

# ATHEISM AND OTHER ADDRESSES

*by*

JOSEPH LEWIS



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2002

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is to again make the United States the  
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**American Founding Fathers**  
originally meant this Nation to be.

Emmett F. Fields  
Bank of Wisdom.

## FOREWORD

All the material in this little book originated as talks for specific occasions. Several were broadcast over the radio. After they were delivered, requests for copies of the addresses poured in on the author, and to meet the demand they were published in pamphlet form.

Because of their current and permanent value to students, speakers, writers, and intelligent laymen, many readers have re-ordered individual pamphlets many times through the years as their copies wore out or were borrowed and never returned. This undoubtedly has been responsible for the ever-increasing volume of requests that we have been receiving to have the pamphlets compiled into book form—and this little volume is the answer.

THE FREETHOUGHT PRESS ASSOCIATION

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# ATHEISM

**THE COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**PARK AVENUE AND THIRTY-FOURTH STREET**  
**NEW YORK CITY**

April 21, 1930

Dear Mr. Lewis:

I want to thank you this morning  
for the great service which you did us last night.  
Your address was brilliant in the extreme, alto-  
gether the best statement I have ever heard on the  
question of atheism. I feel deeply grateful to  
you for this carefully prepared contribution to the  
evening's discussion.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John Haynes Holmes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom of the letter.

This address on Atheism was delivered at a Symposium on "Present Religious Tendencies", held at the Community Church, 34th Street and Park Avenue, New York City, on the Evening of April 20th, 1930. The other speakers were Mr. Stanley High, Editor of the Christian Herald, and Reverend Charles Francis Potter, Minister, First Humanist Society of New York. Reverend John Haynes Holmes, minister of the Community Church, was Chairman.

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*"Is it to the interest of a man to be a boy all his life?"*

THOMAS PAINE

Both of my colleagues on this platform have been especially trained to espouse the cause they have presented tonight.

Both were trained to be ministers of religion.

And although only one of them still occupies the pulpit, the other is the editor of a religious magazine.

Both have faithfully fulfilled their training. And it would be unusual if that were not the case.

We cannot expect a man trained to be a carpenter to be able to carve statues like a Rodin. We cannot expect a man trained to be a bricklayer to be able to paint pictures like a Rembrandt.

If by some chance we find one who possesses a natural talent, and is able to rise above the level of his training, that exception only proves the rule.

I was never trained to espouse the cause of Atheism.

I came to accept Atheism as the result of independent thought and self-study. And although as a child I was instructed in the religion of my parents, I never came under the spell of religious training long enough to so warp my mentality as not to be able to see any other viewpoint.

I came to my conclusions after a full analysis and an impartial consideration of the various religious creeds and the different systems of philosophy.

In my study of the different fields of thought, I found no philosophy that contained so many truths, and inspired one with so much courage, as Atheism.

Atheism equips us to face life, with its multitude of trials and tribulations, better than any other code of living that I have yet been able to find.

It is grounded in the very roots of life itself.

Its foundation is based upon Nature, without superfluities and false garments.

It stands unadorned, requiring nothing but its own nudity to give it strength, and charm and beauty.

No sham or shambles are attached to it.

### ATHEISM RISES ABOVE CREEDS

Atheism rises above creeds and puts Humanity upon one plane.

There can be no "chosen people" in the Atheist philosophy.

There are no bended knees in Atheism;

No supplications, no prayers;

No sacrificial redemptions;

No "divine" revelations;

No washing in the blood of the lamb;

No crusades, no massacres, no holy wars;

No heaven, no hell, no purgatory;

No silly rewards and no vindictive punishments;

No christs, and no saviors;

No devils, no ghosts and no gods.

Atheism breaks down the barriers of nationalities and like "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

Systems of religion make people clannish and bigoted.

Their chief aim and interest in life is to gather together and pick out the faults of others and reveal their secret hatred of those who do not believe as they do.

### ATHEISM IS MENTAL FREEDOM

Atheism is a vigorous and a courageous philosophy.

It is not afraid to face the problems of life, and it is not afraid to confess that there are problems yet to be solved.

It does not claim that it has solved all the questions of the universe, but it does claim that it has discovered the approach and learned the method of solving them.

It has dedicated itself to a passionate quest for the truth.

It believes that truth for truth's sake is the highest ideal. And that virtue is its own reward.

It believes that love of humanity is a higher ideal than a love of God. We cannot help God, but we can help mankind. "Hands that help are better far than lips that pray." Praying to God is humiliating; worshipping God degrading.

It believes with Ingersoll, when he said: "Give me the storm and tempest of thought and action rather than the dead calm

of ignorance and faith. Banish me from Eden when you will, but first let me eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge."

Atheism is a self-reliant philosophy.

It makes a man intellectually free. He is thrilled to enthusiasm by his mental emancipation and he faces the universe without fear of ghosts or gods.

It teaches man that unless he devotes his energies and applies himself whole-heartedly to the task he wishes to achieve, the accomplishment will not be made.

It warns him that any reliance upon prayers or "divine" help will prove a bitter disappointment.

To the philosophy of Atheism belongs the credit of robbing Death of its horror and its terror.

If Atheism writes upon the blackboard of the Universe a question mark, it writes it for the purpose of stating that there is a question yet to be answered.

Is it not better to place a question mark upon a problem while seeking an answer than to put the label "God" there and consider the matter solved?

#### THE ASYLUM OF IGNORANCE

Does not the word "God" only confuse and make more difficult the solution by assuming a conclusion that is utterly groundless and palpably absurd?

"God," said Spinoza, "is the Asylum of Ignorance."

No better description has ever been uttered.

Shelley said God was a hypothesis, and, as such, required proof. Can any minister of any denomination of any religion supply that proof?

Facts and not merely opinions are what we want. Emotionalism is not a substitute for the truth.

If Atheism is sometimes called a "negative" philosophy, it is because the conditions of life make a negative philosophy best suited to meet the exigencies of existence, and only in that sense can it be called negative.

Some ministers of religion ignorantly call Atheism a negative philosophy because Atheism must first destroy the monumental ignorance and the degrading superstition with which religion, throughout the ages, has so shamelessly stultified the brain of man.

A negative attitude in life is sometimes essential to proper conduct.

Life itself very often depends upon negation.

It is a negative attitude when we are cautious about over-eating. It is a negative attitude when we do not indulge our appetites, or give vent to our impulses.

And on many occasions I have seen illustrated editorials sermonizing upon the fact that the hardest word in our language to pronounce is the word "NO!"

It is only when we have the courage to say NO to certain temptations that we can avoid the consequences that are the results of following those temptations.

Progress also very often consists in negation.

Man finds himself in a universe utterly unprepared and poorly equipped to face the facts and conditions of life.

He must overcome the illusions and the deceptive forces that are forever present in Nature.

When the light of intelligence first came into the mentality of man, he found himself in a world that was a wilderness; a world reeking with pestilence and populated with shrieking beasts and brutal and savage people.

No wonder that Man's distorted intellect gave rise to a series of ideas concerning God that makes one shudder at their hideousness.

His primitive imagination conceived gods of a multitude of heads, of grotesque parts, of several bodies, of numberless eyes and legs and arms.

In order that man may think clearly and rationally upon the facts of life, all these concepts must be destroyed.

That is only one of the tasks of Atheism.

"To free a man from error is to give, not take away," said Schopenhauer.

### NEW GODS—WHAT FOR?

Some of our present-day humanists, emancipated to the degree that they no longer accept deities like "Jehovah," cry for a new concept of God. They want something to put in the place of what has been taken away.

Do they want also a substitute for Hell?

And what would be their answer to this question, "If the Devil should die would God make another?"

They are like children crying for the moon.

Will anyone be so good as to tell me what we need a new concept of God for? Haven't we had gods enough? Hasn't it been task enough to get rid of the conglomeration that has already plagued the human race?

I plead that we no longer contaminate heaven with these



hideous creatures and frightful monsters of religious hallucinations.

### DESTRUCTIVE OF SUPERSTITION

Ministers also take delight in saying that Atheism is dogmatic and destructive.

If Atheism is called dogmatic it is because dogmatism is the law of nature.

A fact is the most stubborn thing in the world. Matter insists upon occupying space all by itself and motion will continue in motion regardless of the opinions concerning it.

Time does not stop to listen to prayers.

"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,  
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

And Atheism is destructive in the same sense that Columbus was a destroyer, when he corrected the erroneous conception, induced by false theological ideas, of the flatness of the earth, when he sailed across the ocean and proved the rotundity of the planet upon which we live.

Atheism is destructive in the same sense that Galileo was a destroyer, when he corrected the erroneous conception, induced by false theological ideas, concerning the existence of only one moon, when he discovered the satellites of Jupiter.

And so throughout the history of intellectual progress is this attitude true. Call it negative, call it dogmatic, call it destructive, call it what you will. It is the main spring of progress.

Is a physician destructive when he cures a patient of disease?

### A CURE FOR MENTAL DISORDER

The human race has suffered for centuries and is still suffering from the mental disorder known as religion, and Atheism is the only physician that will be able to effect a permanent cure.

No wonder the great Buckle was prompted to say:

"Every great reform which has been effected has consisted, not in doing something new, but in undoing something old."

But what hypocrisy it is on the part of ministers of religion to call Atheism a negative philosophy, when their own Ten Commandments are a series of "Thou shalt nots"—

But Atheism is also an aggressive and a militant and a constructive philosophy.

It is interested in the **HERE** and **NOW**.

It finds problems enough here that require immediate solution and does not fly to others that it knows not of.

### MAN MUST HELP HIMSELF

Atheism cannot sit idly by and watch injustice perpetrated, nor permit the exploitation of the weak by the strong.

Its ideal is the establishment of justice—man-made justice, even though it be.

If man waited for God to feed him he would starve to death.

Atheism believes in education. It believes in telling the facts of life and revealing the truths as they are discovered regardless of whose opinions it shocks. It is ever ready and willing to accept the new and discard the old. Atheism does not believe that man's mission on earth is to love and glorify God, but it does believe in living this life so that when you pass on, the world will be better for your having lived.

That is the ideal that now inspires more hearts to help humanity in its upward march than ever before in the history of the human race.

That is the ideal that inspired Shelley, that inspired Voltaire, and Humboldt, and Garibaldi; that inspired Mark Twain, and John Burroughs, and Luther Burbank. That is the ideal that inspires Sir Arthur Keith, Albert Einstein and Thomas A. Edison.

If man wants help he must abandon his appeals to God. They will prove only "echoes of his wailing cries."

### THE EVOLUTION OF IDEAS

Atheism does not place any trust in God. The inscription on our coins is a lie.

It was not long since when a person who denied the existence of a personal god, who refused to accept the Bible as a divine revelation, who branded as absurd that Christ was miraculously conceived, who characterized as a delusion the resurrection, and who stigmatized as a myth immortality of the soul, was charged by ministers of religion with being an Atheist.

Thomas Paine was called a "filthy little atheist" upon evidence that he did not even approximate this.

To call oneself anything but a Freethinker or an Atheist after the denials of these religious premises is to belie one's own words.

We do not intend to let the clergy, to suit their fancy or their moods, give us our definition of Atheism.

It may be perfectly satisfactory for the editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica to commission a clergyman to write upon Atheism, but that is no reason why we should accept him as an authority.

If a clergyman knew enough about Atheism to write with authority upon the subject he would no longer remain a clergyman.

The rejection of religion and the denial of God has been the definition of Atheism from time immemorial. We have accepted it in the past, and we accept it today. We do not intend to compromise upon a single point.

If religionists have advanced to our position, it is they who must accept our banner.

#### PIETY CONDEMNS THOUGHT

Have we so soon forgotten the Scopes Trial when Evolution was denied a place in the school curriculum because it was branded as godless; when all Evolutionists were charged with being blasphemous atheists?

Atheism has given to the human race the intellectual monarchs of the world.

When the great Darwin discovered the law of the origin of species, he was called an Atheist because he disproved the special creation of Man.

#### THE STEPS OF SKEPTICISM

When the Chemist went into his laboratory and discovered the indestructibility of matter, he was called an Atheist because he proved the impossibility of a Creator.

When the Astronomer pointed his telescope to the sky and explored the regions of unlimited space, he was called an Atheist because he found no god within the confines of space and no heaven within the region of his explorations.

When the Geologist determined the age of the earth through its rock and soil and formations, he was called an Atheist because he too destroyed a belief in the special six-day creation and repudiated the biblical cosmogony.

When the Historian went back to ancient and prehistoric times and discovered civilizations of high ethical and moral culture, of intellectual achievements that are still an amazement to us, he was called an Atheist because he exposed the myth of Adam, uncovered the mistakes of Moses, and branded with the epithet of fraud the commands of Jehovah.

When the Physician sought to alleviate the pain and suffering of Man, he was called an Atheist because he refused to accept the existence of disease as a special visitation of a vengeful god.

Even the discovery of anesthesia, the most humane of all of man's accomplishments, was branded as an impious intrusion, and an effort to circumvent and defeat the so-called will of this monstrous creature. And Timothy Dwight, a gentleman, once president of Yale College, preached a sermon against vaccination on the ground that smallpox was a decree of God and it was a frightful sin to avoid it.

Every Scientist who refuses to be held back by narrow theological limitations, and searches Nature for her secrets, becomes an Atheist, the Millikans, the Osborns, and the Pupins to the contrary notwithstanding.

That electrical wizard, a Prometheus himself, the late Charles P. Steinmetz, said that Atheism was the ultimate philosophy of the scientists.

"Where there are three students of nature there are two Atheists," is an old saying.

### INGERSOLL'S HIGH IDEAL

In this age and generation no one need cloak his Atheism with some garment of so-called "religious respectability."

Charles Bradlaugh's and Robert G. Ingersoll's fight to make Atheism respectable has fortunately come to pass.

When religion expresses a nobler sentiment than that contained in these words of Ingersoll's, then, and only then, might it assume a superior attitude. He said:

"Call me infidel, call me atheist, call me what you will, I intend to so treat my children that they can come to my grave and truthfully say, 'He who sleeps here never gave us one moment of pain. From his lips, now dust, never came to us an unkind word.'"

Compare that statement with the words of Jesus Christ when he said that if a man hate not his mother and his father, his brother and his sister, his wife and his children, he cannot

become his disciple, and then decide whose mantle you prefer to wear!

## THE DECLINE OF THEISM

In our own day we see a revolution taking place in the ranks of religion. We see the liberating force of the great Freethinkers of the past having their effects upon our generation by the breaking of the chains of superstition that have enslaved mankind to a degrading religion.

Our fight today is no longer against Theism. The arguments that were used by Freethinkers more than a century ago are now being used by the liberal minister against his more orthodox brother.

Who can deny that progress has been made when ministers themselves repudiate Theism?

Who today would expose himself to public ridicule and defend Theism in the face of its history and its record?

It has perverted the mentality of man and has caused him outrageously to abuse his own life.

In the name of God and for the love of God, Hell, in all its fury, was let loose upon the earth.

No wonder Theism is being repudiated and disowned.

The liberal minister will have none of it.

Like Caesar, "but yesterday it might have stood against the world, but now lies it here and none so poor as to do it reverence."

Even in our theological colleges, we see the impossibility of trying to harness a man of intelligence with the bridle of Theism, and as the result of this impossible combination, there is a widespread repudiation of religion and all that it stands for.

We are witnessing a period of intellectual honesty that does credit even to ministers of religion. There is a positive and an aggressive advance towards the ideals of Freethought.

## THE DEATH OF MYTHS

And the time is not far distant when a minister who takes money for prayers for the repose of the so-called soul of man, will be charged with misrepresentation and fraud just as others are now being apprehended for similar schemes of deception.

When a minister today makes a public declaration that he can no longer believe in the Virgin Birth, the resurrection of

Christ, in the inspiration of the Scriptures; acknowledges that Moses was very often mistaken, and can find no justification for the existence of a personal god, the brass band plays and the flags wave for his "great courage," while as a matter of fact these things have been so obvious to us that we look with pity upon people who still believe them.

### FULL WAY WITH TRUTH

We have no applause for those who have stolen the thunder from the leaders of Freethought only to cloak it in a garment of so-called "liberal religion."

We are encouraged at the progress they have made, but unless they come the full way, they must be watched with the same vigilance and fought with the same force as the Calvins and Knoxes.

Halfway measures will never do. They invariably prove futile.

What a complete revolution has taken place when people must make apologies for their religious beliefs, and give symbolical interpretations to the incomprehensible ravings of insane men! When they must deny and reject the beliefs that were but a few decades ago so tyrannically imposed upon the people and for which unnumbered thousands suffered the penalty of torture and death!

### THE BONDAGE OF BELIEFS

Is the modern trend to perpetuate religion, or is it doomed to occupy the same place in history as the institution of slavery? And how apt is that comparison of religion with slavery!

Throughout the ages religion has imprisoned and chained and stultified the brain of man, just as the institution of slavery has bound and manacled and torn the limbs of man!

And when efforts were made to abolish the hateful institution of slavery there were many who by their compromises only prolonged its existence.

And the efforts of those today who are compromising with religion and making apologies for its past crimes, are only prolonging its existence and making more difficult the task to eradicate this blot upon civilization.

They are interfering with the removal of the worst obstacle that has ever blocked the intellectual progress of Man.

## HUMANIZING RELIGION?

A rose may smell as sweet by any other name, and religion will be just as obnoxious under any other title.

There are some who claim that religion can be humanized, but how can we humanize something that does not admit of humanization?

How can we humanize ignorance, superstition and brutality? Can we humanize the thumb-screw, the rack and the auto da fé?

If we could humanize religion then the dream of the alchemist will have come true.

If we could humanize religion then truly base metal can be converted into gold.

Humanism and Unitarianism differ only in degree and not in kind from Catholicism and Presbyterianism. The great trouble with the liberal Unitarian, the Modernist and the Humanist is that we do not know where they stand. Their attachment to religion as an element of respectability is still an enigma. Their so-called emancipation from the fetishes and superstitions of their more orthodox brethren is more apparent than real.

Before the Board of Education of this city some years ago, when the proposal was made to permit children to receive religious training on public school time, the most fanatical supporter and most vehement proponent of this scheme was a Unitarian Minister.

He loudly decried the fact that our children were being "deprived" of a religious education. He stood side by side and shoulder to shoulder with Monsignor Lavelle of St. Patrick's Cathedral and the late Bishop Burch of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

## DEFENSE OF PIOUS FAKE

This minister was terribly perturbed because he was afraid our children would grow up without some knowledge of the story of Adam and Eve; that they would not be acquainted with Jonah's sojourn in the belly of the whale, or of the miraculous conversation of Baalam and his Ass.

And while Freethinkers were making an effort for the newspapers publicly to state, on their behalf, that they had offered a thousand dollars reward for the evidence of one authentic cure that took place at the grave of the consumptive priest, Father Patrick Powers, buried in the cemetery at Malden,

Massachusetts, Charles Francis Potter was making a declaration from the platform of his Humanist pulpit, concerning these so-called cures, that "there was something in it."

If it is Mr. Potter's contention that auto-suggestion has accomplished beneficial results in patients suffering from mental disorders, our answer is that we heartily approve of the application of mental therapy in such cases, but do not believe that it should be administered in a grave yard!

By his public statement he condoned this shameful exploitation of thousands of credulous people who were making a weary pilgrimage, at the sacrifice of their health, to this latest fraudulent undertaking of the church.

Immediately following Mr. Potter's statement, Gardner Jackson, writing in the *Nation*, exposed this pious fraud. Mr. Jackson very significantly showed the close blood relationship between the superintendent of the cemetery and Cardinal O'Connell of Boston. They were brothers! He also very vividly depicted the baskets of money that were being emptied as rapidly as the poor deluded creatures would fill them.

In our opinion, it was the duty of every American to use his efforts to prevent the establishment in this country of so barefaced a fraud as the establishment of a shrine similar to that of Lourdes which now disgraces France.

If to condone such a disgraceful exhibition as a gesture of compromise with religion is a sample of Humanism, then we want none of it!

### CHURCH PARASITISM

And even John Haynes Holmes, for whom I have the highest personal regard, and who stands at the forefront of the liberal ministers of this country, cannot be pardoned for his advocacy of exempting church property from taxation. He claims that churches increase the property value of the surrounding buildings and permit the maximum of air and light.

I say that if you make a park out of the land upon which the church stands, you will accomplish all that Mr. Holmes claims for the church, and one thing more. It will do away with the evil of the church and free the country of these institutions of superstition and houses of stultification.

But with the advent of the skyscraper building on church property even this argument falls to the ground. The present tendency of the church is to get "under cover" of an income-producing apartment house or office building.



Let us replace the churches of this city with a system of parks and we will make New York the most beautiful, the most attractive and the most healthful city on the face of the earth.

Society has no right, through the instrumentality of its government, to exempt from taxation a single institution, while a member of the community is without food and shelter.

The church may be successful in convincing a person that the more he suffers here the less he will suffer hereafter, but we are concerned with putting food into his stomach, clothes on his back, and shelter over his head now.

One may believe what he will as long as he is well fed and protected from the elements, but the moment he falls below that condition he is actually deprived of food necessary to life by the church that does not pay taxes.

In reality it is actually stealing food from one who is starving.

It is like a miser counting his gold while poverty is knocking at his bolted door.

To delude a man into believing that the more he gives of the possessions of this life for the imaginary benefits to be enjoyed in a mythical one is to perpetrate upon him a monstrous and unforgivable fraud.

Every steeple that rises above a church is a dagger thrust into the heart of Humanity. It has proved so in the past. And by the past, we judge the future.

#### PRESENT TREND ATHEISTIC

The situation today is not whether the present trend in religion, with its impossible premises and its still more impossible articles of belief, leads to a compromise with science, or whether it should be liberalized into a respectable harmony with the pace set by education and the progress made by man, but whether its complete eradication must be accomplished so that it may no longer hamper man in his search for the truth nor be an obstacle in his path toward his ultimate mastery of the forces of Nature.

Only when a man ceases to be a child, only when he emancipates himself completely from the fetishes of religion, and gives up his silly and childish ideas concerning the existence of God, will he be able to rise to that commanding position and station in life when he can be truly called a Man!

**LINCOLN**  
**THE FREETHINKER**

EDISON'S LETTER PRAISING "LINCOLN THE FREETHINKER"  
WHICH REVEALS HIS DISBELIEF IN CHRISTIANITY

*From the Laboratory  
Thomas A. Edison,  
Orange, N.J.*

November 19, 1924.

The Lincoln Publishing Co.,  
1650 Broadway,  
New York City.

Gentlemen:

I wish to thank you for Mr. Lewis' book on "Lincoln  
The Freethinker".

This is another of the many publications brought out  
in late years which are dispelling the clouds of superstition  
and breaking our bondage to a mythical religion.

Yours very truly,

*Thomas A. Edison*

Executive Mansion.

Washington, \_\_\_\_\_, 186

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal"

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who died here, that this nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow, this ground—the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, <sup>we here be solemnly</sup> ~~to stand here~~ dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that, from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here, gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people for the people, shall not perish from the earth

Abraham Lincoln was, in my judgment, in many respects, the grandest man ever President of the United States. Upon his monument these words should be written: "Here sleeps the only man in the history of the world, who, having been clothed with almost absolute power, never abused it, except upon the side of mercy".

Robert G. Ingersoll.

## LINCOLN, THE FREETHINKER \*

I REMEMBER once reading a statement in the public press that no person could be elected President of the United States unless that person were a believer in the Christian religion. At the time I saw this statement I took it as being true, because there came to my mind a story often told about Robert G. Ingersoll.

The story was something like this:

A number of prominent men and women came to pay a visit to the celebrated orator and during the course of conversation one of them remarked that the Colonel had a magnificent library which was no doubt extremely expensive. To this Ingersoll replied, that his library *was* exceedingly expensive and possibly the most expensive library of any individual in the world. The questioner looked a bit dubious at the reply and ventured that he thought he had seen libraries which cost a great deal more than the Colonel's. In reply to this, Ingersoll said that *his* library cost him the presidency of the United States.

But it is not true that a person must be a believer in the Christian religion as a qualification to hold that high

\* Address delivered at banquet of the Freethinkers' Society of New York on the evening of February 12th, 1924, at Hotel Belleclaire, 77th Street at Broadway, New York City.

and distinguished office. More than one President of this great country was a disbeliever in the Christian plan of salvation, and, peculiarly so, the very men who were not Christians have been acknowledged as the greatest in that long list of illustrious men who have received the highest gift within the power of this nation. Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln, all unbelievers, are the great triumvirate of the United States of America.

My effort, and it is a labor of love, is to show you tonight that Lincoln, that sad-eyed martyr of this Republic, was a Freethinker, "even as you and I." But in proving to you that Lincoln was a Freethinker, it becomes necessary to disprove the frequent assertion that he was a Christian. Under ordinary circumstances, it would not be necessary to prove a man was not something else in order to establish what he was. But in the case of Abraham Lincoln such a procedure is absolutely essential, because the Christian world, in a shameful disregard of the truth, claims an absolute monopoly of great men.

It is strange that very little effort is being made by the Christian world to prove the religious beliefs of Presidents other than those three who stand so preeminently as America's greatest statesmen; I think I can safely say that there are more volumes written to prove Lincoln a Christian than to prove the religious conviction of any other statesman of this country. And, like a man that "doth protest too much," there is a reason for this. Perhaps they are believers in the motto that if you tell a lie often enough you will begin to believe it yourself, and so hardly

a year passes that a book by some clergyman proclaiming Lincoln a Christian, is not issued from the press.

Last year, in response to a public announcement that a prominent senator was to deliver an address on Lincoln, I attended this gathering. Through an unfortunate circumstance the senator was unable to attend, and the minister in charge of the ceremonies announced that in the evening, at his church, he would deliver an address upon "Lincoln, the Christian." But in making this announcement he seemed to apologize for his liberty in calling Lincoln a Christian without the proper evidence to support his contention, and quoted Emerson, by saying: "What you are speaks louder than what you say." Under those conditions you can prove anything to be anything you want to prove it to be. But we will measure Lincoln for not only what he said, but also for what he did not say. We will follow the motto that although "actions speak louder than words," only hypocrites say what they do not believe.

In order to be a Christian it is necessary to believe the Bible to be a divinely inspired book. To be a Freethinker it is essential that you reject the Bible as a revelation from God. To determine, then, whether a person is a Christian or a Freethinker should indeed be very simple. A person may believe in God and yet reject the Bible as a divine book. Such a person cannot be a Christian believer, but may be a Freethinker.

A person may believe in the Bible, and according to his particular interpretation be any one of the following divi-



sional sects of Christianity: Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, Congregationalist, Seventh Day Adventist, Holy Roller or Holy Jumper.

A Freethinker may be any one of the following: A Deist, a Rationalist, a Pantheist, a Materialist, an Agnostic, or an Atheist.

It is not my intention to dispute with any particular branch of Christianity that may claim Lincoln as its follower, nor classify him in any one of the subdivisions by which a Freethinker may declare himself. It is my purpose to disprove that Lincoln was a Christian, and with the produced evidence, to show unequivocally, that he was an avowed Freethinker.

Evidence may be true or false. Proof of evidence is the only test of its reliability. The proof of a statement, without evidence, depends a great deal upon the person who makes it. What ministers say, particularly in religious controversies, requires corroboration.

For a great many years it was impossible to secure the "Life of Lincoln," as written by his intimate friend and law partner, William H. Herndon. And yet it was to Herndon, that Lincoln on becoming President, said that he wished his own name associated with that of Herndon's until death.

It seems that the religious world took exception to this "Life of Lincoln." It was found to contain too many truths that were not in harmony with the notions of a number of clergymen.

The story goes that every available copy of Herndon's

"Life of Lincoln" was purchased by the clergy, some paying as high as one hundred dollars for a copy. They did not spend this money for the book because of its intrinsic value; they did not want its facts known to the public. For nearly twenty-five years this work on Lincoln was held at a premium, and I believe it was only last year, in response to an overwhelming demand, that the descendants of Herndon decided upon a republication of the volumes, and they are, fortunately, once more available to the general public.

Herndon's "Life of Lincoln" is conceded by all fair-minded persons to be the most accurate picture of the life of the sixteenth President of this country that has ever been written. Some maintain that Herndon was to Lincoln what Boswell was to Johnson. Men prominent in the higher walks of life, members of Congress, Senators, Judges, members of the President's cabinet, intimate friends and relatives and even his wife, testify that Lincoln was an unbeliever, an infidel, a Freethinker. Strangers, a few casual acquaintances and a number of clergymen, known and unknown, maintain that he was a Christian. And yet the two ministers most intimately acquainted with Lincoln—Bishop Simpson and the Reverend P. D. Gurley—do not support the contention of their more zealous, but less truthful fellow "divines."

The weight of the evidence is so preponderantly in favor of Lincoln's religious emancipation that it seems almost impossible that anyone could be so audacious as to assert that he believed in any dogma of any religious denomina-

tion. But we cannot prevent anyone from saying what he will, particularly in religious matters, where the emotion stronger than reason, sometimes prompts the religious fanatic even to murder a person in an endeavor to "save his soul." It may seem a paradox, and yet in religious matters the things most difficult of performance are the things most easily believed. And for Christianity not to possess Lincoln as an adherent is truly a tragedy for it. It is a thrust too painful to bear. It is no small wonder, then, that some clergymen have stooped to questionable means and methods in their endeavors to show Lincoln to have been a member of their faith. They did not seek the truth. They strained every fact to the breaking point in their endeavor to find some shred upon which they might base their claim. But, alas! unable to secure any truthful evidence, some, as proof of their contention, have said that Lincoln possessed the virtues of Patience, Tenderness and Charity.

As though these were exclusively "Christian" virtues!

For ages the virtues of Christianity were exemplified in the heartlessness that murdered a Hypatia, and the cruelty that accompanied the Crusades; that schemed and inflicted the punishment of an inquisition; that burned a Bruno and imprisoned a Galileo; that madly and joyously took part in a Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, and that with due solemnity judicially tried, and convicted, sentenced and executed a rooster for laying eggs!

It requires but little effort on the part of the unscrupulous to find witnesses to testify falsely. I remember

distinctly that when I first read the claim that Thomas Paine recanted I was simply overwhelmed. I was not only convinced that this brave and good man recanted before he died, but I felt certain, from the charges brought against him, that he had led a most profligate and dissolute life. No doubt the defamers of Paine believed in the motto, that if you throw enough mud a little of it will stick. I was stunned and bewildered. I was sore at heart to feel that so great and unselfish a man, the author of the "Age of Reason" and the "Rights of Man," could have fallen to such miserable depths. But when I read Ingersoll's answer to the charges; when I saw how he disposed of each and every accusation; how he discredited the witnesses; how he exposed the character of the defamers and calumniators of Paine, I realized then that the reputation of any man with courage enough to speak the truth as he sees it may be besmirched if what he says is contrary to what the great mass of people are led to believe to be the truth.

I also realized then that the statement of a minister, especially in a bitter religious controversy, must be substantiated before being accepted as a verity. But "truth crushed to earth will rise again," and as it was with Paine, so it is with Lincoln.

Were the Civil War a failure, had the Union perished, the church would not be straining every muscle to claim Lincoln a believer in Christianity. Rather they would "shout from the house tops" the destruction brought upon this nation by the insane idealism of this arrogant infidel!

All the horrors of that war would be vividly pictured before you. They would relate with glee, how in early manhood he had written a pamphlet against the Bible and Christianity, and how, seated among others discussing its points, it was snatched from his hands and thrown into the fire. How they would dwell upon this act of "Providence"; and with a sanctimoniousness becoming only to Christians, they would pray God to save them from another Lincoln. Slavery would still be the topic of the Christian pulpit and the "divine institution" would still be supported by the Biblical edict: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling."

But the fact of the matter is that the manuscript that Lincoln wrote against the Bible and Christianity was taken from him and destroyed by a friend and fellow Freethinker, Samuel Hill, his employer, who feared the effects of such a book upon his public career. His friend knew the "liberality" of the religious-minded, and, *fortunately for the Republic, his manuscript perished and the Nation was saved!*

When Lincoln ran for Congress against the Reverend Peter Cartwright, charges were brought against him by clergymen that he was an infidel, and that he said that Christ was an illegitimate child. And not once did Lincoln deny the truth of these charges. When asked why he did not deny them, Lincoln said he did not do so for two reasons: First, he knew the charges to be true; and second, they could be easily proved.

Galileo became a heretic when he questioned the truth of Joshua's influence upon the sun. Were Charles Darwin a Christian, the "Origin of Species" would never have seen the light of day, and William Jennings Bryan would have been denied the great opportunity of making a monkey of himself. *And if Abraham Lincoln were a Christian, the emancipation of the Negro slaves would never have entered his mind!*

Slavery is just as much a fundamental part of Christianity as is the Virgin Birth. To contradict one is just as serious as to deny the other. Leviticus, Chapter 25, Verses 44 to 46, is just as much part of the Bible as are the Ten Commandments. If one is "inspired" so is the other, and I quote the former:

"Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen round about you; of them ye shall buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen forever."

The following quotations from the New Testament require the same belief and acceptance from Christians as does the resurrection of Christ.

I quote Timothy, Chapter 1, Verse 6:

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their masters worthy of all honor."

And Titus, Chapter 2, Verse 9:

"Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters."

As proof that the emancipation of the Negro slaves was opposed by the Christian Church, I need but quote the testimony of the celebrated divines of that time.

The Reverend Alexander Campbell said: "There is not one verse in the Bible inhibiting slavery, but many regulating it. It is not then, we conclude, immoral."

The Reverend E. D. Simms, professor, Randolph-Macon College, wrote: "The extracts from Holy Writ unequivocally assert the right of property in slaves."

The Reverend R. Furman, D.D., Baptist, of South Carolina, said: "The right of holding slaves is clearly established in the Holy Scriptures, both by precept and example."

The Reverend Thomas Witherspoon, Presbyterian, of Alabama, said: "I draw my warrant from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to hold the slave in bondage."

The Reverend Nathan Lord (what an authoritative name!), president of Dartmouth College, said: "Slavery was incorporated into the civil institutions of Moses; it was recognized accordingly by Christ and his apostles. *They condemned all intermeddlers with it.*"

The Reverend Taylor, principal of the Theological Department of Yale College (and he certainly ought to know), said: "I have no doubt that if Jesus Christ were on earth, he would, under certain circumstances, become a slaveholder." And I want to say here and now that I agree absolutely with the Reverend Gentleman.

And Lincoln himself said: "All the powers of the earth seem rapidly combining against the slave, Mammon is after him—and the theology of the day is fast joining in the cry."

But the most striking illustration of history, showing the close connection between the Bible and slavery, is the fact that when the Revolutionists of France—Freethinkers all—rejected the Bible as a state book of authority, they also abolished slavery throughout the French possessions. *And when the monarchist government came back into power, and the church regained control of the government, the Bible again became a state book of authority and the institution of slavery was re-established.*

To show the close connection between the belief in the Bible and the institution of slavery I need but mention the fact that when a bill was introduced in Parliament to abolish slavery in the British Empire, Lord Chancellor Thurlow characterized the move as “miserable and contemptible” and as being “contrary to the word of God.”

And I repeat and re-emphasize, *that it was utterly impossible for Abraham Lincoln to be a believer in the Bible, and be the author of the Emancipation Proclamation.*

A Christian believes the Bible to be the infallible word of God. He believes that all the knowledge necessary to his well-being, happiness and immortality is contained therein. To question its precepts is heresy to him. It is because of this belief that Christianity has to its credit the Dark Ages. To doubt, to investigate, to improve, to advance, is a principle contrary to the doctrines of religion. “Prove all things, hold fast to that which is true,” means to the religious-minded only what the Bible says is true. “Whatever is, is best,” is the brake upon the wheel



of progress. "God's will" is the stereotyped answer to all that is. If Lincoln were a Christian he would have accepted the Negro's plight in life as in accordance with the "divine plan" as enunciated in the "Holy Bible."

It was because Lincoln was not bound by any creed, not hampered by any religious belief, that he felt that the mark of the vicious lash upon the tender skin was not and could not be right by divine sanction, and for that reason he waged the most just war in humanity's heroic struggle for freedom. "In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free," is the statement that no believer in the Bible could utter.

Even those clergymen who claim that Lincoln accepted Christianity in the latter years of his life, admit that in early manhood he was an infidel. His first law partner, John T. Stewart, said: "Lincoln was an avowed and open infidel, and sometimes bordered on Atheism. He went farther against Christian beliefs, doctrines and principles than any other man I ever heard."

The impression, now being created in the minds of our school children, that Lincoln's only sources of knowledge were the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress is, in view of the facts, a deliberate and malicious falsehood. Lincoln was a reader and lover of Voltaire, Volney and Paine, and was not satisfied with being enlightened himself, but informed others of what he had found out. He thought it miserly to keep that knowledge to himself and was zealous in his heresy. He argued and talked for that which he had discovered to be true. It is said that he never tired of

reading Paine; and I ask, who does tire of reading him? Who can read the "Age of Reason" without being convinced by its logic?

Oh, what a valuable, what a priceless copy of the "Age of Reason" it was that fell into the hands of Abraham Lincoln! The germ of Lincoln the Emancipator was planted when he read these liberty-loving books. And friends, as a gentle reminder, if you have a son whom you would like to see develop into another Lincoln, you cannot better equip him than by giving him the same mental food upon which Abraham Lincoln thrived.

Lincoln's belief in "God" or "Providence" prompted him to say: "Friends, I agree with you in Providence, but I believe in the Providence of the most men, the largest purse and the longest cannon."

The use of the word "God" has a thousand interpretations and does not reveal the religious belief of the person using that word. The manner in which Lincoln used the word "God" in his immortal papers should be sufficient proof that he had no faith in the generally accepted sense of that word. I think the following incident as related by Herndon should settle for all time the significance of the use of the word "God" by Lincoln. "No man had a stronger or firmer faith in Providence than Lincoln, but the continued use by him late in life of the word 'God' must not be interpreted to mean that he believed in a personal God. In 1854 he asked me to erase the word 'God' from a speech I had written and read to him for criticism, because my language indicated a per-

sonal God, whereas, he insisted, no such personality existed."

Herndon goes farther and says: "If Lincoln were asked whether he believed in God, he would have said: 'I do not know that a God exists.' "

Lincoln's two most important documents, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address, were originally written with the idea of God completely left out. It is an historical fact and noteworthy to us that the Emancipation Proclamation was written and printed by Lincoln before he consulted the members of his cabinet. When he called them into conference he handed each a copy, and asked them for any suggestions. One member, the Honorable Salmon P. Chase, after reading it, stated:

"Mr. Lincoln, this paper is of the utmost importance—greater than any state paper ever made by this government. A paper of so much importance, and involving the liberties of so many people, ought, I think, to make some reference to the Deity. I do not observe anything of the kind in it."

"No, I overlooked it," replied Lincoln. "Won't you make a draft of what *you* think *ought* to be inserted?"

And the following words as suggested by the Honorable Salmon P. Chase were inserted in the proclamation:

"I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

No doubt a similar circumstance was responsible for the words "under God" being put into the Gettysburg Address as the original draft of this immortal speech makes no mention of these words.\*

\* See facsimile reproduction on page 4.

We must not lose sight of the fact that Lincoln was the most misunderstood and hated man of his day. There were conspirators in every branch of the Government, and, it has been intimated, even in his own cabinet. We must not judge him for what he permitted others to do in order to accomplish his glorious undertaking, and if the churches of his day were ready to strike him down on the slightest provocation, the oversentimental references to "God" in his messages can be readily understood as of little importance.

When chided about his Thanksgiving messages as being contrary to his known convictions on the subject, Lincoln said to Judge James N. Nelson: "Oh! this is some of Seward's nonsense and it pleases the fools!" Lincoln knew the power of the church's hostility, and was a compromiser in the sense that he believed in "doing a little harm for a great good," particularly so when the end meant the liberation of thousands of human beings from the bondage of slavery. To the church, it is more important to crush the infidel than to add a step of progress to civilization and for that reason, while president, Lincoln was reticent in public upon the question of religion. By this act of discretion he carried the nation safely through the most trying period of its history.

