and dignity, but always reaching for the long green. The average customer of this outfit does not realize that it is not a society at all but a private corporation that is intended to make profits for its insiders. A small group have succeeded in bamboozling almost a million suckers into "joining" their private nothing, at $3 per year, and in return are "given" a year's subscription to their monthly magazine. What the dumb klucks don't know is that the "membership" is nothing more than a circulation scheme for the magazine. Incidentally, this "society" is capable of the most shady practices, though it does manage to give the impression that it is moved by motives of scientific truth. A glaring case is the manner in which this "society" put over Peary's fraud. Peary, who never got near the North Pole, was
accepted by this clique of insiders as the real thing, without so much as examining his "evidence." Peary has been exposed again and again as a faker, who was as bad, if not worse, than the notorious Dr. Cook.

* * *

Do you think the famous Indian rope trick is a fake?

For many decades the world has been hearing of this famous trick. A magician is supposed to throw a rope into the air, holding one end and letting the other "rest" up in the air. Then a boy climbs the rope and disappears into the sky. That is the trick. Another version has a man follow the boy up the rope. He cuts him to pieces, drops the chunks to the ground, where they are gathered together and the boy is well and whole again. If you will examine the "evidence" you will find that no one has ever been produced who saw the trick done. It's always a case of someone saying he heard of someone who said he saw the trick done. It's just another myth. The rope trick is a good one, except for the one flaw that it has never been done. Otherwise it is better than anything Houdini ever did. Houdini, who was perhaps the greatest magician in history, told me when I spent an evening with him in his New York home, several years before his untimely death, that the Indian rope trick never has been done. There are some magicians who can do something akin to the rope trick by performing on a darkened stage and using mirrors, but this isn't the rope trick as it is supposed to be done in India. The real rope trick is supposed to be done in broad daylight. Any Indian magician who can do the rope trick should hurry to the United States, where he could make at least $10,000 a week showing his skill. But we are still to see the first one come over to do the trick. The reason? Because there isn't any.

* * *

Do you believe there is such a thing as psychic phenomena?

Persons who endorse this mumbo-jumbo pretend to believe in supernormal or supernatural manifestations, such as communications to or from the dead or suspensions of natural law. All of it smacks of alchemy, astrology, spiritualism and the other pseudo-sciences and expressions of mysticism. I dismiss the whole business as rank nonsense. There isn't a shred of evidence to support this moony flapdoodle. Believers in this tripe claim there is a great deal of evidence to substantiate their claims, but it is necessary to note that not one phenomenon has ever been produced under strict laboratory conditions. When these intellectual charlatans are judges and juries they give the world weird reports, but the scientific minded student cannot be taken in by such superficial blah-blah. As things stand, psychic phenomena cannot be found acceptable to the leaders in physics, chemistry and other sciences who demand severely verifiable evidence for everything said or done. All of which means that our best minds reject the supernaturalism in spiritism.

* * *

Are elephants afraid of mice? Do they never forget an enemy?

Charlie Hatch, of Hollywood, who is considered an authority on elephants (he controls 200 elephants for circus, movie and other hire), says elephants are not afraid of mice. As for their memories, they remember enemies for only a few years, not a lifetime. Frequently the pachyderm's memory doesn't hold for even a few years. So says Hatch, and he ought to know. It is always my habit, when regaled with the pretty tales of the mob, to seek an expert and get the real lowdown. Usually there is a vast discrepancy between dogmatic, popular notions and the sure knowledge of the person who knows his subject. If several experts disagree, it is better to suspend judgment.

* * *

Is it true that F. S. Key wrote the Star Spangled Banner on the back of an envelope?

The yarn is without foundation, because envelopes weren't invented until the middle of the last century.
Philosophy

What is the purpose of philosophy?
John Macmurray, in his "Dialectical Materialism as a Philosophy" (a provocative essay), sets down the business of philosophy "to discover and state in a systematic way the meaning and significance of human life." When a man makes a real, intelligent and scientific attempt to understand himself —"his origin, nature and destiny"—he is a philosopher. Philosophy, therefore, has a simple, useful purpose. It can serve all of us, and not a select few.

What does logic mean to a great logician?
Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), of Harvard University, was a great logician, if ever there was one, and he offered two definitions that I select from dozens:

"Logic is the theory of right reasoning, of what reasoning ought to be, not what it is."

"Logic is not the science of how we do think . . . , but how we ought to think in order to think what is true."

Being logical in one's thinking is to be sought for, but one soon learns that the simplest happening may cause a logician the most terrific headaches. For example, take an obvious thing like a dog chasing a rabbit. You want to know which caused which, and immediately you bump into this stream of logic: The rabbit is causing the dog's chase, because he is running from the dog, but at the same time the dog is causing the rabbit's flight because he is chasing the rabbit. So, which is which? I throw this interesting little problem into the laps of amateur logicians who follow these columns.

What are Isolates?
This word was introduced into philosophy by H. Levy, author of "A Scientific Worker Looks at Dialectical Materialism," an excellent and informative essay I hope to print some day. In this work on the Historical Materialism of Marx and Engels, Levy found it necessary to bring in the word "Isolate," which he defined as "something that has been dragged from its environment in time, space, and matter." Of course, this must not be taken literally. It is a philosophical concept that has no place in reality, for it is logically impossible to isolate anything from time, space or matter. A thing can be moved, but it will remain in time, space and matter.

Do you believe in the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake?
No. I prefer to follow Cicero, who held that knowledge is truly valuable only as it is applied to life. I don't believe in knowledge for knowledge's sake, but rather for humanity's sake.

I wonder why so many readers write for your opinion on religion, politics and other debatable questions. Isn't their own opinion as good as yours?
You seem to hold the view that one man's opinion is as good as another's. Without hinting that my opinions are even occasionally correct, I reject the notion that one man's opinions are as good as the next. An opinion has value only when it is based on knowledge, experience, accurate information and sound intelligence. Einstein's opinion on a problem in mathematics surely demands more attention than the opinion of the average man in the street. True democracy does not claim that one opinion is as good as another; it merely seeks to protect all persons in the right to seek, hold and express opinions.

Do you believe in Pragmatism?
Truth, in the view of the Prag-
matist, “is that belief on which we can act with fruitful results.” If a thing “works,” it must be “right.” Thus, according to this muddled logic, astrology must be right because it frequently brings fat fees (fruitful results) to the astrologer.

* * *

As I see your work, you are setting yourself up as an intellectual Pope and offering to think for others.

It is many, many years since I made the great, overwhelming, staggering discovery that it is a complete impossibility for one person to think for another. I think for myself, and have a hard enough time doing that, in all conscience. One difference between Herr Hitler and myself is that he thinks he can think for others, while I know he, and I, can’t. The best I can do is to tell my readers what I think about this, that and the other thing. It then remains for them to think over what I think, and if they think it’s right, well and good, but if they think it’s grandiloquent baloney, then it’s just too bad.

* * *

What is a syllogism?

The best way to answer this question, dealing with the science of logic, is to quote the most famous syllogism ever proposed:

“All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.”

* * *

What did Lucretius teach regarding nature and life?

In his famous, immortal book, which I hope to publish in a cheap edition before I grow senile, he held to the materialistic, mechanistic, atheistic idea that life is but a “fortuitous concourse of atoms.”

* * *

What is the Hegelian aim in education?

Hegel, one of Germany’s philosophers, held that education should be used to form citizens instead of personalities. The citizens he placed above the man. By citizen he meant one who was a willing, glad subject of an authoritarian state. This meant that freedom was rejected and discipline stressed. Citizens, he held, should be taught to consider freedom as the right to obey one’s “superiors” in order to add to the glory of the Fatherland, or State. This, naturally, laid the intellectual foundation of German militarism. The Socialists tried to undermine this philosophy of slavery, but they were overwhelmed by the strength of this creed, which, since Hegel, had been taught without rest. Hitlerism has taken over a certain amount of Hegel’s philosophy, which finds expression in slogans like “We spit on freedom,” “We think with our blood.” German nationalism, or rather militarism, is a deep-rooted disease which will take a long time to cure.

* * *

What method do great thinkers use in trying to achieve Truth?

If you will turn to that famous essay, “On Human Understanding,” by the illustrious English thinker, John Locke, you will find the following:

“The best way to reach the truth is to examine things as they really are, and not to conclude that they are as we fancy of ourselves, or have been taught by others to imagine.”

* * *

How can you shut your eyes to the fact that the Superman is always going to come out on top?

That word “Superman” sounds very classy, but just what does it mean? Can you define it? What is a Superman? Can you point to one? Bernard Shaw has made mincemeat of this Superman hokum when, describing it as a myth, he said something to the effect that when his chauffeur joins him (Shaw) at the theater, Shaw is a Superman, but when Shaw joins the chauffeur in the garage, the chauffeur becomes the Superman. There’s a lot of sound, good sense in that observation.

I may be a super-crapsheader; you may be a super-hog-caller. I may be a super-guzzler; you may be a super-fornicator. Tom may be a super-runner; Harry may be a super-boxer; Bill may be a super-mechanic; Tillie may be a super-sewer; Frank may be a super-juggler; Mike may be a super-sweeper. Each may be super in
something, but that can't make him super in everything. So where does your superman come in? There can be no such animal in a complicated civilization. Just forget the word. It doesn't mean anything.

The Superman is one of the hoaxes of philosophy and rhetoric. There are thousands of jobs, professions, vocations and special abilities. No man can master even a thousandth part of them. When the world produces a man who can do everything—write great books, paint great masterpieces, compose mighty symphonies, build artistic structures, run a railroad, put up a power site, resole his shoes, sew garments, cook a tasty stew, knock out Max Baer, beat Tilden at tennis, tune a piano, fiddle better than Kreisler, tickle the piano better than Paderewski, sing better than Caruso, think deeper than Bertrand Russell, show Einstein how to improve on relativity, make television a sure success, repair a typewriter, operate a linotype, cure a chicken of the pim, kill the germs of flu, predict to the second the next eclipse, take an ocean liner out of port for a trip around the world, fly the Atlantic in an airplane, and then go ahead and do thousands of other things that most of us simply can't fathom— then, and not before then, will I agree there is such a being alive as a Superman.

The fact is simply this: we have different powers of production, creativeness and usefulness, but that doesn't make one a superman and the other a lower animal. The fellow who sweeps the streets is just as necessary to civilization as the sweet thing that dashes off a sonnet. The common man is needed—on the farm, in the factory, in the mines, in the homes—everywhere. And that common man is entitled to a good living, even if Supermen were strutting around, as they aren't.

There are outstanding men and women—geniuses—but where would they be if the common people did not serve them, keep them in comfort, cleanliness and warmth? Who'd feed and clothe them if it weren't for the ordinary man of the street? Your genius is a master-specialist, but millions of miles from being a Superman. So let's forget this superman bunk and settle down to the work of building a civilization that will take care of the lowest as well as the highest.

* * *

What is Aristotle's doctrine of the Mean?
The great encyclopedist of the ancient world, in his Ethics, based this ethical doctrine on the famous precept, "nothing too much." The Mean calls for self-restraint, moderation, self-discipline, and sincere respect for the judgment of intellectually superior men. There is some good sense in this doctrine of the Mean—in eating, for example, or exercise, or laboring. But is it good to be only moderately opposed to war, poverty, bigotry, injustice and oppression?

* * *

What is "a priori" reasoning?
It means reasoning without reference to experience.

* * *

Is it not true that you can kill men, but not their ideas?
One meets this pretty notion frequently, in the literature of religion, politics, and even radicalism and freethought. The thought reeks with poetry, but that doesn't make it valid, by any means. The holders of this picturesque view seem to believe that an idea is a separate reality, apart from its holder, so that if the holder is killed the idea, in some supernormal or even supernatural way, will endure. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." True, if your list of martyrs is less than the number of men who hold the ideas for which the martyrs made their sacrifice. It is simple, and obvious, that if you kill a sufficient number of Socialists, Communists, Catholics or Atheists, their ideas die with them, especially if you destroy their literature at the same time.

* * *

Is there validity in Rousseau's belief in the natural goodness of man?
This question has been argued for more than 150 years. It seems to me
that one should first ask what is meant by “man”? Do we mean a philosopher or a fool, a Hitler or a Lincoln, a scientist or a priest, a savage or a sophisticate, a thinker or a clod? Do we mean a cannibal or a Goethe? I’d say that there is no goodness in man, if by man we mean an exploiter, a sweater, a profiteer, a supporter of superstition, a protector of systems by which a small class may get control of the major portion of the community’s wealth. I can see no goodness in war-mongers and munitions contractors who propagate the war spirit. And yet they are men. Some of them are savage, some barbarous, some educated, some polite, some veneered with the trappings of civilization—and yet all are not good. I’d add at this point that there is goodness in certain manifestations of the human and truly civilized man. The human man, sensitive to needless suffering, ready to help in the work of curing the problems of poverty, unemployment and war, opening the avenues of life to all who are ready to serve society constructively, striving to establish firm foundations under peace, harmony, character-building, culture—such a human man I’d describe as good. But does this mean that even such a person is “naturally good”? Here I cannot say. It would have to be shown that life is naturally good, and this is a pretty big job for one to take on, especially if he is familiar with man’s history and the biological processes in the course of evolution. Man has risen by tooth and claw, by blood and terror. Man has eaten others in order to live, slain in order to survive, caused suffering in order that he himself might feel comfort and ease. The record of evolution is a long, seemingly endless, picture of struggle and misery, and yet, at the same time, there has been a thread of progress, man has risen slowly, hesitantly. But that does not tell the entire story. There has been mutual aid, helpfulness, cooperation. The impulse of love was slow in developing, but it came at last, and while it is not here in all its glory, there are signs of its slow growth. There is goodness there. But who can say it is “natural goodness”? Maybe it is man’s great contribution to life—that he was able to give goodness to a natural condition that was basically brutal.

