

THE TRUTH SEEKER

A Monthly for Freethinkers

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Thomas Paine as Builder of the Constitution

MORE than twenty years ago the Hon. Charles H. Betts, editor of the *Lyons*, N. Y., *Republican*, addressed a Paine anniversary meeting of the Sunrise Club, New York, on "Paine, the Father of American Democracy" and author of the principles of the American Constitution. His proof of the contention was complete. (T. S., March 14, 1914.) Recently Mr. R. C. Roper of this city, who presented the same indisputable facts in a letter to the *Times*, was contradicted by a correspondent named Josiah T. Newcomb, who asserted: (1) that Thomas Paine was not the first openly to urge independence in his "Common Sense" (Jan. 10, 1776), but that this honor should go to John Adams, who "first suggested it in 1755," and (2) that as to the Constitution, Paine "had no more to do with it than the Emperor of Siam." In the same paper, November 18, Mr. Roper made the following rejoinder, proving what Mr. Betts had claimed for Paine, yet duplicating none of the evidence, save in an allusion to "Common Sense":

BY R. C. ROPER

Mr. Newcomb says: "On the subject of the origin of American independence, no one could be a more competent witness than John Adams." Let him, then, take the witness stand. His testimony is that "history is to ascribe the American Revolution to Thomas Paine." This was his statement in a letter to Jefferson. (Works, x, 380.)

Mr. Newcomb says further that John Adams in a letter to a close friend (Dr. Webb) in 1755 used these words: "The only way to keep us from setting up for ourselves is to disunite us." Upon this single sentence Mr. Newcomb sets up Adams as the first to espouse independence and contends that he was having great difficulty as early as 1755 "to suppress his impatience for independence." Examination of the Adams letter discloses that he was so exceedingly impatient for independence that he was willing to wait 100 years, or until 1855, to secure it. "It looks likely to me," wrote the youthful Adams, . . . "that our people will in another century become more numerous than England itself. Should this be the case . . . then the united force of all Europe will not be able to subdue us." (Works, i, 23.)

Thomas Paine, on his part, boldly urged immediate separation and the Declaration of Independence was

signed within six months. This "almost unrivaled political somersault," according to Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, can be explained only by the appearance of Paine's "Common Sense," which was "the proximate and moving cause." (Constitutional Review, x, 133.)

Admitting that the Adams letter "did not become public, of course, until many years later," Mr. Newcomb seeks to explain this obvious lack of impatience for separation by saying that "if it had cropped up in the early Seventeen Seventies, it would have created a riot." Just how a mere speculation of a bare possibility of independence within a hundred years could have started a riot is hard to appreciate at this late day. The fact is that Adams was not impatient for independence until after "Common Sense" had converted the country to the cause.

In a letter to Dr. Rush (1774), Adams objected to the use of the word "rebel," "because I was determined never to rebel." (Works, ix, 596.) Oct. 7, 1774, he wrote his wife: "Our people must be peaceable . . . and avoid war if possible." His "impatience for independence" did not prevent him taking charge of "the legal defense of the British officers and men responsible for the Boston massacre." (Wilstach, "Patriots Off Their Pedestals," 122.)

In 1774 Adams published in London a short "History of the Dispute With America," on the last page of which he declared his faith that Lord North and his associates would yet relieve the people from oppression and that "the moment this is done, 'Long live our Gracious King, and happiness to Britain!' will resound from one end of the Province to the other."

Mr. Newcomb also cites Adams's letter to General Warren of July 24, 1775, as further evidence of his impatience for separation, but that letter expressly sought to "open the door as wide as possible for peace and reconciliation," not for independence. (Works, i, 179.) Adams was so put out by the appearance of "Common Sense," which he styled a "phenomenon" and a "disastrous meteor," that he at once wrote and published a pamphlet to oppose it. (Works, ii, 507.) It was a complete failure.

In support of his second contention that Paine had nothing to do with the Constitution, and that Adams was the one who first urged it, Mr. Newcomb cites Adams's

letter of July 24, 1775, already mentioned. But that letter was in reference to the Articles of Confederation, drafted in 1777 and ratified in 1781, and was not at all a suggestion for a constitution of an independent nation. Nowhere in Adams's writings is that letter cited as having any reference at all to a constitution. The fact remains that Paine's plan for a constitution for "The United States of America"—no one ever wrote those words before Paine—antedated similar plans by Alexander Hamilton and Pelatiah Webster by more than four years.

But Mr. Newcomb insists that because Paine was not a member of the Constitutional Convention (1787), he then being in France, this is proof conclusive that he had nothing to do with it. Then, upon that theory, neither John Adams, nor Samuel Adams, nor Patrick Henry, nor even Thomas Jefferson, had anything to do with it, for they also were all absent from the convention.

At least to the extent that the principles of the Constitution were first reflected in the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Paine had very much to do with the Constitution. The fact is that the principles first urged by Paine in this country in his "Common Sense" and expanded in his "Rights of Man" were and are the fundamentals of the Constitution of the United States.

James Madison declared that "'The Rights of Man' is the exposition of the principles of the government of the United States." Yet Mr. Newcomb says that Paine's plan for a Constitution was "the least sensible" of all the plans and "never had any influence" in shaping the Constitution. Not only does he disagree with James Madison but also with Thomas Jefferson on this point, for the latter declared that "Mr. Paine's principles . . . were the principles of the citizens of the United States" and that "I profess the same principles." (Works, vi, 280, 314.)

The reason why John Adams was so opposed to Paine's plan for a Constitution was given by Adams himself as follows: "I did not like the part opposed to monarchy. His plan was so democratical." (Works, ix, 617.) Adams, of course, was at heart a real monarchist. Paine, on the contrary, was for a representative democracy. His plan, and not that of Adams, was ultimately adopted as the plan of the Constitution.

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The Case of Thomas Aikenhead*

WHEN in 1696 the captains of Christianity in Scotland procured an untimely end and a felon's death for the gentle and unoffending orphan, Thomas Aikenhead, they did not thereafter have the joy and satisfaction of contemplating that it was a much damned Atheist who had been taken into their pious clutch. Neither could they rejoice by thinking that they had fulfilled a religious duty by

having obeyed what was then in Christendom regarded as God's express command, namely, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Aikenhead was a Christian just about to speculate on the variety of his creed, but not even his Christian assassins charged him with sorcery.