It is very curious indeed, that if Lincoln were a Christian, as some say, nowhere in any of his writings does there appear a single mention of Jesus Christ. In his public addresses, official documents and his private correspondence, never once did he express a belief in any

doctrine that would even remotely claim him as a Christian. On the contrary, his personal conversations were such as unhesitatingly to classify him an avowed Free-thinker. And yet some have the impudence to say that on the presentation of a \$500 Bible, which some misguided Negroes of Baltimore gave him as a token of gratitude, he is quoted as saying:

"In regard to the great book I have only this to say, that it is the best gift which God has given to Man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this book. But for this book we could not know right from wrong. All those things desirable to man are contained in it."

This statement is a lie, the enormity of which I am unable to express. To say that Lincoln said this is too ridiculous for notice, and yet when uttered by a clergyman it is taken to be true. It is utterly impossible that Lincoln, who openly doubted the truth of the Bible and questioned the legitimacy of the birth of Christ, should utter such a puerile statement, especially to a group of people representing a race that had been so mercilessly subjected to a condition of servitude because of the Bible's precepts. Out of courtesy, Lincoln may have thanked the little group of well-meaning Negroes for their gift, yet thinking in his heart what fools they were to take \$500 of their hard-earned money and waste it upon the *very instrument that was the greatest obstacle in their struggle for emancipation.*

More likely, sad-hearted Lincoln felt, if he did not actually say: "What fools you are; here I am striving with all the energy I possess, with the resources of a great

nation, sacrificing thousands of lives, the very flower of the Republic, to liberate you from the chains of slavery, and here you are presenting me with a Bible, a book that has held the minds of men in mental slavery for over a thousand years and has caused more mischief and heart-ache, and agony and hatred and bloodshed than any other instrument in the world. Go; you are now physically free: strive for mental emancipation."

Regarding this supposed speech to the group of Colored People, permit me to quote Herndon concerning it:

"I am aware of the fraud committed on Mr. Lincoln in reporting some insane remarks supposed to have been made by him, in 1864, on the presentation of a Bible to him by the colored people of Baltimore. *No sane man ever uttered such folly and no sane man will believe it.* In that speech Mr. Lincoln is made to say: 'but for this book we could not know right from wrong.' Does any human being believe that Lincoln ever uttered this? What did the whole race of Man do to know right from wrong during the countless years that passed before the book was written? How did the struggling race of Mankind build up its grand civilization in the world before this book was given to Mankind? What do the millions of people now living, who never heard of this book, do to know how to distinguish right from wrong? Was Lincoln a fool, an ass, a hypocrite, or a combination of them all? Or is this speech—*this supposed, this fraudulent speech—a lie?*"

Herndon's characterization of this supposed speech of Lincoln to the negroes of Baltimore as a lie is the only term that can properly be applied to it. It only goes to prove to what lengths people will go in their desperation to prove a false contention.

But one lie begets another and the great task before us is to disprove them and halt their circulation. I believe it was Mark Twain—another Freethinker, by the way—who said that a lie could get into circulation and around

the world before truth had time to put on its shoes. While Lincoln was alive no one presumed to call him a Christian. His enemies took particular delight in referring to him as an infidel. And now that he is dead, we take it upon ourselves to defend his infidelity, if you please. And when I hear the word "infidel" used as anathema, I feel like answering, with all the sauciness of a child: "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but *names* will never hurt me."

Abraham Lincoln is *no less* Abraham Lincoln because he was a Freethinker. In fact, many of the world's greatest geniuses and benefactors have been Freethinkers. And it seems to me a very difficult thing sometimes to determine whether a person is a genius because he is a Freethinker or a Freethinker because he is a genius.

For years there has been circulated by the religious forces a picture of Lincoln with his son Tad standing beside him. Both are looking at a large book which Mr. Lincoln has in his lap. This picture is generally captioned: "Lincoln Reading the Bible to His Son." On close examination the book is discovered to be a picture album. And in a recent issue of a magazine in which this picture appeared, Ida M. Tarbell is the authority for the statement, that when this picture of Lincoln was taken he issued this injunction: "Now don't let anybody entitle this picture, 'The President Reading the Bible to His Son.'" How well have the religious forces carried out his wishes!

The following explanation from the *Boston Globe* has an interesting bearing upon this point.

"The pretty little story about the picture of President Lincoln and his son Tad, reading the Bible, is now corrected for the one hundredth time. The 'Bible' was Photographer Brady's *picture album* which the President was examining with his son while some ladies stood by. The artist begged the President to remain quiet and the picture was taken. The truth is better than fiction, even if the recital conflicts with a pleasing theory."

If the religious forces will go so far as to declare that a picture album is a Bible, what kind of other evidence would you expect them to present in order to prove their claim.

How can anyone say that Lincoln believed in the Bible when he so aptly characterized the religious forces of both the North and the South, by saying: "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes his aid against the other." The opinion of the church element toward Lincoln and the reason for its opposition can best be told by Lincoln himself. In 1843 Lincoln desired a nomination for Congress and did all in his power to secure it. The opposition toward him was growing stronger and stronger and in a letter to some of his constituents he wrote as follows:

"The strangest combination of church influence was against me. Baker, (his opponent) was a Campbellite, and therefore *got all that church*. My wife has some relations in the Presbyterian church and some with the Episcopalian churches, and therefore *whenever it would tell, I was set down as either ONE OR THE OTHER*, while it was everywhere contended that *NO CHRISTIAN* ought to vote for me because *I BELONGED TO NO CHURCH* and was suspected as being a deist."

On another occasion he is quoted as having made this laconic, and all too significant statement: "The Bible is not my book nor Christianity my profession."



The Honorable David Davis, a judge of the Circuit Court of Illinois, at the time that Lincoln was a practicing attorney, and who was Lincoln's intimate friend and adviser, and who later became a Supreme Court Judge of the state of Illinois—a United States Senator—a Vice-President of the United States and finally a member of that august body, the Supreme Court of the United States, has something to say regarding Lincoln's beliefs. The intimacy between Lincoln and Judge Davis was such a bond of friendship that upon Lincoln's death Judge Davis was chosen by common consent to be administrator of his estate. Few men of this country have been held in higher esteem by their contemporaries than was Judge Davis. Surely his years of association, his friendship and his intimacy with Lincoln qualify him to testify to Lincoln's religious convictions. Judge Davis says: "Lincoln had no faith in the *Christian* sense of the term—he had faith in law, principles, causes and effects."

Recently there appeared in this city a magnificent production of a play by John Drinkwater, entitled, "Lincoln." In that play Lincoln's life was beautifully portrayed, with the exception of one particularly great blunder, a blunder that adds little credit to the playwright. In this play Lincoln is shown in a humiliating position, and despite a letter from me correcting this falsity, the scene remained unchanged. In this play Lincoln is made to fall upon his knees in prayer. I emphatically state that no evidence exists that the grown Abraham Lincoln ever prostrated himself in prayer. The scene is a lie and belongs in the

same category as that of Washington praying at Valley Forge. We need no better proof of the falsity of this scene regarding Lincoln than Lincoln himself when he said "What is to be will be, and no prayers of ours can arrest the decree."

In every great crisis there are always religious fanatics who have spoken directly to God, and who are directed by God to deliver certain messages. The Civil War was no exception, and Lincoln was not free from such annoyers. It is said that Lincoln, more than any other President, was constantly pestered by clergymen with advice from "divine sources." He controlled his temper only because of his sympathy for the mentally deranged. To indicate his attitude toward such people I will quote his words of contempt for them:

"I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and by religious men who are certain they represent the Divine Will. I hope it will not be irreverent in me to say, that if it is probable that God would reveal His will to others, on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed *He would reveal it directly to me.*"

On another occasion when a woman came to see Lincoln, claiming that God sent her to deliver His message of advice to him, he caustically replied to her as only a Free-thinker would:

"I have neither the time nor disposition to enter into a discussion with the Friend, and will end this occasion by suggesting to her the question, whether, if it be true that the Lord has appointed me to do the work she has indicated, is it not probable that he would have communicated knowledge of the fact to me as well as to her?"

It is sometimes very difficult to determine properly whether these "very religious people" are not fit subjects

for the lunatic asylum, and I wonder if this thought was in Lincoln's mind when he said: "When an individual in a church, or out of it, becomes dangerous to the public interest he must be checked."

Lincoln's real opinion of the clergy may be gathered from one of his anecdotes which, it is said, he delighted to repeat:

"Once in Springfield, I was off on a short journey, and reached the depot a little ahead of time. Leaning against the fence just outside the depot was a little darky boy, whom I knew, named Dick, busily digging with his toe in a mud puddle. As I came up I said: 'Dick, what are you about?' Said he, 'Making a church.' Said I, 'What do you mean?' 'Why, yes,' said Dick, pointing with his toe, 'don't you see, there is the shape of it, there's the steps and the front, here's the pews, where the folks set and there's the pulpit.' 'Yes, I see,' said I, 'but why don't you make a minister?' 'Laws,' answered Dick, with a grin, 'I hain't got MUD enough for dat.'"

During the course of my address I mentioned the fact that during the latter years of his life Lincoln did not engage in prayer. I want to correct that statement. I want to retract it. For I do find that he did indulge in this form of religious exercise. While at the White House some one came to pay him a visit. A terrific storm was raging. It was raining and thundering with fearful intensity. His visitor found himself unable to leave. Lincoln reflected for a moment and with solemn reverence said: "O Lord, if it's all the same to you, give us a little *more light* and a little *less noise*." On another occasion Lincoln prayed to God with deep and reverent devotion, that He put stockings on the chicken's feet in winter.

More significant than anything that might be said by others on the subject of Lincoln's religious belief is the

attitude of Lincoln himself toward religion. *The mere fact that he did not become a member of any church is alone sufficient to silence forever any charge that he was a Christian believer.*

Lincoln weighted down with the pains and burdens of the bloody struggle of the Civil War and with Death constantly staring him in the face, uttered the most important and striking testimony to his lifelong disbelief. It is irrefutable! In answer to a letter from Judge J. A. Wakefield, an old friend, inquiring and hoping that he had changed the infidel opinions and convictions of his early manhood, Lincoln wrote—and it is significant that this letter was written after the death of his son Willie:—

“My earlier views of the unsoundness of the Christian scheme of salvation and the human origin of the scriptures, have become clearer and stronger with advancing years and I see no reason for thinking *I shall ever change them.*”

He emphatically denied the existence of Hell and with equal fervency said that if there were a God *all* would be saved or *none*. Lincoln certainly was not as godly as Jehovah, but his humanity was a thousand times greater. He delighted in repeating this homely, yet philosophic epitaph:

“Here lies poor Johnny Kongapod,  
Have mercy on him, gracious God,  
*As he would do if he were God*  
And you were Johnny Kongapod.”

Other evidence, equally striking and abundant can be adduced further to disprove the clergy's claim; but enough, I think, has been presented to settle beyond the peradventure of a doubt that Lincoln was not a Christian

believer. And yet of the utmost significance is the fact that Mrs. Lincoln was a member and regular attendant of the Christian church and that Lincoln rarely attended the services with her. And like a thunderbolt to the heart of the Christian world, Mrs. Lincoln herself testifies that her illustrious husband and one of America's greatest presidents was a disbeliever in the Christian religion. Mrs. Lincoln says: "He never joined a church. He was not a technical Christian. He had no hope or faith in the usual acceptance of those words."

No effort of mine is needed to establish Lincoln's place in the glittering galaxy of the world's great immortals and humanitarians and if there is a resting place for those who have passed on, he is happily in company with Voltaire, Paine and Ingersoll. In lauding Lincoln as a Christian example, the church makes its own weapon and stabs itself with the very instrument it would use against us.

Abraham Lincoln belonged to no sect; he professed no creed; he was truly an American! We honor him as one of the foremost statesmen of this country.

We honor him as the Preserver of our Republic.

We honor him as the Great Emancipator, and we honor ourselves when we honor him as a fellow Freethinker.

## APPENDIX

Since the publication of "Lincoln the Freethinker" there has been a widespread controversy regarding the authenticity of the famous Bixby letter which Lincoln was supposed to have written to Mrs. Lydie Bixby, of Boston, offering his condolence on the loss of her five sons in the Civil War, and in which he refers to "our Heavenly Father."

The true facts now brought to light concerning this letter are: that five sons of Mrs. Bixby were not killed in the Civil War, but only two sons; that almost every circumstance connected with the writing of this letter is now a matter of much speculation and doubt; that the men responsible for making the alleged facts public have been proved to be of questionable veracity, and that the original letter (if Lincoln ever wrote such a letter, which I doubt very much) is *not* in existence!

"Facsimiles are abundant and though they vary slightly," as stated by Dr. William E. Barton, in defense of the genuineness of this letter, is to me conclusive evidence that the "Bixby Letter" is but another pious fraud perpetrated upon our martyred President. For how would it be possible for facsimiles that "vary slightly" to be made from an original letter if it were not in existence? Furthermore, if such a letter ever existed, how could facsimiles that "vary slightly" be made from it, if they were facsimiles?

# LINCOLN THE SOLDIER

By Joseph Lewis

*Address delivered over Radio Station WGBS,  
New York City, February 12, 1925*

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No one will deny the courage of the uniformed soldier who goes forth to battle. Neither will any one withhold from him the credit and respect to which he is entitled. But not all soldiers wear uniforms. Neither do all soldiers die upon the battle-fields 'mid shot and shell.

There are soldiers who do not know how to operate a gun; who do not go forth to battle amid the beating of drums, the waving of flags or the cheering of people.

There are soldiers who fight, not upon the battle-fields, but upon the field of thought. Upon the battle-field there is somewhat of an equal contest. Man power can be met with man power and destructive explosives with devastating projectiles. But infinitely more courage and superior ammunition are required to do battle in the larger arena of human action.

The progress of mankind has been one bitter struggle against the forces of reaction; a battle of herculean effort against invisible and deadly enemies.

On the battle-field, the roaring of guns and the bursting of shells are a signal that the enemy is approaching and preparation is made by the defending army to with-

stand the attack; but in the battle for human progress, the enemy gives no such signs of approach.

Ignorance, Hatred, and Superstition are the malignant enemies of the human race. These vicious enemies do not fight in open fields. They do not fight fairly. With them equal combat is unknown. Their victories are won in the dark. Stealth and hypocrisy are their weapons.

Thousands have died, millions have died in mortal combat upon the battle-fields in defense of their country, in defense of their homes, in behalf of liberty.

And thousands, yes millions, have died in that grand army of human progress,—soldiers in the army of Science, of Art, of Medicine, of Invention and Discovery, and in the army of Justice and Freedom.

The world is ever ready to do homage to the soldier upon the battle-field. But in the realm of human progress it is lamentably true that only too often does the gallant soldier receive rebuke and calumny for his reward.

Seldom, in his own day, does the soldier who fights for liberty taste the fruits of his victory.

Abraham Lincoln, the Soul of America, was a soldier in both of these armies. He donned a uniform, shouldered a gun, and marched to battle in defense of his country. He suffered the hardships and endured the trials of a soldier's life. As captain of a regiment in the Black Hawk War in 1832, Lincoln acquitted himself with honor. And upon his return from battle he received the plaudits of his countrymen.

War brutalizes our natures and hardens our hearts; it warps our thoughts and makes us callous to the sufferings of human life.

But Lincoln never permitted war to harden his heart nor stunt his feelings. He was possessed of a rare love



for humanity. His kindliness knew no bounds and his honesty was so widespread that he was affectionately known as "Honest Abe." There were many who chided him for his "softheartedness," but Lincoln was *Lincoln* and was not to be swayed from his convictions.

Lincoln's soul was touched with the kinship of life by the magic wand of a mother's love. To Lincoln his mother was his Star of Hope, his Rainbow of Life, the myriad-colored arch that ever beckoned him to "carry on." Lucky indeed is the child whose mother inspires him with humanitarian ideas and thoughts and with the urge that he may so live that when he passes on the world will be better for his having lived.

Lincoln never forgot the lowliness from which he came and it was the memory of his hardships which caused him never to abuse his power except on the side of mercy.

You remember the case of William Scott? While Scott was on sentry duty, after a strenuous day of fighting, and exhausted from the wear and tear of battle, his strength failed him and he fell prostrate upon the ground. When discovered by another soldier and awakened, it was revealed that he was dreaming of his mother, and that she had awakened him to remind him of his duty as a soldier!

But in time of war, excuses for being asleep while on sentry duty are not acceptable or valid, and Scott was taken to his superior officer, tried by court-martial, convicted and condemned to be shot!

The case was brought to Lincoln's attention. His heart was touched. He could not make himself believe that the boy was a traitor, and ordered his release. You know what followed: Scott died fighting valiantly for the cause!

On another occasion a woman went to the White House and begged an audience with the President. Her husband had been captured, tried, convicted and was to be

shot. Lincoln consented to see her. She told her story and pleaded with the President to suspend judgment. Lincoln asked her whether her husband was a good man and whether he treated her children kindly. She replied that he was a good husband and a good father and that the family could not live without him. She said he was a fool about politics and if she ever got him home he would do no more fighting for the South. "Well," said Lincoln, "I will pardon your husband and turn him over to you for safe keeping." The poor woman, overcome with joy, sobbed as though her heart would break. "My dear woman," said Lincoln, "if I had known how badly it was going to make you feel, I never would have pardoned him." "You don't understand," cried the woman between her sobs. "You don't understand, Mr. Lincoln." "Yes, yes, I do," answered the President, "and if you do not go away at once I shall be crying with you."

In our thoughts of Lincoln let us not forget that he was a human being, born just as you and I were born, only that his hardships were immeasurably greater than ours, his difficulties far more numerous. He had to struggle for everything he possessed. He had no teachers. He was self-taught. Tramping through the woods for six miles to borrow a grammar is an indication of his thirst for knowledge and the obstacles he overcame to acquire it.

He had an unquenchable desire to learn. A burning urge to accomplish. This urge prompted him to read every book he could get. He was once asked what he was reading, and he replied: "I'm not reading—I'm studying." He was particularly fond of controversies. He loved an argument. He was never satisfied unless the sparks flew in the discussions. "Hew to the block, let the chips fly where they will," was his motto. And fortunately this trait of Lincoln's broke down all barriers and

prejudice in seeking knowledge. He was carried on the wave of Rationalism which swept this country in the Forties. This brought him in contact with the writings of Voltaire, Volney and Paine. They were his intimates.

Voltaire had shot his bolts at the caste system of Europe and the chains began to fall from the minds and bodies of men.

Thomas Paine was the first man on the American continent to raise his voice in behalf of the negro slaves.

Fired by these men with the love of Liberty and human rights, Abraham Lincoln entered the Army of Progress.

I see him on a flat boat navigating down the Mississippi River. I see him arrive at New Orleans. I see him in company with two friends come upon the market place. I see him watch the sale of a negro slave girl. I see him rebel at the revolting scene. As the girl is examined by her bidders, her flesh pinched, her form displayed, her nudity exposed, I see his sad face become more sorrowful, I see him clench his fist, and with a quiver in his voice, and an oath upon his lips, utter this statement: "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing [meaning slavery], I'll hit it hard." On his return to Springfield I see him enter the political arena with a short but crude declaration only to be concluded by that everlasting monument to his name, the Emancipation Proclamation. I now see him competing for public office. I see him defeated, halted in his march. But defeat and discouragement were words not to be found in Lincoln's vocabulary. When questioned concerning his defeat he said he felt like the boy who was too big to cry and too hurt to laugh. Determination was the quality of Lincoln's character and he knew that "the harder the struggle the more glorious the triumph," and so we see him overcoming the obstacles which had beset his path.

We now see him in his famous debates with Douglass, determining whether the nation can remain "half slave and half free," and whether "a house divided against itself can stand." And in this struggle let us not lose sight of the fact that Lincoln received the brunt of the battle. He was the most misunderstood and hated man of his day. The people did not welcome the economic and social changes which he advocated. The vilest of arguments were used against him. Arguments now known to be utterly ludicrous. He was vilified. He was slandered. The churches of his day opposed him and bigotry supported their contention. Let us take a lesson from the way Lincoln was treated and be not too ready to dismiss a new idea or condemn a new proposal.

In his fight for human emancipation he met the bitterest foes of battle. But not once did he falter, not once did he swerve. He had tasted battle as a soldier fighting for human rights against an institution whose only strength was that it was supported by "divine right." But Lincoln knew that man had no property right in man, and that the marks of the vicious lash upon the tender skin were not and could not be right by divine sanction, and that the damnable institution of slavery was a living lie against our Declaration of Independence!

We see Lincoln gaining in his struggle. We see a convention assembled. We see him nominated for President by an almost unanimous acclamation! We see him at the head of the Republic, Commander-in-Chief of its army, to determine "whether this nation, or any nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal can long endure!"

We see him appealing for support—appealing to the nation's men to fight for the battle of freedom. After many anxious and uncertain moments we hear the mur-

mur of footsteps and the beating of drums and the welcome exclamation: "We are coming Father Abraham, we are coming 300,000 strong!"

And we see Lincoln, this giant of a man, who was too big to cry and too hurt to laugh, weeping for joy at the triumph that 3,000,000 human beings were to be released from the shackles of bondage; weeping for joy that the American Flag, the symbol of Liberty, was to rise once more over a united nation without a blemish and without a stain!

It is the duty of the soldier upon the battle-field to carry the flag of the country for which he fights, and if perchance he is shot and wounded and falls, another soldier must lift it from his hands and carry it high to battle, and this was the task delegated to Lincoln. He carried the flag of freedom which the American Revolutionists had given to Washington, and just as victory was won, just as he crossed the line with the flag waving high, this grand man, this soldier of the Republic, this Liberator, was struck down in battle and died that millions might be free!

Upon the grave of Lincoln, the military soldier, let us drop flowers of gratitude, and upon the brow of Lincoln the Emancipator, the soldier in the Army of Liberty, let us place a wreath as a symbol of the everlasting love and thanks of the human race.

## JEFFERSON, THE FREETHINKER \*

Heresy is still the greatest crime in the catalogue of man's misdeeds. You may be guilty of theft, you may be judged a forger, you may be socially and morally a brute and a reprobate, you may be a child beater and a wife deserter, aye, even a murderer, but with it all, if you are a religious believer, if you are "one of the fold," you may still have the respect of your friends, loyal supporters and heroic defenders. No matter how honest you may be, no matter how noble your character, or the loyalty of your bond and the sacredness of your word; no matter what intellectual achievements you may have attained, or accomplishments effected for the common good, if you are mentally above the rabble; if you have the courage of your convictions and exercise your prerogative of free speech and tell the world your honest thoughts; if you insist that ignorance and superstition should not usurp the throne of authority, you will be guilty of heresy, and conviction carries with it the stern sentence of ostracism.

It is needless for me to tell you, that of the men most responsible for the establishment of our Republic—both in principle and in fact—Thomas Paine stands in the very forefront; and that because of his heresy, because of the expression of his religious conviction, due recognition and a rightful place in the niche of America has been denied this author-hero of our country.

Associated with Thomas Paine as one of the early patriots of the Revolution, and as a brother infidel, stands Thomas Jefferson.

Were it not for the association of Thomas Jefferson with

\* Address delivered at banquet of the Freethinkers' Society of New York on the evening of April 13th, 1925, at Hotel Belleclaire, 77th Street and Broadway, New York City, in honor of the 182nd anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson.—Also delivered over Radio Station W.G.B.S., October 8th, 1925.

the Declaration of Independence, as well as the fact that he held high governmental positions in the Republic—from that of the governorship of a state to the presidency of the Nation—he would to-day be suffering from lack of recognition of his services in the cause of Freedom, to the same degree that the author of "The Age of Reason" and the "Rights of Man" has endured for more than 150 years.

Mighty may be your triumphs, noteworthy your achievements, honorable your conduct, spotless your character, but if you commit the unpardonable sin, if in religious matters you are a heretic, an infidel, an unbeliever, a freethinker, you will be, like Caesar upon his bier: "But yesterday, you might have stood against the world, but now lie you here and none so poor to do you reverence."

The passion of Jefferson's intellectual soul was liberty. His torch burned brightly with the fire of freedom. He could not see man as Man until he saw him mentally free. He knew that the oppression of tyrant kings were the milder forms of subjection under which man was made to suffer. He knew that mental bondage, slavery to superstition and fear, was the greatest obstacle to the emancipation of man. Jefferson had vision enough and forethought enough and intelligence enough to know that when man became mentally free, the shackles of all other forms of slavery would inevitably fall from his side. Once man was emancipated from degrading and enslaving superstitions, once free of the fears of religion, then priests could not beguile him nor governments enslave him; and then prejudice, that poisonous viper of human life, would be obliterated forever.

Jefferson knew that if the American Colonies were to prosper both as a government and as a nation, there must be a complete separation of Church and State. He knew that a church, supported by the State, was an enemy to man, whether it existed under a monarchy or under a Republic. The injustice was the same, and bloodshed and disruption would be the result.

For eight long and tedious years he faced the united opposition of ignorance and bigotry and intrenched superstition. He silently endured the vilification and calumny of his enemies; and when victory was won and the Statute of Religious Freedom was enacted, a new dawn and a new day brightened

upon the land, not only for America, but also for the world.

The United States became the intellectual haven for mankind. What Thomas Paine did as an individual and as a citizen, Thomas Jefferson accomplished as an official and as an executive.

Jefferson believed in the aristocracy of the mind, but in the democracy of man. Some of the other leaders of the Revolution believed in the aristocracy of man and in the democracy of mind. They believed that a select few should be the leaders and the rulers of the masses, and that the masses should believe all that the leaders and rulers dictated. Jefferson believed that the masses should possess the power of government, and that the individual should be the master of his mind.

Washington and Hamilton, particularly, strove for the establishment of the aristocracy of government and went so far as to favor the establishment of a state church. Jefferson knew that as long as the church had the support of the state it would usurp the right to regulate the people's lives, and that all forms of despotism and tyranny, with their attendant horrors of persecution and torture, would follow.

Jefferson knew, and felt no hesitation in saying, that "millions of innocent men and women, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined and imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity." "What has been the effect of coercion?" he asked; "to make one half of the world fools and the other half hypocrites?"

He did not want an *Inquisition in America*—he looked with horror upon those instruments of torture which had so torn and mutilated the tender flesh of man.

He knew that the church and the priests could not be trusted with the people's sacred rights of freedom, and said: "In every country and in every age the priest has been hostile to liberty, he is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own. It is error alone that needs the support of government. *Truth can stand by itself.*"

Armed with these facts and with undiminished courage, Jefferson defeated the efforts of Washington and Hamilton, and to his everlasting credit, to the everlasting benefit of this country, no state church was established.



Jefferson not only thwarted the efforts of Hamilton and others to establish a state church, but he also thwarted their efforts to establish an aristocracy. It was Jefferson—equally as successful as Lincoln—who preserved the Union; Lincoln from Secession and Jefferson from Aristocracy. One in an intellectual battle, the other in a military one. And, like Lincoln, during his political campaign, Jefferson had to contend with the accusation of being an “Infidel.”

The administration of Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, was from every viewpoint and angle, the most nearly perfect of any administration during the Republic’s existence. He was president in fact as well as in name; in practice as well as in principle.

He did not fight for a principle, and then violate that principle to please the ignorant. His Statute for Religious Liberty was not a popular campaign issue. He cared more for intellectual honesty and the sacredness of his oath, than for social or political favors. He was not to be cowed by religious bigots who had done their utmost, by threats of vituperation, to silence his tongue and direct his actions.

When he took the oath of office he swore to uphold the Constitution and he was not to break his oath for the benefit of either the selfish, the ignorant or the hypocritical; and so he steadfastly refused, during his eight years of incumbency in the presidential chair, to issue a single religious proclamation.

In being true to his oath of office, in being true to the provisions of the Constitution, in being loyal to the principles of our secular government, Jefferson knew that he would incur the antagonism of the clergy; and in referring to the matter said: “I know it will give great offense to the clergy, but the advocate of religious freedom is to expect neither peace nor forgiveness from them.”

In a further elaboration of his act, he laid down this premise, which might well be followed by our present-day executives: “I consider the Government of the United States as interdicted by the Constitution from meddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, disciplines, or exercises. But it is only proposed that I should recommend, not prescribe a day of fasting and praying. That is, I should indirectly assume to the United States an authority over religious exercises,

which the constitution has directly precluded them from. Every one must act according to the dictates of his reason and mine tells me that civil powers alone have been given to the President, and no authority to direct the religious exercises of his constituents."

Not since the days of Jefferson has there been a president with courage enough to live up to the example which he so bravely and so valiantly established.

In keeping with the democratic ideals of the Republic, Jefferson dispensed with all pomp and ceremony with which his two predecessors had surrounded themselves. Jefferson was a Democrat in fact as well as in principle; in practice as well as in theory.

Jefferson was also a Freethinker, in deed as well as in thought; the philosophy of Rationalism ever illuminated his mind. He knew that there was no subject which pertained to the rights, the welfare and the liberty of man which should not be investigated. Age, nor the antiquity of a subject was superior to the interests of mankind. If, after an investigation of a subject it was found to be incompatible with the best interests of life, it felt the force of Jefferson's opposition.

In the volume of Freethought, where can you find the principle set down more clearly than in these words of Jefferson—"Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of God; because, if there be one, he must approve the homage of reason rather than of blindfolded fear. Do not be frightened from this inquiry by any fear of its consequences. If it end in a belief that there is no God, you will find incitements to virtue in the comfort and pleasantness you feel in its exercise and in the love of others it will procure for you."

He admonished others to read the Bible as any other book; and if you found recorded therein instances inconsistent with facts, it was the facts which were to be accepted and the authority of the Bible rejected.

Jefferson himself is very explicit upon this phase of his investigation, and he says that Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament was "a being of terrific character, cruel, vindictive, capricious and unjust."

He was equally as emphatic concerning the prophecy of

Jesus as found in the New Testament. He said, "The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the Supreme Being as his father, in the womb of a virgin, will be classified with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter."

In a further investigation of the New Testament he found "a groundwork of vulgar ignorance, of things impossible, of superstitions, fanaticism and fabrications."

"If we believe," he continued, "that he (Jesus) really countenanced the follies, the falsehoods, and the charlatanisms, which his biographers (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) father upon him, and admit the misconstructions, interpolations, and theorizations of the father of the early and the fanatics of the latter ages, the conclusion would be irresistible by every sound mind that he was an impostor."

"Among the sayings and sources imputed to him (Jesus) by his biographers," continues Jefferson, "I find many passages of fine imagination, correct morality, and of the most lovely benevolence; and others again, of so much ignorance, of so much absurdity, so much untruth and imposture, as to pronounce it impossible that such contradictions should have proceeded from the same being. I, therefore, separate the gold from the dross, I restore to him the former, and leave the latter to the stupidity of some and the roguery of others of his disciples."

Many a Freethinker owes his emancipation to the reading of "Jefferson's Bible," the recorded human events of the Life of the Nazarene as Jefferson interpreted them.

Jefferson was not only convinced of the falsity of the religious dogmas of his day, but militantly struggled to break the grapple hold they had upon the minds of the people, and was happy at every defeat they sustained. In a letter to John Adams, he wrote, "I join you, therefor, in sincere congratulations that the den of priesthood is at length broken up, and that a protestant Popedom is no longer to disgrace the American history and character."

And in response to a letter from John Adams saying, "That this would be the best of all possible worlds if there were no religion in it," Jefferson replied: "If by religion we are to understand sectarian dogmas, in which no two of them agree, then your exclamation on that hypothesis is just, 'that this

would be the best of worlds if there were no religion in it.' "

Jefferson was a lover of Voltaire, a correspondent of Volney and an intimate companion of Paine. And we are constrained, in speaking of Jefferson, to mention with the deepest affection, the noble, the generous and the courageous attitude he assumed in offering to send an American vessel for the safe voyage of Thomas Paine when he sought to leave the shore of France and return to the land of his adoption for which he had labored so heroically.

One of the bravest sentiments ever breathed by man in public life was uttered by Jefferson. He said: "I have never conceived that having been in public life required me to belie my sentiments, or to conceal them. Opinion and the just maintenance of it shall never be a crime in my view, nor bring injury on the individual. I never will, by any word or act, bow to the shrine of intolerance. I never had an opinion in politics or religion which I was afraid to own; a reserve on these subjects might have procured me more esteem from some people, but less from myself."

To that end there was no hesitancy on the part of Jefferson in saying, "I am a Materialist."

In establishing the University of Virginia, Jefferson sought to accomplish in an intellectual sphere for the human race what he and others had accomplished in a political way for mankind. The University of Virginia was to be the counterpart, as an institution of learning, to the Republic.

There were to be no religious tests for pupil or professor, the sciences stood on a par with the classics and mathematics, agriculture and the science of the government were for the first time recognized as subjects worthy of a place in a university curriculum.

In establishing this great institution—the first truly secular college to exist in our land—Jefferson hoped to realize that longed-for and hoped-for day when there would be in reality, some semblance of the Brotherhood of Man.

Jefferson said: "By bringing the sects together, and mixing them with the mass of other students, we shall soften their asperities, liberalize and neutralize their prejudices and make the general religion a religion of peace, reason and morality."

Despite his invaluable services in behalf of Freedom, despite

his unceasing labors for the Republic, despite the everlasting debt the world owes him for his accomplishments, when this great Republican and champion of democratic ideals was elected president of the United States, and the day of his inauguration came to pass, newspapers printed borders of mourning and flags were displayed at half mast as a token of grief because an infidel was to sit in the presidential chair.

What was the reason for these signs of mourning, for these manifestations of grief? Were they displayed because a calamity was about to befall the Republic?

No. Because a calamity was not impending. On the contrary, during the administration of this infidel, the country more than doubled in size, and by the Louisiana Purchase laid down the principle of everlasting peace; as a nation we prospered beyond the wildest imagination of the most enthusiastic supporters, and for the first time upon the face of the earth, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" was a reality.

Not because he was deficient in administrative ability, for he was not; not because he was morally and intellectually unfitted to be President, for he was the best fitted and best equipped man in the country to guide the destinies of the Republic, but because he was an infidel, and only because he was an infidel, were the signs of mourning and the token of grief displayed by the clergy and their poor duped and deluded supporters on his ascendancy as the Chief Magistrate of the Nation.

When the time comes that the American people and the American Government depart from the principles of Jefferson, then it will be time for us as a token of grief to border our papers with the black band of mourning and lower the American flag to half mast, aye, with tears in our eyes, and our frames shaking with emotion, as though we are burying a loved one, we can pull down the American flag and with all the solemnity which this emblem deserves, tenderly and silently fold it away, that the future may behold the symbol of Freedom, recount its glories, and mourn the death of the Star Spangled Banner.

When we depart from the principles of Jefferson, our Republic will have ceased to exist.

We cannot honor Thomas Jefferson more, we cannot more fittingly pay tribute to the memory of this great Statesman, Libertarian and Freethinker, than by living up to those high principles which he so nobly and so courageously practiced as President of the United States of America.

**FRANKLIN**  
**THE FREETHINKER**

## FRANKLIN, THE FREETHINKER \*

We meet to-night to celebrate the memory of one of the most illustrious men of the human race, and one of the grandest benefactors of mankind who ever "touched this bank and shoal of time."

No character in all the world was as many-sided as this great genius who did so much for the progress and development of the race, and who played so major a part in the establishment of our Republic.

The energies of this patriot, philosopher, inventor, discoverer, scientist and humanitarian knew no bounds, and he loved life not for itself alone, but for the usefulness he could render mankind through living. Hardly a spot on the face of the earth has not been benefited for his having lived.

This all-embracing genius was not divinely conceived, nor miraculously born. His parentage is authentically recorded, and as an infant he was not found in the bulrushes; and yet, if there ever was a "Moses," the symbol of a divine lawgiver with a message from the God of the Universe (if there be one), his name was Benjamin Franklin!

His code of morals is far superior to the broken tablets of Sinai. And despite the fact that Benjamin Franklin was a child of "God-fearing" parents, he was born an infidel, a heretic and a skeptic. *He was born on Sunday!* The first word uttered was a cry of blasphemy, a thundering defiance to Jehovah, and a challenge to the superstitious of his day. For in Franklin's day to be born on Sunday meant to have been *conceived* on Sunday, and no such desecration should be

\* Address delivered January 17, 1925 by Joseph Lewis at the banquet of the Freethinkers' Society of New York, at the Hotel Astor, New York City.—Also over Radio Station WGBS.



made of the Sabbath, which belonged wholly and exclusively to the Lord. The Lord's Day Alliance of that time should have been more vigilant in the day of Franklin's parents.

He was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations, and you can easily perceive with what precision was this man sent to defy the God of his day.

Although given a strict religious training in his childhood, with much thought devoted to preparing him for the ministry, fortunately we find Franklin in his early manhood frequenting a club of Freethinkers. Once emancipated from the narrowness and bigotry of religious dogma, his heart and mind were free for the love of mankind.

The great fault with the human race is not lack of love, but *misdirected* love. Nearly all the wealth, energy, and intellect of the world have been squandered upon religion. So much love was given to "God" that there was none left for the human family. To fear God and appease his anger by worshipping him was believed to be the highest duty of man in those days.

Franklin's endeavors were not to lessen that love which springs eternal in the human heart, but to direct it from the sky to the earth. Were humanity loved with but half the zeal that has been bestowed upon "The Prince of the Power of the Air," the human family would not be in its present desperate plight. Hatred, bigotry and prejudice would long since have vanished from the human mind. The problems of disease, dissension and war would have long since been solved. Happiness would now be reigning upon the earth, and injustice would be as rare as is justice to-day. The question of buttoning the collar in front or behind would be material fit only for the comic sheet.

Since Sunday was the day Franklin chose for his appearance upon earth, he very early in life made it his business to devote that day to reading and writing and the cultivation of his intellect. Sundays, he said, were too precious to be wasted on prayer meetings when they could be used for mental culture. Was a fairer exchange ever made? And yet Franklin was not without his reason for not attending Sunday services

of the church. Franklin did not do things without a reason, and a good and sufficient reason at that; and so he gives us his reasons for not attending church services.

"The Discourses of the preachers," he said, "were chiefly arguments of explanation of the peculiar doctrines of their sects," and these doctrines he found to be "dry, uninteresting, and unedifying; not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced." In fact, he said: "the aim seemed to be rather to make us good Presbyterians [that was the creed of his parents] than good citizens."

Franklin believed in good works rather than in worship. "Revealed religion," he said, "had no weight with me"; and here he makes the vital distinction between religion and morals, when he said "truth, sincerity, and integrity in dealings between man and man are of the utmost importance to the felicity of life." The church is concerned with making good adherents to the creed, and not in making good citizens. Morality is concerned with good citizenship.

Franklin states further, that religion does not tend to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, but serves principally to divide us and make us unfriendly to one another. "Serving God," says Poor Richard, "is doing good to man, but praying is thought an easier serving, and therefore most generally chosen."

The charge that unbelief is without an incentive to good actions is refuted by Franklin himself. When the preacher Whitefield visited America, he found himself without lodging, and the good Franklin offered him the hospitality of his home.

Referring to Whitefield's acceptance, Franklin writes: "He replied that, if I made that offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss a reward. And I returned, *'Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake.'*"

The preacher Whitefield often prayed for his host's conversion, but "never," said Franklin, "had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard."

Morality was always the important thing to Franklin's mind and anything that tended to promote morality received his

heartly support. Perhaps it was for this reason that he so often criticized religion.

Although Franklin avoided churchgoing, there were times when he attended church, and his experiences are well worth noting. After following a crowd of people on a Sunday morning, he was led into the great meeting house of the Quakers. "There," he said, "I sat down among them, and, looking around awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, *I fell asleep*, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to arouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia."