What is polemics?
The art of disputation.

I have several times met the argument that since man has intelligence it follows there must be intelligence in the universe, for something could never come from nothing. This is supposed to be a strong argument for the God-idea. Please comment.

This is a pretty aged “argument,” and it passes muster among the less studious portion of the population. A careful examination of the “logic” of this proposition shows it to be almost childish in conception. The notion has it that man’s material body is changed into something “spiritual” through the addition of intelligence. We are to assume that some great outside power, laden with “intelligence,” poured a spoonful into each man’s head, thereby turning him from a clod into something like an angel. These panicky theists forget that intelligence, reason, mind—all are merely functions of the physical organ, the brain. Evolution explains the gradual development of the nervous system and brain, from simpler to more complex forms. It did not come full-grown into the world, as though shipped from some great Cosmic Department Store. Once we grasp the materialistic aspect of thought as a function of a physical organ we cut under the mystical vision of a reservoir of intelligence piling some of its essence down to us from on high. The brain in your cranium does not imply that it is a piece from a Great Cosmic Brain, any more than the fact that you have a liver implies that it is a chunk from some Great Cosmic Liver. Those who would prove “intelligence” in the universe (outside of living, biological matter) are still without acceptance among people who prefer
Can a man have depth when his inclination is distinctly dogmatic?

A dogmatist is one who asserts arbitrarily that a certain proposition, tenet or creed is absolutely true, because it has been accepted as truth by some sect, church, group or individual, without analysis, criticism, examination, or verification. If that definition is sound, then it follows that a dogmatist cannot be a deep thinker, because he has surrendered reason, rejected the right to question, denied the scientific method of testing and proving before accepting and asserting. A dogmatist is at home in a church, because there one hears ideas (notions) expounded on the authority of "revelation" or "inspiration," but never on the basis of logic, laboratory experiment or fact. This does not imply that a person is a dogmatist because he states with sureness and firmness his ideas on certain subjects that have been studied by scientific experts and proven sound through empirical means—such as mathematics, physics, engineering, economics, social science, history, philosophy, chemistry, and so on down the line for some 40 sciences.

The expert who has reached certain conclusions through scientific methods can expound his discoveries or observations with intelligent positiveness, because he rests his case on verification and not the blind authority of mass acceptance, sacredness or organized superstition. The person of scientific habit cannot be dogmatic so long as he rests his case on data that may be checked by independent authorities. A dogmatist is sure because he says a certain man or a certain book said so; a scientist is sure because he puts before his hearers a set of facts and says they warrant certain conclusions. The dogmatist is shallow; the realist is profound. The dogmatist belongs to the past; the scientist is the thinker of the future.

* * *

Please comment on this: An article, entitled "Good and God," in the

N. Y. Sunday Mirror, February 25, 1934:

The atheists never seem to get around the one argument which is foolproof every time it is used on them. They have not yet devised a defense for it, nor is there any great likelihood that they will. Simply ask any atheist what it is that he does not believe in. Naturally, he will tell you, among other things, that it is God he does not believe in. Then remind him of the curious truism that by the very ability to mention the word "God" he proves that there is some notion of God in his mind at the moment he is rendering his denunciation, else he would not be saying anything at all. Therefore, he can think and, as a matter of fact, has thought of God even as he expresses his beliefs concerning Him. He has given reality to the notion of God. Therefore, God exists, even for him!

The above is a rewrite of the philosophy of Descartes, though one grows to expect supporters of religious ideas to steal from one another without giving credit. It was Descartes who said that "I think, therefore I am; I think of God, therefore God is." The argument has been popular in religious literature for three centuries, though it is so inane as to be unable to stand the logic of an intelligent child.

There is no evidence for the "truism" that my ability to mention the word "God" is in itself evidence of the existence of a god. It isn't a truism but a choice morsel of bunk. If this were so, it would follow that my ability to mention the word "Devil" would be in itself proof of the existence of a devil. Or a hell. Or a heaven. Or the truth of Japanese, Hindu and other expressions of superstition and supernaturalism.

It is possible to use language to describe abstractions that are without existence, in the same way that an astronomer may use the language of Astrology even though he knows there is no validity to
Astrology and his purpose in speaking of it is to expose it.

The idea of Descartes is brilliantly worded, but it is not accepted by any school of philosophy today. First of all, does it follow that because I happen not to think that it must follow I am not a reality? I am because I am, and not because I think. I think only a small portion of my time, and most of us never think at all, and yet we are, we exist. So much for the front part of the notion.

The rear section—"I think of God, therefore God is"—is as false as the first half. To begin with, man has not produced God but Gods. He has worshiped thousands of Gods, so we think of a god, instead of God. And when we think of a god, we are merely giving intellectual attention to an abstraction, if we are approaching the idea critically, which is the case with most thinkers. If my ability to think about your concept of a God is in itself evidence that your concept is real and actual, then it must follow that every false idea and concept that could be proposed by the gullible would automatically become "gospel" truth as soon as it was considered by one of analytical approach. It would not only be true to the gullible one, but would perfide be true to the unbeliever. It is thus apparent that the notion of Descartes and the N. Y. Mirror writer, quoted above, is a piece of intellectual clap-trap.

* * *

Does Bernard Shaw believe in Immortality?

He doesn't. In his "Parents and Children" he asks: "What man is capable of the insane self-conceit of believing that an eternity of himself would be tolerable even to himself?"

In his "First and Last Things," H. G. Wells also rejects the myth of Immortality, as follows:

"I am a temporary enclosure for a temporary purpose; that served, my skull and teeth, my idiosyncrasy and desire, will disperse, I believe, like the timbers of a booth after a fair."

H. L. Mencken is another unbeliever in Immortality. In Will Durant's "On the Meaning of Life," Mencken is quoted as saying:

"I do not believe in Immortality and have no desire for it. The belief in it issues from the puerile egos of inferior men."

Elsewhere (in "Greatest Thoughts on Immortality"), Mencken writes: "Life is pleasant and I have enjoyed it, but I have no yearning to clutter up the Universe after it is over."

A few of the many great men who rejected Immortality are: Catullus, Pliny the Elder, Seneca, Bjornson, Bertrand Russell, Joseph McCabe, John Burroughs, Charles W. Elliot, Emerson and Schopenhauer.

* * *

What is the difference between fact and theory?

A fact is verifiable, something experienced or observed. A theory is an interpretation of facts. For example, it is a fact that man is a creature of Evolution. However, the thesis proposed by Charles Darwin that man, like the other animals, evolved through natural selection, is an interpretation of the facts, and so it is called the Darwinian Theory. A theory is true or false according to sound or unsound interpretation of facts. Therefore, if we say that something is a theory, it does not follow that the idea is questionable—it may be absolutely true, depending on whether or not its interpretation of a given set of facts can withstand the severe scrutiny of the scientific approach.

* * *

What is rationality?

Bertrand Russell, who said a Rationalist must be one "who wishes men to be rational," defined rationality "as the habit of taking account of all relevant evidence in arriving at a belief." He then tackled irrationality, as follows: "disbelief in objective fact, arises almost always from the desire to assert something for which there is no evidence, or to deny something for which there is very good evidence." It is good to remember that an opinion is never worth a penny more than the reasons for
holding it, and if there are no valid reasons the opinion is worthless.

* * *

Is it logical to say that if you can’t prove a certain thing is false, then you have a right to assume it is true?

No. Bertrand Russell, in his book, "The Scientific Outlook," brands this “time-honored principle” as illogical. Following his humorous way of discussing logic and philosophy by bringing up homely illustrations, he points to the fortunes made by bookmakers. You decide to bet on a certain horse, because it can’t be proved that he will lose. You therefore assume that he will win the race. The bookmaker, a sounder logician, takes your bet and has better than even chances of taking your money.

* * *

Was Plato’s Republic a Socialist Commonwealth?

No. Plato outlined what he thought was an ideal society, but it wasn’t Socialism because it was based on slave labor. Socialism predicates free labor in cooperative ownership of the means of wealth production.

* * *

In fighting the enemies of truth, which weapon is greater—anger or contempt?

Ernest Renan answered this question more than 60 years ago, when he wrote: “Anger leads to declamation, bluntness, often coarse insults; while contempt, on the contrary, almost always produces a refined and dignified style. Anger bears within itself a need of being shared. Contempt is a subtle, penetrating delight which does not require the sympathy of others. It is discreet and all-sufficient to itself.”

* * *

I am a high school student, anxious to use my mind to the fullest, and would appreciate a word of advice.

I’d suggest that you stamp on your memory the following thought from that great thinker and philosopher, Bertrand Russell: “that it is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true.” That thought is clear and simple—obvious, in fact—but apply it to your intellectual life and then see where it will lead you in questions of politics, economics, religion, and sexual behavior. Translate that suggestion into action and you will see many an edifice of bunk topple and fall.

* * *

Does modern philosophy accept the belief of many theologians that time had a beginning?

It is logically most difficult to imagine a time when there was no time, or that space wasn’t always space. What Einstein calls “space-time” may be thought to have always existed. As Prof. Eddington puts the problem: “it is... inconceivable that there was once a moment with no moment preceding it.”

To follow the theologians at this point and claim that space, time and the universe were caused by God—the First Cause—is to indulge in a logical absurdity, for here we are told to accept and deny causality in one breath. If they claim a First Cause they base everything on an Uncaused Cause. If they really believe that every effect must have a cause, then the First Cause contradicts their assumption. It is of such slight logic that they construct their impressive, but untenable, theory of the First Cause, or Prime Mover.

It is entirely beside the point—a crass evasion—to say that causality applies to everything except the First Cause. That’s a case of twisting a shaky theory to fit its difficulties and ending up by causing the entire edifice of “logic” to collapse.

This criticism is supposed to be “old-fashioned materialism,” but that isn’t something to be ashamed of, especially since its force has never been successfully assaulted and its logic is as keen as it has ever been.

“Old-fashioned materialism” is still very much alive, while old-fashioned theology has been dead for generations.

* * *

Why do most people resent a dissenting opinion?

Dr. Samuel Johnson, as reported
by Boswell, once said: "Every man who attacks my belief diminishes in some degree my confidence in it and therefore makes me uneasy; and I am angry with him who makes me uneasy."

* * *

Do you agree with the idea that the most profound questions about life are unanswerable?

No. That would be too dogmatic. There are many questions that are unanswerable today, because of our still faulty equipment. Man has been a thinking animal only a few dozen centuries, while he has been a part of the biological scheme for perhaps millions of centuries. In the world of thought we are still in our infancy, or perhaps I should say that we are still waiting to be born. But that doesn't mean that the questions that are bothering our ablest minds need always be unanswerable. We are getting closer to the truth each year. Ignorance ruled in the past for millions of dark years. But there is a light shining before us. The future is not as dark as the past. If it is a fact that we have learned more in the past century than the race knew in the previous 5,000 years of its history, why not assume that this intellectual progress will continue, perhaps faster than before, with the result that the truths of life will become as real to us as the multiplication table. It may take a dozen centuries—or a hundred but that isn't too long to wait, considering our mental youthfulness. We are asking many questions that are unanswerable in the light of our present knowledge, but I don't believe they will always be unanswerable. I may be wrong in this, but it'll take a few dozen centuries to prove this to me, so we'll not haggle on the subject today.
How do you define science?
Organized knowledge.

* * *

At what point does science begin?
Physics is the first chapter. After physics comes biology. Then comes psychology. The development is direct: 1. understanding the laws of light, sound, motion, gravity, heat, cold, color, vision, etc.; 2. Understanding organic life; 3. Understanding the mind. All other sciences fit into between those three branches.

* * *

When is an opinion scientific?
An opinion that is supported by evidence, experience and observation is scientific. An unsupported opinion is nothing more than a prejudice. If one believes something without reason or evidence, with mere wish-thinking instead of verifiable truth, one thereby holds an unscientific opinion.

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When you speak of science, as you frequently do, are we to understand you mean it in the sense of the searching out of new facts?
No. I prefer Lester F. Ward’s definition of science as consisting of reasoning about and interpreting facts. It was only a part of science to observe the facts of lightning: it was reasoning about the facts that led to the discovery and utilization of electricity.

* * *

Which of the sciences is the most complicated?
I bow to that great authority, Lester F. Ward, who decided it was Sociology.

* * *

Is Clarence Darrow opposed to vivisection?
His name is on the letterhead of the National Antivivisection Society, but I can’t see how he can be claimed as a supporter in view of the letter he wrote, on March 11, 1934, to Professor A. J. Carlson, as follows, in part:

"I am satisfied that vivisection does not add to the pain of animal life. Then, too, I can see no difference between that and killing and eating meat, from which I abstained for a number of years. If the other animals were cared for as humans they would soon drive us off the earth. While I do not place the value of a man far above that of any other animal still we have a better brain and we will not let the other animals destroy us. Long ago, I made up my mind that with strict adherence to aesthetics the terror and pain of animals is rather diminished than increased by vivisection."