The boy was a student in Edinburgh. His moral character was unimpeachable. A fellow student named Mun-go Craig placed in his possession some books of a modernistic nature. The published accounts of his case do not definitely disclose what that literature was, but at that time nothing had as yet been published that was openly and ostensibly atheistic. Aikenhead had an inquiring and an active mind, and probably could appreciate the new ideas expressed in the works smuggled to him. If Christians had permitted him to live, and if he had been encouraged to investigate the origin and evolution of the orthodox doctrines, he might have become a precursor of Modernism, if not a bolder form of what the religionists called "Infidelity." After perusing the books loaned him he made a number of remarks of a heretical character. According to the historian Macaulay, Aikenhead said that Trinity in unity was as much a contradiction as a square circle; that Ezra was the author of the Pentateuch; that the Apocalypse was an allegorical book about the philosopher's stone; that Moses had learned magic in Egypt, and that Christianity was a delusion which would not last till the year 1800. If he said the things attributed to him he was mistaken in, at least, the assertion that Christianity would not last until 1800. But whether mistaken or not, in every or any statement, the fact remains that he was put to an ignominious death for his expressions.

Proceedings were instituted against Aikenhead, as for blasphemy, before the Justiciary in Edinburgh. No counsel appeared for the prisoner, nor was any word spoken in his behalf during the course of the trial. Four or five witnesses were examined. Not one of them proved that the defendant said anything that would make him guilty of a capital offense, or guilty of the main charge, which was that he "railed" against God and cursed "our Saviour." The jury found that he had cursed Ezra and that he said "that the inventors of the scriptural doctrines would be damned, if there be such thing as damnation."

As a result of the jury's verdict, Aikenhead was sentenced to be hanged on a gibbet and his body to be interred at the foot of the gallows. The sentence was illegal, but even if it had been legal, it is still a pertinent historic event which, with others of its kind, shows that Christianity can produce a form of religious *delirium tremens* as bad as anything that can result from Voodooism. The sentence was fully carried out. The preachers would have been the first to protest if there had been any probability to the contrary. Macaulay wrote: "The ministers demanded not only the poor boy's death, but his speedy death. . . . Even from their pulpits they cried for cutting him off." Further on, the historian shows that "the

*From remarks of the author at the Liberal Church, Denver, Col., Nov. 4, 1934.

preachers crowded round him at the gallows, . . . while he was struggling in the last agony." The preachers did those things in spite of the fact that Aikenhead made all possible recantations and retractions and did all he could to soften their Christian wrath. He was not a bold heretic, provoking his persecutors, but only a boy who had repeated some heretical expressions to be found in stray pamphlets. He did all the repenting that any persecutor would ask. His execution is worthy of remembrance, not so much in honor of his memory, as in dishonor of the ministerial profession. This was not an isolated case. Like crimes have been committed by preachers and against honest thinkers and diligent scholars. Enough has been done by them to suggest that the Soviet spokesman was right in remarking to the effect that a community may derive more benefit from raising pigs than from training preachers.

FRANK SWANCARA.

* * * *

An Atheistic and Improving World

IN retiring from command of the Salvation Army, Gen. Edward J. Higgins, who had been fifty years in the "service," broadcast the message that during his time the character of the people had greatly changed, "*mainly for the better.*"

This is a concession to progress, seeing that religious belief is weaker than it was, and the Rev. Dr. Whelpley, one of New York's Presbyterian ministers, can say, as he did recently: "The average man today is an Atheist." And that is another concession, for the customary religious tenet runs that no man is an Atheist—he only thinks he is.

Dr. Whelpley adds that his average man "does not theoretically deny the existence of God, but certainly he ignores God in his plans." He goes on to say that "this is why we have had an epidemic of suicides in recent years," to prepare grounds for which statement was no doubt his purpose in recognizing so much Atheism.

Still, the admission is something. That the average man "ignores God in his plans," THE TRUTH SEEKER has long contended. God is not a factor in any sane man's calculations. To illustrate with a contemporary example, where does God function or appear in the New Deal, which condescends upon such particulars as getting your shirt ironed or your hair cut? No section occurs in the body of any plan, platform or proclamation for trying God, who is lucky if he receives honorable mention in the preamble or in a pious ending as a final flourish. The codes are atheistic. Measures for the relief of the poor rely on God for no necessities, not even morals, while procreation is getting into wiser hands than his except among Catholics. Still, General Higgins, after fifty years of observation, finds that the people are changing "*mainly for the better.*"

What Did They See?

ON the hill top rose a great tower, with a massive door which no living man had seen open. The hill men who dwelt in the palace chambers overlooking the wide court before the door lifted their hands in a hush-hush manner whenever anybody asked the name of the tenant of the tower, and said in a solemn tone,—

"God enthroned!"

A winding path up the hill led to the court, and, by night and by day, in hours of sunshine or in hours of black tempest, troops of men and women often climbed, sometimes singing, sometimes weeping, as they carried gifts to the Lord of the Tower.

A babe was roasted before the door, and the palace-men muttered, "God is well pleased."

A girl was stabbed mortally in the breast.

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Sheep and cattle were burned, while the people murmured prayers to the unseen Master, and the palace-men ate the meat.

Baskets of fruit were borne, and flowers of glorious color and sweet scent made the court a paradise, and the palace-men bowed in dignity, and took all.

Gold and silver, rubies and diamonds, pearls of great price, and rare emeralds were carried up the mount by obedient troops of admirers of the invisible; and the floors and walls of the palace shone with the treasures.

On a lofty platform in the court a Word Chanter, robed in silk, crowned with a tiara, and perpetually opening and closing parchment rolls and huge volumes, recited in a voice of thunder the magical spells:

"Brahma, Bel, Ea, Moloch, Mazda, Mithra, Bogu, Odin, Zeus, Jupiter, Yahweh, Osiris, Allah, Theos."

At moments he paused and pointed to a pit whence lurid smoke belched poisonously, and the pilgrims shuddered, and elders whispered to youth that they who brought no tribute would slip into the damned abyss.

Thus the ages passed, and the psalms still echoed in the palace:

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At last, the womb of evolution bore the child Science, and he grew to manhood and courage and the audacity of proving all things, whether in the palace of Vested Interest or on the platform of the Word Chanter, and he strode, slowly but surely, up the hill, amid the amazement of the crowds, and his axe broke the massive door, and let in the light, and he cried to the world:

"Look within!"

The people came in twos and threes and then in serried throngs, and looked.

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FREDERICK J. GOULD.

Armored, Woodfield Avenue, Ealing, London.

temporaries cold. Jesus made the lame walk, the blind see, and the dead arise; he expelled demons, suspended the order of nature, and produced earthquakes and preternatural darkness, and the pagan and philosophical world, says Lecky, remained calm, treated these prodigies with "supine inattention," and the historians never said a word about them.

* * * *

Not a New Experiment

MARY PICKFORD's recent book asks in its title "Why Not Try God?" Mr. William Floyd, author of "The Mistakes of Jesus," has published a work titled "Our Gods On Trial," but Miss Pickford does not use the verb "try" in that sense. She is more in the mode of "try it on your piano." Hers is the call of faith, wherein to try means to trust.

