

THE TRUTH SEEKER

A Monthly for Freethinkers

Vol. 63—No. 11

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER, 1936

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THE TRUTH SEEKER

Established 1873

GEORGE E. MACDONALD - - - - Editor

VOLUME 63, No. 11

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The Truth Seeker's Contributing Friends

IN the month of September, these contributions to THE TRUTH SEEKER'S Sustaining Fund were received. From J. M. Newell, \$1; Hon. Wm. Sulzer, \$5; Luther Cowan, \$1; W. H. Culver, \$1; G. W. Washburn, \$4; D. H. Gallo-way, M. D., \$10; A. Manzione, 25 cents; Dr. James Mc-Crea, \$4; Jacob Kotar, 60 cents; T. M. Robinson, \$1.20; J. S. B., 44 cents; A. F. Enro, \$1; M. H. Pohlman, \$4. Total, \$33.29.

That the season of a general election is a dull one for non-political periodicals is a historical fact confirmed in the experience of the Freethought press. Always much appreciated, the contributions are especially welcome now. The list for September, though brief, contains a name well known. The Hon. Mr. Sulzer made a personal call and picked out a package of scientific books. He says he has known this journal for fifty years. He knew it when he was Congressman and sent us the Congressional Record in the early '90s, and there was correspondence after he became governor of New York.

On another page this month is a striking article by Theodore Schroeder on the wide and unoccupied field which he sees for the spread and cultivation of Freethought principles. Mr. Schroeder feels confident that with an enterprising circulation manager, and editorially rejuvenated, a bigger and more aggressive TRUTH SEEKER should enter and cultivate that field; and on this possibility he invites, through correspondence, the opinions and deliberate judgment of all readers. After a vast amount of work during the past forty years for free speech and free thought, Mr. Schroeder finds himself at leisure to think also of building up a Saturday or Sunday forum for lectures on the New Philosophy of Life which has resulted from his studies. About this, too, he solicits correspondence and cooperation, on the theory that what he has to propose is what the unchurched majority are unknowingly waiting for and will accept.

To return to the Sustaining Fund, which it is the pur-

pose of this column to report upon with acknowledgments, the new low for the year it reaches is not a sample of what the contributors can do. In August it was \$105.45, and October may duplicate that; besides, there are two more months in 1936.

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Catholics Go on the Warpath

THE leading article in the October TRUTH SEEKER made the timely inquiry, "Is Catholic Dictatorship Coming?"

The answer is that while Catholic dictatorship is the aim of the Catholic church and Catholic Action, to predict that it is coming in the United States is to foretell the end of the Republic, since countries cannot be at once republican and Catholic.

There had been dictatorships in European countries before, but in 1919 a new name for them came into vogue with the establishment of the fascisti in Italy by Benito Mussolini, who under the title Il Duce became to the political body what the pope is to the Catholic. The papal hierarchy is the ecclesiastical fascisti.

In Quebec, Canada, a movement has begun to make that province a piece of separate French territory, "strongly tinged with fascism and clericalism," and with Austria, organized after the model of a papal state, furnishing "the nearest European simile."

The Catholics here open their campaign for dictatorship with a drive on Communists, who besides being anti-fascist are accused of irreligion. The attack can mean nothing but persecution for opinion's sake. The Communists are not numerous enough to create a national issue. The most they achieve in this locality is a disturbance, which the police can take care of. They are of a studious disposition and not of the criminal class. The Catholic church might congratulate itself on a body of adherents of the same average intelligence.

The church points to the excesses of the Communists in Spain. But Spanish Communists are the church's own children, Catholic-born, baptized and priest-instructed. The intolerance that prompts them to knock down churches and to hold life cheap is inherited from their heretic-killing Catholic ancestors. The forces that are doing the church's work against the loyalists are the Mohammedan troops from Morocco, according to whose religious convictions all Catholics and other Christians are infidels. It is a holy enough war for them.

The broadcasting priest who talks of resorting to "bullets" to head off the New Deal is only echoing Father Belford of Brooklyn. Belford years ago recommended bullets to stop Socialists. At the big Catholic rally in New York Rev. E. A. Brosnan, spiritual director of the Holy Name from Richmond, Va., declared:

"The brazen, atheistic, destructive doctrine of communism must be fought and destroyed at the very start."

In frontier days a person about to go hunting for another first warned his intended victim that he was to be

discontinued. Thereafter if the warned party saw him first and opened hostilities, with fatal results, it was altogether in accordance with the code to acquit the victor on grounds of self-defense. The spokesmen for Catholic action give the local Communists such grounds for a violent demonstration against the church.

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Confirmation, Not of Moses but Darwin

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Rest, rest. There is no God, no gods, who dwell
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Those lines occur in the late W. H. Mallock's interpretation of Lucretius "On the Nature of Things," and Mallock sums up:

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The name of this ancient poet and philosopher first came to our notice when as a "typewriter" we handled the article "Lucretius" on page 203 of D. M. Bennett's volume, "The World's Sages, Infidels and Thinkers" (1876). There he was quoted as asking:

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As we write this, intending to dilate further on the Rationalism of Lucretius, a friend calls our attention to a sermon delivered in the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine by the Rev. Dr. John Atkinson on the testimony of unwilling witnesses. The preacher said, in part:

"Even great unbelievers have testified. We owe a great deal to Thomas Paine, who has been called a dirty, little Infidel. He was not dirty; he was not little, and he was not an Infidel. He said, 'I believe in one God and no more.' He was a Deist. Some called Abraham Lincoln an Infidel. He may have gone through a period of Infidelity; most of us do, but no one can read the life of Lincoln and not believe he was inspired by the Christian faith."

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There would be no "Infidels" if all the "great unbelievers" were left to a judgment like that. The word *infidel* is defined as "one rejecting the Christian faith," and that was Paine. Lincoln said to Newton Bateman, superintendent of public instruction, Springfield, Illinois, 1860, "Mr.

"But gathering, as we stray, a sense
Of life so lovely and intense,
It lingers when we wander hence,

That those who follow feel behind
Their backs, when all before is blind,
Our joy, a rampart to the mind."

"Man Answers Death" is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, at \$3.

MIRIAM ALLEN DEFORD.

* * * *

A BOOK ON RELIGION AGAINST JUSTICE

LAST spring a New Jersey jurist, one Robert Grosman of Newark, took a divorced woman's children away from her on the ground that she was an Atheist, though otherwise morally fit to have charge of their bringing up. The jurist in his decision, declared that the mother, Mrs. Mabel Eaton of Montclair, was "not privileged to instil into the minds of these young children these doctrines which she herself has embraced," but the Methodist father, "wished both children to be brought up religiously, and this he had a right to do." That is, she had no right to bring them up in her belief, but he was privileged to bring them up in his! It was brought out that Mrs. Eaton is a student of Karl Marx, but the judge affirmed that since she was an Infidel in religion, "the result would have been the same were she a Democrat or Republican."

