

# THE TRUTH SEEKER

*A Monthly for Freethinkers*

Vol. 63—No. 12

NEW YORK, DECEMBER, 1936

Per Annum, \$1.00; Per Copy, 10c



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# THE TRUTH SEEKER

Established 1873

GEORGE E. MACDONALD . . . . . Editor

VOLUME 63, No. 12

DECEMBER, 1936

## Subscription Rates

Single subscription, one year.....	\$1.00
One subscription, two years, or two for one year.....	1.75
In Canada and foreign countries.....	1.25

Published monthly by The Truth Seeker Company. President, George E. Macdonald; Secretary, James A. Conway, 49 Vesey street, New York.

Entered as second-class matter, June 26, 1879, Postoffice at New York, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879.

Make drafts, checks, and money orders payable to The Truth Seeker Co., 49 Vesey street, New York.

## The Readers' Sustaining Fund

TO THE Sustaining Fund of THE TRUTH SEEKER during the month of October the contributions were as follows: J. M. C., \$1; F. W. Stout, \$1; Hon. A. C. Widdis, \$2.50; R. A. Matthews, \$1; S. Jankowsky, \$10; H. L. Stephens, \$10; G. C. Arnold, \$1; A. Carlson, \$2; Frank Hart, \$25; C. H. Eshleman, \$3; Mrs. E. Keny, \$1; N. S. Cushing, \$1; F. W. Wood, \$1; F. W. Loch, \$1.35; J. D. Lovelace, M. D., \$25. Total, \$85.85.

This Monthly for Freethinkers enjoys the exceptional position that if it does not support itself its paid-up subscribers chip in and help out. The sum of the October's contributions, the largest for any month in the year but one, recalls the equanimity with which we viewed September's, which was the smallest. We felt that they would not keep a good fund down.

The circumstances put us in the right humor for the agreeable announcement we have to make, that from this time forth our place on THE TRUTH SEEKER will be taken by Mr. Charles Smith of the Four-A, who has acquired the whole business and all the good will and hopes that go with it. For some years the friends have been asking who would succeed when we were through. This is the answer. Mr. Smith is of the direct line. He derived his first Freethought enthusiasm from THE TRUTH SEEKER, holds this paper to be the source of all Freethought in the country, as it is also the only connecting-link between the Freethinkers wherever found within our borders; and as assistant he learned how to edit it more than a dozen years ago. He began his apprenticeship in 1923 by selling hundreds of copies per week on the street. In 1924 he accepted an inside position, became an editorial contributor, and learned to prepare the publication for the press, before and after he organized and incorporated his Association known as the Four-A in 1925. Except for our mentioning it, the readers might not notice the change, least of all, we hope, in their Sustaining Fund, otherwise than because it is larger. The office, with Mr. Smith in charge, remains at 49

Vesey Street, whither it came in 1921. The address of Geo. E. Macdonald will continue as given in Who's Who, the Suburban Telephone Book, and "Fifty Years of Freethought" (600 Upper Mountain avenue, Upper Montclair, N. J.).

In quitting the old desk that dates from the time of D. M. Bennett in Clinton Place, and was occupied for a quarter of a century by Bennett's successor, E. M. Macdonald, this retiring editor might turn reminiscent; might speak of his beginning with THE TRUTH SEEKER sixty-one years ago, or state that he has been an editor on the paper since 1896, or for forty years. But this is all in the record, and the Big Anniversary, marking sixty years, was duly celebrated at the memorable testimonial banquet so generously bespoken at the Fifth Avenue by Joseph Lewis and the Freethinkers of America last November, twelve months ago. Save to evince his satisfaction at seeing his work taken up by a younger man, it is too early yet for one born in the spring of '57 to say how it feels to be out of a job for the first time since he was 12.

A man must have missed the good life, or lost hope of living it, who on the eve of fourscore is haunted by regrets. If we had any, the chief one would be the resigning of this column to another hand. Responses to contributors hereto, and to the writers of friendly letters, long since used up the stock of words at our command by which thanks and the sense of obligation are expressed. We might now repeat them all and leave something unsaid.

\* \* \* \*

## "Confounding" Intelligence

THE number of languages into which the "scriptures" have been translated "stands at 705," as counted by the Bible Societies, while it is said that "some portion is published in a new language about every five weeks."

Accepting and marveling over this report, an editorial writer in the New York Times remarks: "The Bible is the one book that has overcome the confounding of tongues at Babel"—a comment probably meant for a sarcasm, or a dig at Jehovah, since it implies that he has permitted his own book to be the means of defeating his purpose, which was the breaking up of a communistic scheme. His confounding of tongues dissolved the union that was possible when "the whole earth was of one language and one speech" (Gen. 11:1); and the Bible in every tongue tends to restore that condition.

The eleventh chapter of Genesis relates the Babel story, and is worth a once-over by believers in the Bible God, who created our first parents as animated pieces of earthenware, and drowned their descendants for the sins of his own sons with women.

The reader will see in the marginal dates of his Bible that, 101 years after the flood, the families of the sons of Noah, alluded to as "the whole earth," while still keeping together, though making nomadic journeys, founded a settlement on the plain of Shinar somewhere in the land of



Judah, and attempted to build a city with a tower as high as the mountain occupied by God and sons.

The result is condensed in the Encyclopedia Biblica:

Uneasy at their newly awakened activity, Yahwe "came down" to take a nearer view of the buildings, and then returned (to his lofty mountain abode, Ezek. 28:14) to take counsel of the sons of Elohim. This, he said, is but the beginning of human ambition; nothing will soon be too hard for man to do. Come, let us go down (together), and bring their speech into confusion. Hence arose the present variety of languages and the dispersion of mankind, and hence the name of the well-known city of Babylon.

The author of the Babel narrative is identified as the one who wrote up the story of Eden, which has the same plurality of gods (polytheism), who were of the same personal and manlike character (anthropomorphism). In the Eden fable Yahwe says, "Let us make man in our image"; in the Babel myth, "Let us go down." In each instance the "us" stands for "sons of God," called "Elohim" by the Encyclopedia, which contends that "sons of God are gods." These brothers, or half-brothers, appear in the Book of Job (1:6), with Satan as one of their number.

The situation on the plain of Shinar is here presented, with comparisons and related circumstances, for the belief of any who would soberly refer to "the confounding of tongues at Babel," thereby only confounding intelligence.

\* \* \* \*

### Science Talks Back to Mr. Roosevelt

THERE is an impression abroad that the advancement of science is responsible for unemployment. President Roosevelt recently sent a letter to educators inquiring "whether the curricula of engineering schools are so balanced as to give coming generations of engineers the vision and flexible technical capacity necessary to meet the full range of engineering responsibility."