Years ago we read of a man who, when advised to "trust in God," replied:

"I trusted in God once and it cost me fifty dollars." He was taken up as a blasphemer.

Just the other day a resident of Fair Haven, Mass., one Alvah Gladsu, hearing his voice, decided to try God according to his will, and nearly lost his arm in a band saw, says the *Providence Journal*. And in Crisfield, Md., Preston Thomas tried God instead of a doctor by praying when his child was sick (*New York Post*). He was treated like the Infidel who lost fifty dollars, being sent to jail for his contumacy.

Our government officially tries God, putting "In God We Trust" on our coinage, but, as Dr. Potter pointed out, we go on enlarging the navy. The churches all try God and trust in him, or profess to. Nevertheless, as we see by the papers (*Times*, Nov. 14), a single denomination, the Episcopalian, carries \$62,000,000 of insurance and is taking out more. They have tried God.

* * * *

Child Set on a Weak Mother's Course

JUDGE JOHN F. CAREW, of the New York Supreme Court, who made what he calls final disposition of the conflict between Mrs. Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt, relict of Reginald, and Mrs. Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, "sister of the same," over the possession of Mrs. Vanderbilt's 10-year-old daughter, took the girl from the custody of the mother and placed her with the aunt, Mrs. Whitney, who is made legal custodian, on the ground that Mrs. Vanderbilt is unfitted by her conduct and habits to bring up a child. The extraordinary part of the decision is the judge's order that the aunt—

"as the custodian of said infant, shall provide for her a governess of the Roman Catholic faith, who shall reside with her, teach her the catechism of the Roman Catholic faith, prepare or cause her preparation for holy communion and confirmation in the Roman Catholic faith, and attend with her at mass on all Sundays and all holy days of obligation of the Roman Catholic faith."

For the helpless child that order sounds a knell like the decree of a tribunal of the Inquisition. Judge Carew

is a New York Catholic, who was in Congress 1913-29, where (*Time*, Nov. 26) he "headed Tammany's delegation in the House for years." Mrs. Vanderbilt, the mother he deems unfit, is also a Roman Catholic, whose religion appears not to have made a model parent of her. The mother is the offender and he sentences the daughter. It seems incredible that under our secular government any judicial office holder can be competent to determine the religious future of the child, with the consequent devotion of her person and her \$2,800,000 fortune to a favored church.

Major Joseph Wheless, well-known New York attorney and author, wrote to Judge Carew as follows:

MR. JUSTICE: It seems to me strange that an American Justice should by decree (based on what principle of law I know not) impose the enforced subjection of a hapless child to any brand of religion, especially one which, by your own judgment, has been found so complete a failure in the moral restraint and conduct of the child's own mother, and as shown by the prison records and the malodorous records of St. Tammany. Very respectfully.

New York, Nov. 25, 1934.

JOSEPH WHELESS.

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The "In Deo Speramus" Hoax

PROJECTED new coinage of a silver dollar bearing the words "In God We Trust" gives occasion for a correspondent of a New York paper to explain in a historical article how the fable first got there.

Two-cent bronze pieces issued after an act of Congress on April 22, 1864, we are told, first carried "In God We Trust." Two later acts, one passed in 1865 and the other in 1873, legalized the motto for other coins.

One purpose of the correspondent, who writes from Providence, R. I., is to trace the legend to Brown University, an institution of that city, whose shield bears the words, in Latin, "*In Deo Speramus*," which, though meaning "in God we hope," will bear translating as "in God we trust." Brown University was of some interest to Freethinkers a generation ago, when the late Dr. Lester F. Ward, founder of the Washington Secular League, was a member of its faculty. The writer continues:

History points to Salmon P. Chase, secretary of the Treasury under Lincoln, as the man who was directly responsible for the pledge to the deity on United States coins.

For years Chase was a close friend of the wealthy and influential Sprague family in Rhode Island, a family which often entertained Brown's executives and gave the university financial support. Chase was a frequent visitor in Providence and at the magnificent Sprague mansion in Narragansett Pier, where his daughter Catherine probably met Gov. William Sprague of Rhode Island, whom she married on November 12, 1863. Two years earlier Brown had awarded the governor an honorary Master of Arts degree.

Chase, an Episcopalian, first drew up orders for a religious motto on coins in a letter to James Pollock, director of the mint, on November 20, 1861, less than three months after Brown had honored his future son-in-law. Governor Sprague's honorary degree certificate, which Chase probably saw, bore the Brown seal with its motto.

Four weeks after his daughter's marriage Chase again wrote

preachers crowded round him at the gallows, . . . while he was struggling in the last agony." The preachers did those things in spite of the fact that Aikenhead made all possible recantations and retractions and did all he could to soften their Christian wrath. He was not a bold heretic, provoking his persecutors, but only a boy who had repeated some heretical expressions to be found in stray pamphlets. He did all the repenting that any persecutor would ask. His execution is worthy of remembrance, not so much in honor of his memory, as in dishonor of the ministerial profession. This was not an isolated case. Like crimes have been committed by preachers and against honest thinkers and diligent scholars. Enough has been done by them to suggest that the Soviet spokesman was right in remarking to the effect that a community may derive more benefit from raising pigs than from training preachers.

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GEORGE E. MACDONALD Editor

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The Helping Out Fund

THERE were twenty-one contributions to this Fund in the month of November, 1934. If the Fund is not remembered every day by the helpers, they do not forget it for more than a day and a half at most. Following are the donations: J. D. Johnson, \$1; Edward Tuck, \$100; H. Posch, \$1; Mrs. A. D. Sheakley, \$4; T. M. Robinson, \$3.75; E. W. Wolesensky, \$1; E. L. Cartwright, M.D., \$1; C. Kraemer, fifty cents; Edward Skille, \$2; T. Storm, \$1; Paul Vogenitz, \$1; G. Schmemann, \$1; W. E. DeLong, 25 cents; Mrs. Amy O'Dell, 25 cents; G. N. DeMerrill, \$1; J. S. Boling, \$1; T. J. Tanner, \$1; Olaus Jeldness, \$1; Mrs. W. O. Freese, \$1; Dr. Tobias Siegel, \$5. To the total of \$127.75 add \$7.50 from Mr. A. Himmelreich in behalf of once able but now indigent readers who have been forced by circumstances to drop behind on their subscriptions—to their regret and ours.

As our correspondent from Simla, in India, wrote last month, Freethought journalism is not quite self-supporting; but admitting the fact, we may reflect that neither is Virtue, which is aided by a great deal of gab, besides warning words by Mrs. Roosevelt, and perhaps some cash contributions.

With this number of the Monthly we take our first bite at 1935 and begin Volume 62 of THE TRUTH SEEKER.