This case is called to mind now on the receipt of a book by Frank Swancara of the Denver (Col.) Bar entitled "Obstructions of Justice by Religion," in which are recorded a great number of instances where justice miscarried by reason of the unbelief of the accused or his witnesses. Through twenty-two chapters making up a book of three hundred pages the author cites laws and decisions at home and abroad based on and affirming the disqualification of unbelievers. Mr. Swancara, by citation and comment, has made an interesting story of these obstructions of justice. He finds in the files of THE TRUTH SEEKER, which he has inherited as the nephew of John Swanchera, a lifetime subscriber, much illustrative and historical material, and he writes the editor: "This law book is so composed as to be propaganda for the cause you have fought for."

* * * *

MOST'S "GOD PEST," TRANSLATED, REPRINTED

WHAT seems to be Herr Johann Most's pamphlet "Gottes Pest" comes now, apparently in Esperanto, from Dr. Tobias Siegel, our subscriber in perpetuity, of Detroit, Mich. We identify "Gottes Pest" in "La Dia Pesto" (translator's title) by the name of the author, with whom we had a slight personal acquaintance back in the '80s and from whose hand, while in company with E. M. Macdonald, we received a complimentary copy of this work in the German original. It was at the bar of a hall where Mr. Most held his meetings, and there was beer. "Ich habe die Ehre auf Ihr Gesundheit zu trinken," said Mr. Most politely, or words to that effect, and we doubtless responded "Prost!" The great agitator wore a high hat and a coat with a cape, and he was not so tall as your reviewer. E. M. M. paid for the beer. We bespeak for the pamphlet a good circulation among the Esperantists.

* * * *

One Strong Reason for Unbelief

I don't believe the Bible—
I'll tell the reason why—
I think it is a libel,
Accusing God on high
Of arranging things upon this earth
So his own son should die.

WALTER D. KENT, JR.

How Dr. Watts Touched the Harp

SINCE the Wigglesworth morsel of 1662 came to light again in the *Plain Dealer*, Franklin P. Adams ("F. P. A.") of the New York *Herald Tribune* has happened upon a book of hymns by Dr. Isaac Watts (1674-1748), published in New York 1834 and sung by "Great Aunt Lydia" in the same decade. Mr. Adams quotes with disrespect a half dozen stanzas, the following one included:

"Terrible God, that reign'st on high,
How awful is thy thundering hand!
Thy fiery bolts, how fierce they fly,
Nor can all earth nor hell withstand."

And this:

"How full of anguish is the thought.
How it distracts and tears my heart.
If God at last my sovereign judge
Should frown and bid my soul 'Depart!'"

With the comment:

"And down you go to the roaring Satan. Which, if it be not sacrilege to opine, would be no worse than Up There with that Frowning Sovereign Judge. At least you would know just where you stood, while Up There anything might happen."

Yet, like Wigglesworth, Watts knew his Bible and in his hymns did not depart from it. His "terrible God" appears at Deut. 7:21—"the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible"—and many times in the Psalms. He is a "thundering" God at 1 Sam. 7:10, and will frown and curse and say "Depart" at the judgment depicted in Matthew 25:41—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." Christians who are ashamed of the stuff of the hymnals need not think they are ridding the world of it by suppressing Wigglesworth and ridiculing Watts. However, F. P. A. is justified in his apprehension that down with the roaring Satan is no worse than Up There with the thundering Jehovah. As the Frowning Sovereign Judge says in his opinion uttered at Hebrews 10:31: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The Christian hymnologists of the seventeenth century wrote according to the Book.

* * * *

THE date of 1200 B.C. "at least" is given by John Hix, in "Strange as It May Seem," to the earliest writings of the Old Testament, that is, the "poems for the Book of Judges"—a conclusion that is questioned by a TRUTH SEEKER reader. Mr. Hix, however, gives it as the last word of "historians and archeologists," but he overlooks the findings of the late Prof. James Henry Breasted (1865-1936), most eminent of them all, who found large sections of the Book of Proverbs to be taken from Egyptian writings of the tenth century B.C., "before any of the Old Testament was written." And what is more, that ancient Egyptian writer drew on one "who had written seventeen hundred years earlier." The Bible never originated with the supposed writers whose names it carries as the inspired authors. It is a collection of religious pieces, poetry, history largely fabulous, and myths, with bawdy romances not excluded.

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Bateman, I am not a Christian." (See Holland's Life of Lincoln, pp. 236, 237.) Ingersoll was never "forced" or impelled or persuaded to speak in the language of a believer; that, like the "conversion" of Darwin, is a death-bed myth. Huxley said of the word infidel that it was "a term of reproach which Christians and Mohammedans, in their modesty, agree to apply to those who differ from them," and he admitted it applied to himself. Naming Spencer also, Dr. Atkinson says that he like the others "came to convictions like our own." We suppose this liberal clergyman is coming to convictions like theirs.

* * * *

Sectarian Uses of Public Property

THE Constitution of the State of New York has the plainly worded provision that neither the state nor any subdivision of it shall allow any of its property or credit to be turned to sectarian uses. This has not prevented the Commissioner of Parks, Mr. Robert Moses, from giving the new Randall's Island Stadium to the Catholics for their big rally against the allegedly irreligious reds. Moreover, the Board of Education has been supplying meeting-places for Protestant, Catholic and Jewish sectarian organizations—the Y. M. C. A., the Newman, and the Menorah.

To check this latter custom, as well as the purchase of Bibles for school use, the Freethinkers of America society applied to the courts for an injunction on the Board. Not succeeding, it instituted mandamus proceedings to compel the Board to produce its books showing all applications and permits granted to the religious societies, and has won a victory to that extent before Supreme Court Justice Hofstadter.

Joseph Lewis represented the taxpayers, and Major Joseph Wheless is counsel for the Freethinkers' Society. "It is the belief of our attorney," writes Mr. Lewis, "that these books will reveal a gross violation of the law in permitting public property to be used by religious and sectarian organizations."

* * * *

The Atheism of Science

It is not true, as some have been persuaded, that religion is verified by science, or that scientific men are believers in the doctrines of Christianity. The harmony if not the identity of religion and science is frequently announced on the strength of random remarks by scientists. The name of Sir Arthur Eddington, a foremost investigator in the fields of theoretical astronomy and physics, occurs as that of a witness to the notion that science and religion can never disagree. Sir Arthur was in New York in September just passed, and explained his religious position at a dinner of the Society of Friends, given in his honor as a fellow Quaker. Having stated that the warfare of science on theology was less in evidence than formerly, and that "the idealist scientific philosophy of today is not the same as religious belief of any kind," he warned his hearers against unwarranted conclusions by saying:

"I want you to understand, however, that there is no approach of science to religion and that science has nothing to say about religion. I do not think that we get a positive contribution to religion from science. When we come up against the question: What is religious insight or vision? that is outside the scope of investigation by the methods of physical science.

"And I want to emphasize most strongly that I do not think for a moment that we can get at the spirit of religion through scientific research. Sometimes when I get a visitor in my observatory and show him some of the marvelous things of the heavens, such as the Orion nebula, he rather disconcerts me by beginning to talk about God. I don't see God in the Orion nebula."