The implication of the inquiry is that engineering does not take up the slack of unemployment that follows the introduction of labor-saving machinery. President Karl T. Compton of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, making a reply to Mr. Roosevelt, questions why this exhortation should be directed specifically to engineers, when similar breadth of knowledge and training is also urgently desirable among business leaders, economists, and politicians; and he intimates that dislocations would be reduced sooner and more effectively if left to engineers instead of industrial, economic and political theorists surrounding the President. What science might do, he remarks, is hampered by current methods of meeting the situation.

College President Dr. Porter Adams of Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont, answers Mr. Roosevelt's challenge to this effect:

The implication in your letter that technological progress is responsible for unemployment, bankruptcy and relief is not supported by history and experience. I should emphasize the basic fact that the impact of science and engineering upon human life has been very predominantly to raise the standards of living, and especially to eliminate the evils you imply it has caused.

Of even date with this discussion was the report from Atchison, Kansas:

Science has put farm products to work propelling motor vehicles over the highways. This was accomplished by distilling alcohol from farm crops and blending it with gasoline for a power fuel now in use in the Midwest. In putting farm products to work science also may have found an answer to the crop surplus problem.

Dr. Leo M. Christensen, Western representative of the Chemical Foundation, Inc., sponsor of the plant manufacturing alcohol, estimated that the Atchison plant, when operating at capacity, would require the work of 2,000 to 2,500 farmers annually. "Suppose," he said, "that the entire motoring population of the United States used an average blend of 10 per cent today, the demand would require the efforts of 600 plants this size, an output of 35,000,000 acres and the labor of 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 farmers."

The side of science is taken, if reluctantly, by at least one New York clergyman, the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick of Riverside Church. In a sermon carrying the newspaper heading "Truth Seeking Held Vital," he suggested that the reason why science noses out "religion as the guide of modern life" is that "science has one consuming passion—the truth, the discovery of what is. Meanwhile religion has tried to content herself with talking about what ought to be."\*

To the enlightened judgment, Science, with its devotion to truth, to facts, to "what is," never loses the argument when it comes to a demonstration. That is why, in practical affairs, it puts religion out of the picture; and even policies for relief will invite more confidence if checked by the engineers.

To be fair, the President should write the clergy a pastoral letter inquiring what the churches are doing to fill the hole in the revenues caused by the exemption of their six billion dollars' worth of ratable property.

\* \* \* \*

### Underhanded Devices of a Detroit Rabbi

IN the regular course of criticism on religious institutions, Joseph Lewis, president of the Freethinkers' Society, pointed out that the observance of Yom Kippur, Jewish day of Atonement (October 10), involved the performance of most degrading and humiliating rites. Mr. Lewis has rightly deemed it illogical for a Freethinker who attacks the superstitions of Christianity to ignore those of the Jews, but Rabbi Leo M. Franklin of Detroit holds otherwise and has sought to injure the society by addressing a protest to its honorary vice-presidents, all persons of distinction, as follows: Herbert Asbury, Harry Elmer Barnes, Chapman Cohen, Clarence Darrow, Dr. John Dewey, William J. Fielding, M. Edouard Herriot, J. F. D. Hoge, Rupert Hughes, Sir Arthur Keith, Prof. Harold J. Laski, Chauncey D. Leake, Joseph McCabe, Edna St. Vincent Milay, Mme. Olga Petrova, Bertrand Russell, Theodore

\*Appropriately a professional man, an M. D., questions: "Why does not Dr. Fosdick read THE TRUTH SEEKER to his congregation?"



Schroeder, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, Prof. Leslie A. White, Dr. Henry Smith Williams.

The rabbi reported to the press that in sympathy with him and supposedly withdrawing from the group were Messrs. Asbury, Barnes, Darrow, Hughes, and Leake, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, while Mr. Fielding alone stood by the offending Mr. Lewis.

The rabbi's representations are fifty per cent false, as Mr. Darrow, Mr. Hughes and Dr. Barnes have not resigned the honorary vice-presidency of the Freethinkers of America.

\* \* \*

### "Thoughts That Bolt Into the Mind"

"Any person who has made observations on the state and progress of the human mind, by observing his own, cannot but have observed that there are two distinct classes of what are called Thoughts: Those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat these voluntary visitors with civility."—THOMAS PAINE.

We have extended to the following unbidden thoughts, bolting into the mind, the civility of recording them with pencil on a fragment of paper and slipping them into a vest pocket, whence they are now drawn. Some of them may have escaped from the pocket heretofore.

\*

THE church wants a site in Manhattan for a statue of one of its priests who happened to be an army chaplain. The church can stick up so many of its images that the people will at length get weary of seeing them at every turn, and rap them down as they do in Spain.

\*

Its limited acceptance does not reflect upon the merits of Freethought, nor upon the manner of its presentation. The rule holds that two are needed to put the truth over—one to tell it and another to get it.

\*

WAR is sacred; the advocacy of peace is subversive—and peace is not commemorated by monuments.

\*

A YOUNG man said: With children religion is not an incentive to virtue and the good life. The religion imposed on me in my childhood was a pain in the neck.

\*

THE theologians make a god; they make a hell and thank the god for providing them with a way to keep out of it.

\*

Nor many persons are met who look to religion for their moral sanctions. Those of moral character are guided by the precepts of honesty and prudence.

\*

THE world, the flesh, and the devil:

God so loved the world that he sacrificed his only son to reconcile it to him.

So loved the flesh that he incarnated himself.

So loved the devil that he gave him dominion.

Gods are where the crowds are and the money is.

\*

ACCEPTANCE makes the gods. There have been claimants to godship who never made the grade, and that is why we have Agnostics.

\*

THAT science lacks the brass to say it knows what it does not know adds no truth or value to the assertion of such knowledge by religion.

\*

ST. MARK's is called the oldest Gospel because, as the reader will observe, it was written before Christ was born of a virgin.

\*

THE gods have always held the secret how to determine sex. Their offspring are sons.

\*

MANY have run head on into disaster by committing the error of trusting that God would show intelligence.

\*

FREEDOM of speech means only granting the right of others to say things with which we disagree.

\*

GOVERNMENT:

"Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for it  
As impotently moves as you or I."

\*

A MAN picked up a copy of a book called "The Mysterious Universe" and laid it down with a sniff; not interested. "Things being as they are is what makes them so, and there's no mystery about it," he said.

\*

HUXLEY said this a long time ago: "Nothing great in science has ever been done by men, whatever their powers, in whom was wanting the divine afflatus of The Truth Seeker."