John Dewey is another important figure who expressed himself on this subject, in an article in "Hygeia," February, 1931, as follows:

"Surely, until it is finally decided that the taking of animal life for human food is wrong, there is something morally unsound in any agitation which questions the right to take animal life in the interests of the life and health of men, women and children, especially when infinitely more precautions are used to avoid animal suffering in the latter case than in the former."

* * *

How big an engineering job was the Great Wall of China?
It was built about 21 centuries ago, and is 20 feet high, with a width of 15 feet at the top. It is 1,400 miles long.

* * *

What was the standard of accuracy among engineers a century ago?
In those days nothing was known about the precision that reckoned on so much as a ten thousandth of
an inch. Instead, their specifications usually called for “within the thickness of a worn shilling.”

Is science a curse to the poor and a blessing to the rich?

Science, properly used, will be a blessing to the poor. It will make the poor rich, and thereby be a blessing to all humanity, instead of serving only a portion of the race. Science has taken from us the fear of famine. We are able to produce a superabundance, because of our application of the great discoveries of physics, chemistry, engineering, electrical science, transportation, communication, power, etc. A few hundred years ago 95 percent of the people toiled long and hard just to get enough to eat, and frequently they didn’t even get that. With science, man has solved the problem of a dearth of commodities and other necessities. To be sure, we now have a new problem to solve—the best way to distribute what labor is able to produce so prodigiously. But this is a comparatively easy problem to solve. It will be done through socialized industry, with science being used for the good of humanity instead of for the profit of a small class of capitalists. With the establishment of the cooperative commonwealth—with wealth produced for use instead of private profit—we will know the blessings of peace, prosperity and true civilization. But this in itself will be a credit to science, for the work of reorganizing society is in itself a problem in science. By applying scientific Socialism to our economic and industrial facilities, we bring about a scientific civilization—the Socialist Republic, or, if you prefer, the Cooperative Commonwealth. That is why Socialists always stand by science. They see science misused in capitalistic society or in war, but that does not mean we should do away with science. Properly administered, science will make it impossible for a single individual to suffer from involuntary cold, want or hunger. Science, used with a view to serving all humanity under a system of socialized industry, will bring us to a position of real power, a position in which humanity will at least be the master of its environment, with the greatest good to the greatest number as the one code of social morality.

How many cells does the human body use in a normal lifetime?

Biologists estimate them at 265 trillion.

How is German science reacting to Hitlerism?

It is giving the scientists of the world laugh after laugh, though the situation is too tragic for facetiousness. That “Aryan” anthropologist, Dr. Hans Guenther, has been given an important chair at Jena, as a reward for his “blond hair.” But, alas and alack, some malicious scooundrel referred to one of his books on anthropology, published before the Jews were thrown out of the science halls of the universities, and found a footnote in which Dr. Guenther derided the notion that there is such a thing as an “Aryan” race. He plainly said that “Aryan” refers to a language used in ancient times and not to a race, as anthropologists say everywhere. When this was called to his attention he kept face with the Hitlerites by ordering it stricken from the next edition of this book, which was done. Thus did science come to the rescue of the “Aryan” myth by erasing the truth. No wonder the scientific world laughs when German science is mentioned. And this comes after generations of noble, honest, heroic research! It is a tragic decline.

How many species of insects are there?

About 500,000.

How long does it take for the sun’s light to reach the earth?

About eight minutes.

When mariners measure for position are the results accurate?

Navigators allow themselves a radius of two miles when determining their position on the seas.

What is the answer to the following well-known problem: What
would happen to a cannon ball if discharged from the rear end of a moving train with a velocity equal to that of the train and in the opposite direction?

The late William Benjamin Smith, mathematician and professor of physics, University of Missouri, said the ball would fall directly to the ground.

* * *

Which is more numerous—water or land life?

It has been established by the science of oceanography that there is more living matter in the aquatic than in the terrestrial environment. This not only applies to the quantity but also to the variety of species.

* * *

What is the scientific explanation for the Dionne quintuplets?

Sexual intercourse.

* * *

Which science is the oldest?

Astronomy.

* * *

Did the ancients have shorthand?

The orations of Pericles were reported by a system of shorthand somewhat similar to the modern method of fast writing. The British Museum, in 1887, was fortunate enough to acquire nine tablets, which contained shorthand notes written on wax, dating to the third century B.C. These tablets were not deciphered until 1924, when Egyptologists discovered two volumes, written in the third century B.C., on papyrus, containing the keys to the various shorthand signs used on the wax tablets. The system is now complete, except for a few omissions which still baffle the scholars in the British Museum. The ancient Romans also used shorthand. During the Dark Ages, when the Catholic Church ruled most of Europe, shorthand, like other cultural mediums, died out.

* * *

What is astronautics?

This new science deals with the problem of flying from the earth to the moon, or even Mars. The students of this science are devoting their attention to rockets, the most prominent organization in this field being the American Rocket Society. So far, rocketeers have succeeded in sending a rocket six miles up. They claim that before long it will be possible to shoot mail and express across the Atlantic. It is estimated that a rocket could carry mail from New York to Chicago in 20 minutes, and across the ocean in two hours. Students of astronautics are working quietly, avoiding sensational publicity whenever possible, experimenting with different kinds of fuels and hint that before long the world will be startled by some great rocket feat, though they do not say much about visiting the moon just yet. It would be folly to call these earnest, sincere experimenters visionaries. They are hard-headed and determined, and it would be well to treat them with respect.

* * *

What is the biological advantage of sexual reproduction?

It is of great importance because it makes for variety through the crossing of strains. There's never any variety when living matter reproduces itself without sex. It continues endlessly along the same monotonous way. Sex, when it appeared in the biological scale, changed all this. It is healthy for the organism to mix the blood.

* * *

Are any races immune to certain diseases?

African Negroes lost those of their number who were subject to malaria, and those remaining are quite immune. Arabs are immune to typhoid fever, also as a result of their having lost the susceptibles and developing immunity among those who survived.

* * *

You only believe what you can see.

That isn't correct. I believe many things that I can't see. Germs, for example. I've never seen one, but I believe in their existence. And so on down the line—lots of things I can't see, but in which I believe. But here's the rub. I don't believe in them on faith. I believe in them because I know that experts say they are verifiable. I don't believe in the germ theory because some pope says Moses said so and therefore it must be so. I accept this
theory, as I take the theory of evolution, because the scientists who conducted their researches did so under laboratory conditions, with each fact checked and verified, later to be scrutinized by other experts in the same department of science.

* * *

How fast does a bullet go?
There are different velocities with different bullets. Let us take a .270 Winchester cartridge. It will travel 300 yards in 0.22 seconds.

* * *

You discuss many weighty subjects admirably, but why is it that most of us are more concerned over what amounts to trifles? In my case I fret and fuss over the fact that at 5 o'clock each morning I am awakened by a rattling, noisy bumpy milkwagon, which bothers me a great deal more than Hitler or Mussolini.

I don't agree that noise is a trifling matter. It is a very serious subject worthy of the most conscientious, scientific treatment. Noise makes for unhappiness, physical pain, reduced efficiency, domestic discord and crankiness. Science is giving serious study to the problem of noise, particularly in large cities.

In the case of your milkwagon, it happens that science has already offered a demonstrated remedy for this preventable annoyance. A large milk company in New York City has tested successfully a milkwagon equipped with pneumatic tires, drawn by a horse shod with rubber horseshoes. Even the horn has been "piped down" to a graceful, soothing, pastoral "moo." As a result, scientific experts, aided by accurate instruments, found a sound reduction of 96 percent. The rubber horseshoes last three times as long as the metal ones, and are half the weight.

* * *

Who invented the electric motor?
Thomas Davenport, in his smithy in Forest Dale, Vt., in 1834, invented the electric motor. A man of modest education, Davenport invested $20 in a "galvanic magnet" and batteries and, after much toll, devised a motor which achieved the production of rotary motion by repeated changes of magnetic poles. His name is hardly known, and yet he was one of the pioneers who laid the foundations of modern industrialism.

* * *

What is solar engineering?
This is a comparatively new science. It deals with the problem of converting the energy of the sun into power for industrial, commercial and other purposes. This is by no means a visionary ideal. The problem is a practical one and long steps have been taken towards solution. Solar engineers have already succeeded in producing a copper oxide, the surface of which picks up the sun's energy and converts it into electricity. It may be many years before this science reaches its objectives, but there is no denying the fact that it is of genuine importance to the future welfare of mankind.

* * *

Has a perpetual motion machine ever worked?
Never. Thousands of inventors have toiled over this problem during many centuries, but without success. Many clever models have been made, but the things can't deliver an endless stream of power. Most of them are based on wheels, with balls, water, or weights of some kind moving automatically to the rim of the wheel, but the results are all the same: the attempt to create a leverage on one side to keep the wheel revolving is countered on the other side, because the weight on that side is always the same as the weight that is pulling down. The thing therefore settles down to an even balance. It is a settled principle in mechanics that "there can be no motion without the expenditure of force exterior to the mechanism."

* * *

Is there real authority for the belief that oysters should be eaten only in R months?
Prof. Trevor Kincaid, of the University of Washington, says oysters can be eaten in May, June, July and August as well as the other months. He says this non-R oyster business is just another popular
superstition. If he's right, the oyster sellers should erect a monument to him. A cracked wit has suggested that we change the four nixie months to Mary, Jurne, Jurly and Orgust.

** By what means was the light from a planet used to turn on the lights at the World's Fair? **

Telescopes from four different directions, were turned simultaneously on the star Arcturus, which is 30 times larger than our sun. At an agreed time the light rays (which left the star 40 years ago) acted on a photo-electric cell and an amplifying mechanism. In addition there was an extremely delicate relay that closed an electrical circuit which held a battery. That's the scheme. It's all too complicated for my lay mind.

** Does the water of the Dead Sea have an outlet? **

This body, which is 1,200 feet at its deepest, has no outlet. It receives 6,000,000 tons of water each day from the Jordan, in addition to what flows in from several other sources, but the sea's surface remains practically at one level because of the great evaporation resulting from the place's great heat. It contains no living matter because the Dead Sea holds immense stores of mineral salts. It is impossible to swim in this basin.

** How accurate are the weather bureau's forecasts? **

W. R. Gregg, chief of the U. S. Weather Bureau, reports that his department "is right 90 percent of the time on short-range forecasts, and about 80 percent of the time on forecasts of 24 to 36 hours." No one can deny that this is a good record. Tireless efforts are being made to improve this record. This same department forecasts flood conditions, with good results. The New Orleans station is so efficient that it is now able to forecast Mississippi River flood stages as much as 20 days in advance. In this work the bureau comes within an inch of being completely accurate.

There are 8,000 stations in this important bureau. A new development is the study of the upper air, for which army and navy airplanes are making daily flights from 20 stations throughout the land. This work, when it becomes completely organized, will help make long-range forecasts more accurate.

The bureau not only gets telegraphic, teletype and radio reports twice daily from 200 stations, but gets equally important reports from ships at sea, Alaska, Canada and Mexico. Such painstaking efforts are not wasted, because accurate weather reports are essential to the economic life of the country. Weather is always a front-page "must" story. It is as important as the calendar.

** Do you believe that radio has something to do with droughts and heat waves? **

Meteorologists have refused to accept the explanation that the radio is in some way to be blamed for the recent drought. However, William H. Hobbs, geologist, University of Michigan, suggests that broadcasting waves may "release an immense energy of a vibratory character and may prevent the condensation of moisture." He asks meteorologists for the basis of their calculations in rejecting this theory. Naturally, as a geologist, Dr. Hobbs is not a competent authority. But it would do no harm for experts in meteorology to give his claim serious attention. Speaking only as a layman, I am not impressed with Dr. Hobbs' fears. The total of electrical energy used in broadcasting is so insignificant as to exert practically no influence.

** I was impressed by Napoleon's use of the word "telegraph" in his recently discovered letters. How come? **

It is true that Napoleon used the word long before the telegraph was invented in 1844. In his time the word described signaling systems with sun-flashing mirrors, sent from hill to hill along the army's line of communication.

What is your opinion of the oft-quoted statement that only 12 per-
sons throughout the world understand Einstein?
I am not a mathematical physicist, and yet even I know that this supposedly witty remark is the bunk. There isn't a first class university or college in the world that hasn't dozens of men on its staff who understand Einstein's Theory of Relativity and the mathematical process by which he arrives at his conclusions. To be sure, they are involved. They are not intended for children. Laymen have difficulties, though many grasp the highlights of the theory. Given proper training in mathematics, physics and astronomy, anyone can understand Einstein.

Do animals fear death?
I do not know of a single scientist who says animals are like humans with regard to fearing death. Animals have been conditioned to dread pain and therefore fear the things that cause pain. The idea of death is an interpretation of a set of facts, and only human beings have this reasoning faculty. Human beings fear pain naturally, but their fear of death is a result of super intelligence.

How much salt does the Great Salt Lake contain?
Utah's "Dead Sea" has been studied by two geologists of the University of Michigan, A. J. Eardley and Mack Demorest, and Capt. Leon Stanley, a scientist at Salt Lake. According to their estimates, the bottom of this lake contains 400,000,000 tons of salt. As very little of this common salt remains in suspension, it is possible to measure it by studying the lake's bed. The salt layer is more than two inches deep everywhere in the lake's floor. This means, on a low estimate, the tonnage just given.

How long does radium retain its energy?
Radium remains active 25 centuries, as it loses its activity at the rate of only 4 percent per century.