A man who does not see God everywhere—who doesn't believe that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork"—is practically an Atheist.

And it is to be noticed that Dr. Robert A. Millikan, who a few years ago affirmed that science without religion was or might be a curse, while science dominated by the spirit of religion was the hope of the world, has lately proposed the application of the rational methods of science to the solution of human problems in place of the present "emotional approach." In his speech before the American Roentgen Ray Society, at Cleveland, he declared:

"A democracy like ours cannot survive and war can never be eliminated unless we can learn to solve our social problems by the rational method."

As the religious approach is the emotional one, we may infer or hope that through a widening of his thought, when Dr. Millikan speaks of applying science to social problems he no longer has in mind science dominated by religion. The religious or emotional approach is the antithesis of the rational.

* * * *

THE town of Thetford, Norfolk, in England, will celebrate on the 29th of January next the two hundredth birth date of its native son, Thomas Paine. We observe in the New York *Herald Tribune*, published in Paris, that Mr. Edward Tuck has sent to the authorities in Thetford his check for \$500 as a contribution to the commemoration fund, with a letter in praise of the author of the "Age of Reason." Incidentally, Mr. Tuck has this year, August 26, celebrated his own birthday, his 94th, at the Castle of Vert-Mont, at La Malmaison, France, as chronicled at length in *L'Eclair* of Nice, where he is credited with being the oldest of Americans residing in France and also that country's "most faithful friend." Mr. Tuck is likewise a most faithful friend of THE TRUTH SEEKER, which wishes him a full century.

* * * *

ONE of the long-time exchanges of THE TRUTH SEEKER is the *Progressive Thinker*, a Spiritualist weekly begun in 1889 by J. R. Francis and still going. Mr. Francis departed twenty-five years ago; his widow, who succeeded him as editor, gave place in 1910 to Mrs. M. E. Cadwalader, who continued until 1934. Mr. C. Rudolph Malmberg, the present editor, is probably too young to remem-

ber when Spiritualism was presented as a science or a philosophy instead of a religion with churches and reverend pastors, and when Spiritualist societies sent delegates to Freethought congresses. The *Thinker* prints a Declaration of Principles beginning: "We believe in an Infinite Intelligence." That is the Spiritualists' act of faith. Intelligence (if we may speak a word in criticism) implies the capacity to learn, and infinite intelligence must know everything. Then why not believe in Infinite Knowledge? Herbert Spencer found man "ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed," but he did not make "intelligence" coextensive with energy. The infinite, so far as penetrated, shows no intelligence.

* * * *

AN American sailor named Simpson, who went ashore in Germany to distribute communistic literature, was arrested and will serve a term in prison. Earl Browder, communistic candidate for President, went to Indiana to broadcast his sentiments and with four companions was put in jail at Terre Haute. Men are fined and imprisoned in New York, threatened also with the confiscation of their property, for pursuing their ordinary avocations on Sunday, dubbed "the Lord's day." Forms of government are not very important when Bigotry administers them all.

* * * *

At the state convention of one political party in New York the delegates nominated for governor a man who is "a prominent lay member" of the Roman Catholic church, of the Knights of Columbus, and of Cardinal Hayes's smelling committee called a League of Decency. A supporter of another nominee warned the convention that up-state members of the party (that is, Protestants) would not vote for a Catholic governor. The opposing political party, at its convention, nominated unanimously the man whom President Roosevelt has been accused of putting forward to "capture the Jewish vote." Protestants are assumed to hold less prejudice against the traditional foes of their savior, the Jews, than against their fellow-Christians, the Catholics.

* * * *

DECLARED the Rev. Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, president of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, in a late Sunday sermon: "Religion can be and often is the most intolerantly savage force in history. We live in an age of passionate devotions: Nazis, Fascists, Communists. We say the only adjective strong enough to describe these passions is 'religious.'" The words of Dr. Coffin, who is not the first to identify these passions as religious, are recommended to the studious regard of Catholic Justice William F. Bleakeley, candidate for governor of New York, who couples "religion" with the Constitution as one of the "two safeguards" of the nation. If he means Catholicism it would be prudent for him to say so, as Dr. Coffin reminds us other "intolerably savage forces" are also religious.

OCCURRENCES AND OPINIONS

FOREST fires have raged in Minnesota, Michigan and British Columbia. State Forester Conzet of Minnesota told the State Conservation Commission: "The situation is entirely subject to acts of God." And the God in question will never learn to be a God.

* * * *

VARIOUS spokesmen for the Catholic church vehemently deny the charge of George Bernard Shaw that Catholic action has taken upon itself the censoring of his play "Saint Joan." No one puts up a louder "holler" of injured innocence than the habitual offender who is accused of a felony he did not happen to commit.

* * * *

MEMBERS of the United Order of the Brethren, a broken-off branch of the Mormon church in Arizona, are prosecuted for having a plurality of wives. One who was convicted waved his Bible and shouted: "Polygamy is the law of God. I'll stick to my religious beliefs and take the consequences." He proved his contention and went to prison for his religious beliefs.

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BISHOP WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN, Galion, Ohio, having attained his 81st year, celebrated with a dinner at which Earl Browder, Communist presidential nominee, was guest and speaker. Dr. Brown was once a right reverend of the Episcopal church. Since separating from that communion his ecclesiastical title has been Episcopus in partibus Bolshevikium et Infidelium—Bishop to the Bolsheviks and Infidels.

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THE quarterly survey conducted by *Fortune* magazine finds that 63 per cent of the population of the United States believe in birth control. Fourteen per cent of the people questioned replied they knew nothing about it, and only 23 per cent said "no." That Catholics disagree with their church in this matter was shown by the 42.8 per cent of them favoring birth control and only 45 per cent opposed to it.

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A PROPHET instructing his followers twenty centuries ago advised them that if they had faith in his promises, they might drink deadly things and take up serpents without injury to themselves. The credulous, even today, prove their faith and the falsity of the promise by letting snakes bite them and dying in agony. A report from Jonesville, Va., Sept. 30: "The Rev. T. Anderson, who was thrice bitten by snakes in a faith demonstration at a religious meeting Sunday, died at midnight."

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CATHOLIC women of Woodbridge, N. J., went before Recorder Brown of that town and laid a complaint against one of their number as a witch who practices diabolic arts. The recorder said he did not see how people in this age could profess belief in such things. But the *Ave Maria*, a Catholic magazine of Indiana, advertises a pamphlet with the title "Case of Demoniactal Possession, Authenticated," and "twenty million Catholics" in the United States are supposed to believe in it.

* * * *

"By not upholding the true ideals of your faith you are not good Americans, for real Americanism stands for loyalty to faith in religion as well as nationality." So Magistrate Jacob Eilperin, a Jew, to a group of Jewish men arraigned for playing games for money on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement in the Jewish system of superstition. To show his own "Americanism" the said Eilperin gave one man "twenty-five dollars or two days" for not attending synagogue. It is a question whether a man can be a conscientious American and a consistent adherent of any of the three faiths.