\* \* \*

### EDITORIAL NOTES

ARRANGED and edited by Ernest Sutherland Bates, a literary editor, book reviewer and author, and published by Simon and Shuster, New York, a version of "The Bible Designed to Be Read as Living Literature" has appeared. The idea, shared by editor and publishers, is that with the parts of God's book put together and presented in the same orderly form as the works of profane authors, the reading public will take to it as to other pure literature, or belles-lettres, that is, literary productions that exclude the positive sciences and include poetry, drama, fiction, and so on, with deep feeling, lofty thought, and good style of expression. That the Bible, with judicious expurgations, will yield easily to this treatment and become literature is undisputed; but to bring it to life in this generation, as "living" literature, like some of the modern classics, the plays of Shakespeare, or the poetry in Corliss Lamont's "Anthology," needs a resurrection miracle. No religious motive



in the publication is professed. The editor, Mr. Bates, is the author of a "Gospel According to Judas," and is thought to have a preference for Christian Science. The publishers have an eye for the economic opportunity, are diligent in business and stand before Jehovah. We cannot imagine anyone getting so much fun from this book as Freethinkers have from the Authorized Version according to King James.

\* \* \* \*

IN picking 'em for the new Papal Academy of the Sciences, Pius XI sticks to the cabalistic seventy, which is scriptural and magical withal. There are to be 70 members, as there were in the Jewish sanhedrim, in the body of disciples selected by Jesus to preach his gospel and do faith cures, and in the delegation of Mormons, under the Twelve Apostles, "to travel into all the world and preach the gospel and administer its ordinances." They also were hand-picked. Not all the pope's seventy men of science need be Catholics, but they must be religious—of the class who "do not hesitate to say that true science leads to and has prepared the soul for faith." Of this group of spiritually trained seals he finds six in America, namely, Professors Birkhoff of Harvard, Morgan of the California Tech., Taylor of Princeton, Speri of Cincinnati, and of course Millikan of Pasadena, who holds the clerical profession above that of science, and Carrel of New York, who is a witness to miracles of healing at the shrine of the Virgin in Lourdes, France. The Seventy include thirty-three Italians. The other leading countries of Europe are represented, with the exception of Russia. Speri of Cincinnati is the only American scientist connected with a Catholic institution. The pope, in announcing his new Academy, makes the remark, which is not without humor, that science never finds itself in contradiction with the Christian faith!

\* \* \* \*

A SPLINTER of the "true cross" having been acquired by St. Joseph Church in Dickinson, Texas, reports the *Houston Post*, the church will hereafter be known as the Shrine of the True Cross, and the pastor hopes to get together enough money to put up a new building. The recently acquired splinter, the story runs, is off the Vatican true cross, which "was brought from Jerusalem in the year 326 through the efforts of St. Helena, mother of the Roman emperor Constantine. After long search, she discovered what she was credibly led to believe were the three crosses on which Christ and the two thieves were crucified, and the True Cross was selected from these by a miracle which returned life to a dying woman." Catholic belief about the piece of wood called the true cross is that it has the gift of "miraculous multiplication," that it can be in two or more places at once, and that its size is not diminished by prying off splinters. An account of the discovery of a heretofore unknown fragment, along with other relics, in a Paterson, N. J., monastery fills a current newspaper column. (The list of other relics, which we haven't space

for and the irreverent would laugh off anyway, may be found in the *New York Times* of Sept. 25, 1936.) An official Vatican document, dated August 9, 1843, attests the genuineness of the collection. Enough pieces of the cross to "form a ship's cargo" were found by John Calvin, the Protestant reformer of the sixteenth century, and the quantity has been increasing ever since in proportion to the demand.

\* \* \* \*

"The urgent need of our American-bred children of high school age, as I know them, is not for dogma but independence, the right to begin at least to conduct their own experiments, lead their own lives, make their own decisions, use their own judgment. This is no indication of defiance or rebellion but only of natural growth."

These are not the words of the "Atheist mother," Mrs. Eaton of New Jersey, who by her independence lost the care of her children, but of Mrs. John S. Reilly, a Catholic woman of New York, at the late congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, before which mothers were invited to speak. Catholic women often appear to be more impatient of control by priests than are the laymen. The reverend fathers are said to have some difficulty in exercising their control over the woman heads of convents and sisterhoods.

\* \* \* \*

In different parts of the world, believers in different gods are fighting with one another, creating religious riots that amount to wars. In Palestine, Jewish and Christian followers of Jehovah, and Mohammedans, who accept the god Allah, are mixing it. In Bombay, India, the Mohammedans are having fatal fights with Hindus, who worship Brahma. All of these gods, Jehovah, Allah and Brahma, are Supreme Beings and each of them the Creator of everything. And besides these qualifications as deities, each and all of the three gods, sundry and severally, are Infinite. There is not one god but three gods, not one Infinite but three Infinites—the which if one do not unfeignedly believe he shall without doubt perish everlastingly. Only Atheists will contend that three infinites of the same sort are two too many.

\* \* \* \*

THE Columbus (Ohio) Rationalist Society is holding regular meetings at the Fort Hayes Hotel. Olin J. Ross, Esq., secretary and treasurer, 300 Schultz Building, Columbus, invites all to attend and hear an instructive series of lectures.

\* \* \* \*

MARSHALL GAUVIN, the Rationalist speaker, has begun his eleventh lecture season in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Mr. Gauvin's home in that city is at 503 Dominion street.

\* \* \* \*

#### INGERSOLL FORUM

The Ingersoll Forum meets Sundays, 8 P. M., Pythian Temple, Broadway and 70th St., New York. Admission 25c. Nov. 29—"Is Religion the Opium of the People?" Morris Talpalar vs. Arthur D. Rees.

For season list of lectures and debates, send to The Truth Seeker, in which reports of meetings will be published.



## OCCURRENCES AND OPINIONS

THE other day lightning (which "does the will of God") struck the summer residence of Pope Pius XI at Castel Gondolfo, a few miles from Rome. The 79-year-old Pope, vicar of Christ and vicegerent of God, has since developed a weakness in the legs.

FROM Buenos Aires, via New York *Sun*: "Players of the Racing Club tried prayer in an effort to end a protracted slump. One of the best-known Buenos Aires soccer teams lost consistently to tail-end elevens. They went to a shrine and asked for divine help. The next Sunday they lost again."

THE medicine men of the Hopi people in Arizona went in for a snake dance to bring rain in August. "Not once in a thousand years," the Hopi claim, "have the prayers for rain gone unanswered." Farmers in other states would like to know how they do it, and be introduced to the Hopi deity.