No one can object to the church being put to such a use; and were all churches converted into lodging houses, their benefit to society would be increased manifold.

On another occasion, Franklin was attracted to church by a young preacher named Hamphill, whose sermons, Franklin said, we not of the dogmatic kind, but "inculcated strongly the practice of virtue or good works." The older clergymen of that time were vociferous in their denunciation of the strange young preacher, and branded his appearance as a "dreadful plot laid by Satan to root Christianity out of the world," asserting that his eloquence attracted only "Free-thinkers, Deists, and nothings." Needless to say clergymen were not more liberal then than they are now, and the young preacher was tried for heresy and convicted. It is interesting to note that the only clergyman who commanded the attention of Franklin was so liberal in his views that he was put out of the Church.

Church disputes were prevalent in Franklin's day just as they are in our time, and will continue to be until the church abandons its false premise. On this point Franklin said: "Each party abuses the other; the profane and the infidel believe both sides, and enjoy the fray; the reputation of religion in general suffers and its enemies are ready to say, not what was said in primitive times, 'Behold how these Christians love one another,' but 'Mark how these Christians hate one another!' Indeed, when religious people quarrel about

religion, or hungry people quarrel about victuals, it looks as if they had not much of either among them."

Franklin thought that "original sin" was a detestable doctrine, and his idea of the Sabbath may be summarized by his reference to his partner, a Mr. Keimer: "Keimer wore his beard long, because Moses has somewhere said, 'Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.' He likewise observed the Sabbath; and these were with him two very essential points. *I disliked them both.*"

And when Franklin was in Paris this observation struck him very forcibly, and in a letter to a friend he wrote: "When I traveled in Flanders I thought of your excessively strict observation of Sunday, and that a man could hardly travel on that day among you upon his lawful occasions without hazard of punishment, while where I was everyone traveled, if he pleased, or diverted himself in any other way, and in the afternoon both high and low went to the play or the opera, where there was plenty of singing, fiddling, and dancing. I looked around for God's judgments, but saw no sign of them. The cities were built and full of inhabitants, the market filled with plenty, the people well favored and well clothed, the fields well tilled, the cattle fat and strong, the fences, houses and windows all in repair, and no 'old tenor' anywhere in the country; which would make one almost suspect that the Deity was not so angry at that offense as a New England justice."

These words of Franklin should be engraved upon fine parchment, suitably framed, and presented to the Lord's Day Alliance.

Franklin's complete emancipation from the superstitions of his day came about when, as he said, "Some volumes against Deism fell into my hands. They were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's lecture. It happened that they produced on me an effect the opposite of what was intended by the writer; for the arguments of the Deists, which were cited in order to be refuted, appealed to me much more forcibly than the refutation itself. In a word I soon became a thorough Deist." The word "Deist" of Franklin's day has its exact counterpart in the word "Freethinker" to-day. And how many thousands of our leading men and women have

been emancipated as a result of theologians quoting Free-thought arguments in an endeavor to answer them?

We cannot overlook the influence exercised upon Franklin's mind by his association with that little club of Free-thinkers with which he came in contact early in life. The discussions he heard there opened his mind to see both sides of a controversy; they taught him to use reason as his guide.

A little more than a hundred years later, another band of Freethinkers were again to give to the world an invaluable contribution when it freed the mind of Abraham Lincoln from the superstitions of religion and stirred him to the needs and want of humanity. And perhaps in our own band of Freethinkers there is a Franklin or a Lincoln in the making.

Although not yet eighteen years of age, says one of his biographers, Franklin began to write vigorous attacks against religion. And when the opportunity presented itself to assist his brother in publishing a paper called the *New England Courant*, the pen that was destined to be read and admired the world over poured its satire upon the miserable and degrading superstitions of Puritanism. Although his brother was jailed for the blasphemies, for which no doubt Benjamin was responsible, Franklin continued with his assaults upon the stupidities of his time.

In humor, Franklin found one of his most effective weapons against religion. And oh, how deadly is humor to religion! Joy is a child of Satan. His most successful hoax was the composition of a satire of the fifty-first chapter of Genesis. In the language of the Bible he wrote out a parable against persecution, and committed it to memory. Then, whenever the question of religion was discussed, he would very solemnly open the Bible and seemingly begin to read—to the mystification and ultimate confusion of his opponents.

Piqued and stung by the constant lashing and ridicule heaped upon them by this unusual young man, the clergy sought protection from further attacks.

No less a personage than Cotton Mather was prompted to pay this tribute to Franklin's courage and daring: The *New*

*England Courant*, he declared, was "full-freighted with nonsense, unmanliness, raillery, profaneness, immorality, arrogance, calumnies, lies, contradictions, and what not, all tending to quarrels and division and to debauch and corrupt the minds and manners of New England.

Coming from a man of the mentality of Cotton Mather, I consider this the greatest tribute that was ever paid to Franklin. And yet I doubt very much whether some of the clergymen of to-day have advanced intellectually very much further than this Puritan divine.

To prove the charges against this blasphemous paper and bring about its suppression, Increase Mather quotes this statement from its pages:

"If ministers of God approve of a thing, it is a sign it is of the devil; which is a hard thing to be related."

Franklin may have written this merely as a piece of satire, but many a true word is spoken in jest.

Even Harvard College was not free from Franklin's attacks. For he wrote that most of the graduates, whom he characterized as stupid, went into the Church which he described as a temple of Ambition and Fraud, controlled by money.

This virile paper was finally suppressed, "because it mocked religion, brought the Holy Scriptures into contempt and profanely abused the faithful ministers of God."

Franklin was a prophet of far more accuracy than the Apostles of Doom of his day, and although he was *not* a divinely appointed representative of God, who can deny he did not possess supernatural prophetic powers in his prediction:

"Of the Fruits of the Earth."

"I find this will be a plentiful year of all manner of good things, to those who have enough; but the Orange Trees in Greenland will go near to fare the worse for the Cold. As for Oats, they'll be a great Help to Horses."

Much awe and reverence are inspired by the so-called miracle of Christ and Peter walking upon the water; but it

is not generally known that Franklin was capable of *sleeping* upon the water. He records this miraculous performance himself in the following note:

"I went at noon in the Martin salt-water bath, and, floating on my back, fell asleep, and slept near an hour by my watch without sinking or turning! a thing I never did before and should have hardly thought possible. Water is the easiest bed that can be."

Persecution did not deter Franklin from his criticism of the Bible nor of religion in general. In an essay on "Toleration" note with what force he states the truth:

"If we look back into history for the character of the present sects of Christianity, we shall find that few have not in their turn been persecutors, and complainers of persecution. The primitive Christians thought persecution extremely wrong in the Pagans, but practiced it on one another. The first Protestants of the Church of England blamed persecution in the Romish Church, but practiced it upon the Puritans. These found it wrong in Bishops, but fell into the same practice themselves in England and America."

All of which merely emphasizes the fact that Religious Liberty is safe only in the hands of the Freethinker, whose philosophy of freedom of thought is expressed by Thomas Paine in the words, "He who would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression." Religious sects differ about interpretation; the minority use the arguments of liberalism to justify their existence; but history proves, as Franklin so pungently puts it, that when minorities become the majorities and possess the power, dogmatism overshadows the principles of Liberty which permitted their existence, and they in turn become the persecutors of others and are as tyrannical with their powers as those who previously endeavored to force them to conformity.

The philosophy of Freethought is the principle of the open mind. Difference of opinion and the unbound avenue of investigation are essential to its existence. It gives the same right to change an opinion as to accept one, and respects the honest conclusions of others. Is it any wonder, then, that the

Freethinker Franklin could travel from one country to another and be respected by all the differing sects? He looked with understanding and sympathy upon them all.

Franklin knew the importance of placing all religions upon the same basis, and when he laid down this premise it was one of the soundest pieces of political advice that this great statesman gave to the world in his vast volume of political philosophy.

He said: *"When a religion is good, I conceive it will support itself; and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for help of the civil powers, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one."*

If the exemption of church property continues to be granted in this country, a problem of no mean dimensions will have to be faced before many years have passed. Franklin never gave a better warning nor sounder advice than when he made that statement.

"To exempt the church from taxation," says Ingersoll, "is to pay part of the priest's salary."

Let us resolve now, in the name and memory of the great Franklin, to wage a relentless war upon this unjust taxation of the people. Let us inscribe on our banner: "Equal rights for all, special privileges to none."

The fame of Franklin, having spread far and wide for the blessings his genius had brought to the people, prompted many communities to do honor to his name. One particular community in the State of Massachusetts decided to name their town after him. And, as they also wished to build a steeple to their church, they asked him to make a contribution toward the bell. In a letter to Richard Price, of England, a well-known infidel of that time, Franklin thus sets forth his views:

"My nephew, Mr. Williams, will have the honor of delivering you this line. It is to request from you a list of books, to the value of twenty-five pounds, such as are most proper to



inculcate sound religion and good government. A town in the State of Massachusetts having done me the honor of naming itself after me, and proposing to build a steeple to their meeting house if I would give them a bell, I have advised the sparing themselves the expense of a steeple, for the present, and that they would accept the books instead of a bell, sense being preferred to sound."

And remember that Dr. Price, the infidel, was the one whom Franklin instructed to select the books that would be most conducive to "sound religion and good government."

On another occasion, while traveling to Europe with his son, his ship encountered a storm at sea, and was saved from shipwreck through the fortunate existence of a lighthouse. In writing to his wife of this experience, Franklin said: "If I were a Catholic, on my arrival home I would ask subscriptions to build a church, but being an unbeliever, will raise the money to build a lighthouse instead."

While speaking of England and Franklin's association with that country, I must not forget to mention that while there Franklin was seen regularly at a coffee house, the haven of Freethinkers.

It was at this coffee house that he met a young man who was desirous of making his acquaintance—a young man whose name was Thomas Paine. And if Franklin did nothing else to entitle him to the everlasting gratitude of the American people, the letter of introduction which he gave Paine, with the advice that he come to the American shores to make his home, would be sufficient.

And in discussing Thomas Paine and the religious convictions of Benjamin Franklin I would be remiss in my duty if I failed to make mention of the fraud perpetrated upon the honored names of both of these illustrious men.

It is claimed by some religious zealots, that before publishing his immortal *Age of Reason* Paine showed the manuscript to Franklin to get his opinion of it. And Franklin is said to have written Paine a rather lengthy letter, in which he advised him against the publication of the book. The letter was supposed to have been found among the effects of Frank-

lin *after* his death and had been captioned, "Don't Unchain the Tiger." The sense of the letter is, that if people are so bad with religion they will be worse without it.

Since it is frequently necessary to refute the lies that have so often been woven around our great men, in order to get a true estimate of them, it is needful to expose this falsehood that a true conception of Franklin and Paine may be made plain to all, and at the same time expose the mendacity and the desperate ends to which the religious forces will go to vilify the name of one and falsify the words of another in order to accomplish their vicious ends.

I doubt that Franklin ever wrote that letter, or, if he did, that it was intended for Paine. The letter is addressed to no one, and superscribed by no one. And does anyone believe that if Franklin really wrote that letter he would not have signed it? Franklin was accused of many things by the enemies of his day, but cowardice was not one of them. And how could Franklin condemn in another the very things he had himself been doing? Did not Franklin attack religion at every opportunity? And are not the sentiments contained in the *Age of Reason* identical with the thoughts expressed by Franklin?

Could a more vicious piece of propaganda be circulated to discredit two of the greatest men of America just because they were unorthodox in religion, disbelievers in the inspiration of the Bible, and doubters of the divinity of Christ?

But another important point concerning this letter, and perhaps the most important of all, is this: Franklin is supposed to have written this letter in 1786. Paine did not write the *Age of Reason* until 1793, when he was confined in the Luxembourg prison in Paris. Franklin died in 1790, three years before the *Age of Reason* was published! Moreover, Paine specifically states that "I follow the rule I began with Common Sense, that is, to consult nobody, nor let anybody see what I write till it appears publicly." With these facts before us how is it possible that this letter, supposedly written by Franklin, referred to the *Age of Reason*?

This letter that Franklin is supposed to have written to Paine brings to mind the charge made concerning Ingersoll and his profligate son.

An all too pious clergyman had stated that Ingersoll's son, bred in a home of Infidelity, had gone insane, and had died in an insane asylum; to which Ingersoll replied; "My son was not a profligate; he was never insane, he did not die in an asylum; in fact, I never had a son."

And then again, how can such a letter be representative of Franklin's convictions, when at the age of eighty, but three years before his death, he wrote to a correspondent in England, in which he asks to be remembered "affectionately to good Dr. Price and the honest heretic, Dr. Priestly," and continues:

"I do not call him honest by way of distinction, for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude, or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of their virtues, as that would give advantage to their enemies; and they have not, like orthodox sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them. Do not, however, mistake me. It is not, my good friends, to heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, it is his honesty that has brought upon his head the character of a heretic."

Few of us to-day can fully realize the mental night that darkened the world in Franklin's time. Witchcraft was everywhere dominant. Every conceivable superstition held sway over the minds of the people. The most horrible crimes were committed in the name of religion. Cotton and Increase Mather were the intellects who ruled. And although the great souls who lived before Franklin had broken to some degree the tyrannical power of priest and king, and here and there the monsters of religion had been driven from the face of the earth, the winds, the rain, the storm, the sunshine and the seasons were still believed to be the caprices of God. And even though you were not burned at the stake for disbelieving the inspiration of the Bible, the wrath of God would yet fall upon you at Judgment Day. The cringing mass was awed

into submission by warnings from above. Was not thunder the voice of God: and did not lightning reveal his anger and strike many dead?

But in 1752, on the banks of the Schuylkill River, came one of the most significant triumphs for the liberation of man. Benjamin Franklin, through his successful experiment with the kite, discovered the true nature of electricity, tore the mask from the face of Jehovah, and freed the heavens of a hideous monster.

The thunderbolt was no longer the manifestation of God's anger, nor the lightning of his wrath. The mind of man was completely emancipated from the fear of God.

It is difficult to realize the complete revolution this discovery made upon the human race, or how far it was responsible for the triumphs of the nineteenth century. With it Franklin's fame, already world-wide, was intensified into universal approbation.

The only dissenting voice was that of the clergy. They feared with their whole being, and rightly, too, the consequences of his achievement,—the lightning rod. They roundly termed it the "heretical rod" and refused to desecrate their churches with it, although as a consequence God particularly singled them out for destruction. Prayer, supplication and the ringing of bells were the methods they employed to forestall the lightning or to calm the rising flood.

The clergy of that day, not unlike some to-day, could not reconcile their calling with the impious work of an "arch infidel." There has always been hesitancy in accepting the achievements of the leaders and pioneers of progress, and always because it was in conflict with "God's word."

History is but a continuous narrative of the steps of progress, each one of which the Church has bitterly contested.

Franklin's "Heretical Rod" has been a mighty instrument for the liberation and progress of man. It has released us from the terror of the Unknown, and the debt the world owes this infidel is greater than it can pay.

After a life so full of good works, so resplendent with achievements, so crowded with accomplishments, and so marked with unselfishness, this grand man, grander than all the saints, honored the world over and loved by his countrymen as their father, "shuffled off his mortal coil"; and, although he wrote an epitaph for his tomb, what more appropriate and fitting could be said of this great Freethinker than those words of Shakespeare:

"The elements were  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world 'This was a man.'"

**BURBANK**  
**THE INFIDEL**

Dedicated  
With Deep Affection  
to  
**THOMAS A. EDISON**  
Genius, Inventor, Humanitarian  
and World's Greatest Benefactor

## LUTHER BURBANK

BY EDITH DALEY

*The gentlest man in all the world is dead—  
So understanding in his thought of her  
That Nature made him her Interpreter,  
And crowned him with the sun about his head;  
Crowned him with sun, and gave him Love instead  
Of human greed; such Love that eyes now blur  
With tears, while memory's lavender and myrrh  
Breathe in the blossom-pall upon his bed.  
He sleeps as gently as he lived; and high  
Among the trees, and underneath where blow  
The April buds, the green earth seems to know  
And grieve—and hush—and softly say:  
“Good-bye!”  
And all who love him, where the blossoms bend,  
Lean low to hear all Nature whisper: “Friend!”*



Cable Address "Edison, New York"

*From the Laboratory  
of  
Thomas A. Edison,  
Orange, N.J.*

January  
twenty-fifth  
1930

Mr. Joseph Lewis,  
250 West 54th St.,  
New York City.

My dear Mr. Lewis:

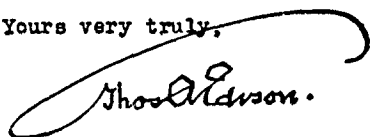
It was a cause of much regret to me that I found it impossible to carry out my part of your programme by planting a tree in Central Park in memory of my greatly esteemed friend, Luther Burbank.

It was indeed a most fitting manner of perpetuating the memory of one whose every thought and heart-throb had their inspiration in the glorious beauties of Nature. Being a sincere admirer of this supremely simple but wonderful man and his achievements, I regarded it as a great privilege to have spent some little time with Mr. Burbank at his home in Santa Rosa a few years ago.

Despite his unaffected bearing and simplicity of manner one could not help but feel that here was a Master in his own chosen field, and thus I found him.

I am rejoiced that he accepted me as a friend.

Yours very truly,

A large, elegant handwritten signature of Thomas A. Edison, written in dark ink. The signature is cursive and flows from the words "Yours very truly," which is printed above it. The signature itself is written in a style characteristic of Edison, with a prominent "T" and "A".

Ediphoned-C

# BURBANK THE INFIDEL

On April 11, Luther Burbank died.

His death was not only a bereavement to his family and friends, but the entire country, aye, the whole civilized world mourned his passing.

The world mourned because a man had died who had brought happiness to the human race; had added to the sum total of knowledge, and had made the world better for his having lived.

Luther Burbank was a rare spirit, a tender soul. He was a noble son of the earth and his death was an irreparable loss to mankind.

We honor Luther Burbank today not only for his independence of thought, although that alone would entitle him to our homage, but also because of his achievements as a scientist and his accomplishments in the realm of Nature.

Stone and marble do not seem to be fit attributes for this lover of Nature and so we plant a tree to his memory. It symbolizes more appropriately his life and work.

Flowers and plants and trees were his intimates and formed part of his family.

He loved them as we love human beings and they became as much a part of his life and existence as if he were born one of them. This close intimacy gave him a familiarity possessed by no other man. He learned the secrets of the plants and spoke the language of the flowers. So remarkably intimate was he with life in the flower kingdom that he became known as "The Wizard of Plant Life."

He moved in a mysterious way among them his wonders to perform. He nurtured a flower as we do a child and it seemed to love him for it. A broken branch of a tree touched him to pity, and the wanton destruction of flowers

Address delivered on May 22, 1927, in Central Park, New York City, at the Tree-Planting Memorial Exercises, conducted by the Freethinkers of America, in honor of Luther Burbank, who was a member and First Honorary Vice-President.

was a grievous hurt to him. He cured sick flowers, brought beauty to ugly ones and sweet odors to all.

From early life he manifested a kinship with them and often when provoked by pain to tears his mother would place a flower in his hands and a smile would appear on his tear-stained cheeks. He took the rough and uncouth of plant life and brought beauty and charm to them by the magic of his touch. Flowers seemed to obey him like good children a kind parent. No man had greater love for them. And no man was more tenderly revered by them.

Burbank also loved children, his country and mankind. His life was one continuous romance. He lived like a man forever falling in love with his wife and child and family. What a glorious feeling to be in love and happy and live!

He gave as freely of his work as flowers their perfume. He made the earth a better, brighter, and more beautiful place than he found it, and the world is healthier and happier for his having lived. More cannot be said of any man. Even a god would be proud of such a record.

It is impossible at this time to comprehend the immensity of Burbank's work, and the benefits his researches and experiments have brought to mankind.

It is even impossible to calculate the value in health and the amount of enjoyment his creations of fruits, flowers and vegetables have been even to this generation.

Millions are enjoying the fruits of his labors without the slightest knowledge of their benefactor.

Laws of selection, variation and heredity which he discovered and applied are in themselves invaluable instruments of knowledge with which to accomplish among human beings what he so marvelously achieved with plants.

Burbank's work is not done, it has really just begun. His death ended his own labors but placed a tremendous responsibility upon the living. Thousands are now required to do the work that he alone performed.

On March 7, 1849, Luther Burbank was born.

Twenty-six years later he entered Santa Rosa, California, the little town which he made his home and which he has since immortalized. He lies buried there beneath a tree he planted.

It is said that he came to this little town with but ten dollars, ten potatoes and a few choice books.

Three authors of these books inspired him in his life's work. They were, Henry Thomas Thoreau, Charles Robert

Darwin, whom he loved to call "Master," and Alexander Von Humboldt, who imbued him with the spirit of the importance and worth of his work.

These three men inspired him with a burning desire to accomplish, a confidence that only one genius can impart to another, and with an idealism known only to the few heroic men and women who have been mankind's benefactors.

And it is most fitting for us to plant this tree as a memorial to Burbank that it may grow and spread its verdant leaves as a shade over the magnificent head of this "Columbus of Science."

His material equipment was indeed poor, his body was not overstrong, and his heart was broken. He had been unsuccessful in love. He tried to mend his broken heart by lavishing his love upon his beautiful garden and upon the flowers he loved as his children. And what an abundance of love he had, and with what abandonment he lavished it!

He added strength to his body by living close to Nature, and following the advice of Mother Earth.

Enraptured in his work he began his labors of more than a half of a century.

Although Burbank came to Santa Rosa unknown and in poverty, the world made a beaten path to his door. The celebrated and the famous the world over came to pay homage to this "Gardener touched with genius."

By the fruits of his labor he gave incalculable wealth to others.

Do not let it be said, however, that Burbank's accomplishments were the result of a magic wand. He labored assiduously and found competition most keen.

There may be room always at the top, but there is always a crowd that must be pushed aside in the middle of the road so as to clear the passage for the ascent.

Burbank found many botanists, and horticulturists, and plain gardeners who were doing things a bit above the ordinary, and he realized early in life that if he was to distinguish himself he must do something that had not been done before.

The obstacles that he found in his path did not prove to be millstones around his neck, but rather milestones on his road to fame.

Each difficulty proved a new experience, and a new experience to Burbank meant more knowledge with which to work. He built his knowledge upon experience and experiments.

He had a keenness of perception not surpassed by any man. He watched for the slightest variation to wrest a secret from Nature. Experience is the only knowledge we possess and is the basis for the development of our mind. In Burbank's experiment with the cactus he discovered how intelligence is gradually formed through experience and manifests itself through what we call instinct.

As with Edison, perspiration was the predominant part of his inspiration. No task was too arduous for him and he permitted no obstacle to stand in his way. He knew the ends he wished to accomplish and determinedly set about his work.

He did not always work from appearances. Appearances, he found, were as deceiving in flowers as in human beings, and he often went back many generations to correct a fault.

A changed environment invariably changed the character of the flower, but to eradicate a deep-seated fault it was sometimes necessary to operate upon the roots.

Once he learned the secrets of Nature, once he learned to talk to Nature in her own language, Burbank became proficient in conversation. A more brilliant conversationalist the plants have never known. Once on speaking terms with Nature he established a friendship never to be broken. His loyalty never wavered.

He was also an apt pupil. He studied her alphabet, mastered her grammar, punctuation and rhetoric and wrote many pages in the book of Life which only a few are privileged to do.

"I took Nature's mind and added it to my own," said Burbank, "and by so doing bridged centuries of time in adding sweetness and charm and color to Nature's products."

He married beauty and strength and sweetness to produce the Ideal.

He took Nature by the hand, so to speak, and led her into paths of beauty that she had not dreamed existed. With his help he made Nature excel herself and sit and marvel at her wonders.

Burbank did not claim occult powers. He did not pose with a halo around his head. He did not boast that he was "divinely inspired." He performed no miracles, although he accomplished marvels.

He gladly, freely and generously gave his knowledge to others. He was an intellectual spendthrift "What I have learned, you may learn," are his words.

His soul was the heart of a true scientist.

Where did Burbank learn the great truths that he applied so effectively and so ardently wanted man to follow? Why was he so sure that they would be as successful in the human realm as they were in the plant kingdom?

Surely his own academic education was not sufficient to give him this grasp of Nature, nor was his technical training sufficient to enable him to perform his wonders.

His early schooling was the barest rudiments that the little Red School House had to offer.

The secret of his marvelous intellect and his ability to apply the knowledge he acquired are told in his own words.

He received a scholarship which anyone with a desire for knowledge may secure also. He said: "My school has been the University of Nature. I matriculated in the College of Horticulture, Department of Market Gardening, but I finished that course in short time and entered the laboratory where Nature teaches Plant Breeding. I cannot say that I graduated from that branch of the Institution even yet—there is so much to learn! But in the years that I have been a student I have spread out considerably and taken something pretty nearly of every course my Alma Mater offers except Football and Public Speaking. I was not taught everything, but was taught the fundamentals behind everything!"

In the University of Nature, Burbank not only learned about plants and flowers and trees and vegetables, but also about rocks and soil and mountains and rivers, about birds and fish and horses and cows and dogs and men.

He was told by the great Humboldt that "the Universe was governed by law," and in the University of Nature, Burbank verified this great truth!

Burbank wanted others to enter the University from which he was graduated with such high honors and in these words differentiated it from any other college in existence.

"The great difference between my favorite University and the schools men build is that the ambitious and the interested student can enroll for life and take every course offered, and each fact he adds to his store, and semester of work he does, fits him precisely and definitely for the next subject ahead without any loss of motion and without a line that is superfluous to him."

The University of Nature might well be proud of the distinguished career of her pupil and above the portals of her entrance should be inscribed these words of his.

"Nature is not personal. She is the compound of all these processes which move through the universe to effect the results we know as Life and of all the ordinances which govern that universe and that make Life continuous. She is no more the Hebrew's Jehovah than she is the Physicist's Force; she is as much Providence as she is Electricity; she is not the Great Pattern any more than she is the Blind Chance."

A great artist was once asked by a lady admirer what he mixed his paints with to get such marvelous results, and he answered: "With brains, madam." Burbank's brain bore the same relation to flowers as did the artist's to his paints.

With an almost uncanny touch the artist can, with a daub of paint, change the perspective of his picture; and so sensitive was Burbank to the pulse of the flower, that he could, with the slightest touch, make it perform wonders for him.

In his own words he defines this unusual characteristic. "It was with this instinct for selection that I was gifted. It was born in me, and I educated and gave it experience, and have always kept myself attuned to it. I have particularly sensitive nerves—that accounts partly for my unusual success in selecting, as between two apparently identical plants and flowers or trees and fruits. I have always been sensitive to odors, so that I could detect them, pleasant or disagreeable, when they were so slight that no one about me was conscious of them."

Burbank never grew old in mind or body. He was as ready to accept a new truth as to discard a wrong impression.

This attitude of mind is the first requisite of knowledge. It is the first principle of an alert intellect.

And these words of Burbank should become an axiom in our language:

"Intolerance is a closed mind. Bigotry is an exaltation of authorities. Narrowness is ignorance unwilling to be taught."

That he did not consider the Bible a divine revelation can be attested by these words of advice:

"Let us read the Bible without the ill-fitting colored spectacles of theology, just as we read other books, using our own judgment and reason, listening to the voice within, not to the noisy babel without. Most of us possess discriminating reasoning powers. Can we use them or must we be fed by others like babes?"

No dogmatism hampered Burbank. No theology prevented him from peering into the unknown. He never permitted himself to become set in his opinions.

"Folks wonder how I keep so young!" he said. "I am almost seventy-seven and still can go over a gate or run a foot race or kick the chandelier. That is because my body is no older than my mind, and my mind is adolescent. It has never grown up. It never will, I hope. I am as inquisitive as I was at eight."

To those who ask us "what will you give us in exchange" when we free them from their superstitious religion, how pertinent and precious are these words of Burbank. I wish they could be impressed upon the mind of every living person. "I have seen myself," he says, "lose intolerance, narrowness, bigotry, complacency, pride and a whole bushel-basket of other intellectual vices through my contact with Nature and with men. And when you take weeds out of a garden it gives you room to grow flowers. So, everytime I lost a little self-satisfaction, or arrogance, I could plant some broadness or love of my own in its place, and after a while the garden of my mind began to bloom and be fragrant and I found myself better equipped for my work and more useful to others as a consequence."

"I have learned from Nature that dependence on unnatural beliefs weakens us in the struggle and shortens our breath for the race," said Burbank, and in the twilight of life, when he knew that the end was approaching, he said that "the time had come for honest men to denounce false teachers and attack false gods" and with a courage characteristic of this great and grand man he proclaimed to the world that he was an infidel!

When Burbank made this declaration, the theological hyenas were ready to tear the flesh from his body. They maligned and vilified him, and tried to inter the good that he did with his bones.

When he made that statement, however, he classed himself with Franklin, Jefferson, Paine, Lincoln and Ingersoll.

Burbank refused to accept the dogma and religion of his time because he knew that they were poisoning the brain and mentality of man. They were paralyzing the intellect. He looked upon them as weeds that must of necessity be rooted out before man could think freely and act properly upon the problems of life.

Because of his fame, and despite his open declaration, the religious world is making an attempt to claim him as one of their members. What hypocrisy!

Luther Burbank was not religious!



His name cannot be mentioned in the same breath with that impulse, with that conviction which produces religious mania, religious strife, religious hatred and religious prejudice.

Religious love is clannish.

Christian loves Christian.

Jew loves Jew.

Luther Burbank loved everybody. He said: "I love everything. I love humanity. I love flowers. I love children. I love my dog."

Luther Burbank was not religious—he was too human for that.

He was a humanitarian, a lover of mankind.

A religious person loves his God. He loves his God so vehemently that he has no love left for man.

Burbank hated the idea of an all-powerful God and said: "The idea that a good God would send people to a burning hell is utterly damnable to me. The ravings of insanity! Superstition gone to seed! I don't want to have anything to do with such a God."

And in a letter from him, shortly before he died, in response to my request for a statement indicative of his belief, he wrote, "This should be enough for one who lives for truth and service to his fellow passengers on the way. No avenging Jewish God, no satanic devil, no fiery hell is of any interest to me."

A religious man attends church, observes feast days and fast days. He takes part in religious ceremonies and pays the priest to pray for him.

"Prayer," says Burbank, "may be elevating if combined with work, and they who labor with head, hands or feet have faith and are generally quite sure of an immediate and favorable reply."

To pray for that which you have not labored for is the most selfish impulse in life.

A religious man is one who has sold his brain, and who has mortgaged his intellect. He believes in a Heaven and in a Hell.

Burbank asked for no Heaven because he knew that it did not exist, and he feared no Hell because he knew that there was none.

No, Luther Burbank was not a religious man. He was a good man. He was a grand man—one of the grandest that ever lived on this earth.

Moses, and Jesus and Torquemada were religious. So were

John Calvin and John Knox and John Wesley and Martin Luther and Cotton Mather. The Pope is religious.

Hypatia and Bruno and Galileo were infidels. So were Ernest Haeckel and Herbert Spencer and Charles P. Steinmetz and Voltaire and Thomas Paine and John Burroughs and Mark Twain. Clarence Darrow was an infidel.

Luther Burbank is dead.

His lips were sealed in death with the same conviction that was his philosophy while he lived.

And now that he is gone we seek to honor his memory with the fullness of our love.

We have come not to honor a soldier or a statesman. No bugle is to sound taps for his military triumphs. We are honoring a simple, lovable man.

One who was a savor of life, a benefactor, a creator of joy, a dispenser of happiness.

One who was not revengeful or vindictive.

One who would rather have made a mistake on the side of mercy than to have a single human being suffer because of his mistake.

Those who were privileged to know Luther Burbank have lost a friend. Our country has lost one of her chosen sons, one who helped to make her famous and added lustre to her name.

The world has lost one of its great benefactors.

In the heart of the flower and in the beauty and sweetness of the world he has perpetuated himself.

And in the starry firmament of immortality is seen a new star—and there appears this illustrious son of America—this great and good man—this Scientist, Naturalist, Humanitarian and Infidel—Luther Burbank.

**SOVIET RUSSIA  
AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

## SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH \*

Lest some "hundred-percenter" shout to me as I leave this hall that I go back where I came from, I want to say at the very outset that I was born in Montgomery, Alabama, that my parents came from Charleston, South Carolina, and that although I have had but a meager formal education, I nevertheless feel quite certain that both places are in the United States of America.

The Pope's recent tirade against Soviet Russia was a deliberate effort on his part to counteract the blunder that he made in issuing his Encyclical dealing with secular education: condemning the public school system and forbidding Catholic children to attend schools open equally to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. On more than one occasion the Catholic hierarchy has condemned Republics as "pests of society" and public schools as "dens of iniquity."

Upon the publication of this stupid statement the whole civilized world expressed its condemnation of the Pope's insolence. He was very promptly and very properly rebuked, and in order that he might camouflage this mistake and distract the attention of the people from this monumental blunder, he issued his silly tirade about religious persecution in Russia. What a mockery! The Pope decrying religious persecution! The history of the human race during that period known as the "Dark Ages" was written with the blood that dripped from the sword of the Church.

Any attack upon the Russian form of government can always rally support, especially from the bigoted, the ignorant, and the intolerant, because the Russian system

\* Address delivered at the Bronx Coliseum before an audience of 20,000, Sunday, March 16, 1930.

is a new and daring experiment in government and a break-away from the conventional. Step off the beaten path and you will be heaped with vituperation even though you shorten the road to your destination.

But just as the Pope's Encyclical against secular education proved to be a blank cartridge, so his unfounded and ridiculous charges against the Russian government in this controversy proved to be nothing but noise. For, as a matter of fact, there is more religious liberty in Russia today than ever before in its history.

The same charges that are now being made against the Russian Government by the present Pope were made by the Vatican against the Republican French Revolutionists of 1873 when, because of absolute necessity, they confiscated all Church property. The Church had grown so wealthy that it was causing financial stagnation to France.

It was only recently that the present Pope made the same charges against the Mexican government that he is now making against Russia. And on the very day that the appeal for prayers was made by the fanatical clergy, the Mexican government closed three churches. In the town of Cholula which has a population of only 12,000 people, there were three hundred and sixty-five churches—one for every day of the year! The officials of the present Mexican government are trying to determine what the people did on the extra day provided by Leap Year. Mind you, three hundred and sixty-five churches, but not a single public school or a hospital in a town of 12,000 people!

But we do not have to go to Mexico or any other country for such examples. Only last Monday, March 10, 1930, there was an item in the *New York Evening Post* reporting the existence in New York State of a small village of only twenty-seven persons which has three churches—two Protestant and one Catholic. Imagine the prejudices and hatreds among these twenty-seven people! Imagine also the terrific financial load that they must carry to support the parasites of these three churches.

At this very moment Sister Concepcion, the Catholic nun, is serving a twenty-year sentence in prison for in-

stigating the assassination of President Obregon of Mexico. Has the Catholic Church condemned her for this murder? No! Not only that, but it will not be many years hence before she will be made a "little flower of the church."

If the Church were truly desirous of having religious liberty, why doesn't it practice what it demands of others?

When the Mexican government under President Plutarco Calles sought to convert surplus churches into schools and hospitals and demanded the registration of priests, the clergy went on strike. I am willing to state that those three years when the clergy were on strike proved to be the three most important years in the history of Mexico. Those three years gave the Mexican people an opportunity to have peace and prosperity in a country that had been held in bondage and continuously robbed by the Church for centuries.

I will go so far as to say that if any government is confronted with problems affecting the welfare of its people, no greater service could possibly be rendered towards the solution of those problems than for the clergy to go on strike. And I make this prediction: If the American government continues to permit the Church to wax fat on tax-exempt church property, we will, sooner or later, have to face a crisis in this country similar to that which has plagued so many European nations where the Church has grown in wealth and power as a parasite on society.

During the past decade in this city alone, church property has been sold for profits aggregating hundreds of millions of dollars. Corporations are not the only concerns making money in real estate. The Church is a very active and a very unfair competitor.

America is still too young and wealthy and unsophisticated to be fully cognizant of the dangers resulting from concentration of wealth in the hands of the Church. Thomas Jefferson warned the people of this country of this menace when he said that "in every country and in every age the priest has been hostile to Liberty." Were it not for his foresight and judgment and courage, we would not have as the First Amendment to our Constitution that wise provision prohibiting Congress from

establishing any religion. "When an individual in a church becomes dangerous to the public interest he must be checked," said Abraham Lincoln.

If it is a crime to sit by and watch without interfering a nation work out its problems even though its methods be different from ours, then I confess to being guilty of that crime of toleration towards Russia and its present government. I am not a communist and I frankly confess that I do not know enough about the Russian Government to speak about it with any authority. A person would not be fair to himself, or mentally honest, if he were to condemn something without an impartial investigation. I fear that we are too far removed from Russia to be able to get a proper perspective or a correct understanding of its system of government.

In order to appreciate fully the gigantic undertaking which has been instituted in Russia, it seems to me that one must first visit the land and spend a considerable amount of time in study and investigation before one can with any degree of accuracy determine the value of the experiment. Reports that have come to us have been too biased or too meager or too largely contradictory for people in this country to properly evaluate what is going on there.

We must not forget that Russia is a gigantic country of over one hundred and fifty millions of people, and before we condemn them we should, in all fairness, know the causes which prompted their actions. We cannot fully know to what extent they have suffered; we do not know to what extent the Czarist government tyrannized over the people or the injustices which it perpetrated. But we do know from past experience the part the Church has always played in the people's fight for liberty. The Church has always aided and abetted every force that sought to keep the people in ignorance and subjection and bondage. The worst and most damnable of all, the most insolent and licentious, were the Russian priests. They were traitors to Mankind!

Let me take a bit of satisfaction in recording this fact. When the Church resorts to prayer, when it can no longer

crush the skull of a Hypatia, when it can no longer imprison a Galileo or burn a Bruno, when it can no longer excommunicate a Spinoza or banish a Voltaire, then truly a tremendous victory has been won. When the Church can no longer bring into use its devilish instruments of torture, then truly the brutal intolerance of the Church has been broken and this day might well be celebrated by us as a victory of victories. For even if the Church does not know it, we know that prayers are only wasted efforts on the desert air! What a spectacle! The clergy praying to God to protect them from Atheists.

My parting word to you is this:

If a government is sincerely trying to establish justice, is making an effort to abolish poverty, is seeking to make the conditions of the people better, is educating its youth, is fighting to eradicate disease, is doing something to bring more comfort and happiness to its people, then I am for that government whether it be called "communistic" or by any other name.



**THE BIBLE AND  
THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## PUBLISHERS' FOREWORD

On May 25, 1930, Mr. Joseph Lewis as taxpayer, and on behalf of the Freethinkers of America, of which he is President, instituted legal proceedings to take the Bible out of the Public Schools of New York.

The case was argued before Justice John Ford of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, First Department.

Mr. Arthur Garfield Hays presented the arguments to the court on behalf of Mr. Lewis, and Mr. W. E. Mayer represented the Corporation Counsel of the City of New York.

On June 24, 1930, Mr. Justice Ford dismissed the complaint "without opinion." An appeal was taken to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, First Department, and on June 9, 1931 the same attorneys presented their arguments for their respective clients.

On July 9, 1931, the Appellate Division, consisting of Justices Finch, Merrell, McAvoy, Martin and Sherman approved the decision of Justice Ford, "without opinion."

An appeal from their decision has been taken to the Court of Appeals of the State of New York.

The question of the Bible in the Public Schools, up to that time was left entirely in the hands of the respective attorneys to be fought out upon purely legal grounds.

However, on July 23, Mr. Charles H. Tuttle, former Federal District Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and late candidate for Governor of the State of New York, and now President of the Greater New York Interfaith Committee, whose purpose it is to put religion into the Public Schools, spoke before the Rotary Club of New York, at their weekly luncheon at the Hotel Commodore, and viciously attacked both Mr. Lewis and the Society he represents, as "fanatical secularists" for their endeavors to take the Bible out of the Public Schools of New York.