"THE DOCTOR—Notes on a Grand Character" is a front page article, with portrait, in a September number of the Alleghany County *Democrat*, Wellesville, N. Y. THE TRUTH SEEKER thanks the newspaper for so honoring Dr. Jasper W. Collier, the 84-year-old resident of Wellesville, our honored subscriber and correspondent. The article covers the long and distinguished service of the Doctor as local health officer and physician. We read that at 84 "his eyes are no less keen, his brain as nimble as that day nearly three score years ago when he first came to town, a handsome young physician, with his bride of a few years, to serve the needs of his chosen community."

* * *

CONTAINED in a review of "Jefferson in Power," a book which is a history of the administration of Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States (1801-1809), this passage is from the *Times*: "Jefferson was kind to Tom Paine, whom the public was now asked to remember as a 'sot,' an 'atheist,' 'an infamous and depraved character,' while his splendid services to the American Revolution were forgotten."

If the reference contains nothing new to the friends of Paine, it still shows that historians are gaining courage to mention Paine and accord him a word of justice. Some day they will discard the offensive "Tom" and give him his right name.

* * *

SELDOM is appeal now made to the religious and political principles of Jefferson. A Niagara correspondent supplies a felt want when he writes to the *New York News*: "If you really doubt that Thomas Jefferson was as skeptical about religion as John Adams and Thomas Paine, read his published private papers, especially this passage in a letter to Adams, Jan. 11, 1817: 'The result of your fifty or sixty years of religious reading is that the four words 'Be just and good' are those in which all inquiries must end; as the riddles of all the priesthoods end in four more, 'Ubi panis, ibi Deus' (God is where our bread is). Jefferson believed in God, but not the Christian God.'"

* * *

GERMAN Catholic bishops have sent to Chancellor Hitler a pastoral letter offering to forget past differences if they are allowed to cooperate with the Nazi government in "fighting the ever-increasing threat of world-bolshevism which shows its sinister hand in Spain, Russia and Mexico." The bishops, with the aid of government, would inflict upon the bolshevists what they complain of as being unjustly suffered by Catholics in bolshevist countries. Hitler's reply has not been seen, but the Rev. Dr. Fleming of Trinity parish, New York, who proposed the "moratorium on preaching," is just back from Europe with the prediction that the time is not far distant when Hitler and the church in Germany will "see eye to eye." Probably he is right. Church and government have every where leaned on each other.

* * *

FACING a continuance of present economic conditions and the survival of "modern" capitalism in the United States, the Rev. Father Coughlin predicts that "1940 is the last general election we will ever have." He names fascism or communism as the successor of our democracy. It is now sixty years since a similar prediction was made by Victoria Woodhull before a large audience in New York, during the turmoil which followed the doubtful election of Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876. Not another President should ever be inaugurated under the dome of the Capitol at Washington, Mrs. Woodhull said, but monarchy would be our next form of government, with Gen. U. S. Grant the dictator. So we have survived prophecies more dire than that of Coughlin. In 1925 we had it on good biblical and Second Advent authority that the world would "come to an end" the 6th of February. Mrs. Woodhull, gaining notoriety with her advocacy of Free Love, once ran for President. She stood for Social Freedom as well as Social Justice, and made as much of a splash as Coughlin, who is the Victoria Woodhull of this campaign.

A Big Field Seen for Our Advocacy

THERE is only one very big unoccupied magazine-field in these United States. In the size of its original opportunities this is exceeded only by the overworked fields of sex and politics. The "good people" are getting nervous about the extent to which the "infallible" goodness of their theory of life is being neglected. And yet their claim of superior sanctions and standards for whatever they believe is hardly being questioned. It is only being neglected. Here are the facts which make our Christian friends so anxious. I quote from the *Religious Digest*:

"During the period from 1890 to 1935, the net growth in membership of all Christian denominations was 200 million. At the same time, the unchurched made a net gain of 470 million. The non-Christians are gaining at the rate of 6 million per year."

And that is practically without any organized anti-religious effort, except in a very few countries. When Christians remember the historical record of their own past intolerance, the above figures make them nervous. That nervousness is aggravated by the happenings in Germany, Spain, Mexico and Russia. Some awareness that their own past intolerance may come home to roost explains most of the constant flow of religion and theology which one hears over the radio. It also explains the several interdenominational organizations allegedly to promote tolerance.

This is a most opportune moment for putting across the non-religious conception of tolerance, and to put it to the test with Christians.

According to the 1926 report, the last available official United States census, there were only 54,576,346 nominal church members out of a total population of 122,775,046. Apparently this is from the official census of 1920, compiled in 1926. Then the field for a Freethought magazine was the 69,198,854 of unchurched, and a large percentage of church members who disbelieve in all orthodox theology except for its political, financial or social influence. But read about the later unofficial religious census.

According to a census made by the *Christian Herald*, as of the year 1933, there were 49,890,205 nominal church members in an estimated total population for the United States of 125,693,000 persons. This makes the present number of the unchurched in the United States about 76,000,000. According to a clergyman recently doing radio broadcasting, 40,000,000 of these are over 21 years of age.

"At the April 30th meeting [1936] in New York of the Association of Statisticians of American Religious bodies, Charles J. McCollough of the Roger Babson Organization broke the news, if it is news, that Protestant churches are running downhill. Only 25 per cent of registered members are supporting their churches; only 30 per cent of the seats in the Protestant churches in the United States are being used, and attendance at Sunday school has declined even faster than church attendance. By way of statistics, Mr. McCollough mentioned that in 1921 the Protestants reported 1,710,000 new members, but in 1936 'only 990,000.' Figures for 1934 showed that 49.07 per cent of the population belonged to churches, but 8 per cent of

those listed were dead. Subtracting the 8 per cent from 49, and figuring on our 124,000,000 (estimated) population, the total church membership is about 50,000,000, of which say one-third is Catholic. Giving the churches their fifty million members leaves seventy-five millions outside the fold."

Our present field for an *irreligious* magazine is that 76,000,000 of the unchurched, plus that 75 per cent, or 37,500,000, nominal church members who are not sufficiently interested in their churches to support them. Our total potential readers are the literate persons among these 113,500,000, who have no real interest in any church. This field of magazine endeavor is unequaled for size, and our periodical, THE TRUTH SEEKER, will be free from any real competition. All that is needed is a slightly enlarged editorial staff and an expert circulation promoter.

One hundred and thirteen and one-half million people in the United States appear to be indifferent to churches. Looking at the recent political conventions, no expert in mental diseases could say that even their unchurched members had attained that degree of emotional stability which precludes the acceptance of a delusional religious "consolation," or another St. Bartholomew's massacre. That is the menace of the present situation in our insane world, for this religious fervor, even among the unchurched, menaces the liberty of all. Let us organize to promote realistic and sober secular thinking and tolerance. There are over forty million of people who have reached maturity, and who are more or less consciously anti-theological or anti-religious.

It must be assumed that, consciously or otherwise, these forty million unchurched adults are favorably predisposed to A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE, which will claim no superhuman or theological sanctions. These will welcome a wholly scientific substitute for the ancient sentimental, metaphysical or religious, infantile rules for living. But there is not one periodical in these United States which efficiently ministers to that need. Let us make such a periodical of THE TRUTH SEEKER. Let us take its fine historic traditions and rebuild it to a living, fighting organ.