THE colored man known as Father Divine, who is honored, praised, worshiped and obeyed as God by his followers, explains how by a hookup they do mighty works in his absence: "I am spiritually charged with the magnetic current of God's infiniteness; and when they concentrate on the fundamentals they receive the reaction of the spirit by transmission."

W. S. BRYAN writes from his home in Nevada, Missouri: "I am not so supple at 91 as I was at 81, when I saw you last." Mr. Bryan's article in this Monthly evidences that his mind is still supple. George Bernard Shaw declines to attend a public meeting, saying: "I am approaching a doddering, senile condition and prefer to stay away." Mr. Shaw was not born until 1856.

IN its religious department the *Literary Digest* lately gave a page of fairly presented information, with a good picture, concerning Charles Smith and his Four-A. Reader John Yearwood of Brooklyn, writing to the *Digest*, tells the editor: "Very properly you have given your readers news of Atheism under the heading 'Religion'." And Mr. Yearwood, guilefully, as we suspect, adds that Atheists give "a great deal of their time to religious thought and research."

WHICH side, Loyalist or Rebel, has been guilty of the alleged indiscriminate slaughter of human beings in Spain remains in dispute. By the voice of the Catholic church, which supports the Rebels, the Loyalists are accused. On the other hand, the Lisbon correspondent of a New York paper avers that both sides are equally ruthless, and speaks of the Insurgents as rounding up inhabitants of captured towns and shooting them in groups of twenty. The pope makes public a list of 400 Spanish priests and 100 nuns slain by the Leftists (Communists), or supporters of the Madrid government. Again, the Spanish priest, Rev. Father Luis Sarasola, described as having become "a fiery advocate of the government with the coming of the revolution," tells New York audiences that the atrocity stories about the Loyalists have been "fabricated in the propaganda mills."

THE fiftieth anniversary of the unveiling of the Bartholdi statue of Liberty Enlightening the World, erected a half century ago in New York harbor, was celebrated on October 28. But liberty has not since 1886 enlightened so much of the world as was then hoped. In European countries she has suffered a great deal of shoving around and hunting forth; and on this point not all the States of America can be praised without reservation. General liberty of speech is accorded here, except to Communists. The Rev. Father Coughlin has publicly and uncivilly branded the President as a liar, double-crosser and labor scab. Those epithets

hurled at the pope in a Catholic country would carry a heavy penalty. Deputy Mayor Ernst Karl Winter of Austria, a Catholic, has been expelled from office for writing in condemnation of the "modern Jesuitical diplomacy of the Vatican" in his country.

"HINDUS and Mohammedans continue their killing in Bombay, one religion lying in wait for the other, 50 killed, 490 wounded thus far. . . . So Mohammedans and Hindus murder each other to please their gods, that actually have no existence—according to our ideas. We may be mistaken, they think us mistaken in our religious beliefs."—*Arthur Brisbane*. People of different beliefs are quite likely to think right of each other. A philosopher has said this is the only time they really tell the truth about religion.

THE increase of registration and the calling of a special session by Governor Lehman to lengthen the hours of voting brings forcibly to the front the necessity of changing election from a weekday to Sunday. At present it is not only an inconvenience to thousands of men and women with business connections to vote, but it also causes a disruption to normal business activities. If elections were held on Sunday it would give people more leisure to think about the issues of the campaign and the more carefully to select their candidates.—*JOSEPH LEWIS*, in the New York Times.

WE have read the last issue of our fun-making contemporary, *Life*, as we did the first one in 1893. *Life*, which has given up the ghost and left its name to another publication, was ten years THE TRUTH SEEKER's junior. Of the group of men who were with it at the beginning, but one survives, namely, Edward Sanford Martin, *Life*'s first editor, now 80, who but lately retired from *Harper's* "Easy Chair." He took the Liberal side of religious questions. His philosophical mind and graceful style made pleasant and quotable reading. His oldest readers missed him when he left *Harper's*. Years ago we received acceptance slips (somewhere preserved) from *Life*, as from *Puck* and *Judge*, and more might have been collected but for impatience to see our work in print (for publication might be long deferred), and so it was placed in the forthcoming TRUTH SEEKER.

WHEN Catholic women of Woodbridge, N. J., went before Recorder Brown of that town to lay charges of witchcraft against one of their number, he told them to go home and be quiet. "I do not see how people, in this age, can believe such things," he said. The other day a Freethought speaker in Wall Street was heckled by a Catholic, who asked, "How do you prove there is no God?" The speaker answered, "How do you prove there are no witches?" and the heckler rejoined, "I don't try, for I believe that witches exist." The church fosters belief in witches, demons and "spirits" as a way up, or down, to belief in gods and devils and the still grosser superstitions inculcated by the faith. A news exchange states that witchcraft, through the voodoo doctors, is "still earning millions." A small take compared with the gains of the church by means of such delusion. Of course Catholics "believe that witches exist." The priests burned the church's since sainted Joan of Arc for a witch.

## Wisdom from Sunday School Answers

"WHAT mean ye by these stones?" was said by Goliath to David. An Archbishop is the Prime Minister of the Church.

One of the women said to Solomon, "My friend and myself had a very young baby each in the night."

The other creed besides the Apostles' Creed is the creed of Ananias.

Ahab got some sackcloth and rapped himself in it.

Sarah was Abraham's half wife or widwife, otherwise called Columbine.—"Howlers," by Cecil Hunt.



## Except Ye Hate

It is said in the press that at the recent convention of the "Holy Name Society" Cardinal Hayes spoke in the following terms:

"Today we are a world in battle, a battle against atheism in Russia, sacrilege in Spain, a Catholic country, and apostasy in Mexico, another Catholic country. It is a serious situation. We may have to battle here in America for the flag that flies over our heads."

It is unfortunate for the Cardinal's point of view that the two countries named should be Catholic, or "Christian," which means the same thing to him. Spain has been such from the beginning, and Mexico since the coming of European Christians. Therefore, in matters of civilization, these countries, above all others, should have reached perfection. But revolution, wars, murders, massacres, carnage and destruction have prevailed there since Christianity supplanted Paganism.

In Spain at this moment we see the utmost reaches of "Christian civilization," while reports come from Mexico that a teacher in one of the public schools of that country had been crucified, and two others burnt alive at the stake, after the manner of those "good old times" of the "Ages of Faith." These teachers were guilty of no crime; they were intelligent, useful gentlewomen; but they had committed the offense of teaching the truth instead of the miserable fables of a barbarous religion. How many others may have been crucified or burned we have no means of knowing, for it is difficult to get such things into the newspapers. Some hesitate because they fear to offend the church by making its crimes public. It is not safe to beard an institution whose cardinal principle is hate, without which no one can be a disciple.