Importuned by numerous friends to defend himself and the cause he represented, Mr. Lewis wrote the following letter:

July 24, 1931.

SECRETARY, ROTARY CLUB of New York,  
Hotel Commodore, New York City.

Dear Sir: I note in this morning's paper, that Mr. Charles H. Tuttle delivered an address before your organization yesterday. That Mr. Tuttle is suffering from religious hallucinations goes without saying. But when a former district

attorney, and a former candidate for the Governorship of New York State tells you that we are a fanatical sect because we are trying to uphold the fundamental American principle of the separation of Church and State, I think you owe it to us as a duty, to accord us the same privilege that you extended to him to present our side of this important public controversy.

We shall be pleased to furnish a speaker to present our point of view on any date suitable to you, or, if you wish, we would be very pleased to debate the question with Mr. Tuttle or anyone else.

Confident that you will see the justice of our request, and awaiting your kind reply, I am,

Very truly yours,

JOSEPH LEWIS.

In response to this letter, Mr. Lewis received a telephone call from Mr. Edwin H. Rushmore, Secretary of the Rotary Club of New York, inviting him to speak on the subject of "The Bible and the Public Schools," and present the Free-thinkers' point of view of this important subject.

Acknowledgment of this invitation was incorporated in the following letter:

July 30, 1931.

Mr. Joseph Lewis, President  
Freethinkers of America  
New York City

My dear Mr. Lewis:

In accordance with our conversation of this morning we are looking forward to having you as our speaker on Thursday, August 6, 1931, at 12:30 o'clock, at luncheon at the Hotel Commodore, on the subject "The Bible and the Public Schools."

I am enclosing our weekly bulletins of July 21 and 28, announcing the luncheon at which Mr. Tuttle spoke, and giving a brief account of the meeting.

Very truly yours,

Edwin H. Rushmore, Secretary.

Mr. Lewis' address follows:

He who decides a case, though he may decide rightly, if he has not heard both sides of the question, has not done justice.

Fair play is only too glibly mentioned today without being practised; and tolerance is more observed in the breach than in the performance.

And so when an occasion presents itself where both of these cherished ideals become a reality, our thanks and appreciation are due—and I want the Rotary Club of New York to know how much I appreciate the opportunity they have given me to present our side of the important controversy of "The Bible and the Public Schools."

And if there are men in this audience, who, for the first time, are looking upon a Freethinker I want to assure them that I have no horns in the back of my head; that I have never been arrested for beating my child, or for deserting my wife, and I even pay my income tax!

I also want at the very beginning of my talk to assure you that anything I might say this afternoon should not be taken as a reflection upon the personal beliefs of anyone in this audience.

I would not deliberately hurt the feelings of a single individual, and although I would like to explain in detail our philosophy, I shall do my utmost to confine myself strictly to the subject of the afternoon.

However, you have invited me to present the Freethinker's point of view on "The Bible and the Public Schools" and it would be hypocritical on my part if I did not speak the truth as I know it.

We are opposed to the reading and teaching of the Bible in the public schools from both a legal and moral point of view; and although the legal phases of the case are in the hands of our attorneys, I think we, as laymen, can well appreciate the fundamentals upon which we base our case.

The Constitution of the State of New York, Section 3, Article 1, provides as follows:

"Religious liberty: The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, *without discrimination or preference*, shall forever be allowed in this state to *all* mankind."

When George Washington Butler, that eminent mountaineer representative to the legislature of the State of Tennessee, the gentleman who introduced the notorious anti-

evolution bill, made the startling discovery, during the now famous Scopes trial, that God in his infinite wisdom did not write the Bible in the English of the King James' version, he was terribly perturbed.

If anyone attempted to use some other version of the Bible he would have considered it blasphemous.

He found out however, to his amazement, that there were not only other versions of the Bible but that no two were alike.

The Catholic version differed from the Protestant version and both in turn differed from the Hebrew version.

In view of these facts how can any one particular version or in fact all three versions be read in the public school, with children of every conceivable religious heritage, without violating both the spirit and the letter of the provision of the Constitution that I quoted.

Section 4, Article 10, of the Constitution of the State of New York says:

"Neither the state nor any subdivision thereof shall use its property or credit, or any public money, or authorize or permit either to be used directly or indirectly, in aid or maintenance of any school or institution of learning wholly or in part under the control or direction of any religious denomination, or in which any denominational tenet or doctrine is taught."

Can anyone deny that the reading of the Bible, without note or comment, is in effect a denominational tenet and religious exercise?

Can anyone deny that the Bible is a religious book and that its purchase by public money is illegal and a clear violation of this article of the Constitution?

There is a provision in the charter of the City of New York which says that the Bible may be read without note or comment, but specifically mentions that the Board of Education shall NOT be competent to decide which version shall be read!

Perhaps the great brain of Mr. Tuttle will be able to solve this conundrum.

When the wise founders of this Republic incorporated in the Federal Constitution those provisions known as the Bill

of Rights they did so with the full knowledge and understanding of their importance.

And what was the very first of those amendments? It said that, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Thomas Jefferson was responsible for the Bill of Rights, and if Mr. Tuttle is in this audience, I trust he will include the name of Jefferson among the "fanatical secularists" that he so eloquently characterized at this meeting two weeks ago.

"When a religion is good, I conceive it will support itself, and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call upon the civil authorities, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one."

I want also to make sure that Mr. Tuttle includes Benjamin Franklin, whose words I have just quoted, in his category of fanatical secularists.

The late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, William Howard Taft, said ". . . religion itself may not be taught in the public schools, or under associations so near to the public schools that they become part of the instruction."

And Ulysses S. Grant, said, "let us resolve that not one dollar of public money shall be appropriated to the support of any sectarian school. Keep the Church and State separate."

Include these two Presidents in your list, Mr. Tuttle!

But if Mr. Tuttle insists that his remarks were particularly directed at our organization, then he will have to include in his list of fanatical secularists such men as Rupert Hughes and Clarence Darrow, Sir Arthur Keith and Bertrand Russell, Dr. Henry Smith Williams and Dr. Philip G. Peabody, Ex-Premier Herriot of France and Thomas A. Edison.

And in response to an inquiry from me asking his opinion of Bible reading and Bible teaching in the public schools, Mr. Edison wrote:

"I do not believe that any type of religion should ever be allowed to be introduced into the Public Schools of the United States."

Mr. Tuttle must also include the late Luther Burbank, whose noble character and invaluable contributions to humanity are only too well known.

If these illustrious men who are members of our organization, are fanatical secularists, then I want to tell you gentlemen that I am proud to be President of that organization.

When Dr. A. S. Draper was Commissioner of Education of this state he laid down this rule: ". . . Religious exercises of any character cannot lawfully be conducted in the public schools. Reading of the Bible or repeating the Lord's Prayer is a religious exercise."

The laws governing the public schools of this state specifically mention the subjects in which the child is to be instructed, and Mr. Tuttle knows, and the churches know, that religion is not one of them.

Bible reading in the public schools is religious instruction. It is a violation of the law.

Are the strenuous efforts of the Greater New York Inter-faith Committee and their attorney Mr. Tuttle to inject religion into the public schools an admission on their part that they are unable to make the people adhere voluntarily to their creeds?

Must they have the machinery of the state to assist them in their endeavors to make adherents and supporters of their churches?

Is it possible that the people are too enlightened to support as truth dogma that has long since been proven to be founded upon superstition and mythology?

Must the public school system be used to bolster up the dwindling congregations of the churches?

And when the churches insist that the machinery of the government do the work that they are supposed to do, then is it not a public acknowledgment of their failure?

They want the government to do what they themselves are unable to accomplish. And why?

Because education has left the church lagging miserably behind. The churches insist that an adulterated product is better than a pure one.

We do not.

We believe that education makes for morality and that religion adulterates it with superstition.

When Mr. Tuttle tells you that the Bible in the Public School will cure crime, he is suffering from religious hallucinations.

*If religion could cure crime we would today be living in a paradise.*

If what Mr. Tuttle says is true, then the Middle Ages should have been the most moral in the history of Man.

Were they?

Read any authentic history and it will tell you that never in the history of the people of this earth did there exist a more demoralized or more licentious people.

Only a little more than a week ago, there appeared in the New York Press, (New York Times, Herald-Tribune, July 27, 1931) the report of Dr. Adelaide T. Case, Professor of Education at Columbia University. In this report of her examination of 1,000 pupils, she expresses her astonishment at "the surprising amount of prejudice and ignorance about religion" among the majority of these children.

She continues: "How can there be any religious tolerance and true understanding when youngsters of nine and ten have such bitter and intolerant ideas of other religions? Not only do we find a marked misunderstanding between Jew and Christian, but between Catholic and Protestant children as well."

Her reason, she says: "Too often the fault lies with the parents. It is in their power to mold and color all a child's beliefs."

It has been our contention for years that the instilling of religious beliefs in the minds of young and immature children intensifies the hatred and bigotry that must inevitably follow such teachings.

And I am glad to see our educators verifying our contention by a scientific analysis of this important phase of child education.

The prejudiced and preconceived notions that children receive from their parents regarding the religion of others is only renewed and stimulated with Bible reading.

If you send your children to school with hatred in their



hearts for other children of different religious belief, how can you expect peace and harmony in the world?

The parent who instills religious prejudice in the mind of his child not only poisons his mentality with the virus of an implacable hatred, but is guilty of a moral crime for which there is no expiation.

Let us begin right. Let us send our children to school with a tolerant attitude towards other children, and with a desire to seek the truth no matter where it leads. If we do that, we can be fairly confident that before long the dawn of brotherhood will break upon the earth.

Let me control the education of our public school children for one generation and I will perform an educational miracle.

I will not subtract a single item from the education that they now receive, but I will eradicate racial and religious prejudice and hatred from their hearts.

Perhaps the most important and significant educational test in recent years, was detailed in a paper read before the Ninth International Congress of Psychology, held at Yale University on September 6, 1929, when Professor Pleasant R. Hightower of Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, made the startling report of an examination of more than 3,300 children. The New York Times reported his address with this caption:

## **"STUDENTS OF BIBLE FOUND LESS HONEST"**

Professor Hightower said:

"People have been saying for years that if you give children a knowledge of the Bible they will walk the straight and narrow way. The results show that they will NOT walk the straight and narrow way. It does indicate very definitely that mere knowledge of the Bible of itself is not sufficient to insure the proper character attitudes."

A child must be taught the morality we wish him to follow. In facing the facts of life there is no magic wand by which we can accomplish what we desire. We must work and labor for what we want. We must be trained to perform our labors. It is a slow and painful process. Anyone who has taught children knows how difficult it is. And if any of you gentlemen

present do not know how difficult it is to teach, just remember the task you had the first time you tried to teach your friend how to play golf, or your wife how to drive a car.

If we could teach children morality by merely reading a passage from the Bible every day, then every child would be a moral genius.

No, my friends, the teaching of morality is a far more difficult task than most people realize.

Give us knowledge, and a sense of understanding, and a high order of morality cannot help but follow.

Not very long ago this city was stirred by the exploits of a young desperado. I am referring to "two-gun" Crowley. The memory of his capture is still too vivid in our imagination to need repeating here. He boldly confessed the murder of an officer of the law. I want to cite his case to show you the difference between religion and morality.

If you tell me that what he was taught is not the religion that you would teach, then I must ask who is to determine the religion that is to be taught, and when I raise that question there comes to my mind the whole history of religious antagonism and wars; with their massacres and butcheries that have stained this earth with innocent blood for the past 2,000 years.

After Crowley's capture and his incarceration he was approached by the district attorney. He said: "Of course I killed that cop, I don't like cops. No, I don't want any lawyer. Get it over with. Repent? Hell, no! My conscience was never so clear in my life. What I want is a square meal."

The kind-hearted district attorney suggested a thick beefsteak. "No, sir; no meat for me," said the young killer. "Don't you know this is Friday?"

What did Crowley's religion teach him: that it was a greater sin to eat meat on Friday than to murder a man?

When Earle Peacox was apprehended after the frightful murder of his wife he was found to be the proud possessor of a medal for six years of perfect attendance at Sunday School.

And recently a man of the Jewish faith was arrested for some infraction of the law. He refused to eat any but kosher food while in jail! He was not going to take any chances to arouse the wrath of Jehovah.

These are but three of the hundreds of instances that are happening daily to prove that religion and morality are not the same.

And I have in my hand a letter received some time ago from Mr. Lewis E. Lawes, Warden of Sing Sing Prison. It is in answer to a letter of mine asking for the religious beliefs of the inmates electrocuted during the past ten years.

To me this is a very significant letter.

And unless we are ready and willing to face the facts we would not be fair to ourselves nor to the important subject under discussion.

Mr. Lawes' figures for those executed in Sing Sing for ten years are as follows: Catholics, 65.1%, Protestants, 26.6%, Hebrews, 6.1%, Pagans, 2%, Irreligious, 0.3%.

If what Mr. Tuttle tells you about religion and crime were true, the reverse of these figures would prevail. Not only are these figures true of Sing Sing Prison, but they are substantially the same in every country, almost without exception.

*This condition proves that the more intense the religious instruction, the less is the sense of moral responsibility!*

Professor Westermarck, in his monumental work, "The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas" (Vol. 2. P. 736) says "it has been noticed that a high degree of religious devotion is frequently accompanied by a great laxity of morals." Of the Bedouins, he found that with one or two exceptions, "the practise of religion may be taken as a sure index of low morality in a tribe."

And in quoting an authority of the Mohammedan people, he records that "those Moslems who attended to their prayers most regularly were the greatest scoundrels."

Among two hundred Italian murderers, Ferri did not find one that was irreligious; and Naples, which has the worst record of any European city for crimes against the person, is also the most religious city in Europe.

On the other hand, according to Havelock Ellis, "it seems extremely rare to find intelligent irreligious men in prison."

And Laing, the historian, who was anything but a skeptic, observed that there was no country in Europe where there was so much morality and so little religion as in Switzerland.

So, when Mr. Tuttle tells you that religion is the cure-all

of crime, he makes that statement either designedly, deliberately and maliciously, knowing it to be false, or he makes it through ignorance.

If the former, it disqualifies him as an honest representative, and if the latter, it precludes him from speaking with authority upon this important subject.

Does Mr. Tuttle think for a moment that if religion, as he wants it taught, would cure crime, that we would be opposed to it?

On the contrary, we would welcome it with open arms.

What Mr. Tuttle and the Greater New York Interfaith Committee propose has been tried and has failed. That is why we are so much opposed to it. His method has been discredited. We want a better and more efficacious system.

But I do not think that Mr. Tuttle or the members of the Greater New York Interfaith Committee are seriously interested in the question of crime. It is religion that they are so much concerned about.

Another question that is sometimes raised while discussing the Bible in the schools, is that we do not object to the reading of Shakespeare.

Why should we?

Is Shakespeare imposed upon the children by law as of divine revelation? Is Shakespeare read in the schools without note or comment?

On the contrary, Shakespeare is read and discussed and studied for the good that can be gotten from him, for the knowledge that can be gained from the study of the greatest literary mind that ever lived upon this earth. And when the Bible is put into our educational institution to be studied as Shakespeare is now studied, no one will be better pleased than we are. Because we advocate the study of the Bible. We advocate that it be studied with the same searching inquiry as any other book.

We do not for one moment want to convey the impression that our efforts to take the Bible out of the public schools is an attempt to interfere with the rights that parents possess to instruct their children in religion if they so desire.

If parents wish to instruct their children in a religious doctrine there is plenty of time outside of school hours and

on Saturdays and Sundays for this purpose. To ask the public schools to do the work that properly belongs upon the shoulders of the parents and the churches is not only an unjust imposition but reveals a shameful shirking of their duty.

And it is a peculiar situation that those who are trying to uphold the law and the Constitution are put on the defensive by being called "intolerant" and "fanatical," while the churches and their paid representatives, who are deliberately making every effort to violate the law to attain their ends, are put in the light of the injured party.

The attitude of the churches in trying to break into the public schools and break down the safeguards which were so wisely provided in the Constitution reminds me of a man who, after robbing a store, runs down the street shouting "stop, thief," for the purpose of distracting the attention of the people from his crime.

*How can the churches plead respect for law, when they are doing their utmost to violate it for their own selfish purposes?*

They are merely trying to bootleg religion into the public schools, and bootlegging is obnoxious even if done by a churchman.

There is an old principle of justice, that if you come into a court of equity you must come with clean hands.

The injection of religion into the public schools breeds prejudice and hatred among the pupils. It intensifies their religious convictions, and discord and dissension must inevitably follow.

The fight to take the Bible out of the Public School and stop the singing of hymns is a movement that has been going on for decades. It is an endeavor to keep our public institutions free of religious influences, as well as to keep up with the march of intellectual progress.

The Bible cannot legally be read or taught in the State of Ohio. It cannot legally be read or taught in the States of Wisconsin, California, Illinois, Kentucky, Kansas or Washington.

And the last state to my knowledge where a decision has been secured on this question comes from the far western State of South Dakota. It was rendered by the highest court of that state in June, 1929.

After reviewing fully the question, the court said:

"A review of the history and a comparison of our institutions with those of other nations where religion is under state control, reveals the wisdom of our policy. It will not do, by an ill-advised decision, to impair the liberty of conscience so carefully safeguarded in this country."

The charge is made that without the reading of the Bible our public schools are Godless.

The same court had this to say in answer to that:

"Another premise to be firmly fixed is that the reading of the Bible, or the offering of prayer, or both, in opening the exercises, is devotional, and not a part of the secular work of the school. One serious complaint made by religious people is that by excluding such exercises we thereby make our schools Godless. Such complaints argue that the converse would be true if such exercises were allowed, indicating that such exercises are considered devotional."

I do not think that the members of the highest court of the State of South Dakota are "fanatical secularists," but I want to take the opportunity of congratulating them on their sound Americanism.

*Secularism, gentlemen—the separation of Church and State—is the magic principle that has made this country the most outstanding success among the governments of the world.*

When the time comes when such a system of government no longer exists in this country, the time will come when religious freedom will cease.

The reading of the Bible and the injection of religion into the public schools is the entering wedge that will eventually destroy this principle.

And the old adage is still true that "a little leak will sink a big ship" . . .

Would Mr. Tuttle and the misguided members of the Interfaith Committee have us surrender this principle?

Can an intelligent person, looking back upon the history of those governments which sanctioned religion in their public institutions, and reviewing the fearful destruction wrought by a connection of Church and State, want to see such a blight fall upon this Republic?

The public schools of this state provide for the secular education of our children; the teaching of those fundamentals which we all agree upon as the basis of truth and knowledge. They must be kept free from sectarian influences, influences which are diametrically opposed to all the principles of education and learning.

I have the utmost confidence in the efficacy of our public school system. Its work has been most commendable; its future of great potentiality. I hold that the public schools are the most fundamental and most important institution of America. It is indeed the "melting pot," and we do not intend to sit idly by while over-zealous religious forces seek to "season" it to their liking.

We send our children to the public schools, not to be made Protestants, Catholics, or Jews, but American citizens, and to be instructed in the fundamentals of education. They are sent to the public schools to be taught that each and every one is equal before the law, and that each possesses the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

And that man is an enemy to this country, an enemy to its ideals and institutions who seeks to corrupt that system with religion.

The record of the public schools needs no defense. They are a shining light to America and her principles of equality. Nowhere in the world has education better shown itself than in the splendid men and women who are the products of the public school system of this country.

For that reason we are opposed to the reading and the teaching of the Bible in the Public Schools.

We are opposed to the Bible in the Public Schools because we want to eradicate religious prejudice, bigotry and hatred. We are opposed to the Bible in the Public Schools because we want our children to receive the finest secular education that the world has to offer.

We are opposed to the Bible in the Public Schools because we want our boys and girls to grow up to be intellectually free and morally courageous men and women.

We are opposed to the Bible in the Public Schools because we want the future citizens of this country to be Americans in the best sense of that word.

**SHALL CHILDREN RECEIVE  
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION?**



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## SHALL CHILDREN RECEIVE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

A debate between Rev. Walter M. Howlett (Secretary of the Department of Religious Education of the Greater New York Federation of Churches) for the affirmative; and Mr. Joseph Lewis (President of the Freethinkers of America) for the negative.

### INTRODUCTION

During the last week of September, 1932, The Greater New York Federation of Churches had carried on a program emphasizing and advocating the value of religion in education. Newspapers had given wide publicity to this "Religious Instruction Week."

Mr. Edward L. Wertheim, who represented The Greater New York Federation of Churches, conceived the idea that the efforts of his organization during "Religious Instruction Week" could be brought to a climactic finish by a public debate on that subject. He, therefore, secured the services of Reverend Walter M. Howlett and Mr. Joseph Lewis as the two men most eminently capable of advancing the arguments for and against religious education for children.

Through the courtesy of Mr. S. Theodore Granick, director of the "Forum Hour" on Radio Station WOR, it was arranged that the debate was to be delivered over that station on Sunday, October 2nd, 1932. Each speaker was permitted a presentation of fourteen minutes, and a rebuttal of three minutes.

The result of the debate, Mr. Granick explained, would be determined by the radio audience itself which would be invited to express its decision by vote, to be announced one week later over Station WOR.

### PRESENTATION OF THE AFFIRMATIVE

RESOLVED: That Children Should Be Given Religious Instruction.

REV. WALTER M. HOWLETT

Secretary of the Department of Religious Education  
of the Greater New York Federation of Churches

It is a self-evident fact that children should be given instruction. It would not be possible to conceive of an intelligent mind that would question such a statement. Education we must have—the only question to be discussed then this afternoon, as I understand it, is—

## SHOULD CHILDREN BE GIVEN RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION?

In its simplest form religious instruction has to do with our relationships with one another and our relationships with God. Religious instruction therefore would be instruction concerning the relationships between persons and between persons and God. Christian education, which is the religious education with which I am most familiar, would deal with what Jesus taught should be the relationships of persons and His conception of what the best relationship ought to be between persons and God.

Education has been defined as life. To put it in the schoolman's phrase—it is the continual reconstruction of experience. The great objective of religious education is the enrichment of life. Our Master said: "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."—John x, 10.

The objectives of religious education have been defined under seven heads by the representatives of the Protestant denominations of the United States of America. Since they are the consensus of opinion of the great body of educators representing millions of people, these objectives are much more important than anything I could say independently. Therefore, let us consider them.

First, religious instruction seeks to bring the individual into a consciousness of God as a reality in human existence and a source of personal relationship to Him.

Let me be concrete. A child watches a beautiful sunset. His heart and his emotions are stirred within him. He is led to wonder and into thanksgiving that such beauty exists. When a parent turns these emotions of his child toward God as the Giver and Creator of this beauty that is religious instruction. Further when the little child, just learning to speak, kneels in prayer with the parents—or more often with the mother alone—and is taught in simple words to thank God for the gifts of life, for its beauty and its truth, and to ask God to help him take the right course and to obtain the victory in right living—that is for the child religious instruction in its most beautiful and most effective form. He begins to know God in his own experience. This experience will ever grow and widen as the child becomes older. Dealing with the scientific side of this, James' "Varieties of Religious

Experience" is one of the greatest books ever written and thoroughly scholarly.

The second great objective in Christian religious education is to experience God through the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is to experience Christ as Saviour and Lord and to accept and act on the assumption of Jesus that persons are of infinite worth.

The idea of God has evolved throughout the ages. Truth does not come to man full-blown but yields its meaning bit by bit—so man's idea of God. In the early ages this idea was crude. Jesus however reveals a God Who is a loving Father, Who cares for each individual person. In its simplest form, Jesus brought to the world the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.

The third objective of religious education is character building.

Now it might be said that the teaching of morality produces character and it does to a certain extent. To make morality effective however there must be emotion. Someone has said that religion is morality tinged with emotion. Psychology has taught us that emotion is the power house to character building. Undirected power is dangerous. Religious instruction seeks to guide that power into the *right channels*. It recognizes that character building is progressive. There is one ideal for the little child, another for the growing child, another for the youth and another for age. *Character building is never completed—it is a growing process.*

Christian instruction seeks to lead the individual into an enthusiastic and intelligent participation in the building of a community and a world.

Character does not develop in a vacuum. It develops in relationships of people. It has to do with the building of a good community. America has examples enough of the anti-social character. To be concrete, it feeds the hungry. It seeks to cast out disease, ignorance, *prejudice* and war—that is religious education.

Religious education seeks to develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in the work of the organized Church.

I am not dealing with any theory of the origin of the church. I am only saying that religious instruction is not confined to the home alone. It seeks to get together in the

community in an organized way, which way is through the church or synagogue. One object is to worship God but the greater object is that righteousness and right relationships may prevail among men.

Sixth: Religious education seeks to develop in growing persons a particular theory of life and the universe.

Right living produces right thoughts and right theories. At the same time, right theories produce right living. It seeks to lead persons into a sound theory of the universe.

Seventh: One of the greatest teachers of the Christian religion said: "Whatsoever things are TRUE, whatsoever things are HONORABLE, whatsoever things are JUST, whatsoever things are PURE, whatsoever things are LOVELY, whatsoever things are of GOOD REPORT; if there be any VIRTUE, and if there be any PRAISE, think of these things."—Phil. iv, 8.

It leads children to appreciate the great literature of the world especially the Bible because it contains so much of what is most worthwhile. Then it leads to an appreciation of the lives of great men and women who have meant the most in bringing about a better world. So many of the great paintings of the world deal with religion. How many paintings of the MADONNA AND CHILD have we among the masterpieces of the world? Would you deny children the study of these? How many of the great paintings have to do with the heart of religious instruction? How much of the poetry, how much of the great prose, how much of the great architecture, how much of the music, of all art is based on religion! In fact, unless children are given religious instruction, the best that life has to give will be missed.

All the world without exception will agree that children should be given religious instruction in the widest sense of the term. The only question among intelligent men can be what is religious instruction—what should be included in it and what should be excluded? After all that is about all that our discussion this afternoon can deal with.

President Hoover gave an address on Thursday and referred to the Children's Charter and he has done what every other president has done from the beginning of time in this country—he has said that the morality and welfare of our people and in turn the well-being of our state, country and institutions depends upon religion. He made the aims of the

Children's Charter his own. He said: "For every child spiritual and moral training to help him stand firm under the pressure of life."

It is one thing to stand firm under the pressure of life—character we must have—it is another to have life and have it abundantly and this is the fruit of religious education.

## PRESENTATION OF THE NEGATIVE

RESOLVED: That Children Shall Not Receive Religious Education.

BY JOSEPH LEWIS

President, Freethinkers of America

This is not a question as to whether a parent has the *right* to instruct his child in religious matters.

The Freethinkers of America maintain that parents possess *not only a fundamental right* in this respect, but that it is the duty of society to see that *this right* is always respected and maintained. But however emphatic we are in stating the principle of the parent's inalienable right to instruct his child in religious matters, we are *equally as emphatic* in contending that the inculcation of religious doctrines into the mind of a child is not only philosophically wrong, but morally and ethically harmful and detrimental.

The right to do a thing, and the propriety of doing that thing, are two altogether different propositions.

Many parents claim the right to beat their children.

They maintain that without corporal punishment they are unable to "make them good."

We consider the beating of a child to be brutally cruel and morally reprehensible.

But many parents still accept the Biblical injunction, the substance of which is, to spare the rod and spoil the child.

Not only have parents claimed the right to beat their children, but corporal punishment, until recently, was inflicted upon children even in our own public schools.

As the beating of children has been found to be wrong both in principle as well as in practice, we no longer permit the teacher in our public schools to inflict physical punishment.

And we no longer permit our public institutions to give religious instruction to children. Why?

Because the entire fabric of religious instruction has been found to be both educationally useless and intellectually harmful.

And just as we have made definite progress in convincing parents that it is wrong to beat their children, so I trust it will not be long before parents are convinced of the detrimental effects of giving religious instruction to their children.

In discussing this question one must speak plainly and frankly if one is to be honest in his presentation. And the more serious the question the more important it is that the facts be presented as they are.

At the outset let me define what is meant by religion. Religion is that which deals with man's relationship to a god, and all the ceremonies attendant upon that belief. It consists in praying, in making sacrifices, in observing feast and fast days, and in the worship and fear of a god. To give any other definition of religion is to confuse the issue in an attempt to avoid its implications.

Religious instruction consists in inculcating into the mind of the child the doctrine of a particular dogma.

Of what that dogma consists does not concern us in this particular discussion. *It matters not which one it is.* The mere fact that it is based upon a presumed infallible revelation *is sufficient* to exclude it from the mind of a child.

All religious systems and all religions are fundamentally based upon the fear of a god.

And the religious tenet that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" is contrary to every principle of enlightened education.

Nothing has proved more harmful and detrimental to the building of character than the inculcation of fear into the mind of a child. We cannot expect children, who are saturated with fear, to grow up to be intellectually free and morally courageous men and women. Any instruction that carries with it a fear reaction should be avoided as a plague. Because the courage to face the facts of life is without question the most important and most essential element in child training and education. What the world needs today is not cringing, frightened minds, but bold and courageous ones.

No better advice in this respect can be given than these words of Thomas Jefferson. He said: "Fix Reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion.

Question with boldness even the existence of God; because if there be one, He must approve the homage of reason rather than that of blindfolded fear."

Ethics deals with principles of conduct between me and my fellow-man, and morality is a code of rules by which the individual conducts himself. The more we know, the more intelligent we are, the higher are our principles of ethics and the more scrupulous are our morals. It is our contention that education makes for morality and religion adulterates it with superstition. There is no problem of human conduct, either in the field of ethics or in the realm of morality, that cannot be solved without the element of religion.

In fact, no human problem can be solved satisfactorily until religion has been absolutely and completely separated from it. Whenever man has sought to solve his problems in conjunction with religion his tasks have become more complicated, and his conclusions have proved disastrous.

No better proof can be given of this than the principle underlying our own government. Secularism—the separation of Church and State—is the magic principle that has made this country the most outstanding success among the nations of the world. And what has proved beneficial and successful in the social sphere will be more definitely beneficial when practiced by the individual.

Religion belongs in the field of speculative philosophy. And I challenge any one to disprove the statement that there exists today a single system of religion that has for its basis anything *other* than speculation. What an injustice it is, then, to impose upon the mind of a child speculative philosophy when the most acute adult minds are baffled by it.

The child has task enough in understanding the simple things of life, without complicating its mentality with propositions impossible of solution. To burden the child's mind with anything but the truth is to handicap its whole mental machinery.

Intellectual freedom is the birthright of every child. He who robs a child of that right commits, in my opinion, an unpardonable crime.

If we are at all concerned with the education of our children it becomes of paramount importance that the child be taught the truth. And no doctrine should be taught as fundamental that has not been subjected to the closest and most



searching inquiry. And it is because religions are based upon faith, and not upon proven and indisputable facts, that we have so many diverse and conflicting systems.

And although many religious systems accept the same basis for their creeds, their differences as to interpretation have caused the most vicious and antagonistic conflicts; conflicts that have led to murder and massacres, and to the bloodiest wars man has ever suffered upon this earth. It is because of these wide differences of opinion regarding the interpretation of religion that its inculcation into the mind of a child becomes so pernicious.

It is just as easy to teach a child the truth as it is to teach it a falsehood. It is just as easy to teach a child the facts of life—the basic and fundamental principles of existence—as it is to fill its mind with weird superstitions and phantasies.

Teaching facts, and the truths of life, has the added virtue in addition to its being the truth. It possesses the rare quality of honesty. And I would rather be honest in teaching my child the facts and truths of life than in maintaining an institution, regardless of how sacred it may be held.

Mental honesty is, above all the attributes, the greatest virtue of the mind.

Cultivate in our children this virtue and nine-tenths of the problems of misconduct will be solved.

It is the contention of some parents that it is better to teach their children "some kind of a religion" with the hope and expectation that when the child becomes an adult it will then be able to determine for itself whether the religious instruction it received was true or false, and whether it should be retained or rejected.

If the harm of such instruction was merely its stupidity, then there would be no need for its condemnation. But the leaders of organized institutions of religion know that that which is impressed upon the mind of a child before the age of seven, molds and shapes the child's character. Only by the most heroic mental effort are men and women able to eradicate the teachings they received in childhood, but which are no longer tenable in the face of present day knowledge.

To inculcate religious dogma into the mind of a child, with the hope that when it grows older it will discover its falsity, is to perpetrate upon that child irreparable harm.

What would we think of a teacher who taught a child the

wrong principles of grammar, and gave as her excuse that when the child grew up, it would then be able to distinguish between the wrong instruction and the right principles.

What would we think of a teacher who taught a child that the way to arrive at a sum of figures is to multiply and subtract, hoping that in later life the child would discover the mistake, correct the false method, and free its mind from these entangling conclusions.

Giving a child religious instruction about matters that are based upon faith and belief, and of which there are no known facts, with the hope that the child in later life will discover the truth and free its mind of these confusing ideas, is just as stupid as it would be to inculcate the wrong principles of grammar and arithmetic.

Does any one think for a moment that if religious instruction to children were conducive to good morality that we would be opposed to it? On the contrary, we would most heartily favor it. It is because religious instruction has been tried and found wanting that we are opposed to it.

If children, given religious instruction, were more moral and offered better examples of proper conduct than those children whose education consisted solely of ethical instruction and moral precepts, then there would be no question about its benefits. But the facts are on the other side.

The most careful analysis and the most searching inquiry reveal that the children whose education is free from religious bias and influence, and who are taught strictly the rules of morality, are more upright and are often better examples of right conduct than those who received religious instruction.

Perhaps the most important and significant educational test in recent years was detailed in a paper read before the Ninth International Congress of Psychology, held at Yale University on September 6th, 1929, when Professor P. R. Hightower of Butler University, made the startling report of an examination of more than 3,300 children. The New York Times reported his address with this caption:

#### STUDENTS OF BIBLE FOUND LESS HONEST

Professor Hightower said: "People have been saying for years that if you give children a knowledge of the Bible they will walk the straight and narrow way. The results show that

they will NOT walk the straight and narrow way. It does indicate very definitely that mere knowledge of the Bible of itself is not sufficient to insure the proper character attitudes."

If we could teach children morality by merely reading a passage from the Bible every day then every child would be a moral genius. But the teaching of morality is a far more difficult task than most people realize.

Give us knowledge, and a sense of understanding, and a high order of morality cannot help but follow.

Recently I received from Mr. Lewis E. Lawes, Warden of Sing Sing Prison, a letter giving me the religious beliefs of the inmates electrocuted in Sing Sing during the past ten years.

And unless we are ready and willing to face the facts we would not be fair to ourselves nor to the important subject under discussion. Mr. Lawes' figures for those executed in Sing Sing for ten years are as follows: Catholics, 65.1%; Protestants, 26.6%; Hebrews, 6.0%; Pagans, 2.0%; Irreligious, 0.3%.

If religious instruction were conducive to a high degree of morality, then the reverse of these figures would prevail. And not only are these figures true of the State of New York, but they are substantially the same in every state, almost without exception.

This condition *proves* that the more *intense* the religious instruction the *less* is the sense of moral responsibility!

Only a little more than a year ago, there appeared in the New York press, the report of Dr. Adelaide T. Case, Professor of Education at Columbia University. In this report of her examination of over 1,000 pupils, she expresses her astonishment at "the surprising amount of prejudice" among the majority of these children.

She continues: "How can there be any religious tolerance and true understanding when youngsters of nine and ten have such bitter and intolerant ideas of other religions? Not only do we find a marked misunderstanding between Jew and Christian, but between Catholic and Protestant children as well."

The reason, she says: "Too often the fault lies with the parents. It is in their power to mold and color all a child's beliefs."

It has been our contention for years that the instilling

of religious beliefs in the minds of young and immature children intensifies the hatred and bigotry that must inevitably follow such teachings.

And I am glad to see our educators verifying our contention by a scientific analysis of this important phase of child education.

The prejudiced and preconceived notions that children receive from their parents, regarding the religion of others, is only renewed and stimulated with religious instruction.

If you send your children into the world with hatred in their hearts for other children of different religious belief, how can you expect peace and harmony in the world?

The parent who instills religious prejudice into the mind of his child not only poisons that child's mentality with the virus of an implacable hatred, but is guilty of a moral crime for which there is no expiation.

Let us begin right. Let us keep our children free from religious prejudice. Let us send our children out into the world with a tolerant attitude towards other children, and with a desire to seek the truth no matter where it leads. If we do that, we can be fairly confident that, before long, the dawn of brotherhood will break upon the earth.

## REBUTTAL BY THE AFFIRMATIVE

REV. WALTER M. HOWLETT

Mr. Lewis is talking about an age long since gone. He is a very learned man but in regard to religious education, its objects and what it seeks to do, he is no more an authority than I would be on atheism. The basic idea of religious education is not fear but love, love of God and love of fellow man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." These are the words of Jesus. I will leave it to any intelligent person to decide if these teachings are dangerous to children. Are children likely to be better or worse if they are taught to base their lives in such practices?

Mr. Lewis says that the teaching of religion means the teaching of falsehood. The Master said: "Know the truth and the truth shall make you free." All modern and up-to-date religious education is based on this idea, whether it be Christian religious education or otherwise. The open mind, the search for truth, the testing of things, is basic in religious education. Is an attitude of this kind likely to better social life?

Then he fears that in view of the fact that there are different religions, that because I have dealt with Protestant Christian religion, I have brought in a dangerous principle. Does he know that all religious education, no matter what the division may be, teaches pupils to seek the truth and that great religious movements are co-operating? Witness in this respect our Interfaith Committee in New York City where the three great faiths co-operate in the interests of childhood of our city and the welfare of our country.

Again he says criminals label themselves Protestant, Catholic or Jew, and only 0.3% label themselves Pagan or irreligious. It is true that practically all people do label themselves as belonging to some faith or other. There is not even 0.1% of our people in America who would not label themselves under one or another. Thus the so-called Pagans or irreligious, even according to the figures Mr. Lewis gives, have many times their normal percent of criminals according to their quota of the population. Is he aware that scientific investigation has shown that those who really practice religious living, speaking generally, do not commit crimes?

Then Mr. Lewis quotes Dr. Adelaide Case and Professor P. R. Hightower. He fails, however, to get the point in each of these instances. I am well acquainted with this great teacher, Dr. Adelaide Case, and familiar with her work. If any reader will study the book and the article quoted he will find that what each is contending for, is a particular method in religious education. What they really say is that religious education to be effective must be "learning by doing," not by memorizing Bible verses in general or abstract principles about virtue. People do not become virtuous in that way, they acquire virtue and righteous living by "being and doing." It is only thus that religious education is effective.

No intelligent person teaches falsehoods or hate, or the beating of children for that matter. Teaching religious edu-

cation is summed up in "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." Teach children to practice this kind of living and life will be more satisfying; their future will be sure and our country will be a better place in which to live.

## REBUTTAL BY THE NEGATIVE

JOSEPH LEWIS

"To make morality effective there must be emotion," says Rev. Mr. Howlett.

The most dangerous person in the community is the man or woman obsessed with religious emotion. Our insane asylums are filled with religious maniacs. The man who shot President Doumer of France was deeply religious. He said that he committed his crime by the direction of God. The assassinator of President Garfield said in his defense that God told him to commit his dastardly crime. The daily papers are filled with crimes committed by the homicidal religiously insane.

Instead of its being an argument in favor of religious instruction, morality mixed with religious emotion is one of the most pertinent reasons why children should NOT receive religious instruction.

No child should be taught to pray to God for help, not only because the prayer will not be answered, but because it is a selfish act. The height of selfishness is to ask for something you have not worked for. And to teach a child to pray has still an additional objection. It undermines the *strength of will* which is so necessary to character building.

This illustration is pertinent.

Two little girls were on their way to school. As they approached the school house, the bell rang, which meant that they should be inside the building. One little girl, brought up in a religious home, said to the other: "O, Mary, we are late, let us pray." The other little girl, the daughter of Free-thinkers, hastily replied: "O, NO. Let us RUN."