The Editor also is measuring time by three-score year periods—that is to say, 1935 will be the sixtieth since he accepted a call to THE TRUTH SEEKER office, the first being 1875. Whether he completes the year in the same office lies with the patrons of the paper and the contributors to this column.

On that point one from Virginia writes: "You and I both know the Rationalists of this country are *capable* of making a much better showing than they do." But how are we to be sure of that? It irks us less to hold that the number of courageous and contributing Rationalists in the United States is fairly measured by the subscription lists

of Rationalist publications, and that these are upholding the best of causes to the extent that their means will permit. For all we know, there may be a hundred thousand irreligious, some of great wealth, but being voiceless they are ineffective. We have to address the tried and true. The problem at the beginning of the year is whether the outlook warrants the hope that with their assistance 1935 will be a better year than its predecessor.

While the Editor takes a sentimental interest in finishing the sixtieth year above alluded to, he intently scans the horizon where a successor may appear. The opportunity would seem to be at hand for some Freethinker, competent editorially and financially, to maintain the voice of Reason amidst the political, religious and economic din; and to keep up the good old traditions of Freethought. There is a big gift awaiting the right person to receive it.

Happy New Year, Everybody.

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One Night at the Knights Hotel

CONCERNING the Knights of Columbus Hotel at Eighth avenue and Fifty-first street, New York, which is tax-exempt on a valuation of \$300,000 because of its moral and religious influence, we lately heard that the premises served as a sporting resort for Catholic politicians, policemen and priests, with wives or women of the same faith. Allowing to everybody, including the religious, their time to relax, we let the report pass and forgot the joint except as a tax dodger until reminded of it by a headline in the newspapers just before Thanksgiving day, which recited: "PRIEST AND WOMAN SLAIN BY HUSBAND IN K. OF C. HOTEL." It was an all-way religious hook-up, and came near being a Three Faith affair, for the priest, the Rev. Father Joseph J. Leonard, was a Catholic clergyman and pastor of Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel, Lawrenceville, N. J.; the woman, Mrs. Ruth Mary Steinmetz, though nominally Catholic, was of Protestant antecedents, while the husband, Joseph Steinmetz, was a Jew before he became a divinity student at the Los Angeles Bible Institute.

On the imperfect day that closed with the shooting, the trio, as Steinmetz, the surviving member, has stated, mixed their drinks in his room at the K. of C. Hotel. When full, he took the priest's advice and went to bed. The priest took the woman and went to his own room. Steinmetz followed later, discovered a compromising situation, and killed them with his automatic. "For details see your daily newspaper," for the event did not take the air by the broadcasting system.

Before one of our Catholic judges, the ex-divinity student Steinmetz, who so excitedly vindicated the unwritten law, is likely to be severely arraigned for violating the rules of the house, which doubtless include leaving all hardware at the desk. Triangular drinking in such circumstances that the woman goes to the male survivor might be within the law as it runs in untaxed hotels, but no shoot-

ing! That brings the police and the coroner and the wrong kind of publicity.

Not long ago a new kind of novel became a best seller as "Grand Hotel," in which the author described what took place in the acts and minds of the men and women putting up at the hostelry named in the title. Although the author's imagination was a lively one, it caught nothing that paralleled actual occurrences in the retreat at Eighth Avenue and Fifty-first street. For the "low-down" on caravansaries, forget the "Grand" and contemplate the Knights of Columbus Hotel in the light of what happened there just before Thanksgiving.

Last month there was news of a birth control book by a Catholic father seized by the customs as obscene. Here is a priest killed with a married woman in his room, in a Catholic hotel—an event of a kind to turn the mind back on the pope's city of Rome before the Reformation.

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Mr. Laski's Advice to Rationalists

PROF. H. J. LASKI views "The Next Phase of Rationalism" in the Rationalist Annual for 1934. Seeing that past work of the great scholars and Freethinkers, with the evolution of scientific technique, has driven the church's religious claims from the field of rational acceptance, Professor Laski visions the future of Rationalist propaganda as following economic lines. Paying tribute to Voltaire, Paine and Ingersoll, and affirming: "It is as important today to continue their effort as it was when it was first undertaken," Mr. Laski admonishes us, however, that "Propaganda addressed to the individual reason stops short of touching the core of our problem," and that Rationalists should devote themselves to "a study of religious institutions in their *social context* [our italics] as full and comprehensive as our study of religious doctrines." They should point out how the practices of the churches are economically determined, how they make peace with the basic principles of the established economic order, how their social tactic keeps them from risking unpopularity with the powerful. As if Rationalism had not been doing this from its youth up, we are to expose the alliance between the church and the politicians, the relation of religion to big business, and its hostility to plans for achieving social justice, says Mr. Laski, who concludes:

"If Rationalists would devote the next thirty years to revealing the churches as one of the essential instruments of social and economic reaction they would contribute enormously to the emancipation of our age."

We do not quote Dr. Laski to criticise or refute, but one may remark that if the transferred emphasis which he proposes did not have the effect of causing politicians, big business and "capital" to back the churches more heavily than now as their best bet, the age might be the gainer. The age gained something, we hope, from Socialist Upton Sinclair's book, "The Profits of Religion," in

which the author took the course which is above suggested and revealed the churches as the instruments of social and economic reaction.

As a final word, it is to be observed that diversion of Rationalist aims is uniformly recommended by thinkers who regard another propaganda than Rationalism as of greater importance. We should like to contribute to a social-economic Annual (or to see the professor do so) an article on "The Next Phase of Socialism," pointing out that if the social-ists would devote the next thirty years to carrying out his advice to Rationalists, they would, in the language quoted, "contribute enormously to the emancipation of our age."

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"Supine Inattention"

"OLDEST Bible Found in Cairo Bookshop," reads the heading of an obscurely placed piece of news in the *World Telegram*. We read:

VIENNA, Nov. 9.—Discovery of the "world's oldest Bible," said to have been written in the second century, was announced today by the Austrian National Library.

Hans Gerstinger, chief of the library's manuscript section, said the pile of dusty manuscripts was found in a Cairo bookshop by Hermann Junker, director of the German Archeological Institute there. They were brought here for study and their importance confirmed.

The entire Bible was not included in the manuscripts, bound in the form of a book, but the Gospels of Matthew and Paul's Epistles, and portions of the Old Testament were there.

Scholars said the oldest Bible previously known dated from the fourth century.