Is the world's supply of salt indefinitely sufficient?
Practically. A mathematician has figured it out as follows: 4,500,000 cubic miles of rock salt would result if the oceans were dried up. This immense quantity is equal to 14½ times the entire land area of Europe above the highwater line.

Did Copernicus teach that the earth went around the sun in a circle?
Yes. It was Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), the German astronomer, who corrected the error committed by Nickolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), the Polish (or Prussian) astronomer. Kepler proved it traveled in an ellipse.

At what rate is the sun consuming its mass?
Professor Einstein's theorem proves that the sun is burning its mass (in radiation) at the immense rate of 4,000,000 tons per second. However, don't let this worry you, for it will be quite a while before it turns chilly. Sir James Jeans, the mathematical astronomer, estimated that 97 percent of the sun's radiation would still be retained 150,000,000 years from now. The same authority figured it would take 15,000,000,000,000 years to burn away its entire weight. (I wonder if this seemingly innocent answer is going to cost me any subscriptions. The reason I say this is the fact that my discussion on how the Catholic Church met the claim that the world is a ball brought me a hot letter from a Clarksville, Texas, reader who is sure the earth is flat and that I'm nuts to take for granted its sphericity. He closes his letter with this ominous note: "If your answers to other questions are as erratic as is this answer I fear I have squandered another dollar." Now, whenever I would discuss scientific geography, I must balance the truth with the possibility of losing a reader in Texas who knows for a fact that the earth is as flat as a pancake. It is a serious moral temptation, in these times when it is so hard to get new subscribers who can spare a whole round dollar.)

What does radium cost?
Radium is the most expensive substance in the world. It takes al-
most 45,000 ounces of gold to buy a half ounce of radium.

* * *

Do you believe the power in the atoms will ever be used?

In science and philosophy I can serve only as an amateur, so the answer to your question must be drawn from the experts. In December, 1934, Albert Einstein explained the extent of the tremendous powers locked in the atoms. I forget the exact estimates, but they were all immense. If atomic power could be used, a piece of coal the size of a pea could move a steamer twice across the Atlantic. A handful of snow could heat a skyscraper for months. An ounce of water could lift a million pounds to the peak of the highest mountain. And so on, with statements that stagger the imagination. Yes, the power that holds a pebble together could level mountains, but will it ever be harnessed? Einstein is doubtful. He doesn’t see it as a possibility. The problem is of great interest and usefulness, but atomic power won’t move your flivver, at least in our time. But our physicists keep working, and they learn more about atomic power from day to day. Maybe they’ll make Einstein eat his words. What a triumph that would be, and I’m sure Einstein would be the first to shower them with his praise. If they were to win, it would be the greatest victory in the history of science. It would be as gigantic an achievement as the invention of a thousand electric lights, telephones, radios, engines and X-rays rolled into one. And while we look forward hopefully to some future Newton, let’s not forget to cast an admiring glance backward—to that unknown, unsung wizard who, perhaps 50,000 years ago, discovered a “simple” principle that helped establish modern industry—the wheel!

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What is economic entomology?

This science deals with the use of insects that are harmless to a certain crop, let us say, and turning them on destructive insects, to exterminate them, if possible. It is a sound, proven method of using one parasite to destroy another.

The U. S. Dept. of Agriculture does great work in this field. There are hundreds of bulletins describing how these insect wars are provoked. The value of this science is almost beyond computation. An equally important science in this field is mycology, which deals with fungi. These plant parasites are fought mainly with the weapons of chemistry.

* * *

Do mental giants suffer physically?

Dr. Samuel B. Heckman, director of the Educational Clinic of the College of the City of New York, says this popular conception is all wrong. “In fact,” he claims, “on the average, an accelerated mentality is accompanied by an acceleration in growth and a higher health index.”

* * *

I was puzzled by your remark that the Church opposed Geography. Can you refer me to something that will help establish that conclusion?

Ptolemy’s “Geography” was brought out in an edition by Michael Servetus. In it Palestine was properly described as “meager, barren and inhospitable.” This, of course, contradicted the Bible, which says it is “a land flowing with milk and honey.” Calvin, who caused Servetus’s burning at the stake, used this against Servetus, when he was on trial. Calvin said it “necessarily inculpated Moses, and grievously outraged the Holy Ghost.” Andrew D. White, in his “A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom,” wrote that the Church’s position on Geography was “on the whole, steadily hostile to truth.”

* * *

Is there any difference of opinion among scientists regarding the validity of Evolution?

No. Evolution is accepted as a fact by every important authority in the fields of Biology, Geology, Zoology, Physiology, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Embryology, Anatomy and the other great sciences. By “important authority” I mean every science professor in the great, free universities of the world. Naturally, I could not include in such a list the “professors” in
Methodist, Baptist, Mormon, Seventh Day Adventist or Catholic institutions of "learning." There hasn't been a scientific voice against evolution in over 30 years. While the fact of Evolution is accepted unanimously, the methods of Evolution are naturally subject to dispute. Scientists still differ over the manner in which species, mind, plants, planets, etc., evolved. There isn't anything surprising about this, because the sciences listed above are all comparatively young. As the Evolutionists have the opportunity to continue their studies and researches, the conflicts over the means of Evolution will be liquidated by the application of more exact knowledge and better founded interpretations. But this doesn't alter the important truth that Evolution is a fact.

Please define Darwinism.
Sir Arthur Keith puts it this way: "Darwinism is the doctrine of Evolution applied to living things. Darwinism is also a movement—the movement which converts men and women to Darwin's way of thinking. . . . 'Darwinism' is sometimes used as a term for the application of the theory of Evolution to explain the origin of man. When we speak of a man as a 'Darwinist' we imply that he believes in the origin of man and of beast, not by the methods described in Genesis, but by those which were investigated and recorded by Charles Darwin. It is certainly wrong to suppose that Darwinism means merely the application of Natural Selection to the theory of Evolution—as Sir Ambrose Fleming has done. It is a mistake often made by men who write in defence of the Roman Catholic conception of evolution."

What is "Emergent Evolution"?
Evolution, of course, means growth, change, development. It is materialistic, in that it makes biological life a product of conditions, environment, circumstances. We find that it works in three "directions."

First, living beings can develop greater complexity, grow truly superior. Man has been, and is, such an animal. He has evolved upwards.

Second, living things can become so completely adjusted to their environment, so certain of survival without struggling to develop new functions, that the biological equipment settles down to constant, unchanging existence. The alligator is such an animal. He has found his place in the evolutionary scale, and stays there. He moves neither up nor down.

Third, a living being finds itself ill-equipped to survive, because of one or numerous reasons. He may not be able to reproduce, or connect with a sure food supply, or the climate may be too hot or cold. He declines. He disappears. The pre-historic giant lizards and other reptiles belonged to this classification. They were killed off in the evolutionary process. There is evolution as well as evolution.

All these three "movements" I've described are completely materialistic and therefore unacceptable to a small minority of biologists who persist in holding religious ideas. Such a religious-minded biologist was Prof. Lloyd Morgan, who, in 1923 and 1926, wrote two books on what he called "Emergent Evolution," by which is meant that there is a Divine Purpose behind evolution. God is supposed to perform his wonders through "Emergent Evolution." But the whole idea merely ignores what has already been shown—that nature does not always evolve upwards. It does sometimes. Then again it stands still. Or it slides down the scale. This explodes the pretty theory of "Emergent Evolution." Morgan, and
others of his view, shut their eyes to nature’s waste, cruelty, ugliness, and needless suffering. They see only the “good” and the “beautiful.” If they could show that life always improves, that beauty always grows, that nothing is subject to devolution, then one might give them serious thought. But they can’t do this. “Emergent Evolution” simmers down to a mere dogmatism, something accepted without evidence, something proposed without proofs—another vain sop to the religious.

Do scientists and theologians approach their subjects in the same way?

There is a world of difference between them. The scientific method is to present all the evidence for and against a proposition, to welcome inquiry and opposition, to be ever ready to chuck over anything that cannot stand rigid scrutiny, and to bring in expert authority, not in the spirit of appealing to someone who is above and beyond examination but rather to avail oneself of the benefits of carefully accumulated data. The theologian doesn’t do his work in this manner. Rather does he take the position that his notions are true because a “higher spirit” said so in a certain book, which is sacred because he says it is, and anyone who questions him is heretical and suspect. To disagree with him is equal to rejection of morality. His authorities speak with the voice of God and not by the rules and tests of evidence. He thunders at skepticism, instead of encouraging it. He doesn’t know that doubt is the beginning of wisdom, that tolerance is the best fruit of civilization, that a liberal spirit is necessary in the world of intellect in order to defend unpopular ideas and protect cultural minorities, otherwise learning might become only a rubber-stamp in the hands of dogmatists. The scientist experiments; the theologian cries for faith. One seeks; the other asserts. One says truth is a growth; the other claims it is a revelation. One builds on reason; the other glorifies mysticism. One reaches a conclusion be-

cause the facts point that way; the other believes because he wishes to believe.

* * *

What is the fundamental difference between the Creation Theory of life and Evolution?

Sir Arthur Keith answers this question in a paper he wrote recently in reply to an address delivered by Sir Ambrose Fleming, F. R. S., in which Sir Ambrose attempted to support the Creationist Theory. Said Professor Keith:

“In Creation the organizing, the vitalizing force, acts from without; in Evolution the vitalizing creative power acts from within; it is an inherent property of living matter... ‘Creation,’ as the Evolutionist or Darwinist pictures it, is less romantic, less easily perceived. The power which creates new forms and new species is resident in living matter; we have no knowledge of any kind of matter that has not this creative power. Creation came into operation as soon as matter became living... How did matter become living?” And the Darwinist has to confess that he does not know... To say ‘God made matter’ and ‘out of dead matter made living matter’ cannot satisfy even a child’s intelligence, for the child’s next question is sure to be ‘And who made God?’”

* * *

What is an organism?

An organism is something that has dual functions, which are able to work together in harmony or unison. A man is an organism, because his body has thousands of various functions, all of which are different, yet interrelated; individual, yet cooperative. But one would not call a motor car an organism merely because it is made to correlate many functions to the single end of locomotion, because its parts are acted on from the outside.

* * *

What is your opinion of mental telepathy?

This subject does not belong in the same class with psychic phe-
nomena, though psychics often try to run the two together. There is very little real evidence in support of mental telepathy, but there is an attitude of suspended judgment among educated people. The thing may work out in time, but this does not mean it will function through supernatural means. If arrived at, mental telepathy would be no more super-materialistic, or spiritual, or miraculous than radio, which, of course, is a triumph of physics.

“Mental telepathy” suggests communication between the living and the dead, which, of course, is rank superstition, so it would perhaps be better if one were to speak of “thought transference,” which is simpler and less subject to notions of the supernatural.

Clairvoyance is different from thought transference, because it has come to mean supernormality in the sense that the receiver of an impression claims the arrival is not from another mind, which throws it into the lap of mysticism and psychical superstition.

Hypnotism, of course, is recognized in modern science and carries none of the suspicions attached to thought transference, or the downright charges of fraud attached to spiritualism and psychism.

When the Society of Psychical Research was organized in 1882 it entered a debatable field, and now, after 40 years, not a single theory or belief is accepted as valid in the world of science.

* * *

Is the American eagle bald?

No. “Bald-headed,” two centuries ago, meant “white,” which properly describes the head of the mature American eagle (the young are usually dark). Misuse of the word “bald” has resulted in the popular idea that the American eagle is without feathers on the top of his head, which is a gross libel on that beautiful bird. The American eagle is all American, for he is to be found nowhere in the world outside North America. Benjamin Franklin hated the American eagle, and regretted its use as an emblem of our country, describing the magnificent creature as an all-round scoundrel, bird of prey, thief, parasite, lousy and cowardly. He wanted the U. S. to use the turkey as its emblem.

In his interesting book, “The American Eagle,” Francis Hobart Herrick comes to the defense of the bird, giving him a good character, worthy of the greatest admiration. Among other things, Herrick claims for the American eagle the following virtues: He is a good parent, giving upwards of a half year to rearing his family. He is no more parasitic than other birds; if anything, less. He is a capable fisherman. He never robs unless absolutely necessary, which is also true of many humans. And he isn’t a coward, says this author, who has spent many years watching eagles from specially built platforms and towers high up in the mountains.

An eagle’s nest is a vast engineering job, being often 4,000 pounds in weight and covering more than 57 square feet. Mr. Herrick says they use their nests as a burial ground for garbage, so that a captured nest can give one a long record of the eagle’s activities, for these birds usually settle down to 30 or 40 years of life in a single nest. He has found nests made of branches six feet long and two inches in diameter.

Eagles make fish their favorite food, which they take mostly through their own efforts. They also dote on rabbits, rats and sometimes a tiny lamb, though our author doubts that they go in for larger catches. The popular idea has it that an eagle is a tremendous bird, but the fact is they rarely weigh more than 10 or 12 pounds, the larger birds usually being females, the heavier of the species. He doubts seriously the sensationalism which has an eagle carry off children. As a student of eagle life during many decades, Herrick has still to verify such a story. The writer adds that an American eagle is more likely to attack and tear to pieces a very small lamb, rather than fly away with the entire carcass. Eagles watch for trapped animals, carrying away muskrat and trap to the nest. He says he found 14 steel muskrat traps in one nest.

* * *

What is a reflex?

This is something that the body
of any animal or human does automatically, unconsciously, without waiting to be taught. For example, an infant sucks at anything it reaches, because it wants food. This is an unconditioned reflex. Later, the baby, through experience, learns to distinguish between what to suck for food and what not to suck. This is a conditioned reflex. Psychologists and physiologists increasingly prefer the word "reflex" to "instinct."