I challenge the statement of Rev. Howlett that religious instruction teaches a child to appreciate the lives of the great benefactors of the human race. Invariably our great men have been martyrs to the cause of truth. Galileo was imprisoned; Bruno and John Huss were burnt at the stake by

the religionists of their time. In our own day we see Thomas Paine, the author-hero of the American Revolution denied his proper place in American history because of his irreligious opinions. And when Thomas A. Edison died, a teacher of religion had the brazen effrontery to berate the American people for honoring so great a man merely because he rejected the religious opinions of his day.

Religious instruction narrows a child's mentality to the scope of the particular religious dogma it receives. The teaching of ethics and morality, *free* from religious bias, permits a child to weigh the opinions and thoughts of the world.

Some of the points raised by Rev. Mr. Howlett injected sectarianism into this debate, and that is what I wanted to avoid.

I wanted to discuss this question purely from a philosophical and educational point of view. To discuss it from the angle of sectarianism would only add another argument against giving children religious instruction, because it would provoke antagonism from many sides.

The test made by Dr. Case, which I mentioned in my presentation, proves the harm of the very instruction proposed by Rev. Mr. Howlett. It is sectarianism that has caused man's inhumanity to man, and you cannot separate sectarianism from religious instruction.

We want our children to be instructed in the highest principles of ethics and the soundest code of morals. This cannot be done as long as they are associated with religious dogma. Not until we keep our children free from religious bigotry and prejudice will the human race make any definite progress towards peace and understanding.

## RESULT OF THE VOTE ON THE DEBATE BY THE RADIO AUDIENCE

As previously explained in the Introduction, the winner of the debate between Rev. Walter M. Howlett and Mr. Joseph Lewis was determined by the recorded votes of the radio audience.

On Sunday, October 9th, 1932, Mr. S. Theodore Granick announced over Radio Station WOR that the public vote on the question "Should Children Receive Religious Instruction" stood more than three to one in favor of Mr. Joseph Lewis, who had spoken against it.

# **MEXICO AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**



## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

IT IS common knowledge that, ever since the successful establishment of the Republic of Mexico during the administrations of Presidents Obregon, Calles, and Cardenas, there has been a terrific conflict between the Government and the Roman Catholic Church.

The crisis has been severe. Blood has been spilled in actual insurrection by the Church and its followers.

If for no other reason, the religious crisis in Mexico has held the nationwide attention of our country. It was, therefore, decided that a public debate be held on the subject so that the question could be presented by men who were competent to discuss the question, and who could be considered representative of the opposing forces.

Through the courtesy of Mr. S. Theodore Granik, the facilities of the "Forum Hour" on Radio Station WOR, on Sunday, July 7, 1935, were offered.

The subject selected for the debate was:

*"Is Mexico's Religious Policy Justified?"*

The affirmative was supported by Mr. Joseph Lewis, President of the Freethinkers of America.

The negative was taken by Hon. William J. Boylan, Member of the House of Representatives of the United States from the State of New York.

The publishers must offer an apology to readers of this pamphlet. In printing a debate it is but common courtesy to publish the addresses of *both* speakers. Unfortunately, in this instance, Congressman Boylan declined to permit the inclusion of his address.

Yet, even though Congressman Boylan's address is missing, it is felt that those who read Mr. Lewis's presentation as contained here will be satisfied that they have obtained every fundamental point of the subject—especially since the public vote, as received by the officials of WOR, stood nearly two to one in favor of Mr. Lewis.

*Radio Address Delivered by Mr. Joseph Lewis,  
President of the Freethinkers of America,  
Over Radio Station WOR Sunday,  
July 7, 1935, on the Question:*

## **“IS MEXICO’S RELIGIOUS POLICY JUSTIFIED?”**

I CONSIDER it a great privilege to defend the Mexican people in their present religious controversy with the Catholic Church.

From the facts in my possession, coupled with indisputable records from the pages of history, not only do I justify the Mexican people in curbing the activities of the church, I also believe the firm stand they have taken was necessary to their security and peace.

In debating an important question of this kind it would be an act of cowardice on my part if I failed to speak the truth which the facts demand.

Where human liberty and human life are involved, I do not consider any institution too sacred to be exposed. Nor do I believe that the ends of justice can be achieved by remaining silent upon a subject, merely because a religious institution is involved.

No wrong can be too old or too venerable to be attacked.

And he who decides a case, though he may decide

rightly, if he has not heard both sides of the question has not done justice.

In my opinion, there is no question of religious liberty involved in this controversy.

If this were a question of religious freedom, I would plead with all the power and strength that I possess not only for the Catholic Church, but for any church; and not only for any church, but for any individual.

I do not believe that religious liberty depends upon arguments.

It is a fundamental human right.

Although I believe that religion has been a retarding influence upon the intellectual and social life of the human race I would not, for a single moment, deprive any person of the right to worship or to hold any religious opinion he desires.

This right, however, belongs equally to the person who does not worship and who is free from any religious beliefs whatsoever.

But religion, to an even greater degree than charity, covers a multitude of sins.

When a religious organization aligns itself with the forces of reaction it cannot cry "Intolerance" and "Persecution" if it meets the forces of progress.

Catholicism is not the native religion of the Mexican. It is foreign and alien to his nature.

It was not until the year 1521, that an emissary of the Pope planted his flag upon Mexican soil.

Shortly thereafter, the simple faith of the Aztecs was destroyed.

All of their sacred literature and religious symbols were consumed in flames, and the population baptised en masse into Catholic Christianity.

From that day began the exploitation of a people, almost unparalleled in history.

In addition to being robbed of their possessions, they were forced to adopt this alien religion at the point of the sword.

So abject did they become that not only their lands, but even their domestic animals, had to be blessed by the Church—for pay.

And on November 4, 1571, there was established in Mexico, under the dominant rule of the Catholic Church, the most hateful institution that ever existed upon this earth,—The Inquisition.

The palace of the Inquisition in Mexico City is now the National School of Medicine.

On April 11, 1649, one hundred and twenty seven persons were burned to death for violating the laws prohibiting religious liberty.

The Mexican people in their fight against tyranny, corruption and exploitation, found that it was first necessary to break the strangle-hold that the Catholic Church had upon their lives.

No government could exist in Mexico, until the present successful revolution, which offered the slightest semblance of freedom and equality to its people as long as the Catholic Church possessed the resources, controlled the education, and dictated the policies of the nation.

Four hundred years of uninterrupted rule gave the

Catholic Church absolute dominance over fifteen million Mexicans.

No word of mine, no argument that I could advance, could as pertinently tell the story of this dominance and its degradation as the facts of history itself.

The progress of a nation is determined by the welfare of its people.

What did these four hundred years of absolute domination by the Catholic Church do for the Mexican people?

What was their condition before the revolution of 1857?

It was one of subjection and abject poverty.

What was their average in education? It was one of the lowest on the American continent. 85% were illiterate.

What was their standard of living?

Hardly better than that of slaves.

What was their per capita wealth?

The Church either owned or controlled nearly 90% of this immensely valuable land.

No country in the world had become so pauperized through the avarice of the church. It became known as the "paradise of religious orders."

What was their political situation?

They were vassals of the Church.

Did they possess religious freedom?

How could they? The laws under which they lived for over three hundred years expressly prescribed the Roman Catholic religion, and proscribed all others.

The first Mexican constitution, adopted in 1824, under

the domination of the Catholic Church, specifically provided that "The religion of the Mexican nation is and shall perpetually be Roman Catholic—and forbids the exercise of any other."

This is not the first time that the Catholic Church has maintained that the Mexican people have been unfriendly to it.

When the constitution of 1857 was formed, Pope Pius IX denounced it in scathing terms and pronounced the anathema of the Church upon it.

When General Plutarco Elias Calles was President and sought to enforce the reformed constitution of 1917, based upon the Constitution of 1857, not only were there loud cries of "persecution", but an edict of excommunication was threatened against the people.

And what happened?

The Government of Mexico insisted upon the observance of its laws.

And what was the result?

In 1926 the present Pope placed an interdict upon the people, and the Catholic Church in its entirety went on strike.

For three years it refused to participate in the religious exercises of the Mexican people.

And it was my prediction then, and I think subsequent events have verified it, that those three years proved to be three years of momentous importance in the intellectual and political life of the Republic.

During this period the Mexican government laid the substantial foundation for a new social order, bringing to

the enslaved Mexican people the first ray of light of political and social freedom that has brightened their dark horizon during more than four centuries.

While the three-year strike of the Catholic Church lasted, other religious organizations continued to function, and when services were resumed, the hierarchy discovered that it had lost thousands of its communicants.

Laws satisfactory to other religions should certainly be good enough for Catholicism.

Mexicans are not the only people who have found it necessary during the past centuries to curb the power of the Catholic Church.

France, Italy, Spain, Germany and England found it necessary, for the stability of their government and for the welfare of their people not only to curb, but in some instances to expel the church.

The pages of history speak for themselves.

The religiously deluded youth who assassinated President-elect Alvaro Obregon wore under his shirt, over his heart, a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe when he committed this dastardly deed.

Today, a Mother Superior is serving a sentence of life imprisonment for her participation in this crime. In a solemn religious ceremony she blessed the pistol that fired the fatal shot.

Evidence raises the suspicion that the Catholic Church supported the reprehensible and traitorous Huerta in his campaign of conspiracy against the Mexican people, which ended in the assassination of their beloved President—Francisco Madero.



Even if the clergy had nothing to do with the murder of Madero directly, they rejoiced at his death.

For two days following his burial, services of celebration were held in their churches throughout the land.

What would our government do if a church persistently violated our laws, flouted our efforts to establish a system of secular education, and was suspiciously associated with the assassination of our presidents?

I think the attitude of the Mexican people in this crisis is one of great restraint and lenity.

It is only when the Catholic Church becomes an instrument of political intrigue that the Mexican people insist that its priests be silenced, and its subversive activities halted.

If an individual is known to be an habitual criminal greater precautions are used to protect society from him.

A defiant, meddling, domineering and conspiring religious institution can easily become Public Enemy Number 1.

Thomas Jefferson must have had Mexico in mind when he said:

"In every country and in every age the priest has been hostile to liberty, he is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own."

Mexico is now living under a constitution which compares very favorably with, and in some respects, is admirably in advance of our own.

The Mexican constitution, like our own, provides for

the secular education of its children, and for the rights of conscience in matters of religious belief.

We cannot object to another country's flattering us by its imitation of our laws, especially if those laws are the fundamental basis of *our* government.

Our constitution says:

"That Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

And the present Mexican constitution, concerning the same subject, reads:

"That Congress shall not enact any law establishing or forbidding any religion whatsoever."

It is these provisions of the Mexican constitution to which the Catholic Church takes exception.

It wants to repudiate this constitution for the one which provides for the existence of the "Roman Catholic Apostolic Religion as the national religion, without toleration of any other."

It also wants the statutes revived providing for the "Benefit of Clergy."

But the Mexican people, like the peoples in other enlightened countries, insist that the temporal power of the church shall no longer prevail in their country, and they insist that the church confine its activities and functions solely and exclusively to matters of a religious nature.

The church as a divine institution belongs to the same category as the belief in the flatness of the earth.

The days of theocracies are over. Religion cannot dictate to free governments.

Neither individuals nor religious institutions can complain of the laws under which they live if, because of their persistent violation of those laws, freedom is denied to them.

With a well organized and well oiled machinery of propaganda the religious problem in various countries could be stimulated and magnified to such menacing proportions that it would embroil the entire world in one of those bitter and devastating religious wars which have stained the pages of history with blood.

Religious intrigue has, on more than one occasion, precipitated bloodshed, and unless we are willing to take heed of the past it will do so again.

Almost every government in the world has had its religious problem, and if the United States were to interfere in each and every one of these countries every time a religious dispute arose, our country would be meddling with the internal affairs of almost every nation on the face of the globe.

We ourselves are not without our racial and religious problems.

Let us make sure that our house is in order before we seek to arrange the affairs of others.

The American people believe that the religious situation in Mexico is purely a problem which concerns them and them alone, and it is our intention to let them solve it.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull has just issued an official

communication in which he states that the government of the United States does not intend to interfere with the religious affairs of Mexico.

He gives as his reason for this action that not a single complaint has been received by him from an American living in Mexico, whose religious liberty has been abridged in the slightest degree.

The enlightened people of the United States want to live in peace and harmony with the rest of the peoples of the world, and with no greater degree of good will does this apply than to the people of our sister republic below the Rio Grande.

Courts of equity were formed for the purpose of administering justice, but one of the cardinal principles of these courts is that those who seek redress shall come to them with clean hands.

Can the Catholic Church in Mexico do that?

Has it been free from the crimes which it now charges Mexico with perpetrating against her?

It is a matter of historical record that the Mexican people have been far more liberal with the Church than the Church has been with them.

The present political leaders of Mexico are men of the highest ideals who have dedicated themselves to the cause of freedom, and I am confident that future generations will honor General Calles, President Cardenas, and other Mexican leaders, with the same devotion that we honor George Washington and the Revolutionary Fathers.

To enjoy the fruits of a Revolution is quite a different

thing from enduring the suffering and hardship of living through one.

I cannot conclude this defense of the Mexican people in their present religious controversy more appropriately, than by firmly and emphatically stating that there is a greater degree of religious liberty in Mexico today than there was at any time during the four hundred years of its domination by the Catholic Church.

# GEMS FROM INGERSOLL

*Address delivered over Radio Station WGBS,  
New York City, May 26, 1926*

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Robert G. Ingersoll was not only America's greatest writer and orator, but he was also one of the grandest men who ever lived. He was not only a soldier, but also a patriot. He was a poet as well as a philosopher, a benefactor and a humanitarian.

He was in the fullest, broadest sense a man among men, a genius among intellectual giants, a mountain standing amidst the hills.

Just before his death, Luther Burbank said in a letter to Ingersoll's oldest daughter, Mrs. Eva Ingersoll Brown, "His life and work have been an inspiration to the whole earth, shedding light in the dark places which so sadly needed light."

It was Luther Burbank, if you remember, who requested that Ingersoll's eloquent oration to his brother be read at his burial.

And Mark Twain said of Ingersoll:—

He was a great and beautiful spirit; he was a man—all man—from his crown to his foot soles. My reverence for him was deep and genuine. I prized his affection for me, and I returned it with usury.

And I hold in my hand a letter from humanity's greatest benefactor, who has written me his appreciation of Ingersoll especially to be read to you tonight. He says:—

I think that Ingersoll had all the attributes of a perfect man, and, in my opinion, no finer personality ever existed. Judging from the past, I cannot help thinking that the intention of the Supreme Intelligence that rules the world is to ultimately make such a type of man universal.

The writer of this letter is Thomas A. Edison.

But perhaps the best description of Ingersoll comes from a member of his family. An admiring friend once said to his youngest daughter, Mrs. Maude Ingersoll Probasco. "Your father was a great man," and she impulsively exclaimed: "My father was not a man, he was a god."

It is generally said, however, that Ingersoll was a destructionist, that his philosophy was of a negative character; that he tore down and did not build up.

Never was a grosser misrepresentation ever made of a man and his labor. Only those who are not acquainted with Ingersoll and his works; only those who do not understand his purpose; only those who are ignorant or prejudiced about what he sought to accomplish could make such a statement. For no man had a deeper regard for humanity; no man loved humanity more fervently; no man did more to bring understanding and peace to humanity than this infidel, this unbeliever.

He labored to abolish war, and fought to establish an international court to settle disputes between nations. He said, "Every good man, every good woman, should try to do away with war, to stop the appeal to savage force."

Throughout history, the man who has been ahead of

his time, the leader, the pioneer, has always been misunderstood, vilified, maligned, and slandered.

The man who has defied convention and proposed new methods for the world to follow has always suffered at the hands of those who did not understand him.

The fighter for human rights and liberty who pays the penalty for his daring, who is heaped with calumny and vilification and branded with the epithet of heretic, infidel, and blasphemer in his own days, is generally remembered by future generations with magnificent monuments in loving memory of his unselfish labors on behalf of mankind.

Ingersoll himself has said, "The infidels of one age are the aureoled saints of the next."

And as it was with Hypatia, Bruno, Servetus, Galileo, Spinoza, Thomas Paine, and Lincoln, so it is with Ingersoll.

Robert G. Ingersoll was a destructionist in the same sense that Columbus was when he destroyed the belief in the flatness of the earth. He was a destroyer in the same sense as the fathers of this Republic were when they destroyed a despotic monarchical government. He was a destroyer in the same sense that Lincoln was when the great emancipator destroyed the abhorrent institution of slavery.

"The destroyer of weeds and thistles is a benefactor whether he soweth grain or not," said Ingersoll. And he did both.

He destroyed hatred and eradicated prejudice from the human mind. He helped to free the intellect from the superstition of a degrading religion and to emancipate the race from the tyranny of fear.

He also planted seeds; seeds which have taken root, and from which have grown precious fruit.



Here are but a few of the gems of Ingersoll. Let these few gems be an introduction to you to become more familiar with the writings of this man.

Contrary to what is known as Ingersoll's belief, the great Agnostic believed in heaven, and here is his description of it:—

If upon this earth we ever have a glimpse of heaven, it is when we pass a home in winter at night, and through the window, the curtains aside, we see the family about the pleasant hearth; the old lady knitting, the cat playing with the yarn; the children wishing they had as many dolls or dollars or knives or somethings as there are sparks going out to join the roaring blast; the father reading and smoking, and the clouds rising like incense from the altar of domestic joy. I never passed such a house without feeling that I had received a benediction.

How much understanding, happiness, and joy has this gem brought to those of wedded life! And from what volume could better advice be given?

It is not necessary to be great to be happy; it is not necessary to be rich to be just and generous and to have a heart filled with divine affection. No matter whether you are rich or poor, treat your wife as though she were a splendid flower, and she will fill your life with perfume and joy.

And do you know, it is a splendid thing to think that the woman you really love will never grow old to you. Through the wrinkles of time, through the mask of years, if you really love her, you will always see the face you loved and won. And a woman who really loves a man does not see that he grows old; he is not decrepit to her; he does not tremble; he is not old; she always sees the same gallant gentleman who won her

hand and heart. I like to think that love is eternal. And to love in that way and then go down the hill of life together, and as you go down, hear, perhaps, the laughter of grandchildren, while the birds of joy and love sing once more in the leafless branches of the tree of age.

And this is what he said of love:—

Love is the only bow on life's dark cloud. It is the morning and evening star. It shines upon the babe and sheds its radiance on the quiet tomb. It is the mother of art, inspirer of poet, patriot, and philosophy. It is the air and light of every heart, builder of every home, kindler of every fire on every hearth. It was the first to dream of immortality. It fills the world with melody—for music is the voice of love.

Love is the magician, the enchanter, that changes worthless things to joy, and makes right royal kings and queens of common clay. It is the perfume of that wondrous flower, the heart, and without that sacred passion, that divine swoon, we are less than beasts; but with it, earth is heaven, and we are gods.

Ingersoll believed in the "Democracy of the home and the Republicanism of the fireside." He said that "men are oaks, women are vines and children are flowers," and how many men have been made more gentle, and women more tender and children holier by these words?

When your child commits a wrong, take it in your arms; let it feel your heart beat against its heart; let the child know that you really and truly and sincerely love it. Yet some Christians, good Christians, when a child commits a fault, drive it from the door and say: "Never do you darken this house again." Think of that! And then these same people will get down on their knees

and ask God to take care of the child they have driven from home. I will never ask God to take care of my children unless I am doing my level best in that same direction.

Call me Atheist, call me infidel, call me what you will, I intend so to treat my children, that they can come to my grave and truthfully say: "He who sleeps here never gave us a moment of pain. From his lips, now dust, never came to us an unkind word."

On one occasion, after delivering this excerpt in an address in Washington, a United States Senator sought him and said, "Colonel, you have converted me. For years I have been estranged from my only daughter because she did not marry to please me, but now I shall go to her tonight, and beg her forgiveness for allowing a selfish pride to keep her from my arms and heart!"

And not even Shakespeare has surpassed in poetic beauty and expression this gem:—

The laugh of a child will make the holiest day more sacred still. Strike with hand of fire, O weird musician, thy harp strung with Apollo's golden hair; fill the vast cathedral aisles with symphonies sweet and dim, deft touches of the organ keys; blow, bugler, blow, until thy silver notes do touch and kiss the moonlit waves, and charm the lovers wandering 'mid the vine-clad hills. But know, your sweetest strains are discords all, compared with childhood's happy laugh—the laugh that fills the eyes with light and every heart with joy. O rippling river of laughter, thou art the blessed boundary line between the beasts and men; and every wayward wave of thine doth drown some fretful fiend of care. O Laughter, rose-lipped daughter of Joy, there are dimples enough in thy cheeks to catch and hold and glorify all the tears of grief.

Many have asked what did Ingersoll believe, did he have no creed? Oh, yes! he did, and this is the way he expressed it:—

### THE CREED OF SCIENCE

To love justice, to long for the right, to love mercy, to pity the suffering, to assist the weak, to forget wrongs and remember benefits—to love the truth, to be sincere, to utter honest words, to love liberty, to wage relentless war against slavery in all its forms, to love wife and child and friend, to make a happy home, to love the beautiful in art, in nature, to cultivate the mind, to be familiar with the mighty thoughts that genius has expressed, the noble deeds of all the world, to cultivate courage and cheerfulness, to make others happy; to fill life with the splendour of generous acts, the warmth of loving words, to discard error, to destroy prejudice, to receive new truths with gladness, to cultivate hope, to see the calm beyond the storm, the dawn beyond the night, to do the best that can be done and then to be resigned—this is the religion of reason, the creed of science. This satisfies the heart and brain.

Like Shakespeare, it is doubtful whether there will ever live another man to possess Ingersoll's brilliancy of language. His expressions glitter like diamonds and pearls. But it will not be many years more before the heart of humanity will be indelibly impressed with the genius of "The Great Agnostic."

## A VISIT WITH THOMAS ALVA EDISON

December 3, 1929

I have just had the rare privilege of a visit with Mr. Thomas A. Edison at his laboratories in Orange, New Jersey.

When I arrived at the office of the series of buildings in which Mr. Edison had perfected so many of his marvelous inventions, I was met by Mr. W. H. Meadowcroft, Mr. Edison's loyal secretary, who has been with him for more than half a century. He saw the birth of the phonograph, the electric light, and hundreds of others of Mr. Edison's achievements.

On my previous visit to Mr. Edison nearly five years ago, I had met him in his private office which is sometimes referred to as "The Library," and which contains many of Mr. Edison's original inventions. Particularly noticeable is the first model of the phonograph which stands on a table directly in front of his desk. Today, however, Mr. Meadowcroft led me into the chemical laboratory building which is across the alleyway from his private office. As I walked towards the end of the hall, I caught a glimpse of Mr. Edison seated comfortably in a swivel chair slightly tilted back and found myself greatly moved. No one can enter Edison's presence without feeling the effect of the nearness of a supremely great personality.

As I approached, Mr. Edison looked up, recognized me, smiled as only Thomas Edison can smile, and extended his hand in welcome. He clasped mine firmly as I told him how happy I was to see him well again. Apparently he understood what I was saying and smilingly nodded his thanks. Mr. Edison is now almost completely deaf, this condition no doubt aggravated by his recent illness.

I noted that he looked fairly well in view of the severity of his recent illness, except that he was slightly thinner than when I had last seen him. Thomas A. Edison has a majestic head crowned with a diadem of snow-white hair. His keen blue eyes are bright and sparkling. His is the noblest face I have ever seen. It is an inspiration merely to see and talk to this man who has wrested from Nature so many of her guarded secrets.

When I first visited Mr. Edison, I spoke directly into his ear and he heard me distinctly. In fact, he told me that my voice penetrated better than anyone else's he had ever heard. Today, however, I found it rather difficult to make myself understood and so Mr. Meadowcroft suggested that I write my questions.

I repeated in writing what I had previously told him, and also that I considered it a privilege to be able to see him and personally bid him a safe voyage on his annual trip to the South for the winter. He smiled graciously in reply.

I had brought with me a copy of my little book on Voltaire and presented it to him. He looked at my inscription, smiled, and after turning a few pages gave it to Mr. Meadowcroft, telling him to be sure to put it into his brief case so he could take it with him on his trip.

I then asked Mr. Edison what he thought of the Free-thinkers' campaign to send copies of Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* to high school and college students throughout the country. When he finished reading the question, he looked up. "That is simply fine," he said emphatically. "It is the best book ever written on the subject. There is nothing like it! The great trouble is that the preachers get the children from six to seven years of age and then it is almost impossible to do anything with them." Mr. Edison was very much interested in the subject. "Incurably religious," he continued, "that is the best way to describe the mental condition of so many people." He repeated "incurably religious" many times, saying the great task was to get people to read.

Of course, Mr. Edison paid his respects to the preachers. It is needless to repeat what he thinks of them. At the

celebration in Mr. Edison's honor, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the invention of the electric light which Henry Ford held at Dearborn last October, it was particularly noticeable that no clergyman was present either to render an "invocation" or to give a "benediction."

Not very long ago the Board of Education of a city in New York State decided to name a new school the "Thomas A. Edison High School" and the preachers of the community rose in a horrified protest because, they said, Mr. Edison was an infidel! I wonder how many people would go to their churches today if there were no electric lights.

This incident recalls to my mind Benjamin Franklin's invention of the lightning rod. The preachers would have none of it. They called it the "heretical rod" because Franklin, too, was an infidel. Yet despite "God's protection, their churches, having no lightning rods, were invariably struck by lightning. Now the "heretical rod" rises higher than the church steeple!

I do not know what man the religious believers have who can compare with Thomas A. Edison. Perhaps I am doing Mr. Edison an injustice in merely suggesting such a comparison. He has done more for the human race than all the rabbis, priests and preachers, more than all the patriarchs, monks and saints, more than all the Bibles and creeds. He has revolutionized the life of man. He has brought light to dark places and given man the torch that illuminates his path; he has preserved music and events for posterity and given to future generations the voices of the past. By his electrical devices he has freed labor from the burden of ceaseless toil. He has wrought wonders upon wonders and has done more than any other man who ever lived to emancipate the human race from the drudgery of life. His greatest delight is in accomplishing things for the happiness of his fellow man. He is a *real* savior. Upon his noble forehead belongs the palm as a symbol of the everlasting gratitude of all mankind. The next time religionists ask what are the fruits of Freethought, we need but answer, "Edison."

Mr. Edison was forcibly struck by the spectacle of hundreds of thousands of deluded people making a pilgrimage to the grave of an obscure priest in Malden, Massachusetts, a Father Powers who had died of consumption, in the hope of effecting "miraculous cures." He seemed rather discouraged at this pitiful exhibition and after expressing himself at length upon the subject, nodded his head and said, "What fools."

The Wizard of Menlo Park told me of his interesting experiments with rubber plants. He spoke of their similarity to human beings. He said that the plant lives very much as we do. It breathes and eats and converts the things it eats into carbon and energy. He concluded by saying, after intimating that he had made some important discoveries, that the more he studies plants the more he understands men. Luther Burbank knew this great truth, too.

Realizing that Mr. Edison had but recently recovered from a severe attack of pneumonia, I did not want to overstay my visit. Nor did I want to remain longer than I should with a man whose time is so valuable and who is engaged in so many important experiments.

Just as I was bidding him goodbye, I remembered an important question I had forgotten to ask in the half hour of this absorbing visit. I told him that I was publishing a little brochure on Luther Burbank and wanted to include an appreciation of Mr. Burbank by him. He laughingly protested that he could not "write." I said all I wanted was a paragraph or two of what he thought of the man who had given his "fellow passengers on the road" such an immense variety of fruits and flowers, and who had brought so much color and beauty and happiness to the human race. Mr. Edison promised that he would do the best he could. Within a short time I received his appreciation of the lovable Burbank. (See the address, *Burbank, the Infidel* in this collection—Editor.)

After mutually cordial greetings were exchanged, he put one arm affectionately around my shoulder, saying, "Lewis, you have a tough job ahead of you, but don't give it up." Who could surrender the fight against big-



otry, ignorance, and religious intolerance with encouragement from such a man!

I followed Mr. Meadowcroft through the chemical laboratory building with its slab-top tables, test tubes, bottles of chemicals, cabinets, peculiar apparatus and strange instruments, to the main building of Edison's laboratories and into his private office, which familiar surroundings brought back vividly the impressions of my first visit.

After leaving the building a vision of Edison constantly rose before me. The impressions of this visit I shall never forget. I can still see the kindly face, hear his strong mellow voice, and feel with a thrill the clasp of his firm hand.

As I left his laboratory the thought came to me that as some people believe that Man is made in the image of God, I said to myself, I hope that God looks like Edison.

\* \* \* \* \*

The news of Mr. Edison's death fell upon me like a pall. I felt as if a great void had been left in the world. What a pity that he could not have stayed the hand of death so that he could continue to unravel the secrets of Nature. What sort of "design" can there be in life when this grandest of all men is cut down unceremoniously by the Grim Reaper's scythe while idiots and imbeciles live on? This great genius is irreparably lost to the world.

## EDISON BIRTHDAY GREETINGS \*

February is a grand month for the human race, and although it is the shortest, it is nevertheless the most significant. No, not because every fourth February is "leap year" and girls are permitted to propose, for in this age of feminism "leap year" is no longer a necessity to that delicate situation.

But February is the grandest month because it has given to the human race the rarest family of children ever born in the calendar year.

Although Bruno was burnt at the stake in February, 1600, the Cortez abolished the Inquisition in February, 1813.

Havelock Ellis, greatest living philosophical sexologist, was born February 2nd; Count Volney, author of "The Ruins of Empires," and the associate of Voltaire, Franklin and Paine, February 3rd; George Brandes, the noted Danish literary critic, February 4th; Hiram Maxim, noted American inventor, the 5th; Charles Dickens, the 7th; John Ruskin, essayist, and Christopher Marlowe, next to Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist of England, were born February 8th; Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln share the 12th; the Great Galileo, the 14th; Susan B. Anthony, the woman Abraham Lincoln, the 15th; Ernest Haeckel, the 16th; Copernicus, the father of modern astronomy, the 19th; Voltaire, whom Ingersoll called the "Intellectual Emperor of Europe," the 20th; George Washington, the first President of our Republic, Arthur Schopenhauer, the great German philosopher and Chopin, the composer, share the 22nd; Flammarion, the astrono-

\* Delivered over Radio Station W.O.R., February 11th, 1930.

mer, February 25th; Victor Hugo, the most romantic of French authors, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, our great American poet, and Ernest Renan, the French philosopher and philologist, were born February 27th; Montaigne, famous French essayist and philosopher, the 28th; and Thomas A. Edison, genius, inventor, humanitarian and the world's greatest benefactor was born eighty-three years ago, today.

There can be no greater eulogy of Edison than merely to mention the hundreds of inventions which he holds to his credit, any one of which would entitle him to the lasting gratitude of the human race. Without Edison there would be no incandescent light, no motion pictures, no phonograph, no radio, no electric railroads, and hundreds of things which are now part and parcel of our daily lives. And were they to be taken away from us today, only then could we realize the significance of his labor and the debt the world owes this "Wizard of Menlo Park."

As a boy, great fear was expressed for Edison's welfare. His body was frail and his head was so large that his parents and the family physician, and particularly the neighbors feared that he would have "brain trouble." He did! And although as a boy he was invariably at the foot of his class, his mother had implicit confidence in him and maintained that he had an unusual brain. She nurtured him with tenderness. He received the rudiments of education at her hands, and no doubt she cautioned him that other peoples' opinions and convictions are not always to be accepted as literal truth. What a precious piece of knowledge was this! And what a wonderful mother for such a wonderful child. With this foundation he became not only the self-educated and self-made man that he is, but the greatest inventor and greatest benefactor of mankind that the human race has had since the world began!

Early in life Edison was guided by the philosophy of Rationalism, and as early as the age of 13 he was deriving inspiration from the writings of Thomas Paine.

Upon the throne of his mind sat the Monarch—Reason—

And what a glorious reign it had!  
And what a mighty ruler it was!  
And what wonders it has brought forth!

Edison was not a lucky inventor. He did not casually nor by accident strike upon his discoveries. He persevered for what he wanted to accomplish; "Perspiration" was the preponderant part of his "Inspiration."

Newton received his inspiration for the discovery of the law of gravitation from the fall of an apple. Edison went after the secrets of nature. He pursued his subjects. He was determined in his quest. He was not daunted by the "impossible" and so set out to accomplish it. He did not walk along the shore of Truth and pick up a few pebbles. He explored nature and discovered her most cherished secrets—secrets jealously guarded since the world began. He analyzed the why and wherefore of things, and set about to duplicate what only Nature herself could accomplish.

He was more like a Columbus sailing forbidden waters to discover a hidden continent. But Edison was not satisfied with one discovery—with one invention. Like Alexander the Great, he sought new worlds to conquer. He wanted to traverse unexplored regions in quest of new lands. And he did. And he brought back an amazing collection of things unknown in the land in which he dwelt. He heard a voice in the wilderness and penetrated the bewildering forest to find it.

He emancipated the world from the drudgery of labor. He made man the master of the elements and the equal of Nature. And when Edison invented the incandescent light and reproduced the human voice in the phonograph, he pulled aside the veil of secrecy and penetrated the infinite!

As the result of his labors, millions of human beings are now engaged in the work of giving to the world the

benefits of the fruits of his genius, and because of his efforts Humanity is now enjoying Life made better, freer, easier, grander and nobler.

On this, your 83rd birthday, Mr. Edison, we not only wish you health and happiness, and that you may live to equal the age of your father and grandfather, who were both centenarians, but that you may continue to live, so that the millions yet unborn may have the opportunity to express their debt of gratitude for the comfort and joy and happiness that your unselfish labors and great genius have given to the world.

And in expressing these sentiments to you I know that I am voicing the conviction and fervent hope of every human being on the face of the earth.

**EULOGY TO  
MAUDE INGERSOLL PROBASCO**

## EULOGY TO MAUDE INGERSOLL PROBASCO

(It was Mrs. Maude Ingersoll Probasco's last wish just before she died that Mr. Joseph Lewis deliver the eulogy at her funeral services. Mrs. Probasco, Robert Ingersoll's last surviving daughter, passed away on February 12, 1936, and was cremated as she had instructed. The eulogy follows.)

To have known Maude Ingersoll Probasco was a privilege in itself. But to be requested, as her last wish, to pay this sad and final tribute, is something that I shall always cherish as a rich token of her affection.

If "it is difficult to gild a grief with words," how utterly impossible it is to express our love and affection for the daughter of that great and grand man who has been our ideal, and who has been the inspiration of millions.

Mrs. Probasco was a true daughter of the illustrious Ingersoll. She steadfastly maintained his opinions and was firm in her convictions. She cherished his ideals and lived according to that high and enviable standard which he himself had set. And whenever a problem arose, she was guided in her decision by what she thought her father would do under like circumstances.

She was just as lovable as she was true. She forgot wrongs, but always remembered benefits.

Merely to be in her presence was enough to lighten your burdens: she was so sympathetic, so understanding, so willing to help and so anxious to serve. If friendship means to serve faithfully without regard for one's own welfare, then indeed might the word FRIEND be written large and bold next to her name.

We loved her as our own and she genuinely reciprocated our affection. We will miss her encouragement and support, but most of all, we will miss her companionship, her personality, her friendship and her love.

For her to leave us now in the midst of so much that has to be done, and particularly when her presence, her influence and her advice meant so much, makes her death truly a tragedy and an irreparable loss.

Maude Ingersoll Probasco, you are leaving behind indelible remembrances of your gracious self, and next to your immediate family, my wife, my daughter and I will keep forever green the memory of the privilege of having known and loved you.

A woman of your rare qualities passes this way but once in a long, long time. And when your time came to go, "Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams," you passed away into eternity, and, I am sure, with that rare satisfaction of having lived a life of worth-while and valuable assistance to your fellow passengers on the way.

Death is no longer the enigma of Life. Living is its problem. The sting of Death has been removed. We know Death's destiny and no longer fear its consequences. The only suffering attached to Death now is the injustice of its time of coming, the reluctance of parting with loved ones, and the loss of the opportunity to attain.

When Death comes, we are beyond the pale of Nature's pang; we are at rest and forever. And when

"The moving Finger writes; and having writ  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a word of it."

We, with heavy hearts, say to the one we love, Good-bye, and Farewell.





Left to right: Andre Watelet, Vice-President of the Paris Municipal Council; Joseph Lewis of New York, secretary and founder of the committee that sponsored the tribute, and Roger Verlomme, Prefect of the Seine Department. (New York Herald-Tribune. Paris, January 30, 1948.)

## THOMAS PAINE: WORLD CITIZEN \*

The mother who held a babe in her arms in the obscure town of Thetford, England, 211 years ago today, little dreamed that her child would grow up to be a world figure and play so important a part in the struggles of mankind for emancipation from political tyranny and religious superstition. Little did she dream that today, in this educational center of this beautiful city of Paris, this statue—an heroic likeness of that babe grown to manhood—would be unveiled in honor of his memory and as a debt of gratitude and appreciation of those now living for the liberty which he labored so valiantly to establish.

Today, on the anniversary of his birth, in every civilized country, where some degree of freedom exists, liberty-loving people are recounting his deeds of valor and recalling his pleas for justice and humanity, that man might live in peace and understanding with his fellow-man.

A little more than half a century ago, the great Robert G. Ingersoll predicted, at the conclusion of his eloquent tribute to Thomas Paine, that "a few more years, a few more brave men, a few more rays of light," and mankind would venerate

\* Presentation speech made by Joseph Lewis at the dedication of the Thomas Paine statue in Paris, January 29th, 1948.

his memory. The few years have passed. The brave men have appeared, the light has broken through, and today is proof that mankind is beginning to pay homage to him who said, "Independence is my happiness, and I view things as they are without regard to place or person. My country is the world; and my religion is to do good."

Thomas Paine would care nothing for this monument if his ideas should be forgotten. This is not merely another statue honoring the services of a man now dead and soon to be forgotten.

This statue is both a symbol and a beacon, a symbol of the eternal principles of justice and humanity of which Thomas Paine was so preeminently a representative, and a beacon to guide mankind in the solution of the problems that menace their peace and happiness. We have high hopes for the influence of this statue and that the name of Thomas Paine will forever be synonymous with Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.

If Paine's Peace Plan—the "Congress of Nations" which he formulated to settle international disputes by peaceful methods—had been adopted in 1800 when he first proposed it, no one knows how many wars it would have prevented, nor how much progress would have been achieved during those long years of peace and stability.

Paine's "Common Sense" was the clarion call for the liberation of the American colonies from the tyranny of monarchy. "The Crisis," written during the dark days of our struggle, beginning with those immortal words: "These are the times that try men's souls," was the inspiration of our despairing soldiers, and his eloquent words have been acknowledged by

the leaders of the American Revolution to have accomplished as much in securing American independence as did the sword of Washington. His "Rights of Man," written in defense of the French Revolution, is still the greatest book on political science and the rights of the individual in society. For writing this book, he was indicted for treason and forced to flee from England. What intelligent man today does not acknowledge that it was the "Age of Reason" which was responsible for his emancipation from the mentally-stagnating and superstitious creeds that for so long paralyzed the brain of man. For having written this book, he received thoughtless rebukes and suffered heartless ingratitude.

It was because Paine always went to fundamentals that his reason was so clear, his logic so perfect, and his conclusions so sound. This method of determining the cause of things made his position secure and opposition untenable. With what simple eloquence does he state this great truth. He said that government was made necessary "by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world." What other political philosopher has expressed this truth so clearly as does Paine in analyzing the difference between society and government? I quote his observation:

"Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness. . . ."

Paine knew that liberty requires responsibility; he also knew that liberty provides for the making of errors. He knew,

too, that knowledge and liberty are the great solvents of error and that trials and tribulations are its correctives. That is why he said, "When nations are free, either in matters of government or religion, the truth will finally and powerfully prevail."