The Cardinal advises us that "we may have to battle here in America for the flag that flies over our heads." To utter a prophecy is to wish it. When the mythical Head of the Church predicted "wars and rumors of wars," he wanted them to come, as they have been doing with increasing violence ever since. Nothing fosters hate like war. We see it amplified in Spain, surpassing anything that barbarism ever produced. All over Europe we behold the coiled serpent and hear the hiss. And it is Christian. If you would have the genuine thing in hate, go to the Christian. He will fill your cup until like the psalmist's it runneth over.

\* \* \* \*

All we need do to reproduce Spain at our own doors is to start another revolution in Mexico, as prophesied and wished by the Cardinal. Then we shall see again, as we did in the not distant past, thousands of wretched, dumb, miserable and starving human beings, fleeing for safety across the Rio Grande to a land of peace, to avoid the hatred of those whom the voice of nature commanded them to love. Such is Christianity in the ultimate!

Americans will take care of their flag! They require no promptings from alien priests sent here for the avowed

purpose of "making America Catholic." Cardinal Hayes is one of the very few who have an American name. If these foreign meddlers will only sit still and refrain from tearing their millinery, we Americans will continue to fly the flag over our heads, as we have been doing for more than a century and a half. We need no advice from those who confessedly owe their first allegiance to a monstrous priestly conception in the distant—very distant—blue sky; a Something whose wishes and commands are interpreted only by those who invented it.

Whenever "Atheistic Russia" is mentioned the Christian foams with rage, yet that country was the only one in Europe that sent shiploads of food and millions of gold in charity to the misled and dehumanized people of Spain. The Christian nations sent them bombs and bullets, and guns and poison gases, with which to massacre one another. Russia wants peace, and means what she says, while the truly Christian nations would wipe her off the map and, in the familiar language of the "Prince" of peace, send her contented people to everlasting hell. And it has just been announced that the Moody Institute of Chicago is preparing to send missionaries to "Atheistic Russia!" Imagine what would happen here, among the disciples of hate, if Russia should send missionaries to America! And what indeed would happen if she sent them to Italy, where they are so desperately needed?

The approach of the end of religious hate might seem near, if intelligence could win in Spain; but the outlook is not promising at the time this is written. Another generation or two must suffer for the wicked follies of their ancestors.

W. S. BRYAN.

\* \* \* \*

## Designations Chosen at Discretion

ATHEISM is the positive opinion that there is no self-conscious power that with premeditation created any part of the universe, and that no such being exists to watch, judge and punish, supernaturally, any person. The average Free-thinker, like almost any scientist, is an Atheist, but it is a question of expediency whether to call himself an Atheist, an Agnostic, or a Unitarian. If no unpopularity results, or if no petty persecution can weaken his economic condition, he is disposed to admit his Atheism. But it often pays to profess to be an Agnostic, or a Unitarian, because in that way one may avoid being stigmatized by Christians. Professed Unitarians are even honored. An Agnostic is thought to be neutral in theology, and it is unnatural for normal individuals to oppress neutrals. But the professed Agnostic is an unwitting ally of the religionists. Agnosticism admits a possibility that the higher self-conscious power exists and is what the religionists claim it to be, and such an admission implies that there is evidence of such possibility. Colonel Ingersoll was wise enough to know this, but he accomplished most by his own method; Agnosticism obtained a hearing and support. Dr. Andrew D.



White also knew the truth, but he was able to call attention to the conflict between science and religion by throwing out a few sops to Christians. Some of us are coerced into pretensions of being Christians; some, like university professors, find it necessary at least to preach Unitarianism. Some of us rebel, and say we are Agnostics, but those who refuse to be coerced, like Mr. Smith of the 4-A's, admit Atheism, or rather openly avow it. It is a purely intellectual state, yet the religionists insinuate that Atheism is some moral defect or a phase of criminality. They unite to crush the youthful Atheist, and then point out to other children the fact that "smart" men, "like President McKinley," were orthodox Christians.

FRANK SWANCARA.

(Author of "Obstructions to Justice by Religion.")

\* \* \* \*

## The World to Come

### VII

A COMPLETE metamorphosis had taken place in Satan as he stood contemplating with pride the eternal duration of his throne. As reported in our last dispatch, the repetition of "I too am a lord," and "My kingdom too shall never end," gave him an exaltation of spirit clearly reflected in voice and countenance.

Fundamentalists, congratulations! The hole you dug in space and called it hell, Satan gives you his word of honor, is as enduring as time, and as real as human flesh and blood. If the mountain labored and brought forth a mouse, you labored and brought forth a god, a heaven, a devil, a hell—all four imperishable. Bravo!

If it be true that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, is it not equally certain that not all the churches bellowing in unison can extinguish a single spark of your hell-fire? Be not afraid, then, that such men as Darwin or Ingersoll can "with biological blows and knocks upset our doctrines orthodox."

When, finally, our host awoke from his reverie he assumed a more distinguished air and spoke with sterner gestures. "In heaven," he said, "there is only one tongue, one thought, one will. But in my household there are no restraints of any kind on speech or action. They must pray or praise without let-up in heaven; I have neither use nor taste for mouth-functioning of any kind. Among the saints there are degrees and ranks, higher and lower stations. In my hell there is, on the contrary, absolute equality. I treat all the damned with perfect impartiality. No one's punishment is more or less than his neighbor's, Dante and Daniel notwithstanding. Of course it goes without saying that while philosopher and chimney-sweep, king and coolie, the noble and the ignoble, are alike dumped into the same pit without ceremony, their reaction to the common ordeal is quite different. Not even hell can obliterate the distance between superior and inferior. It is not within the reach of God or devil to make the sage forget his self-respect or his consciousness of worth, no matter how rude-

ly he is handled. An artist never behaves like a hod-carrier, never mind the environment or the company he is in. Only in that sense could it be said that there are degrees in hell.

After a short halt, "Nor is it correct to maintain," he continued, "as certain liberals have, that hell is where God is not. Had that been true there would have been no hell at all, since there is no place where God is not."

We were about to ask him if the statement "God is everywhere" meant that he is also in hell, but before we could interrupt him, he beckoned us to come closer to him, and as we did so, he looked about as though he wished to make sure no one but his guests would hear what he was about to reveal *sub judice*, as it were. Lowering his voice, he related how, long, long ago, on a memorable occasion, he had received a visit from none other than the unique son of the Most High, Jesus Christ. He reminded us of the clause in the Nicene Creed, "He [Christ] descended into hell." We had read in theological text books that the purpose of the trip to hell by Jesus Christ was to preach the gospel to those "spirits in prison" who might think their damnation unjust because they had died before hearing the gospel. But according to our well informed host this was no more than a mere gesture, since, to quote him again, "not a single soul accompanied the savior from hell to heaven as the result of the preaching, nor was the temperature of the place lowered to any noticeable degree."