If that is a true report, the press has not adequately played up the discovery it announces. An oldest copy of Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" would get more notice. "The oldest Bible previously known," referred to in the last paragraph, may be identified as the one found in a monastery on or near Mount Sinai by Tischendorf eighty years ago, and sold in England last year for a half million dollars. That code is not complete, either. As rates run according to antiquity, this one should be priceless, but the public hears of its discovery without excitement. The public is not easily interested. For instance, the finding every little while of the Holy Grail, out of which Jesus took his last social drink, is discussed only for a day. That Slavonic edition of Josephus that turned up but recently to prove the historical existence of the Christ has now practically turned to junk. It is a plug. To us the greatest discovery of all was made when a German professor identified the stone tables bearing parts of the Ten Commandments in God's handwriting. Nobody mentions that now. It has less tenacity of life than the saga of James Barkeley (or Bartley), the hardy sailor who proved the Book of Jonah a truthful narrative by falling overboard and getting himself swallowed by a whale.

But greater things than these heretofore have left con-

temporaries cold. Jesus made the lame walk, the blind see, and the dead arise; he expelled demons, suspended the order of nature, and produced earthquakes and preternatural darkness, and the pagan and philosophical world, says Lecky, remained calm, treated these prodigies with "supine inattention," and the historians never said a word about them.

Not a New Experiment

MARY PICKFORD's recent book asks in its title "Why Not Try God?" Mr. William Floyd, author of "The Mistakes of Jesus," has published a work titled "Our Gods On Trial," but Miss Pickford does not use the verb "try" in that sense. She is more in the mode of "try it on your piano." Hers is the call of faith, wherein to try means to trust.

Years ago we read of a man who, when advised to "trust in God," replied:

"I trusted in God once and it cost me fifty dollars." He was taken up as a blasphemer.

Just the other day a resident of Fair Haven, Mass., one Alvah Gladsu, hearing his voice, decided to try God according to his will, and nearly lost his arm in a band saw, says the *Providence Journal*. And in Crisfield, Md., Preston Thomas tried God instead of a doctor by praying when his child was sick (*New York Post*). He was treated like the Infidel who lost fifty dollars, being sent to jail for his contumacy.

Our government officially tries God, putting "In God We Trust" on our coinage, but, as Dr. Potter pointed out, we go on enlarging the navy. The churches all try God and trust in him, or profess to. Nevertheless, as we see by the papers (*Times*, Nov. 14), a single denomination, the Episcopalian, carries \$62,000,000 of insurance and is taking out more. They have tried God.

Child Set on a Weak Mother's Course

JUDGE JOHN F. CAREW, of the New York Supreme Court, who made what he calls final disposition of the conflict between Mrs. Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt, relict of Reginald, and Mrs. Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, "sister of the same," over the possession of Mrs. Vanderbilt's 10-year-old daughter, took the girl from the custody of the mother and placed her with the aunt, Mrs. Whitney, who is made legal custodian, on the ground that Mrs. Vanderbilt is unfitted by her conduct and habits to bring up a child. The extraordinary part of the decision is the judge's order that the aunt—

"as the custodian of said infant, shall provide for her a governess of the Roman Catholic faith, who shall reside with her, teach her the catechism of the Roman Catholic faith, prepare or cause her preparation for holy communion and confirmation in the Roman Catholic faith, and attend with her at mass on all Sundays and all holy days of obligation of the Roman Catholic faith."

For the helpless child that order sounds a knell like the decree of a tribunal of the Inquisition. Judge Carew

is a New York Catholic, who was in Congress 1913-29, where (*Time*, Nov. 26) he "headed Tammany's delegation in the House for years." Mrs. Vanderbilt, the mother he deems unfit, is also a Roman Catholic, whose religion appears not to have made a model parent of her. The mother is the offender and he sentences the daughter. It seems incredible that under our secular government any judicial office holder can be competent to determine the religious future of the child, with the consequent devotion of her person and her \$2,800,000 fortune to a favored church.

Major Joseph Wheless, well-known New York attorney and author, wrote to Judge Carew as follows:

MR. JUSTICE: It seems to me strange that an American Justice should by decree (based on what principle of law I know not) impose the enforced subjection of a hapless child to any brand of religion, especially one which, by your own judgment, has been found so complete a failure in the moral restraint and conduct of the child's own mother, and as shown by the prison records and the malodorous records of St. Tammany. Very respectfully.

New York, Nov. 25, 1934.

JOSEPH WHELESS.

The "In Deo Speramus" Hoax

PROJECTED new coinage of a silver dollar bearing the words "In God We Trust" gives occasion for a correspondent of a New York paper to explain in a historical article how the fable first got there.

Two-cent bronze pieces issued after an act of Congress on April 22, 1864, we are told, first carried "In God We Trust." Two later acts, one passed in 1865 and the other in 1873, legalized the motto for other coins.

One purpose of the correspondent, who writes from Providence, R. I., is to trace the legend to Brown University, an institution of that city, whose shield bears the words, in Latin, "*In Deo Speramus*," which, though meaning "in God we hope," will bear translating as "in God we trust." Brown University was of some interest to Freethinkers a generation ago, when the late Dr. Lester F. Ward, founder of the Washington Secular League, was a member of its faculty. The writer continues:

History points to Salmon P. Chase, secretary of the Treasury under Lincoln, as the man who was directly responsible for the pledge to the deity on United States coins.

For years Chase was a close friend of the wealthy and influential Sprague family in Rhode Island, a family which often entertained Brown's executives and gave the university financial support. Chase was a frequent visitor in Providence and at the magnificent Sprague mansion in Narragansett Pier, where his daughter Catherine probably met Gov. William Sprague of Rhode Island, whom she married on November 12, 1863. Two years earlier Brown had awarded the governor an honorary Master of Arts degree.

Chase, an Episcopalian, first drew up orders for a religious motto on coins in a letter to James Pollock, director of the mint, on November 20, 1861, less than three months after Brown had honored his future son-in-law. Governor Sprague's honorary degree certificate, which Chase probably saw, bore the Brown seal with its motto.

Four weeks after his daughter's marriage Chase again wrote

to Pollock, commenting upon the mottoes which the director of the mint had submitted, saying that the one to be used "with the shield . . . should be changed so as to read 'In God We Trust.'"

The new coins authorized in 1864 not only bore the inscription "In God We Trust" but carried a shield similar in outline to the shield in the center of Brown University's official insignia.

Chase was actuated by the belief that a fiction might be made a fact by having it officially certified.

The pious influence of Secretary Chase, who is thus made responsible for the legend on the coin, is further seen in Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. A biography written by his niece states that the doxology to that document, invoking "the gracious favor of Almighty God," is from Chase's pen.

More history of the vicissitudes of the motto was made in 1907, when President Theodore Roosevelt removed it as being an occasion for blasphemous remark, such as "In God we trust—for the thirty-seven cents we don't pay," and the proposal that on a short-weight dollar should be also engraved: "I know that my redeemer liveth." In 1934 Sir Gerald Campbell, the British consul-general to New York, amused a luncheon club in London by repeating this bit of irreverent humor. During the debate on a restoration act, in 1908, which reversed Roosevelt, Shepard of Texas read into the record an editorial article from THE TRUTH SEEKER stating that in financial matters the people do not trust God, hence it was not apparent why every coin issuing from our mints should carry forth to the world this thing that is not so. It still remains a mystery of religion.