Republics are not perfect in all matters of government. Nothing is perfect. Not even the universe. Man's handiwork cannot correct all the mistakes of nature nor can it remedy all of her faults and make righteous all the acts of man. But a republic, the representative system of government with a basic constitution to protect the unalienable rights of the individual in society, is by far the best system of government yet devised by man. Paine might well be honored as the father of our modern republican governments.

He wanted to make the American Republic the pattern upon which all future governments were to be founded.

At the conclusion of the American Revolution, when our own Benjamin Franklin said to him, "Where liberty is, that is my country," Paine replied, "Where liberty is not, that is mine."

And so the man responsible for the freedom of the United States of America set out to bring liberty to those countries still under the yoke of tyranny.

It is significant that Thomas Carlyle should say in his book, "The French Revolution," that Thomas Paine was a "rebellious staymaker . . . who feels that he, single-handed, did by his 'Common Sense' pamphlet, free America; that he can and will free all this world—and perhaps even the other."

When Paine arrived in Paris he was looked upon as the Incarnation of Liberty . . . as the Symbol of Freedom . . . as

the Apostle of Mankind. . . . He was hailed throughout France. No wonder he was elected from three Departments to represent them in the National Assembly and was made a French Citizen!

And the opportunity for him to break the shackles of tyranny from the minds and bodies of the French people came when Louis XVI abdicated and fled from Paris. Immediately after the king's flight, Achille Duchatelet and Thomas Paine placarded Paris with a manifesto congratulating the French people on their good fortune in having rid themselves of their King—and with the least amount of trouble and expense—in blood and money. A copy of this manifesto was nailed even to the door of the National Assembly.

Breathing the sentiments of freedom as does our own Declaration of Independence, this manifesto urged the people to abandon their royalist government and prepare for a Republic based upon the representative system. The manifesto ended with these words: "In defending a just and glorious cause, it is not possible to degrade it, and the universal tranquillity which prevails is an undeniable proof, that a free people know how to respect themselves."

Carlyle recognized the influence of Paine in creating the French Republic and grasping the opportunity offered by the King's flight to achieve this end. In reference to this momentous event, he said:

"How great is calm, couchant people! On the morrow men will say to one another, 'we have no King, yet we have slept sound enough.' On the morrow Achille Duchatelet and Thomas Paine, the rebellious needleman, shall have

the walls of Paris plastered with placards, announcing that there must be a republic."

And there was one!

There have been political philosophers who have expressed their thoughts in fine phrases, and humanitarians who have spoken their ideals in eloquent language, and on rare occasions there have been a few who have combined both of these high qualities. But I know of no other man in history who combined not only these qualities but, in addition, possessed a still rarer virtue in the fact that he lived the life that was the basis of his philosophy and the underlying moral principle of his humanitarianism. . . .

Man asks so little in happiness for his short existence, and Thomas Paine tried mightily to contribute his small share to achieve that end.

Thomas Paine, with, I believe, some foreknowledge that it might mean his death, stood up in the National Assembly to which he had been elected by three Departments, and made an eloquent plea for the life of Louis XVI, in the face of a fanaticism that demanded the King's death. The enraged Assembly, upon the slightest provocation, was ready to tear limb from limb any who dared to interfere with their mad determination to make the King pay the supreme penalty because of the accident of birth. Nevertheless, Thomas Paine stood firm and said, "I would rather record a thousand errors dictated by humanity than one of severe justice"; and at the conclusion of his impassioned plea, he cried, "Kill the King; but not the man." By this act, Paine not only proved his love for mankind, but gave the world an example of unparalleled courage.

When you consider the circumstances, when you consider Paine's detestation for monarchy, when you consider Paine's hatred of tyranny, then it is the inevitable conclusion that this was one of the grandest acts of moral courage ever performed by a single individual. Paine was ready to die that the principles of justice might prevail.

What greater act is there than that a man should be ready to sacrifice his life to prevent an injustice from being perpetrated even upon his enemy. For this sublime act, Paine was thrown into the Luxembourg Prison and condemned to be guillotined. He spent nearly a whole year of torment in this detestable environment, and was unaware that only by a thoughtless mistake had he narrowly escaped death. For Paine's restoration to liberty and health, we are indebted to two illustrious Americans—Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe.

The Republic of France gave to the Republic of the United States the majestic Statue of Liberty which stands at the entrance to New York Harbor, and which also stands as a perpetual reminder of the century-old friendship between the two countries, and it is our wish that this statue of Paine, while not as imposing as the Statue of Liberty, will represent to the people of France those sentiments of friendship, of liberty and of equality that Bartholdi's statue does to us.

But Paine himself, more than this statute, has created a lasting bond between our two countries, Just as he wrote our Declaration of Independence, he wrote the French Declaration of Rights; just as his ideas and principles were incorporated in our Constitution, so he wrote his ideas and principles into the French Constitution. No wonder he said, "The



Cause of America and the Cause of France is the cause of all Mankind."

What greater bond, what greater tie, than that these two great nations have flowing in their civic veins the same vital blood from the same political father! And what greater recognition did Paine receive for this fusing of these twin children of freedom than that, at the liberation of the French people and in celebration of the establishment of their Republic, it was he who was designated to carry the American flag in that parade of jubilation. Let us also remember that it was to Paine that the Marquis de Lafayette gave the key of the Bastille to be presented as a gift to George Washington.

And the pattern for this statue came from the lips of Napoleon himself when, at a banquet which he gave in Paine's honor, he raised his glass to toast this world citizen, and said, "Every city in the world should erect a gold statue to you." Napoleon made this statement when he considered himself the self-appointed instrument to make the nations of Europe into "One World" based upon Paine's principles of universal justice.

Let us hope that while this is the first of such statues, the others will not be long in following.

This statue is proof, too, that Thomas Paine is rising, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of calumny and vilification under which he has been buried for nearly a hundred and fifty years, as the Rising Star and Inspiration of Liberty-loving people.

The magnificent brain which conceived the Republic of the World and the Religion of Humanity, that wrote new systems of government and from whose cauldron of fire poured forth

sentiments of wisdom and justice for a better life, no longer exists. Not even the bones of his body remain because even his grave was violated. We know not his burial place. Perhaps it is well that such a fate befell him. Neither Thomas Paine nor his brain belongs in any one place. He could not remain provincial. The world was truly his country and the product of his brain has spread over the face of the earth. His thoughts are everywhere, his seeds of wisdom have taken root and fruitful results have enriched the life of mankind. No character in history is comparable to him. He is unique in the annals of the human race. He stands alone, preeminent among men for his unselfish devotion to the cause of freedom and as the noblest advocate of the rights of mankind. He died with the threads of three countries interwoven in him. He was born in England, made a French citizen by decree and was an American by adoption. What other man can boast of such a distinction? He wore no crown of thorns yet suffered the pangs of crucifixion by being banished from the country of his birth, imprisoned in the land whose liberty he defended, and denied citizenship and the right to vote in the Republic he created. He claimed no relationship with the supernatural, but if ever there existed upon this earth an apostle of the human race, his name was Thomas Paine.

Although this statue is not an official gift from the Government of the United States to the French people, it is, nevertheless, a gift from liberty-loving Americans. It is given to the people of France with genuine affection and with the most fervent wish for the enduring of those principles of liberty which Paine so generously contributed to both countries.

It is a great privilege and honor, Mr. President, to present to you, as a gift to the French people, this magnificent statue of "gold" which our great sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, has created of this truly World Citizen—Thomas Paine.

## TEA WITH G. B. S.

A FEW DAYS before the date for the unveiling of the Thomas Paine statue in Paris, on January 29, 1948, I wrote to George Bernard Shaw to his home in Welwyn, in the suburbs of London, and said I would like to see him before I returned to New York. By return mail, I received the card that appears on the following page.

In response to this note, I wrote:

"I will make every effort, after I arrive in London, short of murder, to see a famous author who is a grand old man and still very much alive."

In order to have time to see Bernard Shaw, I left Paris on Saturday, January 31st. Upon my arrival in London early that evening, I went immediately to my hotel, the Savoy, and retired for the night, as the trip across the Channel had been rather rough and the weather in London was cold, damp and gloomy. Besides, it was my intention to visit Thomas Paine's birthplace at Thetford the next morning—Sunday. However, before requesting the baggagemaster of the hotel to procure for me a round-trip ticket to Thetford, I looked over the correspondence and newspaper clippings which had accumulated and were awaiting my arrival in London. When I called the baggagemaster, however, I found to my great disappointment that I had just missed the only train leaving for Thetford

From

21/1/1948

Bernard Shaw

Dear Joseph Lewis

I am practically out of reach of London, very old ( $91\frac{1}{2}$ ) and unable to walk far beyond my garden. The only endurable <sup>way</sup> of visiting me is by car from door to door; and nobody is now allowed to use a drop of petrol except on indis-sably urgent business. In this village there are no public conveyances, no shops, railway 5 miles distant and few trains, and nothing to see but a decrepit ghost who was once a famous author.

That is the situation. Consider it.

Needless to say I should be glad to see you any afternoon at or after 3.30 (I am not free earlier); but I cannot reasonably encourage to break your journey on that account.

L. B. S.

that morning which would have brought me back the same evening. And, as I had only two days in London before boarding the S.S. *Queen Elizabeth* on which I was scheduled to sail February 4 from Southampton, regretfully I had to postpone until another trip across the waters, my visit to the birthplace of the author of "The Age of Reason."

I wanted to go to Thetford on this particular trip for several reasons. I was anxious, for one thing, to see the plaque which the members of the American Eighth Air Force placed upon the house in which Paine had lived. This desire was intensified when I made the acquaintance of Mr. John Henry Kelly, an attache of the American Embassy in Paris, who, as a former member of the Eighth Air Force, had been stationed near Thetford. Mr. Kelly was very enthusiastic about Paine and the importance of his birthplace. He thought there were many things I should see which might mean more to me than to him, since I am so interested in Paine's life. He said his father had been a great admirer of Paine and, on many occasions, when a young man, he had heard him praise Paine as the foremost leader of the American Revolution and one of the greatest men of all time.

Since I was unable to go to Thetford, I decided to visit the office of the New York *Times* to look over some of the papers I missed during my absence, in order to be informed of what was happening in and around New York. While at the New York *Times* office in London. I had the extreme pleasure of meeting one of the important *Times* correspondents, Mr. Drew Middleton, who was in charge of the London Office, and who expressed his congratulations to me on the erection of the Thomas Paine statue.

I left the *Times* office and, after a short walk during which I observed the damage done to London by the bombings of the war, I returned to the hotel. I telephoned Mr. Shaw and said that I was now in London and would like to know when it would be convenient to visit him. He arranged an appointment for 4 P.M. Monday afternoon. I remembered his warning about being unable to secure transportation to his home in Welwyn, and consequently hired a car and chauffeur to drive me to the country home of the famous G.B.S. the following Monday afternoon. I allowed two hours for the trip but we made exceptionally good time, since the chauffeur was well acquainted with the roads, and I arrived half an hour before the appointed time.

As the car drew up in front of Mr. Shaw's home I got out, knocked at the door, and was greeted by the maid who said that Mr. Shaw was expecting me, and I was ushered into a room which might be called the Sunroom. Glancing around before Mr. Shaw entered, I noticed several striking busts of him, a number of particularly clever caricatures, and other items that were so appropriately associated with this great man. Within a few minutes, the famous G.B.S. himself entered. Yes, there he was, straight as an arrow, his full 6 feet a commanding sight. What a thrill it was to meet this famous man again.

He had changed very little since I had seen him 18 years before. Yes, there was that same characteristic bearded face, the same penetrating blue eyes, the same satanic smile. He greeted me with a warm handshake. On my last visit, Shaw had been a young man in his vigorous 70's. Today, he is slightly thinner and somewhat less vigorous—yet the same

Bernard Shaw, nevertheless, in his familiar dress of knickers and sport coat.

We sat down and began to recall my first visit to him. He complained that his memory was not what it used to be and that he could not remember very well events which had occurred only a few weeks before. Yet, when I told him that I thought it was in 1931 when I had last seen him in his London apartment, shortly after his return from a visit to Russia, he promptly corrected me by saying that it was in 1930! However, he did not remember that he had given me two tickets for Albert Hall that evening to hear him tell of his experiences while on his visit to the Soviet Union.

I recalled some of the incidents he had related concerning the trip and of the great desire on the part of the Soviet officials to provide entertainment for him. On that particular afternoon, the party had come to his hotel and importuned their guest to hurry or they would be late for the races. I reminded him that he had said to his host, "There is no necessity to hurry; everyone knows that one horse can run faster than another." And as a final admonition, he concluded in the typical Shawvain manner with this statement, "Gentlemen, gentlemen, don't you know that horse-racing is competitive?" After recalling this incident to him, he said he not only remembered it but with his inimitable smile, also recalled the end of the story—the fact that "it was an Irish jockey who won the race."

I asked him how he had become interested in Freethought, and he told me of his long years of interest in and association with the Secular Society of London and how he had almost become officially connected with it. He remembered Charles



Bradlaugh most vividly, and said that Bradlaugh was one of the greatest men he had ever met and was a remarkable speaker. He recalled some of Bradlaugh's debates and how, on the platform, Bradlaugh would overwhelm his clerical opponent; yet when the speeches were printed, side by side, you lost almost entirely the effect of Bradlaugh's persuasive arguments. He said this was probably due to the constant interruptions of applause by the audience as Bradlaugh made one telling point after another when speaking extemporaneously. Then when you read his speech, it seemed disconnected and lacked the value of continuity. He said that when he was with Bradlaugh, he felt that he was in the presence of a great spirit. He recalled the many characteristics which made Bradlaugh stand out high and above the men of his time—and of many dramatic instances in his debates, even recalling some of the arguments, and with a clarity and enthusiasm as though they had happened only yesterday—and yet Bernard Shaw complained that his memory was failing! Here he was, relating events that had taken place over fifty years ago, and repeating almost word for word the thoughts expressed at the time. Enraptured, I listened to his comments on Bradlaugh, marvelling not only at his great memory but at his enthusiasm, as well. He is still a militant Freethinker.

We talked of Ingersoll, and I asked him what was his opinion of Ingersoll and Bradlaugh. He said that while he had the greatest admiration for Bradlaugh, there was no comparison between the two men, that Ingersoll was truly a genius. Shaw had read Ingersoll in his youth and still admired "the great Agnostic." He also said that Ingersoll's influence upon the English people at that time was very great.

Just at that moment, the maid brought in a large silver tea tray on which was a wide variety of cakes and other delicacies, one being a pile of small pancakes covered with cinnamon, sugar and butter. How delicious! And Mr. Shaw insisted that I eat all of them!

Shaw asked me what other famous Freethinkers I have met and I told him of my long friendship with Thomas A. Edison. He was extremely interested and wanted to know all the details I could remember regarding my several visits with Edison and particularly what Edison had thought about freethought. I told him that Edison was a member for many years of our organization, was a liberal contributor, and had written me some very valuable letters revealing his repudiation of Christianity. I mentioned the letter which Edison wrote me, concerning an employee he once had who was an apprentice in the iron foundry in England where Paine's suspension bridge was in process of being built for erection over the Lasing Green (now Paddington-Green) River. In his letter, Mr. Edison wrote that this man remembered a plaque which had been placed on the wall of the building, expressing appreciation of Paine because of his extreme kindness and consideration for the workmen. I told Bernard Shaw that Mr. Edison was also a very great admirer of both Thomas Paine and Robert G. Ingersoll. I mentioned, too, my several trips to Mr. Edison's laboratory in East Orange—made, usually, at Mr. Edison's request—to discuss my activities in the field of Freethought; of the letter Mr. Edison wrote me, to be read at the tree-planting ceremonies in Central Park, New York, in honor of Luther Burbank, and that, on one occasion, Mr. Edison put

his arms about my shoulders and said, "Don't be discouraged; you will eventually win. The scientists are behind you."

I tried to describe Thomas Edison's appearance, and told Shaw of his massive head, his unusually blue eyes, his benign smile, and the crown of white hair. To me, Thomas Edison presented the most impressive and the most magnificent face I have ever seen in my life. Here was truly an incomparable head—majestic, powerful, fit for a god.

I said to Shaw, facetiously, "The religionists say that man is made in the image of God. If that is true, I hope God looks like Edison."

I then told him of my friendship with Helen Keller. I said I had hoped she would "speak" at the dedication in Paris but, unfortunately, her plans made that impossible. Shaw recalled how when he met her once, she had put her hands over his face, as is her custom when meeting noted persons. I told him that if ever she met him again, she would be able to identify him immediately merely by putting her hands over his face, so remarkable are the impressions which she transmits to her brain through her sensitive fingers. This uncanny image retention accounts for her remarkable knowledge of faces.

When I mentioned to Shaw that he looked extremely well for his age, he chuckled as only G.B.S. can, and told me that hardly a day passes that he does not receive letters from people telling him how to "live forever." He laughingly related that when he read the recipe in one of the letters, it contained a variety of foods which were actually "poison." Shaw, remember, is a vegetarian.

He told me that when the inevitability of death comes, he wants to be cremated and his ashes mixed with those of his

wife. I said then that I would make a promise to come to London and have tea with him again on his 100th birthday, and if he would keep his promise, I would certainly keep mine.

We discussed at length and with considerable thoroughness, the ideas of Voltaire, Hume and even Mohamet, for whom Shaw has a great deal of respect. He even said some parts of the Koran were very beautiful.

I mentioned my disappointment in not being able to go to Thetford and my visit, instead, to the office of the *New York Times*, and that, on my way back to the hotel, I noticed a church which had been completely bombed out. Shaw knew exactly which church I meant and gave me its name. And then I told him of another church nearby that had practically escaped injury during the bombings. I related that as I was passing the second church, I noticed that the sexton was just opening the gate in preparation for the Sunday morning service. I asked him whether his church had been designed by the famous Christopher Wren, and he answered "No." He said it was the work of Sir (I believe) Gilbert Gibbs. It was not a church of architectural beauty—a combination of Italian and Baroque, apparently. I told him I thought it was far from an attractive work of art but, nevertheless, I am always interested in churches and church architecture, and he invited me to enter the building. I did. I also asked him how he could account for the fact that a nearby church had suffered complete destruction, while his church was practically undamaged except for a few broken windows. The only reason he could give for its survival from the terrific bombings was probably the fact that the ceiling of the church was four feet

thick. I reflected for a moment and then replied that "as an unbeliever, I would say that was probably why the prayers of the parishioners could not reach 'heaven'." The sexton looked at me in blank amazement at my remark but made no reply.

As I related this incident to Shaw, he chuckled and laughed.

I waited for an auspicious moment to mention one of the most important reasons why I was so anxious to see him. I said that while I came to London especially to see him again to renew our acquaintance and to wish him continued good health and happiness, I nevertheless wanted him to do an important work for me. This puzzled him and his bewilderment was reflected in his look. He asked me what I wanted and I replied that since we now have a statue of Thomas Paine in Paris, did he not think it was time England honored one of her great sons? I said that there should be a statue of Paine in London! He replied that I was right but that he (Shaw) should not be the one to propose it. He said that his "enemies" would defeat any effort he might make. I told him he did not have any enemies; that while there might be many who did not always agree with him, the people of the world and even his "enemies" loved and honored him for his genius and accomplishments. Apropos of this, he told me a story: he said that there was an Italian General who was known for his unscrupulous severity and who had made many enemies in his day. He was about to die and sent for the priest to administer the last rites. When the priest arrived, he told the General that he could not give him extreme unction because he had too many enemies. The General replied, "I have no enemies." The priest, amazed at this statement, asked what had hap-

pened to them, and the General answered, "I shot them." Shaw said that up to the time of our visit, he had not been able to dispose of his enemies as effectively as had the General. Nevertheless, he said that he would see what he could do and would even make a contribution towards the erection of the statue. I am awaiting word from him now regarding the plan we discussed for this undertaking, and already action has been set in motion for a Thomas Paine statue in London to honor the author of "The Rights of Man."

When I looked at my watch, I was amazed to find that I had been with G.B.S.—and we had been talking continuously—for nearly an hour. I could not help but marvel at the vitality and keenness of this man, nearly 92 years of age, and how his sparkling conversation had fascinated and entertained me. Yes, it is truly an inspiration to be in his presence.

As I rose to leave, we exchanged many pleasantries and he followed me into the hall, helped me on with my coat, opened the door, and walked out with me to the car, without hat or coat. He asked me which entrance we had come in and then proceeded to walk in the direction opposite the road from which we had entered. He told me to get into the car, and when I realized that he was walking a considerable distance to open the large gate so that the car could pass through, I made an effort to follow and help him. This he resented and ordered me back into the car. He then opened the gate, bent down to latch it, and directed the chauffeur to drive out into the main road. He guided the chauffeur in making the turns back and forth so as to bring the car on the road in the proper direction to London, and stood in the road, coatless and hatless, waving his hand in a gracious good-bye

until the car was completely out of sight. I shall never forget the smile of G.B.S. as we waved to each other while the car sped away down the winding road on that memorable Monday afternoon.

I am sure the chauffeur experienced the thrill of his life in having George Bernard Shaw direct him upon the proper road to London. On the way back, he could not subdue the thrill he had had in seeing this great man. He said that after I entered the house, he could see Mr. Shaw through the window and he thought he appeared quite old and feeble, but yet when he saw Mr. Shaw come out of the house with me, he could not help but notice that a decided change had occurred in his appearance. He thought my visit to Shaw was undoubtedly as stimulating to him (Shaw) as it had been to me, because he displayed an exuberance that did not seem possible in a man of Shaw's age.

If our efforts to erect a statue of Thomas Paine in London should materialize sooner than I expect, I may have tea again with G.B.S. before he reaches the century mark.

## THE CHAPLAINS' MEMORIAL STAMP \*

The President of the United States,

Honorable Harry S. Truman

The Postmaster General, Honorable Jesse Donaldson

Washington, D. C.

Honorable Sirs:

I respectfully call your attention to a matter which I believe deserves your very serious consideration.

The cost of the recent war, in lives and property, has been both enormous and terrible. The suffering of those who lost their loved ones has been both poignant and tragic; therefore, it becomes a duty and an obligation that the United States Government should not be a party to any act that is without truth or honesty when honoring our war dead. When homage is paid to the brave men and women who gave their lives that we might continue to enjoy the precious liberty which was bequeathed to us, it is vitally important that no semblance of falsehood be present. Honor should be given where honor is due. If honor is conferred upon those who do not deserve it, then that automatically is an insult to those who are entitled to our homage.

I cannot emphasize too strongly the seriousness of the protest which I am now about to make.

\* Reprinted from *The Freethinker*, Vol. 72, No. 6, June, 1948.



It deals with the sinking of the transport *Dorchester*. This vessel, according to official reports, issued by Major General Edward F. Witsell, Adjutant General of the United States Army, in a letter dated April 12, 1948, was torpedoed and sunk near Greenland in the early morning hours on February 3, 1943 (to be exact, at 12:55 A.M.). Of the 904 passengers and crew, there were approximately 500 survivors.

The Post Office Department has officially announced that the four chaplains who were aboard this ship are to be signally honored by the issuing of a special commemorative stamp on May 28th. The four chaplains who happened to be on this ship were there by a mere coincidence, just as were the other passengers. When this ship was attacked and sunk, there was no particular or specific official announcement concerning their acts. They performed no special or heroic deeds in the field of military operations which would warrant such recognition by the War Department, the Post Office Department, or the United States Government. When the names of survivors were recorded, the chaplains were merely listed as "missing," just as were the other unfortunate victims who were unaccounted for up to the time of the announcement following the tragedy.

However—and this is very significant—*more than a month* after the sinking of this ship, the church to which one of the chaplains belonged, issued a statement to the press, stating merely that he (no mention was made of the other chaplains at the time) had been seen giving his lifebelt to another passenger, and had then *kneeled* and prayed. The item appeared in the *New York Times* on March 9, 1943, and was as follows:

(Special to the *New York Times*)

KEARNY, N. J., March 8—Communicants of St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church, Arlington, attended a triduum service tonight for the safety of Lieutenant John P. Washington, Army Chaplain and former assistant here, who gave his lifebelt to a frantic soldier shortly before their ship sank in the North Atlantic. Lieutenant Washington is reported missing.

The Rev. George N. Murphy, Rector of St. Stephen's, told parishioners that survivors of the sinking ship reported that Lieutenant Washington not only gave up his lifebelt but aided many into boats and walked about the sinking vessel calming others. He was last seen kneeling in prayer before the vessel went down.

"We have heard of many miracles during this war and we will pray that Lieutenant Washington is safe," Father Murphy said.

Lieutenant Washington was the son of Mrs. Mary A. Washington of 103½ South Street.

Permit me to state that during the confusion which undoubtedly followed after the ship was torpedoed, where every moment was of vital significance, and where nearly 1,000 men were struggling to save their lives, such testimony from a 19-year-old boy, under such distressing circumstances, might well be proper subject for analysis in the field of the psychology of religious mysticism.

How could this young boy, while being rowed away, see a chaplain *on his knees* praying, and be able to distinguish him from among the other chaplains, particularly when all four were wearing the same type of uniform, and all of whom were undoubtedly indistinguishable from the distance the lifeboat

had to be from the sinking vessel to avoid being dragged down by the suction.

In a letter from Major General H. B. Lewis, Acting The Adjutant General of the United States Army, dated May 6, 1948, he states that the *Dorchester*, after being torpedoed, listed "to an angle of eight-five degrees, with her mast touching the water . . . plunged bow first and disappeared below the surface" *within 25 minutes!*

In view of the publicity issued by St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church of Arlington, N. J., concerning Chaplain John P. Washington—and quite obviously not wishing to be outdone—the following statement appeared in the same newspaper three weeks later, on March 27, 1943, concerning the Jewish chaplain:

Chaplain Alexander Goode, reported by the War Department as missing in action in the North Atlantic, is the first casualty among Jewish Chaplains in this war, it was said yesterday by Rabbi Phillip S. Bernstein, executive Director of the National Jewish Welfare Board's Committee on Army and Navy Religious activities.

Chaplain Goode, who was rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in York, Pa., before his chaplaincy appointment last July, was aboard a cargo transport sunk on the North Atlantic convoy route early in February. Born in Brooklyn in 1911, he was a graduate of Hebrew Union College and received his B.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Cincinnati and Johns Hopkins University, respectively.

Daniel O'Keefe, a 19-year-old merchant marine of 623 E. 139 St., the Bronx, who survived the sinking, was quoted recently as saying that four chaplains, two Protestants, the Rev. George L. Fox and the Rev. Clark V. Poling; one Catholic, the Rev. John P. Washington, and Chaplain Goode, sacrificed

their lives that four other men might survive when their ship was torpedoed.

"Just before the ship went down," he said, "The chaplains gave their life preservers to members of the crew. They were standing on deck, praying, when our lifeboat drifted out of sight."

Rabbi Goode leaves a widow and 3-year-old daughter, Rosalie, residing in Washington.

It is to be noted that the first newspaper item concerning Chaplain John P. Washington stated that he was last seen *kneeling* in prayer. This is contradicted by the second statement in the same newspaper, which said that all *four* chaplains were *standing* on deck and praying. This contradiction alone warrants very serious consideration regarding the truth of *both* statements.

However, it was not until *one year and 10 months after*—December 3, 1944—that the *Bureau of Public Relations of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Washington, D.C.*, released a publicity report, mentioning four chaplains, all in a similar position, performing the same act at the same time. That this statement is subject to question as to its accuracy and truth is to be found in a letter dated March 15, 1948, from Captain Edward C. Cleave, Chief of the Merchant Vessel Inspection Division, United States Coast Guard, Washington, D.C., who stated that—

"The Coast Guard's record of investigation of this casualty was confined to the *adequacy of the lifesaving equipment* on board the *Dorchester* and the discipline of the merchant crew. The military personnel who were passengers of that vessel *were not interrogated* by the Coast Guard investi-

gators and the only mention in our record of the actions of the Army Chaplains at the time are contained in a summary of statements of survivors furnished the Coast Guard by the Chief of Naval Operations, which reads as follows:

‘Survivors spoke of the calm attitude of the Army Chaplains who were passengers aboard, all of whom were missing. It was reported that an Army Catholic Chaplain gave his life jacket to one of the men and that the Army Jewish Rabbi supplied one survivor *with a pair of gloves.*’” (italics mine)

First and foremost, is the fact that the official investigation by the Coast Guard confirmed “the adequacy of the lifesaving equipment,” which means that there was a lifebelt on board for every person on that ship, and there was no necessity for a chaplain to give up his lifebelt to another. And, secondly, this act is mentioned as having been performed by only *one* chaplain, which contradicts the previous statement regarding all *four*.

We have been further informed that on a troopship such as the *Dorchester*, each person aboard is immediately given a lifebelt and must have it readily available in case of an emergency; that very frequently lifebelts are worn almost continuously during the voyage, so as to be prepared for any contingency; and, in fact, on a troopship, the men even sleep with their lifebelts fastened on. The emphasis with which Captain Edward W. Cleave mentions the *adequacy* of the life-saving equipment on board the *Dorchester*, is additional evidence of the questionable truth concerning the chaplains’ giving their lifebelts to others.

We are constrained to mention that the giving of a pair of gloves to a man who is about to struggle in the icy waters as

a means of help is something that I do not believe would be classified as helpful by any lifesaving corps. I would certainly be interested to know of what value the pair of gloves would be under such circumstances except perhaps to deter the recipient in his struggle for safety.

Since the above statement is a contradiction of the claim concerning all four chaplains, it should be evident that one should seek further in determining the truth of the publicity statement sent out by the Office of the Chief of Chaplains on December 3, 1944, and for specific release on a *Sunday*. It was planned obviously as a piece of publicity for religious consumption.

To show the further confusion regarding the accuracy in reporting the disaster, Mr. Joseph J. Lawler, Third Assistant Postmaster General, wrote, in a letter dated February 20, 1948, that:

"It is a matter of record that 226 persons survived the catastrophe and that the heroic episode was substantiated."

We previously quoted that Adjutant General of the United States Army, Major General Edward F. Witsell, to the effect that there were 500 survivors. Confusion worse confounded!

Certainly, if there is such discrepancy in government records in determining the number of survivors, how much more unreliable is the statement of a 19-year-old boy—or other survivors, for that matter, who were hysterical and confused during the panic which naturally existed during a disaster of such seriousness and magnitude.

Surely, if honor is to be given to those who lost their lives on this ill-fated ship, it should be to the brave officers and crew who stood by, as it was their duty, to see that the soldiers were

given the first opportunity to escape. It is these men who should be honored by a memorial stamp, rather than the four chaplains, the truth of whose deeds is so notoriously unsubstantiated! Truth for truth's sake should be our motto in these matters.

The issuing of this stamp upon the flimsy evidence claimed for the chaplains is an ominous sign of the unwarranted influence of organized religion in our secular government.

At the time the *Dorchester* was sunk, the War Department issued no official statement regarding these four chaplains, and in view of the above facts, and until such time that the acts of these four chaplains can be authenticated beyond the peradventure of a doubt, *this memorial stamp should be withdrawn.*

In the name of truth and honesty, I ask you to do this very thing, not only on behalf of the members of the crew of that ill-fated ship and the soldiers who lost their lives for the preservation of our freedom, but also as an act of integrity in keeping faith with the American people.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph Lewis, President

**FREETHINKERS OF AMERICA**



Unveiling statue to Thomas Paine in Morristown, N. J. on July 4th, 1950. L. to R.—Members of the Color Guard, Sons of the American Revolution; Mayor Edward K. Mills, Jr. of Morristown; Shirley N. Mills, aged 3, daughter of Mayor Mills who with Thomas Paine Van Cott, aged 8 pulled the cord to unveil the statue; and Joseph Lewis, Secretary and founder of the Thomas Paine Memorial Committee which presented the statue to Morristown. (Morristown Daily Record, July 5, 1950)



## THOMAS PAINE AND THE AMERICAN CRISIS \*

Upon this hallowed ground where precious blood was shed for our Freedom, we come to dedicate a statue of Thomas Paine. This event is long overdue—overdue by at least a century and a half.

This statue is to commemorate the critical Crisis which was to determine the success or failure of the American Revolution.

It was here, perhaps upon this very site in Burnham Park, that the turning point of this struggle for freedom took place.

Yes, here in Morristown, where defeat and disaster seemed the inevitable conclusion of our struggle for Freedom, and in the face of desertions and mutiny by the ragged, starving, ill-clothed and ill-fed Continental Army, with the military leaders themselves gripped with fear and discouragement, and with "Surrender" upon their trembling lips, the words of Thomas Paine, the most inspiring ever uttered, produced as if by magic, an enthusiasm and patriotic fervor never yet equalled in the annals of human endeavor.

These words of Paine, each one charged with a force more powerful than dynamite and more devastating than lead,

\* Dedication address delivered at the unveiling of the Thomas Paine statue in Burnham Park, Morristown, New Jersey, on July 4th, in the 174th year of American independence. Reprinted from *Common Sense*, Vol. 14, No. 7, July 1950.

turned what seemed certain defeat into victory, and caused to be established for the first time upon this earth, a government guaranteeing Freedom and Equality, as a basic political right to all who live beneath the folds of her flag.

This conflict, this war, was not a fight between contending parties for power and plunder. It was the historic struggle to determine whether Man was ever to be free.

It was in response to the agonizing cry of George Washington, the Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army, as well as to the groans of despair from the soldiers themselves, in this critical American crisis that one man, AND ONE MAN ALONE—Thomas Paine—rose to the supreme heights of heroic action, and by the eloquence of his inspiring words and by his own unselfish devotion to the cause of Human Freedom, became both the Creator and Saviour of the American Republic.

While the words of COMMON SENSE—Thomas Paine's plea for Independence—were still being eagerly read by the populace, and the stirring words of the Declaration of Independence were being proclaimed throughout the land, and the pealing of the Liberty Bell had not yet subsided, the first shot was fired in the war for Independence.

Confidence pervaded throughout the Thirteen Colonies. Soon the war would be over, and success and victory would crown their efforts.

What an exchange of crowns!

Victory, Independence, and Freedom exchanged for excessive taxation, tyranny and subjection; a Constitution and EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW in exchange for an arrogant and despotic King.

But hardly had the war begun when defeat followed defeat in such quick succession that it seemed not only hopeless, but almost madness to continue the struggle.

Hardly had Washington got his bearings when the first blow of the war took place—it was the strategic Battle of Long Island during the month of August, 1776.

The British Army under General William Howe moved irresistibly against our improvised defenses and before we had time to realize the critical situation, it looked perilously certain that the entire American force on Long Island would be destroyed.

Even a precipitate retreat in such an untenable position was considered a victory, and Washington gathered his forces and escaped to New York.

Long Island, our first outpost, was in the enemy's hands. The fight was almost over before it started.

It was now early in September, a little more than two months after the Declaration of Independence, when the powerful British fleet began to bombard the approaches of New York.

Suddenly and without warning, the bursting shells and the reverberating noises, startled the people of New York—startled them as they had never been startled before.

Simultaneously with the bombardment of Manhattan Island the British troops began landing in ever increasing numbers from flat bottomed boats.

This bold stroke took the untrained and unprepared American soldier so completely by surprise that utter collapse seemed imminent. The hideous noises of the bursting shells coupled with the surprise of swarms of trained soldiers, pouring in ever increasing numbers towards them, was a situation too menacing to face.

"Fright, disgrace and confusion" followed, is the testimony of an eyewitness.

We were in no position to defend New York, and Washing-

ton himself, in referring to the superior forces of the British General said, "Nothing seems to remain but to determine the time of their taking possession."

And possession they took!

New York, New York was gone!

This proud and prosperous city of the New World, the prize of the Colonies, had changed hands within two hours of battle. The British entered New York City and took possession without firing a shot.

There were only two British casualties.

Our forces were completely demoralized.

General Howe was so certain of the situation, and so confident that his superior and well-trained and well-equipped soldiers would overwhelm the rebel forces and that the war was all but over, that he offered peace terms to Washington to lay down his arms.

But Washington was made of sterner stuff.

However, all the elaborate preparations for the defense of New York had to be abandoned.

The fortified positions of Harlem Heights and Washington Heights were deserted.

The British mockingly cried that our fortifications would only serve as a "striking monument of our cowardice and folly."

Winter was approaching, and the British found New York a very desirable winter haven. Washington and his men were again on a precipitate retreat. This time north into Westchester County.

Gloom was increasing.

Other defeats like Long Island and New York would prove disastrous. Washington feared to risk his undisciplined army, not yet recovered from the shock of two successive defeats,

and still exhausted from uninterrupted retreats, to engage in battle with the confident and overwhelming British forces.

As he continued his retreat into Westchester County, he has less and less with which to defend himself.

His arrival in White Plains did not improve his situation. He could not, he dare not risk battle. His men were so exhausted that they would have wilted under fire.

The loss of stores of ammunition which had been abandoned was another serious problem.

Fort Washington and Fort Lee on the Jersey coast, directly opposite Manhattan Island, were vital defenses to prevent the British Fleet from sailing up the Hudson and completely cutting off Washington and his men, not only from receiving any help, but even from escaping.

To trap Washington and end the war was exactly what the British intended when Fort Washington suddenly found itself under severe attack.

After a terrific bombardment, this vital defense post fell.

With it, two thousand Continental soldiers were captured. Enormous stores of great value including the best of cannon and equipment fell into the enemy's hands. Shortly thereafter, Fort Lee, under pressure, was evacuated.

Paine was stationed there, as aide de camp to General Greene at the time of the siege. He had to make a hurried retreat with the rest, and it almost broke his heart to leave the boiling kettles of food and the ovens of freshly baked bread so sadly needed by our famished troops for the already well-fed British Army to consume.

The British were jubilant. The struggle for Independence and Freedom had received another staggering blow.

In an attempt to trap Washington on his retreat, the British were now ready to invade the Jerseys—and this they did.

So hopeless seemed the struggle now that a British spokesman said: "Every thing seems to be over with them, and I flatter myself now that this campaign will put a total end to the war."

The Cause was becoming more hopeless than ever.

Panic was beginning to grip the country. It was hardly believable that conditions could get worse.

But they did!

The people began to wonder if they had not made a grievous mistake. Did they let the persuasiveness of COMMON SENSE get the better of their judgment?

Although smarting under insolent injustice as subjects of Great Britain, their condition had been at least bearable.

What would be their plight, mumbled the people, if they lost the war and England exacted a severe penalty for their daring foolhardiness?

It was now too late to reconsider.

The forces of conflict were in motion.

There was no alternative.

It was to be the fruits of victory or the humiliation and bitterness of defeat.

The Colonies had tasted their third major disaster.

Washington was faced with a momentous decision: To make a stand, he could not; to engage the enemy was suicidal. If he remained in White Plains, all would be lost.

With no help in sight he had but one choice, not to retreat but to escape!

This he did, but at what a cost.

He crossed the Hudson and landed upon the Jersey side.

Here he felt that he would be upon better ground. But here, too, disappointment, despair and defeat dogged his tracks. The level terrain of the country favored the enemy

who took advantage of every factor. Washington was pursued with relentless attacks. He now had two enemies to contend with—the British Army and the people themselves.

Instead of resisting the invaders, many of the residents welcomed the victorious army. Victory has a way of making friends. Generally, the defeated go their way alone.

The American Army found itself faced with capture or annihilation. Utter rout and disintegration followed as rapidly as the army retreated.

One soldier said that: "No lads ever showed greater activity in retreating than we."

Arms and supplies were left behind and the trail of their retreat could be followed by the abandoned equipment. Tents, blankets and even their own personal weapons became too burdensome to carry.

Back, back, back they ran—a hurried and panicky retreat—through Newark, through the Amboys, through Brunswick to Trenton, farther and farther away with less and less.

Flushed with victory, the British were now no longer interested in a peaceful solution of the conflict with the American Colonies, but in retaliation, revenge and plunder.