At this point one of our committee asked, "What is the offense, or crime, for which, more than for any other, people are sent to hell?" "My answer to that inquiry will surprise you," he said. "Only a very small number of the criminal class is ever turned over to me. Somehow these manage to keep out of hell, even as on earth they manage to stay out of jail. And when an offender has been finally tried and convicted, he is converted, just in time to escape the punishment he deserves. A kiss imprinted on a crucifix, a dash of holy water, a swallow of the sacrament, and, in a twinkling, the gallows become golden stairs reaching to the very top of heaven.

"Let me whisper something else in your ears," he went on in the same hushed voice. "No one, having received the transubstantiated wafer at the time of his death, has ever been sent to me. The thing is unthinkable."

We reminded him of the "Divine Comedy," whose author reports meeting a holy father or two in hell. "Some one must have blundered. The purpose of administering the sacrament to a dying person," he explained, "is to make of him half man, half God, or at least to convert the body into a vessel containing the godhead, the holy Trinity. Such a transformed person could under no circumstances be sent to the devil. If any pope or cardinal was ever found in hell, the only way it can be accounted for is that the time the sacrament was slipped into the mouth, the patient was too weak to swallow it."

Resuming his customary voice, "The majority of the



people consigned to the pit are the nonconformists, heretics, the unbaptized and the excommunicated. Let me add," he continued, "that I have also a number of men who chose the company of the damned in hell to the society of the saints in heaven, because they felt heaven for them would be a worse hell if they had to stand by and see God holding sinners over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some other loathsome insect over the fire."

The citation stirred us to the depths. Thoughts crowded in upon us in rapid succession and held us captive. We no longer seemed to be listening to the devil, but to the divine:

*What bliss will fill the ransomed souls,  
When they in glory dwell,  
To see the sinner as he rolls  
In quenchless flames of hell!*

Hardly had the Rev. Dr. Watts of Scotland finished singing his hymn, when Jonathan Edwards of New England began his sermon, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." No wonder his hearers shuddered as he declaimed, "The devil is waiting, the fire is ready, the furnace is hot, and the pit has opened its mouth to receive." The preacher grows eloquent as he describes the joy of the redeemed when, looking from a vantage point in heaven, they shall behold "the exquisite misery of the damned—the bulk of mankind."

As we listened to the divines, the devil standing before us shone white by contrast.

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

\* \* \*

## More, and Dismal, News from Hell

NEW JERUSALEM (September, 1936).—Delegates from all quarter of Paradise assembled in the Chrysolite Auditorium, and, after singing the hymn—

*Jerusalem the Golden,  
With milk and honey blest—*

the Presiding Angel addressed the meeting to the following effect:

For some time past, he observed, public opinion in the Heavenly State had been increasingly disturbed by reports of social conditions in Hell. The Infernal City was now overcrowded with scientists, artists, educators, philosophers, and social welfare workers of both sexes who had desired to serve the world but had felt unable to accept as literally true the Bible accounts of the Flood, Resurrection, Daniel's interview with the Lions, etc. Some citizens in heaven, indeed, were prepared for a scheme of physical and moral training which would reform the worst criminals in the Damned Prison. But the case of the reformers just mentioned seemed to call for primary attention. The convention was open for discussion.

A long and interesting exchange of ideas ensued, and general unanimity was apparent on the question of the transfer of the Atheist, Agnostic, Secularist and Humanist reformers to Heaven. Applause greeted the Saint who outlined a plan of dispatching a group of deputies from

Paradise to the Inferno by means of Ether-planes. The deputies would inquire as to the willingness of the Atheists and others to emigrate to the Land of Hymns.

Finally, it was decided to lay the following suggestion before the Almighty and Everlasting Governor: "That a well-attended gathering of Angels and Saints desire to express their hope that communications may be arranged with Hell in order to effect a transfer of suitable souls to Paradise, and so inaugurate what may eventually become the Eternal Union of All Hearts and Minds."

Half an hour later, an Archangel rushed to the waiting assembly with the message: "The Governor long ago fixed a gulf between Paradise and Damnation, and is not disposed to accede to sentimental demands for change."

The announcement was received with murmurs of discontent.

FREDERICK J. GOULD,

*Special Correspondent with New Jerusalem on behalf of THE TRUTH SEEKER.*

\* \* \*

## Apologizing for God

"HAVE you read Watson's 'Apology for the Bible'?" asked a parishioner of his parson. "No," he replied, "nor did I imagine that God's Word needs any apology." But that was long ago. Today the literature of Christianity consists of nothing else but apologies.

If you have the tremendous patience and almost superhuman self-control required to listen over the radio to "popular" sermons by famous "divines," you will hear one long series of apologies for God, apologies for the "errors" of the churches, "explanations" of biblical absurdities, and, finally, an appeal to "forget all these misunderstandings of past ages" and "come and join us next Sunday."

I "listened-in" recently, on hour-long weekly pleadings of this infantile sort, in which a particularly windy university reverend professor "explained" what he called the "twin-doctrines of sin and evil." It is a silly mixture in some respects, because while one can understand that human drunkenness is sometimes the result of human "sin," a great many pestilences come without human agency. It may be that an automobile ought never to be steered by a habitual drunkard, but no amount of abstention from booze and vice and sabbath-breaking could prevent a blizzard, or keep at bay an oncoming tornado.

Occasionally a man invites disaster by lingering too long on a volcano. I once saw a printed notice (in the Austrian Tyrol) warning visitors to "beware of the avalanche daily expected." But earthquakes don't seem to fit in anywhere to human responsibility. They must be classed as the sheer cussedness of a fool of a God. God needs a good deal of apology for earthquakes, but the reverend professor did not touch on any such perplexing difficulty. He apologized for God but formally. In his opinion, the apology was needed only because man blamed God for evils for which man himself is solely blamable.



In a sense it is a twin-problem. In a sense it is the *same* problem. If there's a God he is just as much to be blamed for letting a man ignorantly or viciously drink himself to death (or shoot a fellow creature by design or accident) as he should be held for dropping avalanches, causing earthquakes, or sending plagues of lice.

The famous, if over-rated, Dr. Schweitzer says we men think too much of our own importance in the universe. He thinks God is what he calls the "Ethical Will"—as much as to say that man and his physical well-being don't matter two hoots to the Creator. God isn't worrying about keeping mankind alive and free from cancer, gout and paralysis. God is keen on ethics. Keep honesty and long skirts and clean souls to the front; never mind if you starve, or catch tuberculosis, or sink into an abyss; ethics alone can ever justify God's interference.