The scientist who has done most in the study of reflexes is Ivan Petrovitch Pavlov, M. D., the great Russian physiologist, born in 1849 and still living. Pavlov devotes all of his time to the study of dogs, particularly their flow of saliva. From such a seemingly limited field he has gathered a vast collection of facts, which are invaluable to scientists in their observations and experiments on higher as well as lower animals. Pavlov is so great in the scientific world that he now stands, in reputation and achievement, with such immortals as Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton and Darwin.

Pavlov is a behaviorist, a mechanist and a materialist. It is interesting to learn that even though he has always been unfriendly to the Soviet government, and voices his criticisms openly, he is given the widest freedom and the most generous support in the maintenance of his laboratories.

Limitations of space compel me to describe only one phase of his work with dogs. According to Pavlov, a dog's unconditioned reflex makes his mouth water when food is put into it. Soon the reflex is conditioned enough to cause saliva to flow at the smell or sight of food. Later, certain sounds can cause the reflex. For instance, Pavlov would ring a bell whenever he gave a certain dog a morsel of food. The ringing bell became associated with food, and finally Pavlov could withhold food entirely and still cause the flow of saliva by merely sounding the bell.

Such things may appear small to a layman, but in the world of science they are of great theoretical and practical importance. From thousands of such experiments come accurate generalizations about the nature and responses of all living matter.

Are the religious beliefs of scientists becoming stronger or weaker?

The church press and platform continue tirelessly to pound on the "argument" that science is no longer irreligious, that the leaders of science, are returning to the fold and that all is bright for the children of Jehovah. Catholic and Protestant fundamentalists repeat this trash. Even modernists like John Haynes Holmes and Harry Emerson Fosdick assure their more liberal followers that the cause of religion is safe because science is now being led back to God and immortality by the world's greatest physicists, sociologists, biologists and psychologists. Freethought is being dismissed as a relic of "exploded 19th Century dogmatism." Atheists are derided as being hopelessly outdated. Agnostics are advised to get on the religious bandwagon.

What are the facts? Alas, here the leaders of religious propaganda come a cropper. Their fine phrases and eloquent perorations turn into Bronx cheers when the simple, relentless, implacable facts show their heads. The rousing slogans die out. The preachers, priests and rabbis turn pale and stammer. It's all too embarrassing.

Here comes Dr. James H. Leuba, Professor of psychology, Bryn Mawr College, with a set of carefully compiled figures that blast to powder the notion that scientists are returning to the God of the religions. It's too bad to have this sound information come at a time when the clergy is so much in need of the support of scientists. Alas, the lord is unkind to his faithful children. He gives them no comfort. Satan rules.

In Harper's for August, 1934, Dr. Leuba presents his tables of figures, and what a sad tale they tell! The figures were obtained in 1933, so it will be impossible for the pulpites to claim this analysis represents conditions of another era in intellectual progress. Dr. Leuba
talks about the opinions of scientists of the fourth decade of the 20th Century, and not the scientists of the second and third quarter of the last century.

Dr. Leuba's purpose was to obtain an accurate report on the "attitude of the American men of science toward two central beliefs of the Christian religion: a God influenced by worship, and immortality." This scientist, whose reputation is world-wide, put before American scientific leaders the following three propositions, for acceptance or rejection:

(A) I believe in a God to whom one may pray in the expectation of receiving an answer. By 'answer' I mean more than the natural, subjective, psychological effect of prayer. (B) I do not believe in a God as defined above. (C) I have no definite belief regarding this question.

The above definition of God was carefully worded by Dr. Leuba in order to describe the God of the Christian religion, whether Catholic or Protestant. Formal religion is based on the qualities attributed to God as envisaged by Christians. Not a priest or preacher will deny the accuracy of Dr. Leuba's definition.

On the question of immortality, three questions "corresponding to those referring to God," were offered. The first: "I believe in continuation of the poison after death in another world." Every branch of Christianity would answer "yes" to that question on immortality.

Who were the scientists before whom these questions were placed? The author explains that he sent his questionnaire to names in Dr. Cattell's American Men of Science, latest edition (1933), which contains about 23,000 names. Surely the most bigoted church--supporter will grant the fairness of this list of names for such an inquiry.

We now come to the figures, which are in the form of percentages of the total number of answers:

The Belief in God

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Believers</th>
<th>Disbelievers</th>
<th>Doubters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicists</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biologists</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociologists</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By eliminating classifications and lumping the scientists together we get "30 percent of believers in a God moved to action by the traditional Christian worship: supplication, thanksgiving, songs of praise, etc.; 56 percent of disbelievers; and 14 percent of doubters." Dr. Leuba then properly calls attention to the fact that in the above table the physicists denote men of science devoted to inanimate matter and the biologists denote those devoted to living matter as their subjects of research. It is the physicists who give the largest percentage (38 percent) while those who study life and the mind give only 10 percent support to the God-idea of formal religion. (Note: Dr. Leuba explains the above table with regard to the total of believers, etc. They should make 100 for all three groups, but as he counted "as one the halves and the fractions over the half and dropped the other fractions, the sum may be 161 or 99.")

In the matter of immortality, we get an even worse showing for religion, as the following table indicates:

The Belief in Immortality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Believers</th>
<th>Disbelievers and Doubters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicists</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biologists</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociologists</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Psychologists .......................... 9 70 91
All together .......................... 33 41 67

Dr. Leuba then studies the above two questions from the viewpoint of scientists of greater and lesser degrees of eminence. Here we find numerous tables which show conclusively that the greater the eminence of the scientists—whether physicists, biologists, sociologists or psychologists—the greater is the degree of unbelief in God and immortality. These scientists of greater eminence were taken from the directory which listed men who had made especially important contributions to their respective sciences, their names therefore being starred. Among the greater physicists only 17 percent believed in God; only 12 percent of the greater biologists believed in God; only 5 percent of the greater sociologists; and only 2 percent of the greater psychologists believed in God. The totals follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disbelievers</th>
<th>Believers</th>
<th>Doubters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Lesser Scientists</td>
<td>35 51 65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Greater Scientists</td>
<td>13 71 87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same condition is found when one studies the answers to the questions on immortality. Here is the result:

**The Belief in Immortality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disbelievers</th>
<th>Believers</th>
<th>Doubters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Physicists</td>
<td>46 29 55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Physicists</td>
<td>20 43 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Biologists</td>
<td>32 40 68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Biologists</td>
<td>15 62 86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Sociologists</td>
<td>31 40 69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Sociologists</td>
<td>10 60 90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Greatest Sociologists</td>
<td>10 70 90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesser Psychologists</td>
<td>12 65 88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Psychologists</td>
<td>2 79 98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Lesser Scientists</td>
<td>37 36 62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Greater Scientists</td>
<td>15 56 85</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It happens that Dr. Leuba conducted the same kind of an inquiry back in 1914. His figures appeared in a book from which I have quoted frequently in the past. He now compares them with the results of his 1933 inquiry, as follows:

**The Believers in God**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lesser Scientists</th>
<th>Greater Scientists</th>
<th>Lesser Scientists</th>
<th>Greater Scientists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicists</td>
<td>50 43 34 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>57 46 40 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biologists</td>
<td>39 31 17 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>45 32 25 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociologists</td>
<td>29 30 19 13</td>
<td></td>
<td>52 31 27 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists</td>
<td>32 13 13 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>27 12 9 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Believers in Immortality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lesser Scientists</th>
<th>Greater Scientists</th>
<th>Lesser Scientists</th>
<th>Greater Scientists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicists</td>
<td>57 46 40 20</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Biologists</td>
<td>45 32 25 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociologists</td>
<td>52 31 27 10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists</td>
<td>27 12 9 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>27 12 9 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is direct, incontrovertible proof that in every classification of scientific men, their beliefs in 1933 were far weaker than was the
case in 1914, which shows finally that religious ideas are rapidly de-
clining among the more intelligent people. Indeed, the facts are an-
nihilating. The churches are losing ground yearly among the leaders
of thought and science. The Freethinker says the churches are wel-
come to the ignorant; he is satisfied to have the intelligent on his side.
However, being a humanitarian, he adds, of course, that it is his duty
to help enlighten the ignorant so they may be able to free their minds
from the fetters of religious superstition. Many ignorant persons are
beyond the powers of education, but it is also true that many (per-
haps most) of these victims can be turned to avenues of knowledge,
truth and enlightenment.
The Bible

Does the Bible say the moon will shine with the sun’s brightness?
Yes, in Isaiah (30:26): “Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun.” The prophet sure was weak on astronomy.

Please give your opinion of the Bible’s report that there was darkness “over all the earth” when Jesus was crucified.
According to Matthew, Mark and Luke, this world-wide darkness lasted three hours. The best comment ever written on this “incident” is found in Gibbon’s “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” and as I can’t improve on perfection, I prefer to let this great English historian answer your request:
“Under the reign of Tiberius the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman Empire, was involved in a perpetual darkness for three hours. Even this miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity, and the devotion of mankind, passed without notice in an age of science and history. It happened during the lifetime of Seneca and the elder Pliny, who must have experienced the immediate effects, or received the earliest intelligence, of the prodigy. Each of these philosophers, in a laborious work, has recorded all the great phenomena of nature, earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses, which his indefatigable curiosity could collect. But the one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomenon to which the mortal eye has been witness since the creation of the globe.”

I defy you to identify one single error in anything Jesus said.
That’s easy. Here it is: Jesus believed in the immediate end of the world.

Did Jesus preach against preventative medicine?
Yes, in Matthew (9:12), as follows: “But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.”

I note your reply to the effect that Eratosthenes knew the world’s circumference. I had the impression that the earth as a globe was not known until about the time of Columbus.

There were ancient scientists and geographers (mainly Greeks) who knew about the earth’s sphericity. After the triumph of Christianity and the centuries of Catholic superstition in Europe, the knowledge was suppressed because it contradicted the ignorant geography of the Bible. Later, when the mind of Europe awoke to the realities of science, the ancient knowledge that the world is round was revived, albeit the Church fought the fact for centuries. It is hardly more than a century since the Catholic Church formally abandoned the claim that the world is flat.

Did some animal in the Bible get thirsty and drink up a river?
It was Behemoth, which, according to the Authorized Version, was an elephant. You’ll find it in Job (40:15, 23), as follows: “Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee: he eateth grass as an ox... Be-
hold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.” The Revised Version claims it was not an elephant, but a hippopotamus, but whichever it was, Behemoth sure could lap it up.

***

**Does the Bible give four legs to a hen?**

I’m afraid it’s so. If you’ll turn to Leviticus (11:20) you’ll find this precious absurdity: “All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you.”

***

**Please tell where I can find the longest word in the Bible?**

It’s in Isaiah (8:1, 3), as follows: “Mahershalaalashshaz.” You say it five times without stopping for your breath.

***

**Did Noah take pairs of fish into the ark?**

He sure did, according to Genesis (7:15). What was he scared of? That the fish would drown?

***

**Where was the Sermon on the Mount delivered?**

According to Matthew, Jesus “went up into a mountain.” But when we read Luke, we find, instead, that he “stood in the plain.” So far as Mark and John are concerned, there was no such sermon delivered, for they don’t say a word about it. The best authorities—church and lay—now agree it was only a compilation, written by many hands long after Jesus’ time.

***

**Is there any reliable profane history that speaks about Christ at the time of his alleged birth?**

There is not a single line of evidence to support the Christ myth. Joseph McCabe, the late Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, the world-famous critic, Georg Brandes, all have studied the evidence carefully and have come to the conclusion that there isn’t a scrap of evidence available that could pass the tests of a scientific historian. The school of thought that supports the theory that Christ was a mythical character—the creation of theocrats and priests—grows stronger each decade. The attempt of the church forgers to put a few words into Josephus’ History of the Jews (which is supposed to give secular support to the historicity of Jesus) has been exposed so thoroughly that one wonders how it is possible for these church “historians” to continue their brazen lies. The Jesus myth rests on pure invention. If you can accept the Bible literally, then you have no trouble believing anything the priests and preachers may say, but once you demand that the Bible be treated like any other book and be subject to the same laws of evidence and inquiry, the whole theological structure collapses in an ugly heap.

***

**Are there any quotations from the Bible that support mortality instead of immortality?**

There are numerous ones to be found, particularly in Ecclesiastes, from which I take the following:

“The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished...” Go thy way eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth they works. ... Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity. ... Whosoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Ecclesiastes XII, 5-7, 9-10.)

***

**Do the orthodox claim to know the exact time the universe was “created”?**

They used to quote Dr. John Lightfoot, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, in the last century, who set the time at 9 a.m., October 23, 4004 B.C. I haven’t seen this “authority” quoted of late, but undoubtedly there are millions of Fundamentalists who still believe this delightful “fact.” It took the combined discoveries of Galileo,
Bruno, Newton, Descartes, Copernicus, Kepler, Darwin and Huxley to wear down this queer superstition. Today, few educated religionists agree with Lightfoot, though the uneducated, who never heard of the race's great discoveries, go placidly on in their sublime and appalling ignorance.

Was Jesus really original when he gave his hearers the Lord's Prayer?
To answer this question, I prefer to go to a Christian source—the *Encyclopedia Biblica*—which says:

"The truth is that we may say of the Lord's Prayer—applying what Theodore Zahn lately wrote of the teaching of Jesus as a whole—that Jesus uttered things which were said almost literally by Jewish teachers before and after him."