The territory they invaded bespoke only too well the thoroughness with which they carried out their determination for revenge.

Perhaps at Trenton he could make a stand, thought Washington.

He pondered well and long before making a decision regarding this important defense post. He would attempt to defend it. But alas, it was useless.

Only by a trick of deception—leaving his camp fires burning so as to deceive the enemy as to his strength and his readi-

ness to engage in battle, did he succeed in retreating to the Delaware River.

So serious was the situation at this time that Trenton might well have been the graveyard of our hopes for freedom and the burial place of Washington, as Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army.

The hopes of the people were at their lowest ebb. Murmurs of dissatisfaction were heard, and whispers of discontent with Washington's leadership reverberated back to his ears.

Many thought he should be replaced. Had not Paine come to the defense of Washington at this critical time, we know not what the results would have been.

With the loss of Trenton, the British were again beginning to celebrate victory.

They jubilantly proclaimed that, "The most dangerous and unprovoked Rebellion that ever existed," was about to be completely smashed, and that, "the business is pretty near over." It only remained to mop up the last pockets of resistance.

It is now the middle of December, 1776. The winds and storms of winter entered the fight on the enemy's side. General Charles Lee, who had refused to come to Washington's help in his retreat through the Jerseys, now blamed Washington's incompetence and mismanagement for the perilous situation which faced the Army. Many thought that our Cause would have been better served had Lee, instead of Washington, been Commander-in-Chief.

Washington himself made no secret of his feelings. He wrote:

"I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things."

And as some people can only measure their loss or despair,



or success, in terms of money, he continued with this statement:

"I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of a hundred thousand dollars a year would not induce me to undergo what I do."

He realized that his reputation was at stake and continued:

"Perhaps to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation."

Shortly thereafter, with matters getting worse, he wrote in a final moment of despair:

"Your imagination can scarce extend to a situation more distressing than mine. Our only dependence now is upon the speedy enlistment of a new army. If this fails, I think the game pretty well up."

To make matters worse, General Charles Lee, second in command to Washington, had been captured.

After the defeat at Trenton and his dash for the Delaware, Washington found little comfort from what remained of his army—if such it could be called.

They were exhausted, barefooted and ragged.

Sickness, death and desertion had reduced his force to but 2,000 men; men whose morale was at the lowest ebb.

Washington could find consolation nowhere. He knew that it was useless to look for miracles. Something more substantial was needed for so critical a situation. What was it? Where would it come from? In despair, he muttered to himself: "Must such a cause be lost for lack of strength and courage?"

While Washington possessed the fortitude of a great general, he was not immune to defeat and discouragement.

When the cause seemed hopeless, and when his avenues of

retreat seemed closed, he pondered with deep seriousness the means and methods by which he might escape to the West so as to avoid being captured and shot as a common rebel.

So imminent was the collapse of our Cause and so serious was the plight of Washington!

If Washington was muttering, that "the game was pretty well up" what must have been the depths of despair which gripped the soldiers.

How they survived the harrowing experiences in the campaign of retreat through the Jerseys, no one will ever know.

Paine was with the Army through all its trials and tribulations. He was with the Army during its retreat through the Jerseys. He was with Washington during the perilous crossing of the Delaware and he himself was "surprised how they got through; and at a loss to account for those powers of mind, and springs of animation, by which they withstood the forces of accumulated misfortune."

"Accumulated misfortune." What a description and what fortitude it required to withstand them.

There was gloom in the hearts and camps of the Colonies.

The future looked bleak through the black clouds of despair.

The celebrations, the joys and hopes and expectations of victory of but a few months before made the defeats sting the harder and the more difficult to bear.

Desertions were too numerous to be counted and mutiny raised its ugly head. Many soldiers had not been paid for months.

Those who had opposed the war were jubilant at our defeats. They pompously boasted as prophets.

There was a scramble to get into the good graces of the winning side.

There were spies and traitors and profiteers in those days,

only more. Some were so callous toward the Revolution, and some so coldly indifferent toward the Cause, that they cared not which side won.

At one time it was difficult to know who was a Tory and who was a Patriot.

Too many were more interested in how much money they could make out of the misery of our troops than they were in the securing of Freedom. Too many were not even mentally capable of understanding what Independence meant. The situation was becoming more critical and desperate.

Never, never before did defeat seem so certain.

Never, never before were those who had hung together with Franklin in signing the Declaration of Independence about to be hanged separately.

The British had already begun to celebrate victory.

The King was preparing to distribute honors to his successful generals.

But they failed to take into consideration that to ONE man the war was NOT over, and the war would never be over until the Declaration of Independence became the foundation stone upon which to build a government.

It was during the retreat with Washington through the Jerseys and across the Delaware that Paine realized that unless something were done and done quickly, all would be lost.

While he called Washington's retreat "glorious," he, and he alone, realized that THIS was the crucial moment.

This indeed was the CRISIS in America's struggle for Freedom.

Was it to be a success or failure?

Victory or defeat?

Life or death?

Did our people, did our soldiers, did our leaders know what it was that they were fighting for?

He would tell them.

And he did!

Paine himself, in recalling the situation at the time, after having crossed the Delaware with Washington, wrote to General Laurens describing the frightful conditions of the people.

He wrote: "I came to Philadelphia on public service . . . and seeing the deplorable and melancholy condition the people were in, afraid to speak and almost afraid to think, the public press stopped and nothing to circulate but fears and falsehoods, I sat down and in what I may call a passion of patriotism, wrote the first number of the Crisis."

Legend has it that he sat on a stone writing on a drum head, immune to the winter's cold, with his musket across his knee, wearing Washington's coat, and with a stroke of genius, just as he had done in Common Sense, penned "The American Crisis" with these flaming words of inspiration:

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: 'tis dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated."

Common Sense was talking and the people listened.

There was no doubt about the honesty, the integrity and the sincerity of Thomas Paine.

HE was genuine.

Hardly had the words been printed when Washington, realizing the power they possessed, had them read and reread to his few remaining soldiers. The results were like magic.

In ringing tones of animation the officers began:

"These are the times that try men's souls . . ."

The moment these words were uttered, they became the watchword of the Revolution; the slogan of the Army.

The soldiers listened with eagerness and rapture to every word that Paine wrote. Every word, every line, every sentence had its effect.

General Von Steuben said that a pamphlet by Thomas Paine would produce a better effect than all the recommendations of Congress in prose and verse. And he was right. It did.

Washington's army was rejuvenated. New recruits rallied to the General's side. Men flocked to the Standard Bearer and a new army was created. New and stronger and more determined than ever before.

"These are the times that try men's souls . . ." are the most inspiring words ever written! They did more for the freedom of mankind than any other words ever uttered. Never before had words had such an effect!

They were responsible for instilling the greatest amount of courage and did more in the shortest space of time in the darkest hour of despair than has ever been recorded in the history of the human race.

They were repeated and repeated until they reverberated into one great crescendo over the broad spaces of this land;

and made every liberty loving person reaffirm his faith that Independence and Freedom were too precious to abandon in times of great physical stress. It made them renew their determination to achieve Liberty regardless of its cost in suffering and sacrifice.

In the midst of battle, these words seemed written across our flag:

These are the times that try men's souls—

The sun never shined upon a Cause of greater worth.

We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free, and make room upon earth for honest men to live in.

But the opening paragraph was not all there was to "The Crisis" which Paine wrote. There were other problems that had to be solved; other arguments that had to be answered; other doubts that had to be resolved.

His pen never stopped until he made certain that every problem had been met; that every argument had been disposed of, and every doubt had been dissipated; and that every man, woman and child was doing his and her share, and every resource had been put into the conflict.

He admonishes the people that, "At such a crisis, the whole country is called to unanimity and exertion." And that, "No ability ought to sleep, that can produce a mite to the general good, nor even a whisper to pass that militates against it. The necessity of the case, and the importance of the consequences, admit no delay from a friend, no apology from an enemy. To spare now," he warns, "would be the height of extravagance," because it would in effect, "be to sacrifice it (Freedom) perhaps forever."

It was a momentous occasion and only one inspired by a *passion for Freedom* and emotionally stirred with a *passion of Patriotism* could have aroused such a passionate response, and accomplished such marvelous results.

While writing "The Crisis"—knowing full well the tragic situation, and that only something of an extraordinary nature could save us, Paine's mind reflects upon the past and he wrote:

"Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen, and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment."

Little did Thomas Paine realize that when he wrote these words that he himself would surpass by a thousandfold the legendary accomplishments of Joan of Arc.

Little did he realize that the very words he was writing was the inspiring message that was to arouse *his* countrymen to rise and save the most precious cause in which man has been engaged to free himself from tyranny and to secure Freedom.

It was not the Maid of Orleans that turned the tide, it was the Man from Thetford.

It was not a Joan of Arc that saved us, it was Thomas Paine—Common Sense, himself.

But as the war continued, and the British pursued relentlessly their determination to end it, there were trembling rumors that Philadelphia was in danger!

What? Had we not suffered enough? Long Island, New York, Fort Washington, and Fort Lee, the Amboys, Newark, Brunswick, and Trenton. Were there no limits to defeat?

But the murmurs continued: "The British are coming."  
"The British are coming."

This alarm was sounded throughout the country.

It was true. It was only too true, despite the fact that the Continental Congress had but two days before implored the people to remain steadfast, and had requested Washington to deny the rumors of the impending disaster.

Washington knew only too well the situation and remained silent regarding the doomed city, but secretly wrote to his brother, "I tremble for Philadelphia."

Paine made a hurried trip at Washington's request from his headquarters here in Morristown to the besieged city with the hope of inducing the people to resist the invaders, but the populace was engulfed in gloom.

The leaders were equally affected. The first and foremost consideration was to escape with their belongings. Many debated seriously the situation. Shall we go? Shall we surrender? Shall we die?

John Adams said that if the British came to Philadelphia, "I shall run away, I suppose, with the rest." And he did.

In this spirit of defeat, with not even time for adjournment, every Congressman sought his own safety first, some not even taking time to saddle their horses.

The British did come, and they conquered!

Philadelphia fell!

Fell to the British!

The Capital of the Thirteen Colonies was in British hands!

Philadelphia, the cradle of Liberty, where the Declaration of Independence had declared Freedom for all, was no longer ours!

What a humiliating situation!

The Tories were happy. They extended welcome arms to the conquerors.

The British were jubilant. The war now seemed to be over.



This looked like the final blow!

But even the fall of Philadelphia could not shake the determination of Washington's re-inspired and re-vitalized army. Not while these words were ringing in their ears:

"These are the times that try men's souls."

No wonder the British marvelled at our resistance. No wonder they could not understand what mysterious force it was that gave us such unbending strength.

The stirring words of Thomas Paine were coursing through the veins of the American soldier.

Our Army was no longer composed of ordinary men. They were now soldiers fighting for Freedom.

Their blood had been mixed with the words of Paine's "Crisis," and never before had such a combination flowed through the arteries of man.

The British were driven out of Philadelphia!

Philadelphia was recaptured!

The cradle where Liberty was born was again in the hands of the patriots—the fruit of Paine's "Crisis."

While the struggle continued, George Washington was encamped here in Morristown, with the burdens of the war weighing heavily upon his shoulders—too heavy for the Commander and Chief of the Revolutionary Army to bear.

The rigors of over three years of bitter warfare were telling upon him.

While we had passed the crisis of Despair, we were now faced with another crisis—the crisis of poverty—the lack of money with which to feed and clothe the army.

From his headquarters here in Morristown, to be exact on January 5, 1780, Washington wrote his most distressing letter.

It was an appeal of the hopeless!

It was the final note of despair!

The cloud of Doom had settled over his headquarters—through the darkness the figure of Defeat was seen advancing. Even Washington failed to see the glimmering ray of a faint light.

In an appeal for help to Joseph Reed, president of Pennsylvania, he concludes his letter with these ominous words.

“I assure you every idea that you form of our distresses will fall short of reality . . . we see in every line of the army the most serious features of mutiny and sedition.”

When this letter was written, Thomas Paine was clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly.

Who can compare with this man in his devotion to the cause of American Freedom?

He was soldier by day, author by night, and statesman during his “spare time.” No ordinary person could have managed to have crowded so much fruitful labor in a day’s activity.

It was delegated to Paine to read Washington’s letter to the Assembly. After Paine had read the letter, he—

“. . . observed a despairing silence in the house. Nobody spoke for a considerable time. At length, a member of whose fortitude to withstand misfortune I had a high opinion, rose: ‘If,’ said he, ‘the account in that letter is a true state of things, and we are in a situation there represented, it appears to me vain to contend the matter any longer. We may as well give up at first as at last.’”

But to Thomas Paine there was no “giving up.”

Just as at the critical moment he had infused fresh patriot-

ism into Washington's despairing army, so again in a "passion of patriotism," with money instead of words, he met THIS Crisis.

In his own words, he gives a graphic picture of the situation. He writes that:

"If the Assembly could not give the assistance which the necessity of the case immediately required, it was very proper the matter should be known by those who either could or would endeavor to do it."

Paine had money due him for his services as Clerk of the Assembly. And what do you think he did?

He took \$500.00 of his meager salary, enclosed it with a letter that only a Thomas Paine could write and sent it to a wealthy friend, Mr. Blair M'Clenaghan, and told him that he wanted to start the subscription with his GIFT of \$500.00 to establish a bank to finance the war, and was ready to give another \$500.00 if needed.

That very evening, Paine's appeal was read to a group of wealthy men meeting in a coffee house, and within less than six months, the subscriptions, spreading like wild fire, had collected a sum of over \$1,000,000.00.

This bank was incorporated by the Congress on December 21, 1780 as the Bank of North America, with Robert Morris as its first President. This bank financed the Revolutionary War, and prevented utter collapse.

Years later, when the list of names of those who had subscribed to the original fund with which to establish the bank was published, the name of Thomas Paine was shamefully omitted, while others, who had made millions in profit from their investments, were immortalized as public benefactors.

Such has been the cruel conspiracy to deprive this great patriot of the recognition which he so richly deserves and of his rightful place in the history of our country.

While there is a great doubt that Moses carried the Children of Israel successfully over the waters of the Red Sea, there is no question that Thomas Paine carried the soldiers of Washington's army triumphantly over the turbulent waves of the Revolutionary War.

Not by his own deeds, which alone were sufficient, but by the testimony of those who were present in the struggle, by those who took part in the conflict, by those who were upon the scene of battle, do we know that Thomas Paine deserves our deepest thanks and our highest homage.

"Washington's sword would have been wielded in vain had it not been supported by the pen of Paine."

John Adams made that statement. He was there. He saw it happen. He knew. He also said: "History is to ascribe the American Revolution to Thomas Paine."

These statements become even more significant when you take into consideration the fact that Adams was not friendly to Paine. He made these statements because of the sheer force of truth behind them.

James Monroe was there. He saw it happen. He knew. He said: "The citizens of the United States cannot look back upon the time of their own revolution without recollecting among the names of their most distinguished patriots, that of Thomas Paine."

George Washington, who perhaps better than any other single individual in the world knew the value of Thomas Paine's services to the cause of American Independence, when

he learned of Paine's neglect and poverty, wrote and invited him to come to his headquarters then in Princeton. He said:

"Your presence may remind Congress of your past service to this country, and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions, by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your work."

The members of the First Congress were there. They saw it happen. They knew. They unanimously passed this resolution (August 26, 1785): "*Resolved*, That the early, unsolicited and continued labors of Mr. Thomas Paine, in explaining and enforcing the principles of the late Revolution, by the ingenious and timely publications upon the nature of liberty and civil government, have been well received by the citizens of these States, and merit the approbation of Congress . . ."

Why, might you ask, has Paine been so shamefully neglected?

I know the answer. I will tell you why.

After he had freed man from political tyranny, he set about to free him from religious superstition. That is all. That was his "crime." If such a thing can be called a crime—the emancipation of man from the twin enemies of Freedom—Tyranny and Superstition.

Is the love of mankind and the heroic sacrifice of one's life to Freedom so debasing an act that it deserves censure?

If such conduct deserves censure then man does not deserve a benefactor.

Man has a peculiar way of being indifferent to his benefactors, of rewarding evil for good, ingratitude for thanks, abuse for honor. But in no instance in history, do I know of

a case where all of these shameful acts have been heaped so unjustifiably upon one man.

No wonder the sting of ingratitude saddened the last years of his life and there was no one to cheer him in the times that tried HIS soul.

Well might his last unhappy days be called the Crucifixion of his life. His was the Cross of Ingratitude.

He was denied citizenship and the sovereign right to vote in the Republic he created. He was unjustly imprisoned by those whom he had helped to make famous, while others turned a deaf ear to his plea for help, and remained silent as he was condemned to be guillotined!

An ignorant conductor ordered him off a coach in an arrogant and insulting manner as if he had been a dangerous criminal or a moral leper. This great patriot was "unfit" to ride with other passengers—men and women who were enjoying the benefits of freedom only because of him. What irony!

He was spat upon and tripped into the gutter.

He was burnt in effigy.

Nails were made with the initials "T. P." and put into the soles of shoes to symbolize grinding him into the earth.

He was humiliated and insulted.

He was obscenely caricatured.

He was slandered, vilified, and libeled.

Every filthy epithet was hurled at him.

And many ignorant people even today would heap upon this great patriot these hateful and slanderous acts.

And for what?

What did he do?

What was his "crime?"

He created the American Republic, suffering every known personal sacrifice so that we might live under a government

guaranteeing to every individual, regardless of race, color or creed, the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Thomas Paine's Idealism in the face of such conduct is heart-breaking.

But he never faltered a moment.

He never asked the cost.

He never sought or expected a reward.

His only compensation for his unselfish devotion to the cause of Freedom and Independence was VICTORY.

He had only one defense. His sterling character; his honesty and his integrity, and that was the only armor he needed to protect him from the scandal-mongers of his day.

As Shakespeare truly says: "Honesty was his fault."

Thomas Paine lived as exemplary a life as any man who ever walked upon this earth, and if Nature is capable of rendering a service to Mankind, she could not give us a greater gift than another Thomas Paine.

The struggle for American Independence started with the publication of "Common Sense," on January 10, 1776, followed by the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, and ended with the publication of the last number of "The American Crisis" on April 19, 1783, on the eighth anniversary of the first shot fired at Lexington.

And nothing could be more appropriate in the observance of this Independence Day than the dedication of a statue to the man who was the author of all three immortal documents.

You cannot separate Thomas Paine from the American Revolution. The one is interwoven into the other.

COMMON SENSE, THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, and THE AMERICAN CRISIS might very properly be called the Bible of the American Republic, and the Charter and Testament for the Freedom of Mankind.

You cannot celebrate the birth of this Republic without at the same time celebrating the publication of "Common Sense."

You cannot praise the brave soldiers of the Revolution and honor the founding Fathers without including the author of "The American Crisis."

You cannot celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence without honoring Thomas Paine, its author. The Declaration of Independence, the Charter of America's Freedom, is the literary and political connecting link between "Common Sense" and "The American Crisis." It is as definitely the work of Thomas Paine as if he had signed his name to it. They cannot be separated. They are part and parcel of each other.

Only Thomas Paine said that a DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE made it impossible for him to give up the struggle. It made it impossible for him because he had written in this greatest manifesto of Freedom, the pledge of his life, his fortune and his sacred honor, to establish its principles.

While I consider it a great privilege and not an inconsiderable honor to dedicate this statue today, I also feel that I could not perform a greater act of patriotism than by honoring Thomas Paine on this 4th of July.

Without him there would have been no United States of America. There would have been no Independence Day. There would be no waving of the Star Spangled Banner in the breezes above our heads to let us know that Liberty still prevails in our land.

And now to you, Mayor Mills, with a "passion of patriotism" on this glorious 4th of July, in the one hundred and seventy-fourth year of American Independence, I give you this inspiring statue, as a gift to the people of Morristown, which our great sculptor, Mr. Georg Lober, has made of Thomas



Paine—the one man, who more than any other single individual, was responsible for the establishment of our Great Republic.

## TAX EXEMPTION OF CHURCH PROPERTY \*

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Joseph Lewis. I am President of the Freethinkers of America, a membership organization incorporated under the laws of the State of New York. We have members in every state of the United States.

We oppose the exemption of taxation to religious organizations on two grounds: 1.) that it is unjust, 2.) that it is a flagrant violation of the basic principles of the Constitution of the United States.

A wrong long in existence does not prove that wrong to be right. We have maintained for many years that tax exemption to religious organizations would be abused. Time has proven the truth of this statement. I would like very much to bring up the question of the spaghetti factory (this was prompted by the remarks of the previous speaker who represented New York University. The case involved a bequest by a former graduate to the New York University of his spaghetti factory. The factory was taken over by the college and then

\* Testimony of Joseph Lewis before the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, in Washington, D.C., December 11, 1947.

As Mr. Lewis spoke extemporaneously and some of his remarks were transcribed inaccurately, they have been corrected from the text as it appears in the Committee's report.

Reprinted from *The Freethinker*, Vol. 12, No. 12, December 1948.

tax exemption of the property secured on the grounds that the money and profits were being used for educational purposes.)

I could give you an instance where a religious organization in New York is engaged in a far more flagrant activity than that of spaghetti manufacturing. This organization which I have in mind is engaged, among its many commercial enterprises, in that of the insurance business, the waste paper business, the old clothes business. I do not think the latter is very far removed from that of spaghetti manufacturing.

I have in mind the Salvation Army. This organization is notorious for its collection of old clothes and odds and ends of household furniture. These articles of merchandise are assorted, priced, and then sold through their social service stores, just as in any other commercial institution engaged in the buying and selling of merchandise for profit. They do the same with the waste paper that they collect. It is baled and sold in the open market in competition with those who are engaged legitimately in this undertaking.

Some years ago we demanded that the building occupied by the Salvation Army on 23rd Street, New York City, be taxed because this organization was engaged in so many commercial enterprises that this administration building could not possibly be construed as being used for religious purposes, and therefore should be subject to taxation.

**CHAIRMAN:** To what purpose, Mr. Lewis, do they devote the proceeds of the sale of old clothing and paper?

**MR. LEWIS:** I presume they would claim for religious purposes, but I do not believe that the answer is truthful or justified, because an investigation has proved that they reinvest their surplus funds in real estate, and have been known to make enormous profits on the sale of these parcels without offering in the slightest degree to pay to the municipality the

taxes which they received for so long from the previous sources and which would be only a fraction of the profit made on the transaction. On the grounds that moneys or profits derived from their activities would be used for religious purposes, any representative could come here and could make just as eloquent a plea as have the gentlemen who preceded me in behalf of the educational institutions which they represent, and the religious organizations would raise their fingers in dire warning that if we sought to tax their property, we would be striking at the very foundation of America. That statement is not true. Both charity and religion cover a multitude of sins. What has made America great is her Constitution. Yes, her secular constitution and the particular provision which has been most responsible for the growth and greatness of this country is the one providing for the separation of church and state. Property owned by a religious organization and used commercially, if exempt from taxation, is in violation of the fundamental principle of the United States Constitution. It is strange that whenever efforts are made to force religious organizations to comply with the law, they raise the cry of the destruction of morality, when they, themselves, are committing a flagrant and reprehensible act in violating the law for their own selfish purposes. Nothing could be more "immoral" nor subversive of our laws.

President Ulysses S. Grant warned the people of the United States, 75 years ago, in his Memorial to Congress, that if church property continued to be exempt it would become the most menacing evil to our free institutions. When President Grant sent this Memorial to Congress, there was only 7 million dollars of church property enjoying exemption in the United States. Today, in the United States there is over 7 BILLION dollars worth of church property exempt from taxation, while

in New York City alone there is more than one **BILLION** dollars free from taxation.

Even though church property used exclusively for church purposes is not entitled to exemption, 90 percent of the property owned by religious organizations which enjoy tax exemption are not used exclusively for religious purposes. It is used for all kinds of activities and for a multitude of commercial enterprises, such as the publication of magazines, the operation of restaurants, the ownership of apartment houses. Even though owned by religious organizations, this property should certainly be taxed, because if you permit the slightest exemption of church property from taxation, you are forcing the taxation upon others for the support of a particular religious belief, which no one can deny is certainly un-American.

There is right here, in a suburb of Washington, a religious organization which practically owns the whole town, and is engaged in all kinds of commercial activities. In addition, they publish a national magazine and all of their property is totally tax-exempt.

So flagrant has tax exemption become and so insolently have the professors of religion demanded tax exemption that only recently in the state of Kentucky, a clergyman protested the payment of his dog license on the ground that the dog was property belonging to a religious organization and, therefore, was entitled to exemption.

If we are not careful and do not do something now to stop this abuse, and if we continue to give to church organizations the tremendous power the use of this money means, we may have to contend with what was so prevalent during the Middle Ages in Europe when the law even permitted members of the religious orders to be immune to prosecution. This immunity was known as "benefit of clergy," and even if one com-

mitted murder, he could not be held accountable for his crime. The thefts of the clergy during that period were so widespread that they were taken as a matter of course.

Exemption has been granted to these religious organizations on the grounds that religion is a benefit and that they are performing a public service. Upon such an excuse, nearly every beneficial industry could claim exemption. Let me make this significant comparison. I am sure that no one will deny that, as far as performing a public service and contributing to the public good and welfare is concerned, no one surpasses the late Thomas A. Edison. Not only did Mr. Edison contribute as much as any man living in our time to the welfare and progress of the human race, but I don't believe that any man in history compares with him as a benefactor of mankind, and yet his laboratories were not exempt from taxation, nor was anything that he bought from which he developed so many of his marvelous inventions.

Let me mention the name of another man whose contributions to the good of the American people cannot be computed, they are so invaluable. I have in mind Luther Burbank. His orchards were not exempt from taxation.

I merely mention these two men because I had the extreme pleasure of knowing both of them personally, and both were members of the organization which I represent.

Equal rights before the law, gentlemen, is what I think should be the duty of our lawmakers and I see no reason why a college, if you will permit me to depart from the religious side of our argument, should be exempt from taxation if it is engaged in commercial enterprises, any more than any other institution. Because, whatever benefit they derive from tax exemption, the burden of additional taxation is placed upon the shoulders of someone else, and that someone else, no mat-

ter who he may be, is paying for the education of either a doctor or a lawyer or an engineer. It is unfair. If a man wants an education he should pay for it. If an individual wants to contribute to the support of a college, that is his affair, but colleges should not seek tax exemption in times like these, when the burden of taxation is so great.

Another point I wish to make. If a tax exempt college, through research, makes a discovery for the public good, that knowledge should become public property and remain in the public domain. I have in mind two instances: first, that of the University of Wisconsin which discovered a method of imparting Vitamin D to food, but, instead of giving this knowledge to the public, it charges a royalty to the users, who in turn pass this tax on to the consumer.

Secondly, that of Cornell University which discovered or invented the process of making butter out of honey, called "Honey-Whip," and for which they derive a royalty from those who are granted the right to make it.

I say that any knowledge, invention, achievement, or discovery, as a result of scientific investigation, by any tax exempt college should belong in the public domain.

The whole question of tax exemption goes back to the basic principle upon which this government was founded, and that is equality before the law. Equal rights for all, special privileges to none. That, gentlemen, is the basis of my argument.

CHAIRMAN: It is a very interesting statement.

MR. SIMPSON: May I ask a question, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: How does your organization raise money?

MR. LEWIS: By membership dues.

MR. SIMPSON: Are they deductible from tax returns?

MR. LEWIS: No, sir. We pay taxes. We would not ask for exemption even if the law permitted us to do so.

MR. SIMPSON: May the dues payer deduct these as an expense?

MR. LEWIS: No sir, because our organization is not designated as either an educational one nor a religious one in the eyes of the law, and as such, the dues payer is not entitled to ask exemption for his contribution.

MR. SIMPSON: I mean the man who gives you the money.

MR. LEWIS: That is the person I mean. He is not allowed to deduct his dues or contributions to our organization because we do not come within the category of an educational institution or a religious organization.

CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions? We are very sorry we cannot give you more time.

MR. LEWIS: I am, too.

CHAIRMAN: The calendar for today had already been prepared and the witnesses notified but we kind of went out of our way to hear you today. The House is in session on this relief bill which also stretches the Constitution to considerable length, in the opinion of the Chair.

MR. LEWIS: I appreciate that very much. Will you permit me to make two more statements?

CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MR. LEWIS: At one time all apartment houses, office buildings and business profits were taxed on the property at 49th and 50th Streets and Eighth Avenue, in New York City. This property was then bought, and upon this site a hotel was erected and named "The Knights of Columbus Hotel." It paid its taxes. We were then informed that, in order to enjoy exemption for this hotel, the charter of the Knights of Columbus was amended to read that all profits from this hotel were to be used to build a home for the aged members of that or-



ganization. This change in the charter was made when the hotel was losing a considerable sum of money. In order to prevent the loss they applied to the Tax Department in New York City for exemption. The exemption was granted. Immediately thereafter, it was called to my attention. We instituted legal proceedings on the ground that the hotel was a commercial piece of property, that it was losing money, that there was no profit to be set aside for the aged members of the Knights of Columbus, and not only that but there was no home where the aged members of the Knights of Columbus could live. Through our efforts, this piece of property was put back on the tax rolls, and the City of New York began to receive again the normal taxes of \$62,500 a year. Shortly after the decision in this case, the hotel property was sold.

There was a bill introduced into the Legislature of the State of New York—and this is probably the most flagrant piece of tax exemption for property owned by religious organizations that has ever come to my attention—in which the entire real estate holdings of the Archbishopric of the New York Diocese of the Catholic Church was to enjoy tax exemption on all property in their possession. This bill passed the legislature and was signed by the late Governor Alfred E. Smith, and became a law of the state. As a result of this, all the property owned or controlled by the Catholic Church in the State of New York, including apartment houses and business buildings and those which they buy and sell at a profit, are completely exempt from taxation. This is a flagrant state of affairs and I cannot express my condemnation of it in strong enough terms.

MR. KEAN: Mr. Chairman, may I ask a question about that?

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kean.

MR. KEAN: Does the real estate owned by the Trinity Church come into that category? Is that exempt from taxation?

MR. LEWIS: The property owned by Trinity Church Corporation is notorious for its tax exemption. This corporation owns hundreds of millions of dollars of property in the very heart of New York City and, upon information which I received recently, they pay about \$500,000 a year in taxes.

MR. KEAN: They do pay taxes.

MR. LEWIS: They do, but only a minor amount compared to what this property would be taxed if owned by individuals.

MR. KEAN: Why do they pay less?

MR. LEWIS: Because of the pressure of being a religious organization.

MR. KEAN: Is it taxed to the full amount?

MR. LEWIS: Certainly not.

MR. KEAN: That is not the church's fault.

MR. LEWIS: Yes it is; they are a party to the failure to be fully taxed, and knowingly so.

MR. KEAN: Naturally, anybody who owns property is anxious to get its assessment as low as possible.

MR. LEWIS: But it is dishonest to have it taxed below its proper amount through pressure. My second instance is that of the Calvary Baptist Church on 57th Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues in New York City. When John Roach Straton was pastor of this church, he saw a wonderful opportunity to convert this property into a handsomely paying commercial enterprise, and live upon the bounty of it. He had built upon this property a 17 story apartment building. When completed, he applied for tax exemption for the entire property, claiming it belonged to the church. If you gentlemen are not acquainted with New York City, I might tell you that 57th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues is a very de-

sirable spot, and within no time the apartment house was rented 100% at very substantial rentals. We protested this exemption on the grounds it was unfair, even under the present laws, to exempt the entire property, despite the fact that the title of the building was held by the church. The Tax Department made an investigation and finally exempted only that part of the building which the church occupied, and proceeded to tax the rest of it. When we analyzed the amount of tax they had put upon the building, we protested that it was entirely too small, compared to the valuation put upon that part which was used exclusively for the church. This brought about a revision of the assessment, and again we added thousands of dollars a year to New York City's treasury. These instances could be multiplied not only in New York City but all over the United States. As, for instance, Unity Corporation in Kansas City, Missouri. They publish a magazine and carry on a mail order religious enterprise. I was informed that their property is also enjoying complete tax exemption. I cannot stress the importance of taxing church property. It is becoming a great menace and sooner or later will precipitate a grave crisis. I sincerely trust that the members of the Committee will give it very serious consideration.

**CHAIRMAN:** Are there any further questions? If not, we thank you for your appearance here, Mr. Lewis.

**MR. LEWIS:** Thank you for hearing me, sir.

## SOVIET SOPHISTRY \*

As editor of *COMMON SENSE* I sat in the press gallery of the Security Council of the United Nations at Lake Success on Thursday, August 10, and observed Jacob Malik, Soviet delegate and temporary president of the Council. During the previous ten days, this gentleman had shocked the world with his arrogance, his utter disregard of Council rules and his unparalleled insolence. He had ignored the opinions of the other members totally, just as he had ignored the purpose for which this session was called. It was called to ascertain the facts about the invasion of the Republic of South Korea by the northern Koreans and to exercise the power and influence of the Council to stop hostilities and bring about peace between the contending parties.

It was for the purpose of mediating such conflicts that the United Nations came into existence. Unfortunately, when it was formed, our representative Alger Hiss, now a convicted perjurer and publicly charged with being a spy for the Soviet Union, used his influence to permit provisions to be adopted which had the effect of giving the Soviet Union the power to complicate and destroy the effectiveness of this world organization. It is quite evident that Hiss did his job well, for in this Council anyone of the five permanent members has the power to veto any resolution passed by the majority of that body.

\* Reprinted from *COMMON SENSE*, Vol. 14, No. 9, September, 1950.

How such a destructive rule was ever adopted is past understanding. Sufficient to note, the Soviet delegate has exercised this veto countless times. This abuse of the veto power should have been an indication of the character of the Soviet government and remedial measures should have been taken long ago in the United Nations.

After the Soviet delegate had used his veto enough to show his utter disrespect for the deliberations of the United Nations, he committed a further act of contempt by absenting himself from the deliberations of the Council for seven months. Obviously the Soviet Union thought that by doing this, it would render the United Nations impotent. And in the meantime, in cynical disregard of the United Nations, and in particular for its establishment of the Republic of South Korea as a separate nation below the 38th parallel, it prepared the invasion of South Korea which it seeks to conquer and to subjugate the nine million people who live in this area. The aim of the Soviet Union is to make the whole of Korea an undivided satellite of the Soviet Union and at the same time use it as a military stepping stone for further acts of conquest.

With the invasion of South Korea by North Korea on June 25th, an invasion without warning and perpetrated with a violence which shamed Hitler's march on Poland, the members of the Security Council were called into session. It became the immediate duty of that body to ascertain the facts, and if the aggressor were found guilty upon the evidence presented, to publicly condemn the brutal invasion of a peaceful country, and act with all speed to stop hostilities. It was as much its duty, as when a fight takes place in our community, it is the duty of the policeman to step into the conflict and arrest the guilty party.

The invasion of South Korea was a challenge to the very

existence of the United Nations. With the Soviet delegate absent, the Council acted speedily and with effectiveness. Upon evidence submitted by the United Nations representative it was clearly shown that the forces of North Korea were the aggressors. The Council condemned North Korea, castigated the invasion as an unwarranted act and invoked the provisions of the United Nations charter by sending military aid to the people of South Korea.

This move, the military intervention by 53 of the 59 members of the United Nations, caused the Soviet delegate to return to the Security Council. The irony of this gesture is that if he had not previously shown his contempt as a member of the Council, he could have vetoed the act which he now seeks to condemn.

Obviously, his government did not believe that the United Nations, particularly the United States, would condemn the Korean invasion and rush military help to its defense. Thereby the Soviet Union committed the greatest diplomatic blunder of modern times. Had its representative remained and attended the sessions, he could have vetoed any action of the Council and prevented military help from being sent to South Korea.

Let me state at the outset that I have no desire to enter into the political questions involved in this conflict. My sole purpose here is to evaluate the type of government which calling itself a "people's democratic republic" would let loose upon this earth a holocaust of destruction in its mad desire to dominate the world.

There is only one justification for war and that is to break the chain of tyranny over the minds and bodies of men. Such wars have been few in the history of the human race.

The killing of one peaceful man, the murder of one woman

in defense of her home, the orphaning of one child to face starvation and loneliness in a cruel and callous world is not worth all the wealth secured by a war of aggrandizement.

What does Russia seek in this invasion of South Korea—a blade of grass? If the Russian people devoted their time and energy to the development of their own resources and to enjoying the benefits of their accumulated labor, they could not possibly use up the material wealth of their country during the next 5,000 years.

But let me return to Mr. Malik as president of the Security Council of the United Nations this Thursday, August 10. Even his “poker” face winced under the lash of ridicule dealt him for his attempt to frustrate the deliberations of the Council and for his desperate manoeuvres to uphold the indefensible position of the Soviet Union.

I watched him carefully and intently and I noticed that he cringed more than once. It was quite obvious that he was on the “hot seat,” to use a colloquialism that indicates the predicament of a guilty man enmeshed in his web of lies. Malik failed miserably to win support for the Soviet Union or to cover up its monstrous act of aggression. Behind his blank expression, I could sense the tumult within.

When piqued by the American delegate, Mr. Austin, about the steps of aggression by North Korea, Mr. Malik became confused by the many “excuses and explanations” he had previously given. He blurted out that “the representative of the United States was seeking to shift the blame for the conflict from the shoulders of the innocent upon the shoulders of the guilty.” These were Malik’s own words!

When the full realization of this confusion dawned on Mr. Malik, a cynical smile spread across his face. With the smugness and arrogance of a brazen culprit he sought to correct this

incriminating slip. My final conclusions after a most careful observation of Mr. Malik for three and a half hours were that he would make an excellent subject for a lie detector.

As I watched the deliberations of the Security Council, I was convinced that never before in the history of man has there existed such an opportunity for peace. I could not help feel what a tragedy it was that one nation could be responsible for defeating this much desired goal.

The United Nations (which I consider a continuation of the League of Nations) is not a perfect instrument, but certainly since its goal is peace there is sufficient reason for its existence. To bring about peace is still the major problem of our times and its consummation is devoutly to be wished.

The closest approach to achieving this desired end was taken following the American Revolution when Thomas Paine proposed in a letter to Thomas Jefferson (1800) the formation of a "Congress of Nations" which he called "A Maritime Compact." Had this "Congress of Nations" become a reality, we know not how many wars would have been prevented and how much progress could have been achieved in the period since then! Ironically enough the unfortunate circumstance that prevented the implementation of this idea was the death of Emperor Paul of Russia. What a king favored for peace and security, is being jeopardized by a government presuming to be a "people's democratic republic."

On the question of war, I believe with Thomas Paine that: "If there is a sin superior to every other, it is that of a wilful and offensive war"—and that "When we consider, for the feelings of nature cannot be dismissed, the calamities of war and the miseries it inflicts upon the human species, the thousands and tens of thousands of every age and sex who are rendered wretched by the event, surely there is something in the heart of



man that calls upon him to think! . . . Let it then be heard, and let man learn to feel that the true greatness of a nation is founded on principles of humanity, and not on conquest . . .”

In previous issues of this publication, we have discussed the Soviet Union's imposition of its economic views upon scientific subjects. We refer to their condemnation of the Mendelian law regarding inherited characteristics as against Lysenko's delusion that acquired characteristics can be inherited.

“Are We Returning to the Dark Ages?”, we asked in this previous article. In view of the military aggression of the Soviet Union, the question was apt. The tyranny of that country in attempting to force its economic views on scientific thinking is unmistakable. It is known that Russian scientists who refused to conform to the dictates of the Politburo were either banished or killed; that membership by Russian scientists in world scientific organizations is condemned and that these men have been compelled to resign. How similar this is to the attitude toward scientific discoveries of the Roman Catholic Church during the Dark Ages when it held power over the minds of men! Even in the fields of art, music and literature, the “economic determinism” of the Soviet Union has shackled its artists. Its hypocritical pretense to idealism is now exposed to all the world. It is not strange in view of subsequent events, that Russian communism should be considered by some as a form of religious fanaticism.