This is apology run mad. I don't know exactly which branch of ethics God is most interested in. But I do not believe there is ethical perfection in the world any more than there is physical perfection. God is a failure, anyway. He could with equal ease prevent children having rickets, men having a thirst, and floods from destroying men, animals and crops.

The Modernist apology for God is that he simply *cannot* do anything at all. But this is to blot him out of existence. So an "ethical" myth is to be substituted for "creative evolution." God can't *do* anything, but like the clergy of similar uselessness, he can "preach." What a descent from the "Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, Omnipotent, Omniscient" Boss of the Universe! An "Ethical" lecturer forsooth!

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH

\* \* \*

## The Finals of a Discussion

*To the Editor of THE TRUTH SEEKER:* I will add a few words to my first article concerning Atheism and Agnosticism, in reply to Mr. Benjamin, although it is really not very important that I do so. My first article answers Mr. Benjamin's reply—as happens all too often in such controversies. Most of them are a waste of words, and nothing else.

Mr. Benjamin says: "The Atheist flatly denies the existence of the 'supernatural.' How then can Mr. Hester consider himself an Atheist?"—seeing that I avow Agnosticism in this connection?

Well, an Atheist is one who disbelieves in a God, or the gods, as I said before. I disbelieve in ALL of them. How, then, could I *fail* to be an Atheist? But the alleged "supernatural" has no necessary connection whatever with the silly gods of ignorant and foolish mankind; it might not be a "god" in the theological sense at all. Just *what* the "supernatural" could be—or if it could be—are baffling and at present insoluble mysteries; hence we must logically be agnostic concerning them, until perhaps they may be some day cleared up.

If Mr. Benjamin chooses "flatly to deny" all that is incomprehensible to him, or is darkly mysterious, he must perforce flatly deny space, time, and what we call "matter," nay, the Universe itself. For we know nothing whatever about the ultimate nature of these considerations. We are even too densely ignorant to say, positively, that the Universe is not an organism of infinite proportions. We do not know what the "infinite" means, or any single "part" of it, if it has any "parts." What is "truth," and

what is "knowledge"? I do not know. And nobody else knows. This, succinctly, is philosophical Agnosticism.

ROBERT F. HESTER.

\*

REPLY BY MR. BENJAMIN

*To the Editor of THE TRUTH SEEKER:* Mr. Hester in his reply to my attack on Agnosticism is willing to deny the existence of *all* gods but does not do likewise in regard to *all* forms of supernaturalism. Now, "supernaturalism" is supernaturalism whether one writes it between quotes or not. Not an iota of evidence has Mr. Hester advanced for the possibility of his type of supernaturalism. Appealing to the limitations of human knowledge proves exactly—nothing! Whatever we know has been derived through empirical means, unless one accepts revelation, and I am certain that Mr. Hester is too good a Rationalist to do that. Upon what grounds does he want us to entertain the "possibility" of his type of supernaturalism? (All that the word possibility entails is a certain paucity of knowledge, because if we had all the necessary facts pertaining to a certain matter we would know precisely what effect would occur and not talk of "possibility.") Such sententious expressions as: the problem of time, the problem of space, or the problem of matter, are not only too vague to possess logical implications, but they are thoroughly misleading besides. When one says he does not know what "truth" is he is talking metaphysics.

It is a highly significant fact that the argument advanced by the Agnostic has invariably found itself a weapon in the hands of the religionist. The Atheist never found it of any value to his position. Besides, Mr. Hester is a Materialist. How does he square the possibility of supernaturalism with his Materialism?

JACK BENJAMIN.

\* \* \*

## From Letters to the Editor

*He's Off with the Old Humbug, and On with the New*

Dear Editor: You will think I'm packing a lot of nerve writing to you, but I just can't help it. Some one brought a copy of THE TRUTH SEEKER to the bunk house on the ranch where I work and I read it from "kiver to kiver." Where you recorded your Sustaining Fund you say: "The Truth Seeker is a good paper, but, alas! not quite good enough for the mass of Freethinkers," and etc. You're dern tootin' it isn't good enough for some of us Freethinkers. Many of us prefer Christian Science, Rosicrucianism, New Thought or maybe even the writings of the poor old darkey, called Father Divine, whom you do not regard as much, judging from your paper. So, what? You bet, so what? So simply this—

We can all of us destroy but how many of us can build? You have hit the old fool, personal, corporeal god so many blows in the solar plexus you surely must have laid him flat by now, and for the poor saps who still believe in him, surely you can lay off them. Now that you have shown up this bugaboo, God, why don't you try to give folks an idea of what the real God is? You say you don't know? You mean to tell me you don't know there is a great creative force in the Universe that put the spark of Life into things and keeps things going? Could you do that or could anything else in this great realm we call Nature? There is a power higher than Nature and that is what Man is forever seeking to know more about.

Listen, Mister: here in the bunk house some one had put up a picture—one of those desecrations of the fine, clean West, showing a scene depicting men who are men and women who are more than willing—and that dern thing got in my hair. I didn't yank it down, however, and destroy it, but I just put a lovely pastoral scene right over it, and the thing is forgotten. So why not cover up this orthodox god with the real divine, spiritual force that we know exists and watch him make a fade-out?

I hope you are not like Clarence Darrow. I nearly busted a surcingle laughing at him when he said he had searched for god some seventy odd years and had never found him. Also your paper some one told me had an article about an astronomer who searched the heavens with a powerful telescope, but couldn't find god. Fer Gosh Sakes! Who ever heard of finding this real god that-away? Clarence Darrow is a spiritual man if I know my Mavericks. He is fine and kind and humane. Spiritual qualities,



I calls 'em. You, too, Mr. Ed., I'll bet my best saddle horse are a pretty good sort, but the trouble is you are barking up the wrong tree. If you will try to help poor stumbling, struggling humanity to get close to that source from which we all sprang, divine spirit, or God, if you like, your old mag will be read, don't worry.

Call me crazy, but I am telling you I have given Christian Science a whirl and let me tell you, Brother, that stuff does things to you. But first of all, a guy has got to be *decent*. We have got to live at least as decently as the dumb animals do and then things begin to happen. Obey Natural Law and then know absolutely in your own mind that the Great Creative Spirit won't let you down and believe you me, things begin to work for you. Laugh your head off at this one and see if I care. I can heal myself of all little ailments that beset the path of man daily. When in trouble I can find consolation and usually help if I will ask for it. Try it some time, Mister; it's lots of fun. But listen, Pal, don't be an iconoclast. Don't destroy. Be a builder. Build a lovely new structure right over the old worn-out shambles and you won't ever know they were there. And give this creative force—yes, Bigod, I'll say it—give this *God*, the real *God*, a chance to work for you. You will find it good sport and you'll sell more papers.—“SLIM” JOE KENT, Salinas, Cal.