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Exemption and Profit

IN restoring exempt educational or so-called benevolent institutions to the tax rolls, the New York Board of Taxes and Assessments discriminates in favor of such as are not conducted for profit. When the properties are churches, however, and used for religious purposes, they are exempted whether run for profit or not. And do the churches make money? The answer is the enormous amount of property they have amassed, which in the country at large is \$7,000,000,000. Three-sevenths, or \$3,000,000,000, is in holdings not put to strictly religious uses, but all of them are owned by the churches and are part of the plant.

The tax board is putting private schools on the rolls and a class called finishing schools are mentioned as taxable. But parochial schools are private, and fashionable convent schools are in the finishing class.

Are gains less taxable because they are made by putting on the market a religion that day by day looks more and more like foreign securities?

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PRUSSIAN Premier Hermann Wilhelm Goering has ordered the suppression in Prussia of a small organization of atheistic and agnostic tendencies known as the "League of Free Religious Associations."

NOTES AT LARGE

IN January two years hence the bi-centenary of Paine, born in 1737, may be celebrated. This is the 198th anniversary. Before the 200th arrives, Mr. R. C. Roper, some of whose voluminous Paine work has already appeared (see pages 1 and 2), expects to publish a book covering the early days of this republic and bringing "to the youth of our country, and to everyone, a rich heritage which has long been denied them, and to supply many missing chapters of history," with Paine as the central figure. A good part of his labor will be that of correcting the mistakes and false judgments of other historians regarding the Author-Hero.

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"It is partly amusing and partly sad," writes TRUTH SEEKER reader A. W. Shattford in the *Halifax Mail*, "to read the criticisms uttered by certain clergymen in the province against the doctrine of evolution as expressed in one of the new school books, 'The Story of Civilization.'" True it is that the clergy of Nova Scotia are doing their best to make another Tennessee out of that Canadian province. In this they have the approval of the respectable *Toronto Globe*, which besides saying that they should be "strengthened by the assistance of church members everywhere who remain true to the old faith," declares that the Rev. Mr. Morris should be heeded when he states that "by permitting the use of such material the government would put itself on record as the enemy of the Bible, the church, the Christian religion, and the home." Obviously Canada would welcome a monkey law. Reader Ralph Helm of Ontario sends us the *Globe*. Mr. Shattuck is so far the only public defender of the teaching of evolution in the schools.

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THE New York, or Metropolitan, Museum of Art has lately acquired by purchase from a private collection in England, and placed in its Egyptian department, "a life-size head of Rameses II as a young man wearing a war helmet." This monarch, the most famous of all the pharaohs, is said to have been the dictator under whose reign the oppression of the Hebrews took place. If so, he found a watery grave, according to the interpreters of the fourteenth of Exodus; for when Pharaoh pursued the children of Israel at the Red Sea crossing "the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them." Fuhrer or Pharaoh Hitler of the third Reich-Dynasty might well see something ominous in this.

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HAVING investigated for the past ten years the sources and prevalence of superstitions in the United States, Drs. Otis Caldwell and Gerhard Lundeen of Teachers College, New York, announce the results of a survey among 854

pupils of a high school in New Rochelle on 200 commonly accepted but unfounded statements. Such beliefs as that "an ostrich hides its head in the sand when threatened with danger" and that "it is a sign of ill luck to have a black cat follow you" were found to be held by about two-thirds of the pupils, while another generally accepted superstition was the equally fatuous one that "faith healers can cure human diseases." Belief in miracles, or uncaused effects, is an inexpugnable prime element of religion.

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ONE division of the Catholic federation for spoils is known as MAC—alphabetical for Make America Catholic. A meeting of Freethinkers in New York, assembled in November to hear a speaker named Michado set forth the case of Mexico against the church, was attended and repeatedly interrupted by representatives of this movement, who, though politely welcomed, conducted themselves in the manner native to defenders of the faith. Near the close of the meeting Major Joseph Wheless took the platform and pointed out to the MACs the mischief and futility of their endeavors: "You will never make America Catholic, because Americans have before them the results of your success in other countries. They have seen your work in Spain and Italy and in Austria; in Portugal, in Mexico and in the Central and South American republics, where your church and religion have reduced the inhabitants to intellectual peonage. You will never make America Catholic except in its penitentiaries, where you already have a large majority."

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A PATRIOTIC orator broadcasts the declaration that "in the United States there is room for only one *ism*, and that is Americanism." The speaker neglected to define his terms. Take from Prof. Edwin S. Corwin's work, "French Policy and the American Alliance of 1778," is the definition that "*the separation of civil and religious interests is the essence of Americanism.*" This vital fact is habitually overlooked by the 100 per centers. A political *ism* that well might be suffixed to *American* as an advance toward the ideal would be "a minimum of government economically administered."

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A MAN that we once did a dollar's worth of business with as an inventor of a shirt that won't work up reappeared last month to say he was the God of heaven named in Daniel 2:44, whose kingdom, Matthew, 3:2, is now set up. He said that the Kingdom was allowing a commission of ten per cent on money collected for expenses and offered to let us in on the graft. Some time ago this personage laid before Miss Evangeline Booth, now General of the Salvation Army, a proposal to make her his spouse, but got no rise out of the lady. The Bible produces more nuts than a tree planted for that purpose.

Prayer and Such

Give me no superstition's stained-glass mystery
Or Prayer which seeks an answer from the sky,
Or Faith, unreasoning, grovelling in awe—
Denial of inevitable law;
No magic Prayer addressed to mystic shrine,
Impossible and therefore called divine.
Give me the sympathy of human hearts,
The Life, that human fellowship imparts;
Social Salvation from a human source:
Resistless Love's co-operative force.

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

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OCCURRENCES AND OPINIONS

THE three faiths, one day lately, took a vacation from interference with home affairs to demand that the Mexican government reverse its policy of suspending Catholic, Jewish and Protestant functions. Nothing appears to have been proposed in behalf of the Mormons, who also are asked to quit preaching and teaching or get out.

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ON the ground that there is no room for an anti-Catholic on the payroll, New York aldermen persist in demanding the discharge of Dr. Charles Fama as medical examiner. Controller McGoldrick replies that the appointment of Dr. Fama having been put into effect, no charge but that of professional unfitness can be entertained. He adds that he has found the doctor fully qualified.

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AS SET forth by the Lutheran minister, Dr. F. E. Oberlander, when Judge Carew sentenced little Gloria Vanderbilt to Catholic mass every Sunday morning, he violated "a state law which says that the first baptism of a child fixes its religion when the child becomes a state ward," as Gloria now is. The Rev. Oberlander points to the situation in Mexico as having been brought about by such Catholic assumptions as this judicial order sets up.