Let us get together right now and put THE TRUTH SEEKER on the map in a big way. It can be done, if we will pool our energies, intelligence, and means. The look we have here given at the neglected opportunities shows that our magazine may be placed among those that are more than self-supporting, even a financial success. I invite an expression of opinion on the subject from all interested readers.

Cos Cob, Conn.

THEODORE SCHROEDER

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A SURVEY sponsored by the New York Board of Education has sought to find out how many adults there are in the city unable to read and write the English language. The figure 250,000 is given as the estimated number in May of this year, religious denomination not stated.

The Gods Are Fitted to Their Worshipers

IN an old Greek legend, Idomeneus, returning from the siege of Troy, was overtaken by a storm and vowed to Poseidon to sacrifice to him whatever he should meet first on landing, if the god would grant him a safe return. The one he met first was his own son, and he kept his vow.

In the gruesome story of Jephthah and his daughter, in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Judges, we have another illustrative glimpse into the savage character of the ancients and the equally savage gods in whom they believed. Jephthah, leading the Israelites against the Ammonites, vowed to Yahweh, "If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, it shall be Yahweh's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

He is proposing a gamble with Yahweh, with the odds heavily against himself, in return for assurance of victory. What came forth from his door might be his dog, might be his wife, might be, as it turned out to be, his daughter—his only child. And on his return from the war he keeps his vow.

Orthodox writers and ministers moralize solemnly over this tale, calling Jephthah's act an awful crime; and as he died half a dozen years later they assume that he must have suffered torments of remorse which hastened his end. In this, they not only show their entire lack of understanding but follow their usual fashion of reading modern ideas into the old story. There is not in the record the slightest intimation of any remorse on Jephthah's part; the only evidence of sorrow he shows, and that in a selfish way, is when he scolds the innocent girl as being one of those that trouble him, when she runs joyfully out to welcome him home from his victory. The whole tenor of the story is that his fealty to his god and his desire for victory are so great that he is willing to sacrifice his dearest, if necessary to gain his end. He knows, too, that he cannot back out, for in Leviticus 27: 28-29 we are told that the withholding of any beast or human that had been "devoted" to Yahweh was sternly forbidden. And remember, the idea of making such a sacrifice, of killing his own daughter, cutting up her body, and burning it on the altar, was that it would be pleasing to his god. A fitting god for such a man!

In fact, the whole matter is a bargain between Yahweh and Jephthah from the beginning. The commentators ignore the most significant words in the whole account: "*Then the spirit of Yahweh came upon Jephthah!*" From the beginning he acts not only under the inspiration but at the instigation of his god. And it is this identical god which the Christian church has exalted to the position of the Supreme Deity of its religion!

But savage, bloody and vengeful as that god was, he

was too tame and mild for the later apostles of a cult which was hypocritically proclaimed a religion of justice, mercy and love; for they ascribed to him the instituting of the hideous penalty of eternal hell-fire for unbelievers. This, however, has at last proved too monstrous for even religious bigotry. By all except the morons of the Billy Sunday and Aimee Semple McPherson type it has been dropped. And gradually the old god, while still held to be the same being, has been combed and barbered, deodorized and perfumed; and though nearly crowded off the throne by his "only begotten Son," he still serves as the ghostly figurehead of the Christian theology.

HAROLD FISK

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The World to Come—Advance Information VI.

It would be no more than fair to register that the lord of the Cimmerian regions was politeness personified in his behavior toward our committee.

Before we had met him we had heard much about his being afraid of the sight and sign of the cross. Another report was to the effect that he could not walk on ground sprinkled with holy water, unless he managed to hop or skip over the wet spots. He admitted frankly that the only people he kept clear of were those who made fun of him. He could avoid the inkstand aimed at his head by Martin Luther, and thumb his nose at people who cursed him by all manner of names and in all languages, but against ridicule he had no defensive weapon. We were tempted to repeat to him the comment of the philosopher Buckle, that though "ridicule is not a test of truth, it is the unfailing scourge of folly." But, of course, we did not quote Buckle's defense of Voltaire to Satan.

But to continue. Our host must have sensed that while we could not complain of our reception, the *locale* was beginning to tell on our nerves. "I know what you are thinking of," he began. "Heaven is supposed to be a better place. It is, in some respects. I know whereof I am speaking. Have I not lived in both places? Hell, however, holds a far larger number of worth-while people. After all, the character of a place is conditioned on the kind of people who make it their home. For every patriarch or pope heaven can name I could cite a thousand men of genius and women of beauty. There is more singing in heaven, but the majority of the masters of melody are in hell. The same claim can be made of the world's highest ornaments,' the masters of the brush. You do not have to go to heaven to meet the world's greatest and bravest thinkers, pathfinders, pioneers, empire-builders or enlighteners of the mentally blind."

We were on the point of questioning his statement about the great painters and musicians, but, allowing us no time, Satan proceeded to produce evidence to substantiate his extraordinary claims. "You were about to ask me," he said, somewhat disdainfully, "how I could claim the com-

posers of 'Ave Marias, Masses and Messiahs,' or the painters of the Last Supper, the Descent from the Cross, the Holy Family, and so forth, as my subjects."

As the lord of the inferno continued, we realized more fully than before that the Bible was not the only book he had read. In his many goings up and down the world, holding a carte blanche into every home, church and school, library, etc., he had picked up information favorable to his trade. Referring us to John Ruskin, he quoted a lengthy passage from his Lectures on Art, another from Heine's "Romantic School," from Walter Pater, Edward FitzGerald, Lecky and John Stuart Mill.

Our Committee decided to reproduce a few of these quotations:

"Few of the greatest men ever painted religious subjects by choice, but only because they were either compelled by ecclesiastical authority, supported by its patronage, or incited by popular applause; that by all these influences their powers were at once wasted and restrained; that their invention was dulled by the monotony of motive and perverted by its incredibility."—John Ruskin.

"The painters of Italy combated priesthood more effectively than perhaps the Saxon theologians did. . . . The vigorous marbles (of Michaelangelo) and the glowing flesh (of Titian) . . . much more fundamental theses than those which the German monk nailed to the church door of Wittenburg."—Heine.

Satan, the best schooled pupil among celestials, would have gone on quoting texts, had we not admitted that we could not name a single illustrious musician or painter, philosopher or poet, from Bach and Beethoven to Wagner and Strauss; from Giotto and Leonardo da Vinci to Turner and Rosetti; from Socrates to Spinoza; from Shakespeare to Swinburne, who was orthodox enough to satisfy the keeper of the gate, St. Peter.

Encouraged by his success, Satan pulled out a piece of soiled paper from his sooty bosom and began to read. It was a short poem. Although he disclaimed its authorship, he could not convince us that he had not, at least, whispered the naughty lines into the ears of one of his minions on earth:

Who came to Paradise? The sick, the old,
The hideous, and the mild and mealy-mouthed;
Lepers, and coughing hypocrites that wheeze
And cringe about the altars on their knees;
Tun-bellied priests, and fools, flat-bosomed hags,
And aches and groans and sores, crutches and rags,
And ghastly saints, itching with filth and lice—
I tell you these go up to Paradise!