#### Mexico, Texas and a Rare Old Breeches Bible

I have been traveling in southern Texas and Mexico. The Mexican government has the Catholic menace fairly well under control. True, the priests still commit terrible atrocities; for example, cutting off school teachers' ears, mobbing, whipping woman teachers for teaching evolution and also for not teaching Catholicism. But you see empty churches and convents everywhere. The priests are not allowed to hold services other than funerals for their dupes.

The bullfights are a novelty for me. They have them on Sundays and holidays. It is their national sport, and they seem to get a great kick out of it. Thinking it over, in U. S. they stage prize fights, two humans beat each other into unconsciousness. Here in Mexico they match human against a bull. And the matador takes no great chance. Not much difference, is there?

Am inclosing a clipping describing the “Breeches Bible,” printed in 1598. This was news to me, as I had never heard of this particular bible, much less to have seen one. Mrs. Riggs keeps it as an old heirloom. It surely is a curiosity.—F. W. STOUT, Texas.

(From the Brownsville Herald.)

A Bible, printed during Shakespeare's time, and an ancestor to the modern Bible, is the proud possession of Mrs. Kerr T. Riggs of Fort Brown. The Bible is 338 years old, and has been in her family for more than fifty years, Mrs. Riggs said.

The Bible, printed in 1598, is known to book collectors as the “Breeches Bible,” because in the seventh verse of the third chapter of Genesis it is printed that Adam and Eve gathered fig leaves and made themselves “breeches.” Other editions of the Bible said “aprons.”

#### Pertinent Questions by a Bay State Reader

Can it be that the clergy are reincarnated Neros who fiddle out their very bad tunes while the superstitious slave and the moneyed hypocrite toss perfectly good money into coffers already overflowing with gold?

When Gabriel toots his celestial saxophone I wonder if the blast will be sufficiently powerful to stir the fossil frame of Catholicism with some sign of progressive life?

Do the traitorous politicians feel a sense of pride when they betray the people's trust upon the gilded altars of ecclesiastical ambitions and greed? Do they plan on receiving their rewards here or hereafter?

Is the Roman Pontiff a victim of autosuggestion when he presents his church as an innocent martyr in the Spanish situation or is the pose but another exemplification of the age-old ecclesiastical hypocrisy?

Will the Fundamentalists of hill-billy Protestantism find a substitute for Jonah's whale now that they know it wasn't a whale after all? Couldn't they substitute a jackass—or a Fundamentalist?

Is it possible that the weakness lately observed in the legs of Pius XI is the result of the strenuous jig which he so obligingly danced to the tune played by Mussolini?

Why don't the clergy laugh out loud when they recite their fairy tales to their congregations? Is it because of unusual mus-

cular control or does the recital of such nonsense eventually become automatic like the movement of the arm when they extend their itching palms for the cash?—HAROLD RICHARD COLLINS, Massachusetts.

\* \* \* \*

#### These May Be the Verses Sought

Hugh F. Munro, Philadelphia, asks in your November number for a poem beginning “St. Peter Stood at the Golden Gate.”

Possibly he has in mind Byron's poem, “The Vision of Judgment,” beginning:

“Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate;  
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,  
So little trouble had been given of late;  
Not that the place by any means was full.”

Yours truly,

—HAROLD FISK, Los Angeles.

\* \* \* \*

#### One Would Have Us Print More Letters

About THE TRUTH SEEKER—do you know, I think if you would publish more and more the letters you get, with homely discussion of the various writers, it would be a stimulant to get new readers. I thought the September issue especially good in that respect. After all, it is the so-called un-churched who ought to get THE TRUTH SEEKER, and ordinary, man-of-the-street chatter will get them interested. Ordinary mortals simply will not read heavy stuff, but if they can get kindergarten talk—the kind they use themselves—I think they will buy it. It might mean a slight lowering of the tone of the T. S. for a while, but also it might mean a wider influence in a short time. Or am I wrong?—VERNE SHERIDAN, Rhode Island.

\* \* \* \*

#### Pope Leo X Said Something Like It

I believe that in one of your former numbers of THE TRUTH SEEKER I saw the expression “and all this we owe to the fable of Jesus Christ.” Which pope was it, and on what evidence does it rest?—EDWIN C. BROOKS, Long Island.

(Joseph Whelless, in his book “Forgery in Christianity,” quotes Pope Leo X, 1513, as exclaiming, “What profit has not that Fable of Christ brought us!” and for authority gives “Encyc. Brit., 14th Ed. xix, 217.”—Ed. T. S.)

\* \* \* \*

#### Greetings to Canada's Mr. Shelley and to G. B.

DEAR G. E. M.: How can I forget THE TRUTH SEEKER? Last night (Oct. 13) I attended a political meeting at Streatham Hall. A man came up to me, shook my hand and said, “I've just been reading your article in the current TRUTH SEEKER.” He's a Canadian, a Mr. Shelley (a good name, indeed), and a veteran Free-thinker, aged 78. Doesn't it cheer us all up!

—GEORGE BEDBOROUGH, London.

\* \* \* \*

#### The Church and Education in Ireland

In the Irish Free State the schools are mainly under the control of the priest, and their influence in general education is dominant. As a consequence in Ireland we meet with more open statements of Roman Catholic aims than we are in the habit of getting in this country. These aims are very clearly set forth in a small pamphlet by the Rev. Peter Finlay, S.J., under the title “The Church and the Secular Education.” The pamphlet is issued from the office of the *Irish Messenger*, Dublin, and Father Finlay sets forth the claims of the Church with all the arrogance of the medieval priest. The church, he says, sets no value upon education for its own sake. Her mission is to preach religion, and in that “her authority is supreme,” she alone is to say what is true religion. No one may come between the church and the people. “Not the state, which has no authority to teach revealed religion, not even parents, who *have*, but who may not hinder the church” in the teaching of religion. “If a father could lawfully shut out the church's ministers from the training of his child on the ground of even his own entire sufficiency for the task, he could so far frustrate lawfully Christ's will and his express command.” This power of the church is to be exercised “within rational limits,” but “it is for her to define what such limits are.”—From the *London Freethinker*.



# ARE THESE THINGS SO?

OR, THE TRIUMPH OF DARWINISM

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M. A. (Oxon), F. G. S.

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## Advertising The Truth Seeker

THIRD 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.

# THE RATIONALIST ANNUAL

for 1937

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