Bishop William T. Manning, in a recent sermon, according to the N. Y. Herald-Tribune, said "the contributions of modern science have in no way weakened the teachings contained in the Bible." Please comment.

It takes a lot of plain gall nowadays to say that science is in accord with the Bible. Let Bishop Manning get a medical scientist to endorse the following; from Isaiah 38:21: "For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover." Let Bishop Manning get an astronomer to endorse the following from Second Kings 20:11: "And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz." (By the way, the Lord put the sun dial back as a sign that Hezekiah would get his boil cured!) Let Bishop Manning get a zoologist to describe a hare as a cud-chewer, as is done in Leviticus 11:6: "And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you." Let Bishop Manning get a professor of entomology (the department of zoology that treats of insects) to endorse Leviticus 11:21–23, which says the locust, beetle and grasshopper each have four legs, when, of course, a high school student knows they have six.

I could go on like this for many thousands of words. The argument that science and the Bible are in complete harmony is exploded by a careful reading of Bishop Manning's precious holy writ.

"This curious World," a newspaper feature, gives us this Believe-it-or-Not: Jesse James, famous outlaw, was the son of a Baptist minister, and always carried a New Testament in his pocket. Please comment.

There's really nothing to say. The item tells its own story. It reminds me of the news reports of the beginning of the late Dollfuss' massacre of the Vienna Socialists. He did not give the order to kill Socialist men, women and children until he had spent hours at prayer in the cathedral. In fact, the first orders were issued while he was still at his beloved Catholic altar. There isn't the slightest evidence to prove that religion makes for higher morality, superior ethics or finer humanity. By the way, our prisons are full of believers. An Atheist is a rarity in a penitentiary.

Have you read Charles Dickens' "The Life of Our Lord," and if you did, what do you think about it?

I read the first two installments and that was enough for yours truly. I knew I couldn't stomach the rest. It is the sort of bellywash that would be written today by a mentality built along the lines of a Billy Sunday or an Aimee Semple McPherson. It is sheer Fundamentalist, the kind one would hear at a meeting of Seventh Day Adventists. Dickens was a brilliant novelist, but when it came to writing on Jesus, he belonged with the worst kind of Bible-thumper in the wilds of Arkansas or Alabama. Remember, Dickens wrote this gosh-awful stuff before Darwin's great books on biology were given to the world. He did this terrible job before the days of scientific criticism of the Bible. The book lacks literary distinction. It is ordinary hack-work, if the rest of the book is as bad as the first chapter, and I have
every reason to believe it is. Of course, it was good journalism to print this tripe, because the author’s name gave the manuscript the standing of a great public document, but at that I doubt it will do religion the slightest morsel of good. If the experts in the churches everywhere have been unable to save this moribund institution, then why should one suppose that this little rewrite of the four gospels is going to reestablish the church? It’s too late. The work of undermining the church has had its effect. The institution is dead. It still hangs around because no one has thought about moving the corpse to the city dump and burying it with the rest of the garbage.

If Jesus were living today, would he preach Socialism and fight Capitalism?

Granting his historicity, I can see no reason for assuming such a position. The words credited to him contain no hint of opposition to the crying injustices of his own time—chattel slavery, militarism and social injustice. If he didn’t oppose chattel slavery, then why expect him to oppose wage slavery? Jesus was not social-minded. His teachings were individualistic—attacks on personal pride, ceremonialism, hypocrisy, bad habits, avarice, misbehavior, traditionalism, etc. To him, salvation was a process of self-purging, not social change. The social institutions of man did not interest him, perhaps because he was certain the world would soon come to an end, and thereby destroy society. God would destroy the collective evils of man by annihilating the world itself—and in the time of those he was addressing. He healed individuals (again accepting tradition), but he said not a word about the conditions that produced sick individuals. He thought in terms of the man, not men; of the person, not the class. He denounced members of the ruling class, but only for their personal vices, not their social parasitism. It seems to me that such a teacher, were he here today, would cry: “Render unto Morgan the things that are Morgan’s!”

Sir Charles Marston reports that modern archeology substantiates the Bible’s report of the walls of Jericho. Please comment.

Marston is a wealthy English religious fanatic who seems to be getting a lot of satisfaction (and stupid newspaper publicity) from his ballyhoo regarding his discovery of the actual walls of Jericho. No critic of the Bible has denied that Jericho had walls. The discovery of such walls does not prove that they tumbled down in response to a priest’s trumpet blast. The fact that the walls are in decay cannot be accepted as evidence. Did Marston expect the walls to be found intact after all these centuries?

Did the Church formally denounce the Copernican doctrine?

Yes, both the Catholic and Protestant churches, for centuries, ridiculed, fought, denied and persecuted those who, following Copernicus (in 1543), held that the earth turns and revolves around the sun. Pope Paul V formally announced to his vast following that the Copernican doctrine "of the double motion of the earth upon its axis and about the sun is false and entirely contrary to Holy Scripture." Yes, the popes are infallible!
Economics and Politics

Please define political economy?
R. Page Arnot, in his essay, "The Relation of Economics to Dialectical Materialism," gives the following broad definition: "Political Economy is the science of the laws that govern the production and exchange of the material means of life in human society."

* * *

Why do you center all your writing on economics and politics?
Because they are the two most pressing subjects facing us. Why talk about the lighter things when millions are out of work, facing misery and starvation? We must concentrate on social questions, even to the neglect of cultural topics. Society must solve its great industrial and economic problems before long or civilization will collapse. I believe it is my duty to hammer night and day on such questions as unemployment, socialization of large-scale industries, unemployment insurance, nationalization of credit, social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, the tackling of all our bread-and-butter problems with a view to a social order in which every man who is willing to work shall be given a good job at good wages, a system in which the old will feel secure and the young will be given every opportunity for physical and intellectual advancement. I don't want to fiddle while Rome burns. I feel it is my duty to discuss economic and political questions, almost to the exclusion of others, when the world is so badly in need of reorganization. We are living in critical times. The best minds of the country must be devoted to economic questions, and in my small way I want to help. My idea is to give encouragement to proper enterprises undertaken by President Roosevelt, reserving the right to criticize when it seems to me that the administration is failing in its duties and obligations. Constructive efforts are needed. Under Coolidge and Hoover there wasn't any chance for anything but destructive criticism, because they operated on the assumption that it was the duty of the government to stay out of business and industry. But things are changing. Roosevelt is more social-minded. He is not afraid of the moss-back conservatives and reactionaries. He shows signs of moving leftward towards Socialism. Let's help him reach the goal. It's Socialism, but according to American traditions and temperament. Instead of having a social revolution by dictatorship and violence we are hard at work on a revolution by consent. It's a big idea, and it deserves support. Let's all jump in and help. The goal is before us: The cooperative commonwealth, with society in control of all the means of large-scale wealth production, and once in control, society is to operate them with a view to service to humanity instead of profits to Wall Street. Isn't that something worth working for?

* * *

Why should a man receive more because of his skill?
There are two kinds of selfishness. One is social, the other is anti-social. The selfishness that seeks self-improvement, self-development, recreational stimulation, pleasure and greater opportunities for service and reward is a form of self-interest that is entirely social and constructive. Such competition that would be to the injury of no other person is of value to society, and it would be a mistake to outlaw it. There is nothing wrong about the selfishness that seeks to enjoy a better standard of living, a nicer house, a newer and faster car, a better job, a more skillful application of energy in industry.
Such social competition should be encouraged. Ambition, that does not crush one's fellowman, is not a menace to the community.

The selfishness that seeks to live by exploitation, that seeks to obtain favors and rewards without social service—such a selfishness should be curbed and suppressed by a scientific society. The selfishness of wanting to live because of control of means and methods of production is a social evil, in the same way that the selfishness of a burglar is an attack on society and should be handled sternly.

Under a system of socialized industry there will be great need for the higher form of selfishness and competition. Call it enlightened self-interest, if that sounds more polite, but the fact remains that it is selfishness, except that it does injury to no individual.

The fact that A is able to lay more bricks than B is not an injustice to B, if B is given the same opportunity that A gets. And the fact that A is more skilled than B and therefore receives a greater wage return is in no way an injustice to B, because B has been given the same opportunity to earn the wages paid to A. That is the prime reason for the policy that will prevail in a socialized order of industry—the full social value paid for the work done by each individual. If your labor's social value is higher than that of your neighbors in a shop or factory, there is simple justice in giving you the reward your energy of brain or brawn earned. In fact, it would be a form of exploitation if the better workers were forced to accept the same pay that is given to incompetent, indifferent or hostile workers.

How do you propose to solve the farmers' problem?

It is a part of scientific economics to consider the agricultural problem as a part of the industrial problem. It is impossible to separate them. The farmers and the workers have mutual interests, and under a system of socialized industry, in which the mines, mills and factories will belong to the proletarian state, the farmers will find a prosperous consuming public that is able to absorb all they produce. In return, the industrial workers will pay the farmers with the products of their labor—the articles of consumption, necessity and comfort so vital to modern, civilized living.

Under Socialism, land, along with industry and banks, will be socialized. Land will be considered the property of the proletarian state, to be used for the greatest good of the greatest number—that is to say, land is to be cultivated for the support of those who live by labor, instead of for the private profit of absentee landlords, bankers, mortgage companies and capitalists.

Large-scale farming—such as one sees in the corporation-run farms in western Kansas and other sections—will be nationalized. Absentee landlords will not be permitted to live off the labor of their tenants. But this does not mean that every small farm will be collectivized or nationalized. Individual farming—where the farmers do their own labor, without exploiting others—will be permitted and encouraged under a proletarian state, or Socialism.

However, collective farming will be so much more scientific and productive that the individual farmers, in a short time, will prefer to work in cooperation with others, knowing that by such an expedient they will share in the benefits that result from socialized farming. But this will be purely voluntary. No one will be forcibly driven from his individual farm into nationalized farming. There will be need for a period of economic education among the farmers, and once they see the lesson they will be quick to respond. Socialized farming, like socialized industry, will mean greater security, sure income, prosperity and social well-being.

For the present, farmers must work hand in hand with the industrial workers. Their interests are identical. They must help in the work of establishing Socialism, if they want to avoid the idiocies of capitalist economics, in which
crops are destroyed while millions are hungry. Socialism spells economic emancipation for the toilers of the land. Socialized farming is scientific; it will work; it will open the door to social security.

* * *

In learned magazines and books I frequently come on the word "Weltanschauung." What does it mean?

This German word means "worldview."

* * *

In studying economics, I have several times met the expressions "traction par la gorge" and "collier d'épaules." They are supposed to deal with the productive powers of the serf hundreds of years ago. What do they mean?

Until about the 12th century, the serfs in Western Europe had a difficult time producing enough to sustain themselves and their masters, the feudal barons who owned the land. No matter how hard they worked, their productiveness was so limited that it was a question whether or not the serf (who was bound to the land instead of having his body owned in chattel slavery) could make the land yield in sufficient volume to keep himself and his family alive and at the same time deliver a surplus to his lord. It was found that they were yoking their beasts of burden (particularly the ox) by the neck. This practice made it impossible for the beast to draw more than something like a thousand pounds, and it was exhausted before it could get much work done. This neck-yoking was called "traction par la gorge."

A smart, anonymous Edison noticed this and made a revolutionary change. He yoked the cattle from the shoulders instead of the neck, and the result was amazing. The animal was able, as though by a miracle, to pull several times 1,000 pounds and could labor much longer. This shoulder-yoking was called "collier d'épaules."

As a result of this slight, but important, change, the serf was able to till a greater area and thereby supply his master with wealth that was formerly unavailable. It, for the first time, really made serfdom profitable and enabled the institution to survive for many centuries, because it gave the serf enough to exist on, and at the same time made it worth the master's while to keep his serfs bound to his feudal estates.

The above interpretation is seriously questioned by some economists, who claim that there may have been knowledge of this better method of yoking back in ancient times. They claim that yoking by the neck may have prevailed in extremely backward sections, while the better way may have been known more widely than is suspected. It is all a very nice question and I do not feel able to give the last word. Like many theories, it perhaps credits too great results to a comparatively small cause.

* * *

What is the Law of Parsimony?

It belongs to the science of Economics and has to do with the impulse to get the largest results from the smallest efforts. This explains the endless, tireless efforts to constantly improve on inventions, straight-line, mass production and the researches in the direction of greater power-sources in industry, transportation and communication. The same economists apply this law to the animals, explaining their willingness to be domesticated on the grounds that it is the easier road to travel—the struggle to get a living is eliminated. Parasitism in the animal and vegetable kingdom may be credited to this Law of Parsimony. It's one of those great laws that one hardly ever talks about, but which is always at work.

* * *

What is the meaning of "Laissez Faire"?

It means "let alone." In economics, the phrase is used to describe the policy of those who would let business alone, to sink or swim. It is the "hands off" policy applied by the government to business and industry. The phrase is also used to mean "do what one may choose."

In the early days of capitalism, with large-scale industry only getting its start, this philosophy had some logic to it. For generations, economists cried "Laissez Faire!" as a part of individualistic capitalist philosophy, in order to give the
system a chance to get itself well started. However, as capitalism became stronger, this individualism became thoroughly anti-social. "Laissez Faire" stood in the way of social legislation, control over business, child labor laws, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, trade unionism, minimum wages, etc. The philosophy is dead today, though die-hard capitalists sigh for its return. Under today's complex social and industrial conditions, with labor tyrannized and exploited by the dictatorship of capitalism, the "Let Alone" philosophy must be torn up by the roots. The state must be used as a weapon in the struggle to protect the workers and, in place, the workers in positions of economic security through socialized industry. Once the private ownership of the large-scale industries is done away with, the last vestige of "Laissez Faire" will be eliminated.