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THE oldest Methodist church in New Jersey celebrated at Trenton in October the 150th anniversary of that denomination in America. The history of the Trenton church sets forth that John Fitch, inventor of a steamboat, was one of its original members, but was expelled for working on Sunday repairing guns for the Continental army. He seems to have been an acquaintance of Thomas Paine, who had preceded him, as well as Fulton and Rumsey, by some years in proposing the application of steam to navigation.

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DEVOUT Bible-worshippers, of tender sensibilities, may well have been affected to tears by a late editorial article in the New York Times lamenting popular unfamiliarity with the holy text and applauding the Bible Society for distributing so many Bibles and parts of Bibles amongst the heathen. The editorial writer himself committed a misquote of the good old hymn, Coronation. The need of more and better Bible reading, even in the newspaper office, is seen when P. W. Wilson of the Times book-reviewing staff, gives Moses and Elijah honorable mention as within their right in controlling the Red Sea and calling down fire from heaven, and adds that "Gideon has the right to tell the sun and moon to stand still." Nobody cares for Joshua now.

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THERE is bad news from E. W. Howe, Sage of Potato Hill, Atchison, Kansas, sometimes called Dean of Newspapermen. The eyes of Mr. Howe, whose *Monthly* devoted to Indignation suspended publication some months ago, "are dimming after sixty years of writing," it is said. He is 80 years old and can see

sufficiently to make his way about, but must dictate his articles. Mr. Howe is a skeptic in religion and has written much which THE TRUTH SEEKER could quote with the approval of its readers. ADDENDUM.—Since the above was released we have a note from W. S. Bryan of Nevada, Mo., who has written and still writes even more acceptably than Mr. Howe, and who is ten years older, indicating that he too suffers from defective vision. "My sight," he writes, "is so dim that I can scarcely see the keys of the typewriter, and there is so much pain that when I try to write I immediately begin to imitate Peter when he heard the cock crow." Mr. Bryan would be found receptive to Holiday Cheer and the Compliments of the Season.

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IN 1932, Bertrand Russell, English mathematician and philosopher, and his wife Dora, feminist author, signed a deed of separation in which all past marital offenses were condoned and eliminated. It appears that both had something in their conduct to be overlooked. The wife admitted hers in her suit for divorce which an English court has just granted her. The defendant, Bertrand Arthur William, who let the suit go by default is Earl Russell, son of Viscount Amberley, author of "An Analysis of Religious Belief," a 725-page octavo, reprinted by D. M. Bennett in 1877; and he is 62 years old now. The plaintiff, feminist Dora, is Countess Russell. As Bertrand and Dora they are more distinguished than as titled persons.

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THE photographic section of a Sunday newspaper shows "a New York city official," George J. Ryan, president of the Board of Education, "on his way to an audience with the pope." Mr. Ryan is one of the Catholics of this town whose educational standing consists in holding a job in that department. New York politics contributed another picture to the gallery of the prostrants a few days earlier. It is that of Postmaster-General James A. Farley kneeling down to kiss the hand of the Most Rev. Amleto Cicognani, apostolic delegate from Vatican City, who in the picture is grinning like a cheshire cat. We have been told by a native of Italy that American-Irish Catholics show a helluva lot more civility to the pope's delegates than their Catholic countrymen do where they come from.

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ALARMED by the statement attributed to President Roosevelt that "the destruction of our present public utilities is a certainty," a newspaper correspondent says:

"Ten million utility investors mean ten million heads of families. This in turn, allowing four to a family, means that forty millions of our more constructive citizens must be called upon to suffer all the way down to complete dissipation of income and savings."

The amount of the doomed investments, representing savings and income, is given as "some fifteen to twenty billions of dollars." Obviously, the government ought long ago to have put a stop to popular use of utilities as a means of saving by offering a better interest rate on U. S. bonds than the private enterprises can pay. If not this, then Congress and the President should underwrite those shares on which the constructive citizen now relies for tax money, or the goose that lays down the golden tax egg will go broke.

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A SPECIMEN of the campaign literature, disgraceful to its authors, which was used against Upton Sinclair's aspiration to be governor of California has come East. The art of printing suffers new degradation in producing it. Our one-time editorial contributor, James F. Morton, Jr., said of a remark by a Catholic priest about women that the utterer was "moved apparently by no cause but the innate impulse of a congenital blackguard." The anti-Sinclair print is no better. How could the

California voters trust their interests to persons with such impulses as are disclosed in the literature that helped to elect the parties responsible for it? The relief plans of Mr. Sinclair, who is author of "The Profits of Religion," went to defeat on one Tuesday, and on the Tuesday following the papers announced from Washington: "SHOPS FOR JOBLESS PLANNED BY FERA.—Tackling the problem from an emergency rather than a permanent point of view, the Federal Relief Administration was disclosed today (Nov. 12) to have marshaled a vast plan for *relief-financed workshops*. In them will be manufactured a wide variety of goods for the needy unemployed. The plans are already being distributed by the FERA," with the approval of Mr. Roosevelt, who has no criticism to make of the profits of religion. Mr. Sinclair mustn't let himself be discouraged. Besides Shops for the Jobless he may yet see our renovated political edifice turned into a larger and more populous Helicon Hall.

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Bookish

THE RATIONALIST ANNUAL (Watts & Co., London) is a yearly magazine, and the world's best. So good a collection of Rationalist articles does not appear in any other, probably not in all of the others. The table of contents for 1935 is laid before the reader in another place. All of the contributions are important, from Sir Arthur Keith's revelations of the love ordeal of Ernst Haeckel to Ernest Thurtell's irenic thoughts on belief and conduct, with Llewelyn Powys' rousing "Dawn Breakers" half-way between.

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IN his *Literary Guide* Book Chat, Sir Alexander Cardew says of "A Martian Examines Christianity" (Watts) that the author, Arthur Levett, "has produced one of the most entertaining and effective exposures of popular theology that has ever been published. . . . The whole inquiry is conducted with so light a touch, yet with such mastery of the subject, that the reader is filled both with sentiment and admiration." Author Levett is an American, a New Yorker, and readers here will agree with Sir Alexander. There is no Nobel prize in theology, or it might have been awarded to Levett for 1934.

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TO REFRESH the memories of men about the attitude of the ministerial followers of the Prince of Peace toward the 1914-1918 World War, George Bedborough has written and compiled "Arms and the Clergy" (Pioneer Press, London). After his Introduction, in which he remarks that "men's speculations on religious problems have no bearing whatever upon the common problems of our citizenship," and a short dissertation on God's part in the business of killing, the author lets the clergy speak for themselves through quotations from their warlike utterances occupying nearly eighty pages. Our Abolitionists before the Civil War indicted the church as the bulwark and forlorn hope of slavery. The clergy are not the bulwark or forlorn hope of war, but they have the belligerent mind, though evading military duty.