But there, in hell, go down the strong and the fair,
All who live life, the gay, the debonair,
The joyous of the world!

Nay, and if God be love, where can hell be,
But where, like God, love hangs on a tree?

Unconscious of our presence, Satan seemed to be soliloquizing: "I too am a lord," he kept repeating. "I too

rule a kingdom, vaster than any ever owned. Will not my throne endure as long as that of the Almighty? Will there ever come a time when there shall be neither devil nor hell?"

We earnestly wished our Fundamentalists had been there to comment on the devil's assurance that his was an everlasting kingdom.

M. M. MANGASARIAN

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I Have No Prayer

I have no prayer; I lift no hands
To some vast guiding Mystery.
All's in the chart. On run the sands.
There'll be no changing to please me.

They pray the best who never pray,
But take life's cuffs and blows and grin.
They pray the worst who ever say
Some platitude bewailing sin.

For sin?—we cannot certain be
Just what is wrong and what is right.
I'll leave the Boss supremely free
As judge in peaceful drift or fight.

A billion prayers have crept along
The ether, blindly echoing.
Oh, sing me some gay-hearted song,
And, as I go, I too will sing.

I did not ask an earthly birth
But while life's mine I will not halt
Each hour or day to rail its worth
Or ask remission of some fault.

They pray the best who never pray
But bend the lorn and lone above.
They pray the best whose fingers lay
A wreath upon the brow of Love.

WILL CHAMBERLAIN.

* * *

America, Salute Dhondo!

Who is Dhondo? Not a Christian. Who is Dhondo? A Humanist, a pioneer, a reformer, a trail-blazer. Who is Dhondo? One of the most distinguished sons of India, though he is quiet, modest, simple-living. Why do I ask U. S. A. to salute him—Dhondo Keshav Karve? Because in 1929, in the cause of Indian Women's education and the promotion of remarriage of Hindu widows, he traveled and spoke and begged and persuaded in New York City, Boston, Mass., Nyack, N. Y., Philadelphia, Pa., Washington, D. C., Ann Arbor, Mich., Chicago, Ill., Iowa City, San Francisco, Cal., and many other places. He then went on in the same splendid errand to Japan, China, Philippines, Java, Malay, and later (1931) East Africa.

I happened to be at Geneva, Switzerland, in 1929, attending an assembly of the U. S. A.-born Federation of Education Associations. We had a garden party. We carried name-bearing tickets slung from necks. I met Karve, and conversed straightway, and found he had sat among the adult audience at Poona (1913) while I gave a story-talk to Indian high school youths. I have met all sorts of political, educational and Rationalist pioneers in India, Europe and America. I quickly recognize the type. I tuned in with Dhondo. I saw the Holy Spirit of Truthseeking and Social Service in his keen eyes. I felt he did me honor when he asked me to write the Preface to his autobiography "Looking

Back" (published by B. D. Karve, Hingore Budruk, Poona 4, India; 200 pages; \$1.50). I—who can pray as earnestly as Billy Sunday or Father Coughlin—beseech U. S. A. citizens to help the circulation of this remarkable book. In extremely simple language, it tells the tale of the Indian Women's University, Widows' Home, etc., and of untiring efforts to collect funds and bear down opposition.

I suppose Humanism was in the blood of the Brahman community at Murud (west coast of India) in which Karve was born in 1858. One of his kinsmen is Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Hon. Associate of the British R. P. A.

FREDERICK J. GOULD.

Armored, Woodfield Avenue, Ealing, London.

* * *

Books Under Review

AN ANTHOLOGY FOR RATIONALISTS

"O MIGHTY, just, and inexorable death!" begins, that noble apostrophe of Sir Walter Raleigh's. However long we live, however few we love, inevitably some day we must die, inevitably we must face that most central to ourselves of all losses. Rationalists, firm in the stoical support of reason, face death more calmly than do those lost in the fog of superstition and credulity; but we too are human, we too fear, we too suffer. When in our anguish we have turned for consolation to the comforting of words of men and women who have undergone our experience before us, we have too often been repelled and angered by the poet's facile acceptance of the slippery solace of an unfounded creed. But now for us there is a lasting treasure, an anthology of death which accepts death as the end of all, and bids us live in spite of the unending pain of bereavement; in spite of the certain brevity of our living.

Corliss Lamont, whose "Illusion of Immortality" should be, if it is not, a guide and text-book for all Freethinkers, has brought together three hundred poems, old and new, ranging in time from Ecclesiastes to Edna Millay, all bearing on the subject of death and mortality, all, in various ways, based on a doctrine "which interprets death as the absolute end of the individual conscious personality and which sets up the progress and well-being of men on this earth as the supreme goal of life." "Man Answers Death" is its title, and the answer is clear and courageous. Here, between the covers of one book, are poems well fitted for inclusion in every non-religious funeral service (I wish I had known of some of them when, in 1932, Maynard Shipley and I published our "Funeral Service for Agnostics" in THE TRUTH SEEKER); and here are others to give strength to the stricken and mourning heart. Undoubtedly every reader will miss some poems which he will wish had been included—Mr. Lamont is a skilled anthologist, but no more omniscient than the rest of us—but to make up the lack he will find others he has not known and would not willingly have missed.

It is a relief to open an anthology where one may be sure that from the beginning to the end there will be nothing to offend a mind freed from the atavistic theology which so often binds and blinds the loveliest of poets. You will find beauty here, you will find strength and courage and hope, but you will not find pious lies or wish-fulfillment dreams. Mr. Lamont says modestly that he is convinced that his anthology "serves a real need and has a real place." It does and it has. Rationalists seldom have any fear of death; but they too may know that emotional attitude more overwhelming and (since most of us have work to do in the world and must live while we can to do it) more dangerous—the love of death, the thought of death as the only solution of all problems and the only answer to all griefs. To the nay-sayer to life Mr. Lamont makes answer with his "affirmation of life." It is voiced in the last poem quoted in the volume—John Masfield's "The Passing Strange":

"But gathering, as we stray, a sense
Of life so lovely and intense,
It lingers when we wander hence,

That those who follow feel behind
Their backs, when all before is blind,
Our joy, a rampart to the mind."

"Man Answers Death" is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, at \$3.

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD.

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A BOOK ON RELIGION AGAINST JUSTICE

LAST spring a New Jersey jurist, one Robert Grosman of Newark, took a divorced woman's children away from her on the ground that she was an Atheist, though otherwise morally fit to have charge of their bringing up. The jurist in his decision, declared that the mother, Mrs. Mabel Eaton of Montclair, was "not privileged to instil into the minds of these young children these doctrines which she herself has embraced," but the Methodist father, "wished both children to be brought up religiously, and this he had a right to do." That is, she had no right to bring them up in her belief, but he was privileged to bring them up in his! It was brought out that Mrs. Eaton is a student of Karl Marx, but the judge affirmed that since she was an Infidel in religion, "the result would have been the same were she a Democrat or Republican."