** What is the percentage of decline in world trade since 1929? 35 percent.**

** Which economist was the first to teach that foreign trade, to be healthy, must rest on a give-and-take basis?**

Adam Smith, in his great book, "The Wealth of Nations," which was published in England around 1776, taught the law of economics which holds that nations must exchange commodities with a certain degree of equality. The world has drifted away from this sound piece of economic philosophy, but it will have to return to it if it hopes for a real revival of trade between nations.

** How much coffee did Brazil destroy?**

It is officially reported that during the past three years Brazil destroyed 31,000,000 bags of coffee. This, of course, is no worse than our plowing under cotton and killing millions of young pigs to keep them off the market. This theory of "planned scarcity" will continue to cause amazement as long as there is intelligence in the world. A "planned scarcity" in times of need should qualify us for the booby hatch.

** Is Sinclair promising the employers that the EPIC plan means the end of strikes?**

During his campaign speeches, Upton Sinclair answered the frequently asked question of strikes under EPIC (End Poverty In California) by saying that there would be no strikes because the employers would not permit them. This statement needed elucidation, so he proceeded with the claim that state-owned factories and farm colonies would draw off the surplus labor that makes it possible for employers easily to break strikes. When the employer sees no hungry line-up at his gates, according to Sinclair, he will see to it that his employees do not strike by giving them increases in pay and other concessions.

** Is it true that England has balanced her budget?**

On paper, yes. In reality, no. By refusing to pay certain debts (including the installments due the U. S.) England has balanced her budget, but many economists agree that this presents a false picture mainly with a view to influencing the 1936 election in favor of the Tories.

** Do you recommend study of Karl Marx?**

By all means. I have always found Karl Marx a source of information and sound theory, plus a scientific analysis of capitalist economy. He gives what I consider unanswerable arguments for a proletarian economy in which capitalist ownership of wealth-producing instrumentalities will be ended for all time. He also gives numerous valuable suggestions in the field of revolutionary, agitational, educational and political tactics. Not to be familiar with Karl Marx means to be ill equipped for a study of social science. I do not accept Karl Marx as a pope. There are many of his ideas that I do not find acceptable in their entirety. But there is so much of genuine
and lasting value in Karl Marx' works that I would be handicapped if I were denied use of such material.

* * *

What attitude did Adam Smith take towards trusts?

Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," one of the greatest works on economics ever written, took no position with regard to trusts because such economic structures did not exist in the days of Smith's researches, which took place during the second half of the 18th Century.

* * *

What is "sub-marginal land"?

This describes farms that produce crops which do not bring in enough money to pay the actual running costs. We not only have sub-marginal farms but sub-marginal industries as well. When industries operate so that their receipts do not pay their expenses without some kind of outside help, we have a situation similar to the farmer who must get outside help or quit his homestead. Some sub-marginal industries conceal their plight through tariffs, which really amount to subsidies. Others, like the railroads, get direct financial help. Shippers get subsidies through rich mail contracts, which, in some cases, cost the government $10,000 per pound of mail hauled. It is estimated that something like 8,000-000 men are employed in sub-marginal industries in this country.

* * *

Why is it that the selling end of a business always gets more than the producing end?

That's because we are living under a profit economy. We do not run factories to produce shoes, shirts and steel, but to sell them at a profit. Under a system of socialized industry, the emphasis will be on producing wealth for use instead of profit, with the result that the worker who produces wealth will be in the position of one entitled to the full reward of his labors. It takes skill to sell merchandise, but such skill does not feed the hungry or clothe the naked, or house the homeless. And yet, if you took salesmanship and advertising out of capitalism the system would go to seed. Why? Because they perform the function of reaping the profit—the sole motive of today's social system. Salesmanship, under a sane social order, would be used exclusively as a human medium between the person who wants something and another person or organization that can supply something. There being no profit motive, the salesman would not practice what we now call super-salesmanship. A super-salesman is a gink who makes you buy something you don't want, or more of something you want than you really should buy, because the super-salesman is in business to help his boss make a profit. The advertising expert uses his skill with words and pictures to make you take on a bill of goods that you really don't want or that you need in smaller quantities, because he is getting paid to sell his client's goods regardless of the needs of the community, because that client is in business to make money, not because he wants you to be supplied with goods. And that's why the boss quits producing wealth just as soon as there's no profit in sight. Today we have plenty of machinery and equipment to keep every person in comfort and luxury, and yet we have millions out of work and other millions working only part time. Why? Because the boss doesn't see a profit in sight. Unemployment is just too bad, to his way of thinking, because that idle labor could be used to make him a profit, but there being no profit in immediate view he doesn't hesitate a moment about closing his factory or mill. The system, as I see it, is cock-eyed.

* * *

Are general industrial conditions improving or getting worse?

There are numerous signs of recovery, judging by carloadings, power consumption, steel production, employment, business failures, building contracts, etc. This, however, does not mean that we are out of danger. These vast crises will come, regularly and with varying degrees of intensity, if we remain satisfied with the inequalities, injustices and inconsistencies
of the present system. Even if further improvements set in, there
should be no let-up in executing a program that aims at the estab-
ishment of a social order in which organized society will be in com-
plete control of the means of making a living for every person in
the land.

* * *

What will happen to advertising under a socialized state?
The great art of advertising ballyhoo would die. There would be
listings of goods, descriptions, price lists, etc., but none of the capital-
istic, high pressure salesmanship that goes by the name of ad-
vertising. Advertising is a great social waste. A socialized state
would have no use for it. On the other hand, advertising, in its best
sense, would be used as an educational medium. Advertising could
be used effectively to promote health, better living, saner behav-
or. But that isn’t advertising in its capitalistic sense. That really is
a form of education, because the motive is not one of profit.

* * *

What was our national income during a prosperity year?
In 1926 the total income of the people of this country amounted to
$80,280,000,000.

* * *

What is the farm population of the U. S.?
It was estimated at 32,509,000 on January 1, 1934. This means one-
fourth of our population is devoted to agriculture. In view of this fact,
it is plain that a program of so-
cialization has little chance for suc-
cess without the help of the farm-
ers.

* * *

You have told what the World War cost. Can you tell what the World
Depression has cost?
A European expert has worked on
this problem and puts the loss,
during the first five years of the
depression, at $100,000,000,000. The
basis of his calculation was lost
workdays. This is a big price to
pay for a social order—Capitalism
—which refuses to work at regular
times. That vast sum of money
could have been used to inaugurate
a system of cooperative effort, in
which the industries would be run
full blast to take care of the legiti-
mate needs of the people, without
recourse to a dividend economy for
the enrichment of capitalists.

* * *

What is the value of the nation’s
gold?
The U. S. treasury report, on
August 4, 1934, showed the govern-
ment owns gold to the value of $7,-
946,466,267. (In reply to another
reader’s question, as to why the
government moved $1,500,000,000 in
gold from the San Francisco mint
to the mint at Denver, it is report-
ed the reason was fear of earth-
quakes.)

* * *

What is the world’s wealth?
R. R. Doane, in his “Measure-
ment of American Wealth,” esti-
mates the wealth of the entire
world at $1,401,089,000,000. The
United States has 44.8 percent
of this wealth; Great Britain, 6.4 per-
cent; China, 6 percent; France, 5.4
percent; Germany, 5 percent; Jap-
.an, 4.4 percent; Russia, 3.5 percent;
India, 3.2 percent; Spain, 3 percent;
Italy, 2.5 percent; all other coun-
tries, 15.9 percent.

* * *

What is the meaning of “Ersatz”?
This German word is frequently used
by Hitler’s “economists.” It
means economic self-sufficiency. It
is the notion of Hitler and his eco-
nomic advisers that “ersatz” can be
applied to Germany’s industries,
substituting things of its own fa-
brication for staple goods. Germany
is desperately in need of raw ma-
terials, but as she is without gold
or credit she cannot buy in the
world market. “Ersatz” is proposed
as a remedy, but it can’t work. The
World War proved that to Ger-
many, and now she must learn the
lesson all over again.

* * *

What is a “mugwump”?
A mugwump, in politics, is a
bird that sits on the fence with his
mug on one side and his wump on
the other.
Psychology and Social Hygiene

What is your notion about the new idea of some mathematicians, particularly Sir James Jeans, that the Universe is, essentially and ultimately, a realm of Mind?

The only thinking, philosophizing, deducting, analyzing mechanism we know about is the human brain. Psychologists have shown that mind in itself is an evolution, that the germs of mind are found in lower animals, and as the biological forms grow more complex the processes of mind follow suit.

So far as we know, man is the only animal that can think about the abstract. All lower forms of mind function empirically—that is to say, they form their ideas from actual reality, from experience, from direct observation. Mathematics being so vastly concerned with symbols and abstraction, we are not surprised to find those who permit themselves the happy, but unsupported, assumption that the world, that the universe, is nothing more than the expression of mind.

Now let us ask this question: What is mind? Is mind itself a reality? The newest psychology would have us believe that mind in itself is not a reality, that it is merely the description of a function, the physical, material brain being the cause of the operation called Mind, in the same sense that there is no reality to Digestion, since that is merely a description of the functions of the physical, real stomach.

In this manner, we cut under the mystical mathematicians, by throwing back at them the charge that they are mistaking a function for a reality. The mind being merely the function of the brain, and thus having no objective reality, it is easy for one given to illogical assumptions to conclude that if the mind itself is an abstraction, then it must follow that the universe is the same. This, of course, is a contradiction, for how could one abstraction—mind—give reality to something concrete—the Universe?

Also, the problem presents itself in the following form: Suppose some sort of a destructive gas were to drift down to all of us on this earth, and we were snuffed out within a split second. The function—Mind—would cease, because its creator—the human brain—no longer was able to create thought. Would it follow that the very second the human brain ceased to function in the realm of mind, the ground, the seas, the stars, the sun, the moon, the meteors and the other forms of matter would cease being physical?

Of course, with such a catastrophe you and I would not be here to check up on our notions, but is it not logical to assume, since man’s body and man’s mind are in no way essential to the existence of the Universe—since man came billions of years after the evolutionary processes which developed our physical planet—that the good old world and the equally good old Universe would be going right on after we were gone? Being a complete materialist, I rather fancy the argument that the answer would be in the affirmative.

What is the view of materialists with regard to thought?

Haeckel taught that “knowledge is a physiological process, with the brain as its anatomical organ.”

What is “necrophilia”?

It means “love of the dead.” There are known cases of sexual perversion in which men satisfy their passions with corpses. Morbid individuals who practice this shocking form of sexual contact are called “necrophiliacs.” Students of abnormal psychology have several theories that are intended to explain this behavior, but the fact remains that this phenomenon is
still shrouded in mystery. It will probably take many years before science solves the problem of why men will act that way.

* * *

Please give some cases in which man resisted Truth because of his pride.

Llewelyn Powys, in "The Dawn Breakers," lists three "bitter humiliations" to which the race had to adjust itself, however unwillingly, as follows:

1. When Copernicus indicated that the earth was not the center of the universe.
2. When Darwin indicated that the origin of man was natural rather than divine.
3. When Freud indicated that even in the moral sphere man was no free agent.

* * *

At what average age does a child walk?

The Psychological Clinic of the University of Pennsylvania reports observations made by Dr. Miles Murphy, assistant professor of psychology, who studied the records of 712 children and came to the conclusion that a normal child walks, on the average, at 15 months. The average for feebleminded children is 26.65 months. He says that it is no sign of superiority for a child to walk before 15 months, but that it is usually because of inferiority when a child is delayed beyond 15 months.

* * *

Has superstition been studied scientifically?

Numerous books have been written on man's superstitions, many of them of extreme value as social studies. Joseph McCabe is included among these authors with a book entitled "Popular Superstitions." As for direct scientific inquiries, the latest were conducted by Dr. Gerard E. Lundeen and Dr. Julius B. Maller, of the Institute of Experimentation, Teachers College, New York City. Among other things, they found that women are more subject to superstitions than men, though they hold that all persons are taken in by superstitions, more or less. Their studies also show that people living in the country are more superstitious than those in cities. They define a superstition as an unfounded belief.

Why do so many people believe that four-leaf clovers and a rabbit's foot are lucky? Investigation shows that most merely replied they believed these superstitions because they were told of their truth by friends. Two-thirds of the people questioned admitted they believed in these two superstitions, while a like number accepted the notion that persons will have a fight if they let a post come between them while walking.

It was also shown that eight percent of those examined said they had learned in church that a person is dishonest if he avoids looking into your eyes while talking to you. One of the most prevalent superstitions has it that "if you kill a snake it won't die until the sun sets."

These scientists claim that many people are ready to shed their superstitions when they are convinced by observation, and that proper education is a real means of eradicating superstition.

* * *

Please explain the Catholic birth control method called "the rhythm."