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INFORMATION from Hackensack, N. J., is that forty-seven religious, civic and fraternal organizations in twenty-three Bergen county municipalities, where they enjoyed tax exemption, have lost appeals filed after the municipal assessors placed them on the taxable lists. The owners of the holdings, which include Young Men's Christian Association, Knights of Columbus and Salvation Army real estate, may appeal to the State Tax Board and the Supreme Court.

From Letters to the Editor

A DOUBTFUL QUOTATION FROM MARK TWAIN

In the Lincoln (Nebraska) *State Journal* of Nov. 10, 1934 (p. 7) a Christian Science propagandist by the name of R. S. Ross is reported, in the course of a lecture on Christian Science, to have made the following claim:

"Like some other critics, Mark Twain was at one time severely unjust in his estimate of Mrs. Eddy and Christian Science. Towards the close of his career, however, his viewpoint changed, and he wrote of her: 'She has organized and made available a healing principle that for two thousand years has never been employed except as the merest kind of guess-work. She is the benefactor of the age.' And of her discovery he wrote, 'Christian Science is humanity's boon.'"

I wrote you a few days ago, Mr. Editor, asking: "Did you ever hear of Mark Twain backsliding like that?" I have since learned where Mr. Ross got his "information." He was quoting, not Mark Twain, as alleged, but Mr. Albert Bigelow Paine, the writer, and devotee of Christian Science (see latter's book, "Mark Twain: A Biography," vol. 3, p. 1271). And as you will see, Mark Twain never "wrote" the alleged defense of Mrs. Eddy, as claimed by Mr. Ross, but was merely represented by Mr. Paine as having made the remarks in the course of a spoken conversation with the latter. Under the circumstances there can at least be reasonable doubt as to the exact words used, and, considering what we know of Mark Twain, there likewise is room for a difference of opinion as to how the remarks should be taken, if made by Twain at all. As you will see from Mr. Paine's book, the alleged conversation is supposed to have taken place about 1906 or 1907, that is, about the time that Twain was preparing for publication his book on Christian Science (published in 1907). Since Twain died only three years after the publication of the latter book, and considering the vigor of his denunciation of Mrs. Eddy's "discovery" in that book, he did not have much time in which to change his mind, as alleged.

Mark Twain having died in 1910 and Mr. Paine's (Albert Bigelow) book being published in 1912, it is evident that the myth-makers got busy promptly when there was no longer any possibility of a come-back.—EDW. WOLESENSKY, Washington, D. C.

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SUB-HUMAN AND ANTISOCIAL PROGENY OF CATHOLICISM

The article "Stunts at the Shrine of God's Grandmother," by Jacques B. Tableporter in the October number, is one of the best THE TRUTH SEEKER has ever published. But the exploitation of the Catholic believers at this St. Anne shrine and at the numerous shrines elsewhere is but one of many forms of control by this medieval though extremely powerful religion.

It is somewhat surprising that Mr. Tableporter did not see and mention the similarity of this subserviency to another largely Catholic activity in the same province—the ballyhoo concerning the Dionne quintuplets.

The desire of Catholic propagandists for large families among the adherents, regardless of the inevitable poverty and wretchedness, is probably responsible for most of this degenerate interest. The survival of the quintuplets—a veritable *sub-human* litter—should not have been artificially promoted. The parents who already had enough children would thus have been relieved of the burden, the community and the government would have avoided the tremendous expense and labor of giving assistance, and the five girls themselves saved from the very doubtful happiness that awaits them if they grow to maturity.

The Catholic educational system is another cruel method of control. In Quebec and other regions where the population is mainly Catholic and nearly all localities have the church schools

the teaching at its best is inferior, emphasizing the alleged achievements of the Popes and Saints and subordinating those of human genius in general.

The parochial schools in the United States give a similarly distorted instruction. Moreover, a special tax is collected from the parents to maintain the separate schools, and the families must either live in clannish communities or require the children to walk long distances.

If the Catholics alone were affected by all the harmful influences, the other elements would have no need for serious concern. But the anti-social or at best indifferent attitude of such a large element weakens our educational and other institutions, and there is constant agitation by the Catholic forces to secure a portion of the general school tax funds for their church schools.

These efforts have succeeded or nearly succeeded in some states. In Ohio the vote of the legislature has several times been close to such an enactment, and the agitation is continuing with increasing strength. Such a division of public funds would be a severe blow at American institutions.

The Catholic population and power are steadily growing in many regions. This growth comes mainly from the infamous mixed marriage rules, which exact from the spineless and renegade non-Catholic parent the pledge to rear all the children as Catholics; and from the comparatively large families among Catholics in general—not as large as the priests urge, but larger than is customary among non-Catholics.

Catholicism must be regarded not only as controlling the adherents, but as striving to dominate society and our institutions.—CYRUS H. ESHLEMAN, Lakewood, Ohio.

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FROM THE BRYAN GENEALOGY, RE METHUSELAH

Mr. McFarland of California (T. S., Dec., p. 138) is worried about Methuselah. Fortunately I am the man who can bring him comfort. Methuselah was my grand-uncle by marriage with my aunt Mehitabel. They lived together the better part of a thousand years, and begat sons and daughters. When the flood came uncle Met and I climbed a tree and sat on a limb until the shower was over, meanwhile subsisting on dead fish, shrimps and oysters which had been drowned because of their sins.

Uncle Met lived about fourteen years after the flood—some estimate sixteen—and continued to begat sons and daughters. I still have a lot of cousins as a result of his activities. I rounded them up the other day and made out five hundred thousand and three of them; but several of the little fellows ran around so fast that I couldn't count them.

Uncle Met told me that Ump-ti-Poo (please accent the third syllable) got so mad because his children looked and acted so much like himself, that he resolved to get rid of them. So he made a lot of extra water and drowned them, as we used to do with unwanted kittens and puppies on the farm. Then he found himself with a good many dam'd souls on hand and no place to keep them; so he made Hell and fenced them in. This explains why Ump-ti-Poo made Hell.

I am as holy as any of the other liars who helped Ump-ti-Poo write his holy book, and those who do not believe what I say will be in danger of hell-fire. Better take my word for it.—W. S. BRYAN, Nevada, Mo.

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Orthodoxy

What is most needed? More light! The illumination of divine light, when it is cast on orthodoxy and the orthodox churches, reveals to intelligent persons a sad state of superstition. In the first instance, orthodoxy gives us "hell" when sheol, hades, purgatory and hell are non-existent places, except in the imagination of the mercenary, perfidious clergy, who fill believers with fear and falsity.

But orthodox pulpитеers do not now dwell so much on sup-