This case is called to mind now on the receipt of a book by Frank Swancara of the Denver (Col.) Bar entitled "Obstructions of Justice by Religion," in which are recorded a great number of instances where justice miscarried by reason of the unbelief of the accused or his witnesses. Through twenty-two chapters making up a book of three hundred pages the author cites laws and decisions at home and abroad based on and affirming the disqualification of unbelievers. Mr. Swancara, by citation and comment, has made an interesting story of these obstructions of justice. He finds in the files of THE TRUTH SEEKER, which he has inherited as the nephew of John Swanchera, a lifetime subscriber, much illustrative and historical material, and he writes the editor: "This law book is so composed as to be propaganda for the cause you have fought for."

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MOST'S "GOD PEST," TRANSLATED, REPRINTED

WHAT seems to be Herr Johann Most's pamphlet "Gottes Pest" comes now, apparently in Esperanto, from Dr. Tobias Siegel, our subscriber in perpetuity, of Detroit, Mich. We identify "Gottes Pest" in "La Dia Pesto" (translator's title) by the name of the author, with whom we had a slight personal acquaintance back in the '80s and from whose hand, while in company with E. M. Macdonald, we received a complimentary copy of this work in the German original. It was at the bar of a hall where Mr. Most held his meetings, and there was beer. "Ich habe die Ehre auf Ihr Gesundheit zu trinken," said Mr. Most politely, or words to that effect, and we doubtless responded "Prost!" The great agitator wore a high hat and a coat with a cape, and he was not so tall as your reviewer. E. M. M. paid for the beer. We bespeak for the pamphlet a good circulation among the Esperantists.

* * * *

One Strong Reason for Unbelief

I don't believe the Bible—
I'll tell the reason why—
I think it is a libel,
Accusing God on high
Of arranging things upon this earth
So his own son should die.

WALTER D. KENT, JR.

How Dr. Watts Touched the Harp

SINCE the Wigglesworth morsel of 1662 came to light again in the *Plain Dealer*, Franklin P. Adams ("F. P. A.") of the New York *Herald Tribune* has happened upon a book of hymns by Dr. Isaac Watts (1674-1748), published in New York 1834 and sung by "Great Aunt Lydia" in the same decade. Mr. Adams quotes with disrespect a half dozen stanzas, the following one included:

"Terrible God, that reign'st on high,
How awful is thy thundering hand!
Thy fiery bolts, how fierce they fly,
Nor can all earth nor hell withstand."

And this:

"How full of anguish is the thought.
How it distracts and tears my heart.
If God at last my sovereign judge
Should frown and bid my soul 'Depart!'"

With the comment:

"And down you go to the roaring Satan. Which, if it be not sacrilege to opine, would be no worse than Up There with that Frowning Sovereign Judge. At least you would know just where you stood, while Up There anything might happen."

Yet, like Wigglesworth, Watts knew his Bible and in his hymns did not depart from it. His "terrible God" appears at Deut. 7:21—"the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible"—and many times in the Psalms. He is a "thundering" God at 1 Sam. 7:10, and will frown and curse and say "Depart" at the judgment depicted in Matthew 25:41—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." Christians who are ashamed of the stuff of the hymnals need not think they are ridding the world of it by suppressing Wigglesworth and ridiculing Watts. However, F. P. A. is justified in his apprehension that down with the roaring Satan is no worse than Up There with the thundering Jehovah. As the Frowning Sovereign Judge says in his opinion uttered at Hebrews 10:31: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The Christian hymnologists of the seventeenth century wrote according to the Book.

* * * *

THE date of 1200 B.C. "at least" is given by John Hix, in "Strange as It May Seem," to the earliest writings of the Old Testament, that is, the "poems for the Book of Judges"—a conclusion that is questioned by a TRUTH SEEKER reader. Mr. Hix, however, gives it as the last word of "historians and archeologists," but he overlooks the findings of the late Prof. James Henry Breasted (1865-1936), most eminent of them all, who found large sections of the Book of Proverbs to be taken from Egyptian writings of the tenth century B.C., "before any of the Old Testament was written." And what is more, that ancient Egyptian writer drew on one "who had written seventeen hundred years earlier." The Bible never originated with the supposed writers whose names it carries as the inspired authors. It is a collection of religious pieces, poetry, history largely fabulous, and myths, with bawdy romances not excluded.

From Letters to the Editor

Still an Atheist After Looking Over "Agnostic"

I was interested to read Mr. Hester's letter because he writes capably, and really touches the essential points of this old controversy. I have lectured many times on Atheism, I am an Atheist, and I have always found that the word Atheist more readily conveys my meaning than any other, such as Agnostic.

Mr. Hester, however, is quite as uncompromising as I could ever be. He indeed actually agrees with Mr. Benjamin—theologically. This seems to me all that anyone could ask. There can be no disputing the point that we are only Atheists theologically. We can only "tell the world" that—as Mr. Hester so admirably expresses it—we "do not know what a god could be."

Philosophically we cannot state our disbelief in something we have not yet had defined to us. Charles Bradlaugh always refused to express his disbelief in a god until his opponent had defined what he meant the term to imply. But Charles Bradlaugh did not hesitate to call himself an Atheist.

Mr. Hester is on sound ground when he attacks all supernaturalism on the same basis as he holds about gods in general. I disbelieve in the supernatural too. I think this carries us even farther than Atheism. I know some curious friends of mine who say they are spiritualists as well as Atheists! Of course I consider the conjunction absurd, but there it is.

Words, after all, are only labels. It would appear that to call oneself a Materialist might meet the case. A Materialist surely must be a disbeliever in both gods and all forms of supernaturalism. Yet I find religious people attacking what they call "materialism," meaning merely the sordid, the unpoetical, the "baser side" of life. Generally, I find myself best understood when I say I am an Atheist, even if philosophically I might enter a caveat to the word as Mr. Hester does.

"God is Love" says somebody. Well, I can't possibly say I don't believe in love. I can only say it is a preposterous definition of God . . . and continue to call myself an Atheist.—GEORGE BEDBOROUGH, London, England.

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A Large Order for Information

What is God? I could never get a clear definition of him. I wish that some theologian would define the Deity in concise and scientific terms.

What I mean by scientific is something which can be demonstrated.

They say that "He" created man in his own image; that he loves justice and hates unbelief. Yet he is a spirit and permeates the Universe. He is both a personal god and a spirit.

Jesus sits upon his right hand in heaven. How can he be a super-being who thinks and acts, and at the same time a spirit? It looks inconsistent.

To say that God is a spirit does not help to explain; for the next question is, What is a spirit?

If someone who has made a lifelong study of God and his ways could give us a scientific explanation it would increase the sum total of human knowledge and, to use a common saying, "fill a long-felt want."

I confess that I have not the faintest idea what constitutes a spirit.

Religion teaches that as chief of the spirits, God is without body, parts or passions. Yet he can think, and love and hate.

My conception of these attributes can only be associated with an embodied mind.