It is not yet generally known that during the past few years the Roman Catholic Church has begun a quiet retreat from its position of uncompromising opposition to the dissemination of birth control information. The Catholic hierarchy still storms against contraceptives of any kind, but it has officially approved of what is now known as "the rhythm." The method is explained elaborately in a book called "Rhythm," by Dr. Latz. This book, strange as it may sound, was issued with "ecclesiastical approbation," which is to say that the book has been published with the formal approval of the Roman Catholic Church. In brief, the theory holds that sexual intercourse during certain days of the month is sure to be sterile, and that intercourse during such time will constitute "moral" birth control. Catholics are now being advised to study the theory and apply it to their lives. How-
ever, medical and birth control authorities agree in saying that the theory is not a certain one and that it is not always safe to practice intercourse during the so-called sterile period. Birth control advocates like Margaret Sanger argue that the safe period should be used, but that physicians should be permitted to advise and instruct their patients in the other, scientific, more certain forms of birth control. It is interesting to note that the Postoffice Department has formally announced that the book on the Catholic method of birth control is mailable, but it continues its ban on the literary works of scientific birth controllers.

Is Birth Control propaganda a part of Atheism?

No. Birth Control is purely a scientific question, though its propagation has been a favorite task of Atheists since the middle of the last century, when the distinguished English Atheist, Charles Bradlaugh, urged scientific contraceptives and was sent to prison for his humanitarianism. Now, 75 years later, the Catholic Church embraces a form of Birth Control—the Rhythm method—but the world will remember that it was the progressiveness of the Atheists which made the subject “respectable” after generations of persecution and slander. A few generations hence, when the entire civilized world will be practicing the most approved forms of scientific birth control, the church—Catholic and Protestant—will blandly take the credit for it all.

Do any of the lower animals practice birth control?

Termites, who are social insects in some ways superior to the ants, keep down the population of their colonies through the use of a secretion which the king and queen termites apply to the young. These young termites can exercise their sexual apparatus only after they leave the colony. Darn clever, these termites. I can’t tell you exactly how the young termites are sexually inhibited for fear of violating the postal laws against the dissemination of contraceptive information. But I can tell you this much: It’s not the rhythm method. This, it seems to me, makes the termite a moral outcast in the eyes of the Catholic Church, though I can recall no papal bull against these tiny sinners.

Is it not true that individuals who practice continence before marriage enjoy happier emotional lives after marriage?

This question has been gone into by Dr. Lester W. Dearborn, of the Massachusetts Society for Social Hygiene. He takes the position that continence before marriage is no guarantee of happiness after marriage. He goes further and says that pre-marital sexual relations “seem to improve lasting faithfulness.” He adds: “If my own son or daughter came to me for advice, I should not advise against pre-marital relations.” This goes to show how the world is changing. Only a few years ago authorities on sexology advised against pre-marital relations, almost unanimously. They held before the youth of the land the ideal of “chastity.” One never hears that word among scientific educators in these more realistic and honest days. Rather do they agree that the youth should learn principles of birth control and the best methods for avoiding venereal infection. The moral is plain. Even the Roman Catholic Church is beginning to waver in the matter of birth control. Great powers in the church—even cardinals—now endorse what is called the “rhythm” method of birth control, based on the theory that women are sterile a certain number of days each month, and that sexual intercourse during this time is “moral.” In the opinion of the church. What does this do to the old, favorite argument of the Church that knowledge of birth control will encourage lust and license? Here we find the Catholic Church itself teaching “moral birth control” based on natural conditions.

Are pre-marital sexual relations increasing?

Dr. Robert L. Dickinson, secretary
of the National Committee on Maternal Health, speaking before 200 educators in Teachers College, who were called together by Columbia University and the American Social Hygiene Association, said they are on the increase. Only one out of five confessed to pre-marital relations back in 1895. One out of three admitted them in 1930. In 1933 it was one out of two. Here is direct evidence that prudery is rapidly dying. The taboos are disappearing.

* * *

Would you be willing to have the people of the United States, generally, believe in and practice the ideas of Bertrand Russell relative to extra-marital sexual intercourse?

It is obvious to the careful student, and often to the most casual observers, that the world is growing more liberal with regard to sexual conduct. Puritanism is dying fast. It still holds a few lines of trenches, but each year shows new reasons for retreat. The conventional ideas about sex are slipping into oblivion. It is growing increasingly easier to get a divorce. Divorce no longer carries the social stigma that prevailed only a few short years ago. Birth control ideas are gaining ground daily and it will be only a matter of time before the people of the United States will enjoy the right to sound, scientific information on birth control, the same as is now possible in other countries, including Russia. Mrs. Grundy is in retreat. The old dies hard, but it dies. The sunlight of knowledge is shining on man's most interesting and exciting emotional experience. Whether one approves or disapproves is now unimportant. The people go on their way, enjoying themselves in matters of sexual and emotional experience. If such conduct is bad, why is it that the people are growing healthier from year to year? People live longer, enjoy life better and have an all round snappier time than ever before in human history, and if "looser" sexual relations are growing more common from day to day, does it not seem reasonable to conclude that these more liberal practices are signs of progress rather than decay? Venereal diseases could be wiped out in one generation if our government and schools and other facilities of education were to make serious efforts to show the people how easy and simple it is to avoid catching such ailments. Here, unfortunately, is another trench still held by the puritans. But it is safe to predict that before long our young and old will be taught how to keep healthy and clean and at the same time enjoy to the full the sexual and emotional experiences they have a right to participate in.

* * *

I notice that you sometimes use the word "homosexuality," which I cannot find in my dictionary. Please define.

It means sexual love between persons of the same sex.

* * *

I was very much amused when I read your statement suggesting that Hitler sterilize homosexuals. Since homosexuals avoid the opposite sex, how is it possible for them to produce offspring? Besides, medical authorities claim that most homosexuals are naturally sterile.

I am sure that you missed the point of my humor. I was under the impression that I was being screamingly funny when I suggested that Hitler, himself a homosexual, should sterilize homosexuals. But my little joke fell flat. Well, better luck next time. In writing on this subject I was careful to say that sterilization along strictly scientific lines would be all right, but that in Germany it would be used almost exclusively as a political weapon to do away with those of opposing ideas. While it is true that many homosexuals are sterile, it is a fact, covered by numerous medical authorities, that they are able to reproduce, and do. Remember, by way of illustration, the fact that Oscar Wilde, the most outstanding homosexual of modern times, next only to Hitler, was the father of two children. Hitler, true to your side of the argument, never married and probably never will, as his interest is not in women but in boys. There is no proof available that Hitler, now in his middle forties, has ever had a sex-
ual affair with a woman. You also ask me the question, “Why should homosexuals be sterilized?” I do not favor sterilization for all homosexuals, because so many of them are not a menace to society. They usually devote their attention to each other, and, as you say, engage themselves steriley. But, it is also true that there is a certain type of homosexual, particularly like Oscar Wilde, who is aggressive to the extent that he goes looking for boys who are ignorant of the homosexual practices that obsess the Oscar Wildes, and such boys are frequently brought to the point where they embrace such conduct, which, to my way of looking, is entirely anti-social and should be suppressed, even to the extent of sterilization. The former is merely a sterile practice and therefore of no social interest. The latter is viciously criminal and therefore of great social concern.

* * *

How do you explain Hitler’s conduct in permitting the beheading of two refined and beautiful women?

It was a terrible thing on Hitler’s part to permit those shocking decapitations. I can’t think of a single civilized country that would stoop to such brutal methods. They may have been guilty of espionage, but here one has no means of getting at the truth. But even if they were guilty (in peace times), the man who is alleged to have employed them was given only a life sentence, while the women were sent to the block. You remember, of course, Hitler’s promise before he became dictator, that “heads would roll in the sand.” Well, here, at least, is one promise that he kept. To understand Hitler’s attitude towards these unfortunate women one must bear in mind that he is sexually subnormal. His homosexual impulses are common knowledge. Also, despite his 45 years, there is not a single fact to show that Hitler has ever had a sexual affair with a woman, which in itself is proof of his abnormal emotional nature. Being a boy-lover, it is expected that he would be a woman-hater, for the two go frequently together. Students of abnormal psychology understand these things and can explain Hitler’s treatment of these women (and all other German women) on the score of his perverted sexual nature.

* * *

What is neo-Malthusianism?

It means the application of artificial checks to population. About 20 years ago, Mrs. Margaret Sanger and her group threw this clumsy word overboard and coined, in its place, Birth Control, which has the virtue of simplicity.
The Challenge to Free Speech and Free Press

Free Press.
Roger N. Baldwin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, gives The Freeman credit for the liberal attitude of the federal government with regard to the rights of a free press. He writes: "I think that indirectly The Freeman helped to check the Postoffice Department, for there have been no restrictions on the press since The Freeman sued the government in 1932 because of the suppression of two of its Hoover editions. You can regard that as a public service, in which we are glad to have had some part."

Arthur Garfield Hays, counsel for the Union, handled The Freeman's appeal to the federal courts, and while the court refused to reinstate the two suppressed editions, because of a technicality, the result, as Director Baldwin says, has been all to the good. I hesitated to claim this honor, but since it came voluntarily I permitted myself, after great inner struggles, to throw off modesty and take my little bow.

It was an expensive fight, for it cost a large sum of money, which was advanced by the Union but which we finally paid off to the last penny, despite the financial losses we suffered at the hands of Hoover's lickspittles in the postoffice department in their ruthless destruction of two entire issues. At times, it might be felt that such fights are a waste of time and money, but, as Baldwin writes, the results have been good, and the papers enjoying a measure of free press unequalled since the war should, he says, thank The Freeman. But, at the same time I want to thank the Union for handling the case, and especially for the splendid work Hays did in arguing The Freeman's right to say what it did against the black record of Hoover. The Freeman used very strong language, but the times demanded firmness. Our headline, which shocked the politicians in Washington, was as follows: "The Thief in the White House." That was sizzling hot, but the facts warranted such straight talk. The Freeman was punished for its frankness, but in the end it won freedom for itself and other publications given to discussing public issues without mincing words.

* * *

What, in your opinion, is the status of free speech and press in this country?

There are two aspects, federal and local. So far as the federal government is concerned, freedom of speech and press are in excellent shape. Since Roosevelt's inauguration, the administration has been just about perfect in its respect for the constitutional right to freedom of expression. I do not know of a single instance of suppression or persecution, for not only are the liberal publications protected but the extremely radical ones (mainly Communist) are given every right they are entitled to. But when we leave the national scene we find the situation changed, and all to the bad. Locally, the police, aided by extra-legal, semi-fascist bodies, are disregarding the constitutional rights to free speech and assembly. Meetings of radicals are broken up on the slightest provocation, and in most cases on no provocation at all. Strike leaders are threatened, persecuted, jailed and terrorized. In many sections of the country, the police seem to think they have a right to arrest citizens for merely possessing radical newspapers and books. In Chicago, an orderly
dance, given by a group of Communists, was broken up, the dancers jailed for "conducting a disorderly house" and the contents of the hall smashed to bits. In California, the police, supported by vigilantes, are making a ghastly joke of the Constitution. And so on. Everywhere one finds czarism in the saddle. Our police, mainly dumbbells and morons, entertain the notion that clubbing a man's head will cure him of the "subversive" ideas inside that dome.

* * *

Your remarks on the state of free press and free speech in this country lead me to inquire for your comment on academic freedom.

There is practically none of it to be found. But this doesn't mean we have lost academic freedom. It never existed at any time in the history of the nation. Of course, there are a few small institutions of learning, and even a few large universities, such as Harvard, where academic freedom will be found, but taking our educational rolling mills, by and large, we find that they never knew what freedom of intellect meant, do not now, and, what's more, the mine run of teachers are too dumb to know they are mere wardens in a mental penitentiary. They don't miss freedom, because they've never tasted it, and so far as they're concerned they'll probably be that way always, time without end, amen.

A teacher is the lowest form of intellectual life. A teacher, to hold his job, must surrender personality, free inquiry, intellectual curiosity and full discussion of controversial subjects. A teacher is spineless, dumb, slave-driven, cowardly and an enemy to real intellectual progress. Of course, you will find a certain amount of competence in their ranks, but you will notice that it has to do mainly with subjects that are not controversial. But let a teacher open his or her eyes to the truths of history, science, philosophy, Freethought, economics, politics, militarism, diplomacy, international intrigue, patriotism and orthodoxy in general, and let that teacher dare say a word that would indicate skepticism, Rationalism, and free inquiry, and that teacher would be out on his ear. But there isn't anything new about that. It's an old story.

Teachers are notorious conformers. They are always on the side of the respectable "ins" and invariably critical of the shockingly unpopular "outs." That's their history. Of course, there are a few signs of restlessness, but such wrong-thinking infidels are rare exceptions and live in terror of early dismissal.

Editors, writers, speakers—such individuals have fought for their rights, and in many parts of the world, particularly in Western Europe, England and the English speaking American countries, one meets with more or less free speech and free press. They have fought, and many are ready to fight again, for their right to free expression. But the teachers have never had it, and don't want it today.

Academic freedom is still an ideal, played with in tiny oases in the intellectual desert. Before Hitlerism, Germany had a certain amount of academic freedom in its great universities, but that is dead now, with the really free teachers murdered or kicked out of the country. Harvard had, and has, a great deal of academic freedom, but there is still much unevenness, particularly in the spheres of economics and finance, where the capitalist class—which rules—can assert itself.

As for our great state universities, they are only a little better than our first class high schools, and they, in turn, are only one notch above our grade schools. Here we find the "good" women, the preachers and politicians in control. As for the religious colleges and schools, they aren't worth talking about. They never produced an idea, and never will. One doesn't expect anything from that source.

The teaching profession is in the condition today that speech and press were in a few centuries ago. It's a bad situation, and so long as the teachers are willing to take it on the chin, there isn't anything you or I can do about it.
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