Spirit is a word much used in religious circles. Probably that is why people given to religion are eloquent on a subject that to the non-religious is incomprehensible.

To conclude, I would like to hear from anyone who can inform us upon the topography of Heaven and Hell?

And would some Catholic friend favor us with something scientific about Purgatory?—J. JACOBS, Montreal, Canada.

* * * *

Religious Connections of the Late Will Rogers

I have no knowledge of Will Rogers' connection with any church, but do know that he belonged to a blue lodge of Masons in South McAlester, Oklahoma, and was a 32d degree Scottish Rite Mason, and a member of the Shrine. I have seen his photograph, taken, I believe, in 1906, with the members of his lodge outside the lodge hall. The photograph was in the *New Age*, the Scottish Rite official organ of the Supreme Council of the 33d degree, since his death. It is sent free to me each month, as well as to all 32d degree Masons.

This is in answer to John W. Weeter of Pennsylvania, in your

The Letter Box

G. B., London.—One in and three held over.

J. B. McCORMICK.—We have referred your inquiry to the American Civil Liberties Union, 31 Union Square, New York.

HUGH F. MUNRO, Philadelphia, inquires for a poem beginning: "St. Peter stood at the Golden Gate." Some reader may have it.

CALVIN D. BEALS, New York.—Your "88th Birthday" poem will do for the present, but send your 89th when written. You may be premature in concluding:

"Now I am looking for the day
When there will be no more to say."

R. H., Illinois.—We cannot venture to decide for you on "the advisability of advertising in THE TRUTH SEEKER for an intelligent, free-thinking wife." You do well to consider in advance the disagreement that may arise over the education of the offspring of a man who is a Freethinker and a woman who is religious.

ALBERT HANNIE, Ohio.—Your letter, called out by the observations of our good subscriber Mr. Manlet, is read with thanks for the information it gives about economic and political affairs which there is little room for us to touch upon in this Monthly. We are with you in this, that "in order to think correctly we must learn what is true." Much argument is wasted for want of such preparation.

E. B. F., New York.—We also sent a copy of this Monthly to Mr. Hooper of Idaho in the hope to fertilize his mind, but having failed we are content that he made his reply to you. One passage in it is worth preserving for the sake of the argument: "Freethinkers scoff at the Virgin Birth of Christ, but this is simply an allegorical representation of a scientific truth well known today, namely, artificial insemination." Instead of being a miracle, then, the "overshadowing" was a brilliant scientific experiment.

M. DE F., California.—The review of Corliss Lamont's "Anthology" is "squeezed in" on another page—which it adorns. We hoped on opening the book that we should find this one, and were gratified (p. 245):

"A shipwrecked sailor, buried on this coast,
Bids you set sail.
Full many a gallant ship, when we were lost,
Weathered the gale."

There is no "Take warning now by me!" in that brave call to carry on.

April issue. Full particulars can be had of his lodge connections by writing to the *New Age*. Brother Raymer of Raymer's Book Store, Seattle, can vouch for this.—SYDNEY K. BALCOM, Los Angeles, Cal.

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Brevity Causes a Profane Exclamation

"Oh, hell! I've read it through." That is what I said to myself as I finished the last page of the September TRUTH SEEKER. "But there will be another one in a little while."—LUTHER COWAN, Idaho.

* * * *

Joy Felt in Mental Freedom

I can't say that I ever believed the Bible or in the Christian religion. In my childhood I did not understand it, and just *wondered*. At about sixteen years I read Paine's "Age of Reason," and that settled the matter with me. I am not an *unbeliever*, I am a *disbeliever*, and more.

Now, at 61, I have read much other Freethought literature, with a little astronomy, geology, and physics thrown in, and have "evolved" to the stage of atheism. Emancipated from fear and superstition, I have a happy feeling of joy and freedom.—H. A. WISE, Kentucky.

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Sweet Influences of the T. S.

THE TRUTH SEEKER seems like a whiff of fresh air in the Bible Belt.—W. M. A., Arkansas.

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The Literal-minded Farmer Meets His Soul

I live now in a rest home on a farm. I told the farmer that in Los Angeles, in the Ambassador Hotel, they were going to give a banquet to three evangelists. "Oh," said he, "I saw them in the play of the Three Musketeers." Said I: "You are right,"

and then asked him if he knew what his soul looked like. He answered: "Sure; it is square, and I get three squares every day." —H. LINDENBAUM, San Bernardino, Cal.

* * *

The Evolution of an Arkansan

I first subscribed for THE TRUTH SEEKER when I was 28. That was in 1877. Then I grew to be an Agnostic, but now at 87 am just plain Atheist. I owe much to Freethought. Truly yours, J. TREFFRY, Arkansas.

* * *

Not Likely "Father" Coughlin Will Reply

I read Theodore Schroeder's able letter to Father Coughlin in THE TRUTH SEEKER, but hardly think the priest will answer it, because no clergyman tries to make his theological position clear on any point that conflicts with common sense or right reasoning, a Catholic priest least of all.

Every clear thinking person knows from history and experience what the Catholic church is after — power and more power, no matter how it is gained. "The End justifies the Means" still holds good with the Catholic church.

Father Coughlin is only a working tool of the church, with a gift for twisting the truth with well sounding phrases.

Liberty and Justice never were nor are the cornerstones of the Catholic church.—JULIUS JANOWITZ, New York.

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Advertising The Truth Seeker

SECOND PUBLICATION

AN enthusiastic reader in Florida (Letters in October T. S.) proposes to advertise THE TRUTH SEEKER in his local paper, and predicts good results if other readers follow his example. But since papers may decline the advertisement in the form he has submitted, we have suggested another choice as equally persuasive, as follows:

ARE YOU FIXED FOR RELIGION? If not, read THE TRUTH SEEKER, a Monthly for Freethinkers, which discusses religious questions freely and advocates Taxation of Church Property. Sample copy free. Send for one. THE TRUTH SEEKER Co., 49 Vesey Street, New York.

Or the advertiser may write his own copy. Essentials are the name, the address, and the invitation to apply for a free sample copy. Perhaps friend Kent of Florida has "started something." If readers will act as our agents and advisers in the matter, we will share the expense with them where that is an obstacle. Let us not overlook a proposal to extend the circulation of this Monthly. Subscribers are invited to write and let us know what they can do. All suggestions welcomed.

And meanwhile it is hoped that friends will continue to supply names of thinking people to whom copies of the Monthly may be sent with the prospect of obtaining subscribers. A generous number lately circulated in this way has brought new readers. This work should be continued.

* * *

A Fund with Two Purposes

As we have said before, contributors to the Sustaining Fund of THE TRUTH SEEKER are entitled to name as many New Subscribers as their donations will cover at a dollar each per annum. Add a dollar to the Sustaining Fund and a new name to the subscription list and it serves the double purpose of sustentation and circulation. Choose the names of individuals who show evidence of thinking out of the

common line. Try the higher-ups, even the Affluent. There must be some unorthodoxy among these. Send the Monthly to libraries, to newspaper offices. Make the Sustaining Fund a Circulation Fund also.

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by
WILLIAM FLOYD

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