But despite such oppression, intellectual freedom is still worth fighting for!

In all forms of tyranny, there is discernible a similarity of pattern. It is not strange to me that the tyranny of the Soviet Union should conform with the Jesuitry practiced by the Catholic Church. The same perversity of language is employed

and the same system of repeating a half truth that is actually a lie is used on the theory that the end justifies the means. This is demonstrated by the use of such words by the Soviet delegate as "peoples' democratic republic" when referring to the government of North Korea. It is nothing of the kind, North Korea is a puppet regime with guns levelled at the heads of the leaders compelling them to do the bidding of the Russians, "or else." This is a far cry from a government "deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed" as is explicitly stated in our own Declaration of Independence.

Are not the words "peoples' democratic republic" repetitious or as the Chinese delegate referred to them the "peoples' peoples' peoples." If North Korea is a government of the people, then the people rule; if it is a republic, the people rule, if it is a democracy, then the people rule.

So too the Catholic Church in its use of the words "father" for priests, "sister" for nuns and "brother" for teachers, prostitutes the tender names of family life. These meanings are hardly less false than when the Soviet Union boasts that theirs is a "peoples' government." Because it used false and misleading terms, many well-meaning people at the time the Soviet leaders got control of the Russian government, were led to believe and to hope that the new regime would demonstrate a power for good. This was revealed as an illusion when the Soviet Union made its pact with Hitler. That should have been a warning to the world that the Soviet leaders were not to be trusted and their promises were a sham. Beneath the glove of friendship was the mailed fist of world aggression.

Let me, here and now, in unequivocal language and as emphatically as I can, state that the Soviet Union or to be more exact, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is not a government based on the philosophy of Atheism. It is in reality, as

it demonstrates in action, a government of tyranny and militarism, which knows nothing about the philosophy of Atheism. Atheism is a humane philosophy, whose primary aim is to advance the cause of human beings on earth. It seeks to diminish suffering, not to intensify it. It should be remembered that the founder of the Red Cross was Henri Dunant, an Atheist. And there have been innumerable other Atheists who have contributed toward the alleviation of suffering. Atheists abhor war as a cruel instrument bringing only suffering to mankind—and disaster. Man has enough problems to contend with without adding the horrors of war. Peace here on earth is the very basis of the philosophy of Atheism. That is why it condemns the church so severely for the church is more interested in the “hereafter” than in solving the problems of man on earth. Atheism believes that life here on earth is more important than imaginary benefits after death.

But the Soviet Union condemns the church only because it itself wishes the power that the church now possesses. This is demonstrated by what happens to the machinery of the church when it comes under Soviet domination. Does the Soviet Union carry out the principle of the separation of church and state in the countries it now controls? It does not! It merely appropriates the machinery and functions of the church and subsidizes its priests to make them subservient to the regime.

No better example of this can be found than Czechoslovakia. The government there now pays priests to perform the functions of the church for its parishioners. A more despicable form of government has not been known in modern times! At the church ceremonial which was part of the presidential inauguration in Czechoslovakia, Archbishop Josef Beran received President Gottwald at the Te Deum mass and con-

ducted him to the famous old St. Wenceslas Chapel. Gottwald who was raised a Catholic and has been a communicant of the church nearly all his life, appointed his son-in-law, another Catholic, as controller of church matters in the state.

Even in the Soviet Union, the Greek Orthodox Catholic Church is controlled by the state and is subsidized as a government agency.

Atheism believes in educating people out of their superstition. To make another pay for the support of religious superstition is a practice too abhorrent for words. If Atheism were the principle on which governments were founded, it would make little difference in which country a man might live. He would enjoy freedom and possess the unalienable right of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Such governments would be based on the idea of Thomas Paine, "whatever the form or constitution of a government may be, it should have no other object than the general happiness."

I challenge anyone to show me a single instance where the philosophy of Atheism has promoted or provoked a war from the time of Epicurus to that of Robert G. Ingersoll. The philosophy of Atheism is an intellectual approach to life and its problems. The Soviet Union, based on the Communist Manifesto, condemns the church only because it classifies it as a "vested interest." Its antagonism towards the Roman Catholic Church can also be traced to the age-old conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church.

The Soviet Union is not even a dictatorship of the proletariat. The great mass of its working people have no opportunity to express their wishes regarding the laws under which they live. If they had an opportunity to vote, do you suppose they would consent to such madness as this war? Do you suppose they would approve the invasion of South Korea, the un-

merciful killing of innocent men, women and children and the ravishment of a country where stark poverty has already been horrible enough? But all this does not concern the Soviet Union for it is a despotic government, as despotic and ruthless as any that ever existed. Its despotism is headed by the Politburo—never before has such a ruthless group of unscrupulous men guided the destinies of a nation.

Shame and everlasting shame upon such tyranny calling itself a “peoples’ democratic republic.” Do the leaders of the Soviet Union not know that they cannot impose their economic views or opinions on a people who do not want them? All attempts in the past to tyrannize the minds of men have been failures.

Must the Soviet Union be taught the same lesson as all tyrants of the past? The pity of it is, as history demonstrates, that this can only be done by the spilling of innocent blood and by the martyrdom of heroes.

It is time that someone began writing a book entitled, “The Rise and Decline of Russian Communism!”

# THOMAS PAINE AND ROBERT EMMET \*

## Martyrs of Freedom

### *An Hitherto Unknown Historical Association*

Thomas Paine and Robert Emmet! Mention these names and not only do they inspire and thrill, but there instantly arises in one's mind their martyrdom for Liberty. Although Thomas Paine did not suffer execution at the hands of those he made free, he nevertheless suffered a crucifixion as poignant as the hanging of Robert Emmet.

The historical relationship between these two great protagonists of freedom has hitherto been unknown. During and shortly after the American Revolution, Thomas Paine's pamphlets enjoyed a world-wide circulation. His "Common Sense" was proclaimed throughout the world as the testament of the American Republic, and his "Rights of Man," in defense of the French Revolution, was hailed as the Magna Charta of political freedom.

It was a copy of the "Rights of Man" that inspired Robert Emmet to become the first martyred disciple of Thomas Paine. The heroic struggle of Robert Emmet and his brother, Thomas Addis Emmet, for the independence of Ireland can be traced directly to the influence of the author-hero of the American

\* Reprinted from the July, 1946 (Vol. 10, No. 7) issue of *The Freethinker*.

Revolution. Paine's words rang as a clarion call to freedom among all the peoples of the world, and nowhere were they more cordially received and more vociferously repeated than among the Irish people of Ulster.

The pamphlets of Paine spread like wild-fire among the Protestants of Ireland, and they solidified the people's movement for liberty. At fairs, in the market-place, at taverns and in homes, Paine's books were passed from hand to hand. Rich and poor, peasant and artisan read Paine, and his works helped mould a people into a nation. As if his words had wings, they cried from the written page, "When we suffer or are exposed to the same miseries by a government which we might expect in a country without government, our calamity is heightened by the reflection that we furnish the means by which we suffer." These words resounded throughout the land, and in many homes the "Rights of Man" supplanted the Psalter and the Prayer Book. The passion for liberty inspired courage in the hearts of everyone and replaced slavish devotion to religious obedience.

The Bible, with its sanction of monarchy and slavery, was being displaced and even the country urchin plodding along to school and the poor tramping the road, often counted as a prize among their scant possessions, a copy of the "Rights of Man." All were aroused. Even the village schoolmaster could not escape the contagion for liberty, and often would take as his lesson of the day some text from Paine's book. Paine was pictured as having liberated America from the tyranny of oppression, and when the United Irish Party was founded, he was made an honorary member.

Unsuccessful in his attempt to make Ireland a Republic, Robert Emmet was arrested, tried, convicted, and hanged in 1803. Regarding his religious beliefs, he said he was "an in-

fel by conviction," and spurned the consolations of the Church on his way to the scaffold.

These events take on added significance when it is recalled that Thomas Addis Emmet, who escaped the fate of his brother, and was released from prison only on the assurance that he would be given asylum in America, immediately on his arrival in the States became an intimate friend of Paine, as well as his lawyer and one of the executors of his will. Thomas Addis Emmet had already distinguished himself as a brilliant lawyer, and later became attorney general of the State of New York.

Equally significant is the cryptic phrase contained in an unpublished letter of Thomas Paine. Here Paine speaks of an impending "descent upon Ireland," apparently referring to the abortive plan calling for a United Irish revolt simultaneously with a Napoleonic attack on Ireland. The fact that Paine was aware of the plan indicates his close relationship with the Irish independence movement and his tremendous influence in instigating it.



# BIBLE READING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS \*

## The Pennsylvania Case

(The following correspondence speaks for itself.)

April 10, 1950

Dr. Francis Haas  
State Commissioner of Education  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Dear Dr. Haas:

Our attention has been called to a condition existing in the public schools of the state of Pennsylvania wherein ten verses of the Bible are required to be read, without note or comment, at the opening of school.

Would you be kind enough to tell us if this is true and if it is on what law this procedure is based?

(Signed) *Joseph Lewis*  
FREETHINKERS OF AMERICA

April 12, 1950

Dear Mr. Lewis:

Your letter of April 10, 1950 addressed to Dr. Francis B. Haas, Superintendent of Public Instruction, has been referred to me for reply.

\* Reprinted from *Common Sense*, Vol. 14, No. 6, June 1950.

In response to your request we wish to quote Section 1156 of the Public Code of 1949, Act of March 10, 1949, P.L. 30:

"Bible to be Read in Public Schools.—At least ten verses from the Holy Bible shall be read without comment, at the opening of each public school on each school day, by the teacher in charge: Provided, that where any teacher has other teachers under and subject to direction, then the teacher exercising such authority shall read the Holy Bible, or cause it to be read, as herein directed.

"If any school teacher, whose duty it shall be to read the Holy Bible, or cause it to be read, shall fail or omit so to do, said school teacher shall, upon charges preferred for such failure or omission, and proof of the same, before the board of school directors of the school district, be discharged."

(Signed)      *Stanley C. Fellows*  
Legal Advisor

On receiving the above letter, we responded as follows:

May 3, 1950

Mr. Stanley C. Fellows  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Public Instruction  
Harrisburg, Pa.

Dear Mr. Fellows:

Thank you for your kind letter of April 12th in answer to my communication to Dr. Francis B. Haas, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Pennsylvania, and for the information it contains.

It seems almost unbelievable that Section 1516 of the Public School Code of 1949, Act of March 10, 1949, P.L. 30 could

have been passed by the legislature of Pennsylvania and signed by the Governor as an act of law.

In the hope that you might see this provision in the same light as I do, I am taking the liberty of quoting it herewith:

“Bible to be Read in Public Schools.—At least ten verses from the Holy Bible shall be read without comment, at the opening of each public school on each school day, by the teacher in charge: Provided, that where any teacher has other teachers under and subject to direction, then the teacher exercising such authority shall read the Holy Bible, or cause it to be read as herein directed.

“If any school teacher, whose duty it shall be to read the Holy Bible, or cause it to be read, shall fail or omit so to do, said school teacher shall, upon charges preferred for such failure or omission, and proof of the same, before the board of school directors of the school district, be discharged.”

Is there on the statute books of any state in our Union a more reprehensible law?

Under this provision, may I ask, what parts of the Bible are to be read? Are they to be the parts upholding slavery as a divine institution, or those sections dealing with the divine right of kings which the American Revolution so decisively destroyed? Or, could they be any of the repulsive stories in which the Bible abounds, or the admonition that was responsible for one of the bloodiest and blackest pages in the history of mankind—the injunction: “Suffer not a witch to live?”

Or could it be that the parts to be read are those which geology, biology, anthropology and history have disproved or

those precepts which are no longer applicable to modern society?

To force a teacher to comply with this law under penalty of the loss of his or her job is a violation of the most fundamental right of an individual under our government.

Do those who are responsible for this obnoxious law know the moral and mental mischief they are perpetrating upon our public school children by impressing upon their tender minds the fallacy that the Bible is a book of divine revelation or a sacred volume that must not be questioned? Its injection into our public school system as such a book is the intrusion of a religious doctrine which is definitely prohibited by law, and which the recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Vashti McCollum* case, so severely condemned. Furthermore, it contaminates our public school children with the virus of sectarian bias and religious prejudice.

There is nothing in the Bible to acquaint the children with the basic American principle of equality before the law regardless of race, color or creed.

If, instead, this section of the Public School Code contained a provision making it mandatory to read the first Ten Amendments in the Constitution, so as to better acquaint public school children with the principles incorporated in the Bill of Rights, then indeed beneficial results would follow from their reading. And how much more beneficial would a reading of a portion of the Declaration of Independence be so as to give the young minds of our public school children a better understanding of the political philosophy on which our government is founded?

I shall address a communication to every member of the legislature of the State of Pennsylvania without delay, and call their attention to this pernicious provision in the Public

School Code. I shall ask that this amendment be repealed at once, as it is an insult not only to our public school system, and to all intelligent Americans, but to the honesty and integrity of the public school teachers themselves who are employed to teach our children verified facts and fundamental truths.

If the legislature fails to do this, we shall, through our members in Pennsylvania, ask the courts to declare unconstitutional Section 1516 of the Public School Code of 1949.

(Signed) *Joseph Lewis*, President  
FREETHINKERS OF AMERICA

The letter below was sent to the Governor of Pennsylvania, the Lt. Governor, the Attorney General and every member of the State Legislature of Pennsylvania.

Honorable Sir:

The enclosed copy of a letter sent to Mr. Stanley C. Fellows, Legal Advisor of the Department of Public Instruction of Pennsylvania, is self-explanatory, and is sent you with the request that the law complained of be repealed at once.

Under separate cover, I am also sending you a copy of my book, "The Bible Unmasked" so that you may read for yourself what the Bible actually contains.

(Signed) *Joseph Lewis*

## MAN'S BEST FRIEND

I am man's best friend. Some people think that a dog or a horse is man's best friend, but they are mistaken. I am. And who am I? I am a book. It is true that there are some dogs who love their masters, and who would die for them; but sometimes even loyal dogs have been known to "bite the hand that feeds them." Horses are wonderful creatures, too. Many have been known to "die in their tracks" for their owners: And that's the trouble with horses—they die. You die too, but I don't. I can live until the "end of time." I am the essence of immortality; I am both the child of today and the parent of tomorrow. I am constantly renewing my existence.

While faithful dogs and loyal horses have been known to resent abuse, I don't. While there is a limit to patience in dogs and horses, I am immune to such things. You may hurt me but that doesn't change my attitude towards you. I remain steadfast and unswerving under all circumstances, and Oh! how some people abuse me. My covers are broken, sometimes even pulled off, and while I remain naked for years, my heart is untouched. I am as constant as the day you bought me. Loyal and faithful through all the trials and tribulations, yes, and even the neglect, that you put me through. I am the only friend a person has who, though neglected, remains as devoted and as true as though nurtured with love and affection. While you may forget me for years, I always remember you. I am at your beck and call at any hour of the day or night.

The knowledge, the inspiration, the comfort to be found with me does not diminish, but increases with time. I can make you laugh as well as cry. I can carry you to the heights of excitement and I can lull you to sleep. And I can accompany you whenever and wherever you go. And if you leave

me behind, I will always welcome you back no matter how long you have been away. And if through some act of maliciousness, I am destroyed, you will be able to find me safely cared for by another. I am your best friend. *I am a book.*

## OUR ANNUAL APPEAL TO THE ENLIGHTENED JEWS OF AMERICA \*

We repeat and re-emphasize that the time has come when enlightened Jews of the World should make every effort to emancipate their more orthodox believers from the bondage of their religion. The tendency of human nature is not to admit a mistake or acknowledge a fault, but time has its softening influence, and with one grand stroke the Jews can emancipate themselves from the discredited and superstitious religion of their ancestors, at the same time advance the cause of intellectual progress throughout the world.

It is needless to state here that educators, historians and scientists have discredited the Bible as the Word of God. It is no longer the sacred volume, which for centuries, Jewish children have been taught to believe it is. Let the Bible be weighed for its actual worth and accepted or rejected for its intrinsic value only.

Even if the Jews were God's "step-children," he would not have permitted them to endure so much injustice and misery without some manifestation of pity. He has been untrue to the faith and loyalty they have accorded him. And, since all their prayers have had no effect upon him, how unworthy and degrading are further manifestations of worship. How ridiculous are further prayers when wails of mourning have been so cruelly ignored. Not until the Jews give up their primitive superstitious religious beliefs will they be free from persecution.

Only in a religious sense do people love to worship their tormentor.

\* This appeal has been made annually for the past twenty years on the observance of Yom Kippur.



Only in a religious sense do people persist in believing that which has been discredited.

Only in a religious sense do people continually perform acts that are degrading and harmful.

Only in a religious sense do people exert effort after effort in trying to get fruit from barren soil.

If an infinitesimal part of time and energy spent in praying and other religious observances were used in some other direction with the same unproductive returns, all efforts in that direction would be immediately abandoned with a finality absolutely impossible of renewal. Prayers are wasted effort on the desert air, and the Jews are the most convincing example of this truth.

The Jews do not have to confess or offer expiation for their sins; it is their God who should ask forgiveness for the false precepts he has given them and for the false prophets he has induced them to follow. They must repudiate this mythical braggadoccio of the sky!

No one who has any knowledge of the plight of the Jews during the past two thousand years can fail to sympathize with their desire to have a "homeland," a place to go to escape from the torture, prejudice and humiliation which they have endured for so long. No people on this earth have ever been so persecuted.

The writer fervently wishes that such a place be found, so that the blood relatives of the foremost living scientist, Albert Einstein, and the multitude of others, not excluding the illustrious, though excommunicated, Benedict Spinoza, who have so lavishly contributed to the knowledge, welfare and progress of the human race, may have a place to "lay their heads."

But is Palestine the place where the Hebrew God wants his people to settle?

Is Palestine the Holy Land? If it is, why is it now so covered with blood? Why so much hatred, why so much destruction, why so many innocent lives so ruthlessly and brutally destroyed?

It is because Palestine is NOT a *Holy Land*. There is nothing holy about it. Its climate, its soil, its geographical position could hardly be worse. There are spots on the earth, still uninhabited, that far surpass it in desirability.

But if Palestine is historically the Hebrew Homeland, then why does not Israel's God deliver it to them so that the persecuted may live their days in peace, NOW!

I will tell you why. Because there is no such God as the Bible deity.

The enlightened nations of the earth are doing more for the establishment of the Jewish homeland than all the Hosts and prayers of Israel.

If Israel is to be a new nation, and a refuge for the persecuted and hounded Jews of the world, then I bid it to disassociate itself from all of its religious associations of the past, and come free and unhampered as a member of the family of nations, so that its people may enjoy, in an equitable exchange, the fruits and benefits that the other nations of the earth are so anxious to share with it.

Nor is there anything Holy about Jerusalem. The "Holy" places are fakes and frauds. They have been invented to fleece mankind, and to create hatred and prejudice among the peoples of the world, hatred and prejudice that are responsible for many of the world's ills and much of the bloodshed that have been such a torment to life upon this earth.

Jerusalem a Holy City? Then why these screaming headlines in the daily press?

"Battle Rages in Jerusalem."

"Holy Land Hate Splits U.S. Friends."

"Heavy Gun Duel Rocks Jerusalem."

"Child killed in Jerusalem Fighting."

"Jerusalem torn by 3-SIDED Fight."

"Arab Jewish Riots In Holy Land."

"Bombs Blast Jerusalem."

"Christian Leaders in Jerusalem Lay Damage of Shrines To Israel."

"Peace Envoy Assassinated."

What is *holy* about such a place? At the present moment, is there a more *unholy* place on the face of the globe?

If ever God had an opportunity to show his "love for his children" and exercise his power for the benefit of his "chosen people," it is now when they are seeking a Homeland for themselves.

But does he? Certainly not!

Just as he failed them before, so he fails them in this terrible crisis.

For the religion the Jews have given to others, they have received nothing but bitterness and persecution in return. And if the wealth spent in behalf of their religion were expanded for their own development, education, culture, and comfort, the results would be abundant in fruitful dividends, and the benefits derived would prove a staff of support that would strengthen and bring peace and happiness as the years go on.

**"YOM KIPPUR" IS THE MOST HUMILIATING DAY IN ALL THE SUPERSTITIOUS ANNALS OF RELIGION. USE THIS DAY FOR RELIGIOUS INDEPENDENCE, AND LET IT BE AN EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD! ABANDON YOUR TEMPLES AND RENOUNCE YOUR ANTIQUATED CREED, AND, BY SO DECISIVE AN ACT, GIVE TO THE WORLD ITS FINEST EXAMPLE OF COURAGE AND INTELLECTUAL HONESTY.**

**ARISE AND BECOME FREE MEN!**

## THE VIRGIN BIRTH \*

For ages the question of the Virgin Birth has occupied the thoughts and attention of theologians. Thousands and thousands of books have been written upon the subject. Every clue has been followed and every manuscript has been scrutinized in an endeavor to throw more light upon the problem. Every possible phase of the question has been investigated. Clergymen and ministers, even in our own time have quite vehemently debated the question, and I therefore do not think it improper, under the circumstances, for me to discuss it.

I do not, however, intend to discuss the Virgin Birth from the point of view of a Savior, or a Messiah, or a God, nor from any of the abstract angles of theology. I intend to discuss the Virgin Birth from the evidence as recorded in the book which theologians claim is of divine authority, and was written under the direct inspiration of him who performed the duty of the male parent in the birth of his only child and offspring on the body of a woman "who had not known man." Throughout the ages, from the dim and distant past to the present day, the great mass, the ignorant and superstitious mass, has always looked upon its leaders with reverence and awe; have always attributed to those of superior intellect qualities other than those of human origin.

Kings and priests stood apart from the people.

Unusual personalities were either possessed of God or the Devil.

And the pages of history are well crowded with "Virgin Births" that antedate the advent of Jesus Christ. And of particular interest is that of Persues, who is said to have been born of a virgin, hundreds of years before B.C. 4, but which Justin Martyr, the 2nd century Christian Divine, stigmatized

\* Reprinted from *Common Sense*, December, 1949.

as the work of the Devil, who, knowing that Christ would subsequently be born of a virgin, counterfeited the miracle before it really took place!

Even Plato's mother was supposed to be a virgin, who conceived him immaculately by the God, Appollo.

And I have heard fairly intelligent men of our time, in speaking of some of the prominent personalities of the day, say that they hate to think of them possessing the ordinary traits of human beings, and implying that they were above the sordid standards of life, and that they were particularly free from the passions that rule in the sexual realm. "The Gods have lived on earth in the likeness of men" was a common expression during Mythological times, and immediately preceding the Christian era.

Sir James J. Frazer, the eminent English author, and one of the world's foremost anthropologists, makes this pertinent statement: "The belief that a virgin can conceive and bring forth a son is one of the last lingering relics of primitive savagery."

As I always like to present both sides of an argument I wish to quote the late Rev. John Roach Straton, who publicly declared that "For myself I confess to you, that this narrative (The Virgin Birth of Christ) with its simple dignity and transparent truthfulness, not only enraptures my heart, but delights my mind; and though I have read the critical and skeptical books about it, I feel no hesitation or embarrassment in saying that I accept it, in toto, just as it is written, and believe it with every faculty of my intelligence and every drop of my blood." In fact, he said, that the very difficulties in believing the story was proof sufficient for him to accept it as the truth. The Reverend also had the honesty to say, that "If Jesus had a human father, it was some unknown man and some one who had not been the husband of Mary. If this is the state of the case, then both Joseph and Mary were utterly immoral, tricky, deceitful and sinful."

Reverend W. L. Pettingill said: "Only those who believe in Christ as God, in His Virgin Birth and in His Resurrection in the body—the irreducible minimum of the Christian faith—will go to heaven. Those who deny any or all of these tenets will be lost—they will go to hell . . . These things do not permit of interpretation. There is no altering the words writ-

ten. Either the Virgin Birth is true, or two things must be—the Bible must be false in regard to this or Jesus of Nazareth was a bastard. Either Jesus was God or a hideous impostor.”

Let us judge for ourselves, after hearing the evidence that even the Bible contains, whether God performed the sexual act upon the body of a Virgin, and Christ was born; whether Mary was morally flippant and Jesus was her child.

In discussing the Virgin Birth mention should be made of what is scientifically known as parthenogenesis. Parthenogenesis is a biological fact dealing with the lower forms of life, in which the female produces and develops the germ of reproduction without the direct aid of the male. In quite a number of the lower, or rather the simpler forms of life, parthenogenesis has been observed to be the principle of reproduction. But this does not prove the possibility of the virgin birth of a human any more than the fact that a codfish lays 8,000,000 eggs at one time proves that a woman can give birth to 8,000,000 children simultaneously!

All the faith in the world, sprinkled with an abundance of divine blessing, cannot bring forth an oak unless an acorn is planted. It is well known to science that certain species of plant and animal life are of an asexual nature, and that hermaphroditism is the first form of reproduction of life in the evolutionary process of nature.

The religionists do not argue for the Virgin Birth of Jesus from the scientific point of view. They do not claim that such an occurrence could happen again. Jesus was born, according to the contention, by the miraculous intervention of God. While in nature parthenogenesis is a principle now in force, and will continue as long as the particular species live under conditions which make parthenogenesis the law of its life and existence. It is not mysterious. It does not vary and it can be investigated and verified. Now that Science has given to the world such undreamed of and apparently impossible things as atomic energy, television, radar, aeroplanes, electronics, radio, X-rays, telephones, automobiles, and other wonders of invention and discoveries, the theologian attempts to use these “miracles of science” to prove the so-called miracles in the realm of religion. But their claim can be answered with one sentence: The “scientific miracles” can be DEMONSTRATED, the theological miracles must be BELIEVED.

You can learn the principle and reproduce all that science has accomplished, but only upon faith can you accept the theological ones. Before we turn to the Bible for evidence, the most important question involved in the discussion of the Virgin Birth is not that God is the Father or Joseph the male parent of Christ, or that maybe his mother was a virgin, but the important thing is that the human race would have been spared its greatest calamity if Jesus, either in the flesh or in the imagination, had never been born!

What is meant by "coming together," is the necessity of the male adjunct of this union by the introduction of the Holy Ghost . . . as well an acknowledgment of the human parentage of Jesus.

I say this solemnly and with deep conviction: If all the acts of adultery and unfaithfulness could be blamed upon the Holy Ghost and accepted as such by the injured party, a great deal of misery and sorrow of the world would have been avoided. Men are so jealous of their loved ones, that if they find them liberal even with their glances and smiles to other men, a situation hard to overcome presents itself. What, I pray you, would be the result of the situation in which we find Mary, the espoused of Joseph and mother of Jesus? I am sure the Holy Ghost story would not hold water. I am sure the young man would say: "If you are unfaithful to me before we are married, what can I expect after we are wedded?" I am inclined to think the young man would say that he was "finished with her" and would demand the return of his diamond ring. More than one proposed marriage has been broken for a far less cause than that of finding the espoused "with child."

Men are very adverse to supporting other men's children. As each man, in a situation of this kind, is a law unto himself, we will proceed with the story as it concerns Joseph.

St. Matthew, Chapter 1, Verse 19:

19. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

Bully for Joseph! His act is commendable. Surely worthy of our praise. But why "put her away privily"? And why was he not willing "to make her a public example"? Why was he not jubilant that God complimented him to such an extent

that he chose his sweetheart to bear his son and Savior of the world?

It is quite evident from the narrative that Joseph bore a great love for Mary and was willing to marry her despite the fact that she had slipped from the path of virtue even after her betrothal to him.

That some sly and smooth-tongued seducer was responsible for Mary's plight cannot be denied. A super Don Juan he must have been to entice a girl already pledged to another to suffer his embrace. And although it is claimed by some that Pandora, a "good for nothing" neighbor, was responsible for Mary's condition, the time is far too distant for the production of any credible evidence regarding the notorious affair, as evidence in such cases is considered the most difficult to secure. "Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily," is sufficient evidence alone to brand Mary's condition with the stamp of unfaithfulness.

No doubt the parents of Mary, to avoid having a public scandal pleaded with Joseph to take Mary to a place where they were unknown until after the delivery of the child. Such things are done now, and there is no reason to suppose that it wasn't done then. No doubt Mary herself was anxious to repent, and in her pleadings with Joseph must have promised him—faithfully—that she would never again stray from the path of virtue and rectitude. Joseph evidently believed with Shakespeare, "that love is not love that alters when it alteration finds," and so he overlooked the slight "alteration" he found in Mary. If the angel of the Lord could tell Joseph about the Holy Ghost, he could surely inform him what Shakespeare was to write more than 1,500 years hence!

But despite his great love for Mary and despite her "slight alteration" Joseph began to have his doubts about the Holy Ghost version of her condition as the narrative continues.

St. Matthew, Chapter 1, Verse 20.

20. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.



One thing the above quotation proves. **IT PROVES THAT JOSEPH DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CHILD CONCEIVED BY MARY WAS OF THE HOLY GHOST.** Joseph gave the matter serious consideration.

If Joseph, who was on the scene and acquainted with all the facts of the deed, did not believe the "ghost story" how can you expect us, after nearly two thousand years have elapsed, to accept it as a verity? As for having the truth revealed to him in a dream by an angel, that is too laughable for mention; truly that is "such stuff as dreams are made of."

That the story of Christ and his so-called virgin birth is a pure fabrication and myth, and was invented by the deluded and superstitious believers of that time, is attested by the following verses of the narrative. It was an attempt on the part of some to "contest or reinterpret" the "first will" or Old Testament, in an endeavor that they might become the favored ones of God. The text proves unequivocally that it was NOT the miraculous birth of Christ that was of so much concern but the supreme importance was the fulfillment of the so-called prophecy that "a virgin shall conceive and bear a son"; as the following text proves:

St. Matthew, Chapter 1, Verses 21-25.

21. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.
22. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying.
23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.
24. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:
25. And knew her not till she had brought forth her first born son: and he called his name JESUS.

It is unnecessary for me to show the falsity of the prophecy, "now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying:

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being in-

terpreted is, God with us," because Thomas Paine has already so admirably unmasked this monstrous lie. I refer the reader to the analysis found in his celebrated book, "The Age of Reason."

I challenge every minister of Christianity to refute Thomas Paine's exposure of the most dastardly piece of imposition ever perpetrated upon the human race! I make no restrictions to this challenge. It includes every gentleman of the cloth of every church professing the Christian doctrine.

Prove Thomas Paine false or cease your hypocrisy with its unholy gain!

Perhaps the birth of Christ as related by St. Matthew was not minute and conclusive enough as to the details of the sexual act and so we turn to the Gospel of St. Luke to supply this most interesting account.

I quote The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 1, Verses 26-28.

26. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.
27. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name WAS Mary.
28. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, THOU THAT ART highly favoured, the Lord IS with thee; blessed ART thou among women.

One difference already noted between the narrative of St. Matthew and St. Luke regarding Mary and the conception of her child, is that in St. Matthew it is the Holy Ghost who is responsible for her pregnant condition but in St. Luke the angel Gabriel is mentioned. And although here is a distinct contradiction between the two accounts, the designation of the character by different names responsible for the condition actually makes very little difference. What we are concerned with is the FACT THAT IT WAS SOMEONE ELSE THAN THE MAN SHE HAD PROMISED TO WED.

We have read of angels "whispering" to a person, but we have never heard of an instance where "the angel came in unto her." And the word Angel is equally appropriate as that of the Holy Ghost. The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 1, Verse 29.

29. And when she saw HIM, she was troubled at his saying, cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

I wonder what this HE angel proposed to Mary that made her "cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be"? Is it possible that she was innocent of the relationship he proposed, or was she simply amazed at his daring and boldness? Especially so, since she was already engaged to some one else and was mindful of her virginity. And what an altogether different story it would have been if God had sent a SHE angel to visit Mary!

No wonder the poor girl was troubled. She had a difficult problem on her hands. Although the Bible is not explicit in what this HE angel said to Mary, we are not devoid of imagination: and so continue.

The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 1, Verse 30.

30. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

From this verse we glean the manner of pursuit and what the angel was after. "Fear not" is the pet phrase of the seducer. The angel's courting has not been in vain. Victory has been achieved. Similar action to that of Mary is taking place, at this very moment, throughout the world. Seduction, unfortunately, is still too commonly prevalent. Is it possible that the angel "doped" Mary as sometimes happens in cases of this kind and when she "awoke" she was unaware of what had transpired. For she says,

34. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

You see Mary was aware of the fact that without a man's help she could not have a child. Where Mary received her sex education I do not know; perhaps from the story of Tamar and Judah? And so, we continue with the unusual story of the intercourse of an angel with a maid.

The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 1, Verse 31.

31. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Yes, the deed is done. The angel has satisfied his desire. The prophesy is well founded. As truly "prophetic" as Isaiah and his subsequent action. Although any potent man could accomplish the same result. For more of this kind of "literature" continue the narrative as it consecutively appears in the Bible.

But it occurs to me that if Jesus was to be immaculately conceived and God was to be his father, he should have chosen a different place of incubation than that of a woman's womb. It is in the womb that all of us mortals are conceived. The Bible's own testimony regarding this birth is rather disconcerting to those devout believers in the MIRACULOUS BIRTH of Christ. If there were to be a really and truly miraculous birth, conception should have taken place in the ear, or arm, or leg, but in the womb—never!

It is quite probable that a story like the one just related, detailed in any other book than the Bible, would be construed as being of a highly spicy tone and condemned as being vicious in its moral conclusion. Surely, Mary would be looked upon as a girl whose character was not worthy of emulation. I wish for the moment to speak to the fathers and mothers of young girls; particularly those of the Christian faith. What would you say if your daughter came and told you that she was "with child by an angel"? What would the young man to whom she was engaged in marriage say about her condition? I am sure you would immediately make a thorough search for this angel and bring him to account. In certain parts of this country, this angel, if caught, would not be given much of an opportunity to explain himself. And if he said that he was "an angel of the Lord" you know how much weight that would have.

And now you parents, you who are so anxious about the welfare of your daughters, and so mindful of their amusements and companions; if your daughter was reading a book, whose plot corresponded to the story of Mary, would you not admonish her that such a book was unfit to be read, that its example was vicious and detrimental, and that "nothing good" can come from such stories? Wouldn't you make an effort to discourage her interest in such literature? By what rule, then does a story which is suggestive in any other book, become of high moral value when it is found in the Bible?

Now let me say a word about the moral import of this narrative. It is of the grossest obscenity. It poisons the minds of children not only to the vital facts of biological science but even prejudices the minds of adults to these vital facts. Would you think of reading this story to your children for the purpose of drawing a moral lesson? What moral principle can be inculcated from this narrative? Is it the seduction of Mary and the illegitimacy of Jesus?

Let me repeat that the human race would have been spared its greatest calamity if Jesus, either in the flesh or in the imagination, had never been born!

## PROSTITUTING A SCIENCE! \*

Mr. Robert R. Coles, Chairman  
The Hayden Planetarium  
New York City

Dear Mr. Coles:—

One of the great achievements of modern times, particularly in the field of photography and electro-mechanics, is the construction of the photo-electric telescope at the Hayden Planetarium.

This great machine was invented to reproduce the stars in the firmament, explain the planetary system of the universe, and instruct the public in the fundamental principles of astronomy.

A few weeks ago (*Sunday, March 4th*), I visited the Planetarium to see unfolded the marvelous array of stars in the firmament before the vernal equinox, or the coming of Spring. Shocking beyond words was my experience when, instead, I saw the prostitution of this display. I saw it turned into a cheap piece of propaganda for religious observance.

The speaker's reference to the Biblical Hebrews as being responsible for giving us the basis for the science of astronomy, was nothing short of an outrageous insult.

The Biblical Hebrews knew nothing whatever about the science of astronomy.

They were simply moon worshippers and calculated their activities and conducted their ceremonies upon its various phases.

Passover is not a celebration of the liberation of the Jews from bondage in Egypt. They were never in bondage in

\* Reprinted from *Common Sense*, April, 1951.

Egypt. The Biblical God did not *pass over* the children of Israel and kill only the Egyptians.

The Exodus never took place.

The whole story is a cruel hoax.

The story of Passover as the Bible related it, is a frightful tale of horror without the slightest element of truth. "It's false—it's twice false."

The science of astronomy has nothing whatever to do with the observance of Passover or the so-called resurrection of Jesus.

The peoples of the world have calculated the coming of the seasons for milleniums before either Judaism or Christianity was born.

The Greeks, Caledonians and Babylonians who really made valuable contributions to astronomy were not even mentioned. The ancient Greeks who chartered the firmament for us and gave the stars their names were treated with ominous silence.

Where in the Bible will you find the basis for the science of astronomy?

Could it be the reference to the creation of the universe in six days?

Can you find in the Bible any mention of the principle of gravitation, the velocity of light, the laws of motion, or any other reference to astro-physics so essential not only to the study of astronomy but even for a proper understanding of this great science?

The sun was not made to rule the day nor the stars the night.

They shine continuously regardless of the calendar or time of day.

If what the speaker said in reference to the religious significance of the coming of Spring is true, then why did he not explain our solar system in pre-Copernicus-Galilean terms?

Why did he not tell us, with Biblical authority, that the earth was the center of the universe and the sun revolves around it?

To cap the climax, the speaker sought out some stars in the firmament as indicating the Cross of Christianity.

Only a deluded mentality can find in the firmament stars to represent the myth of the birth of Jesus.

To add further insult to injury, the Cross of Christianity

was flashed upon the ceiling, as if this symbol covered the dome of the universe.

And what an insult was the showing of a choir singing (*as if in Heaven*) of the resurrection.

This is beyond forgiveness!

What a prostitution of the science of astronomy!

How poor does language become when falsehood deserves exposure and denunciation!

Respectfully yours,  
JOSEPH LEWIS, President  
Freethinkers of America



## WHY GOD? \*

*(Because of the prominence of the party to whom the following letter was addressed, the name is omitted.)*

I have just now secured a copy of your book, "My Religion," and I have read it carefully and critically. Early in life, I, too, read, Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell," but I was not impressed with his symbolic interpretation of the Bible as you were. My early skepticism demanded something more concrete, something more fundamental, something more definite, something more tangible to cope with the realities of life. I had read Paine's "Age of Reason" before I read "Heaven and Hell" and I could not dismiss Paine's admonition that before you could prove anything by the Bible, you must first prove the Bible to be true!

I cannot accept the statement that the Bible contains the essence of man's spiritual development. Far from it. It relates tales of horror, cruel and bloody wars and the most primitive concept of God—its pages reek with the wickedness of its leading characters.

Nor can I square the goodness of a God with the excruciating pain of a helpless infant. The horrors of physical deformity negate a conception of a divine plan.

Neither do I see in the mind's awakening to knowledge, a manifestation of spiritual light. There is no more significance to it than there is to the bud blossoming into the rose. Nor must we forget the multitudinous buds that never blossom and all the untold thousands who "blush unseen and waste their sweetness on the desert air." The brain is subject to the same laws of evolutionary development as the eyes, the hands and the feet.

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, December, 1952.

I cannot conceive of a God who has labored at least fifty million years to produce a perfect man and who still creates so many idiots. If this is part, as some say, of God's inscrutable plan, then like Omar Khayyam, I would like to smash it to bits and "to remold it nearer to my heart's desire."

If life with all its tragedy was the result of my handiwork, I would be ashamed of it and brand myself a humiliating failure.

This is the way Mark Twain expressed it:

"A God who could make good children as easily as bad, yet preferred to make bad ones; who could have made everyone of them happy, yet never made a single happy one; who made them prize their bitter life, yet stingily cut it short; who gave his angels eternal happiness unearned, yet required his other children to earn it; who gave his angels painless lives, yet cursed his other children with biting miseries and maladies of mind and body; who mouths justice and invented hell—mouths Golden Rules, and forgiveness multiplied by seventy times seven, and invented hell; who mouths morals to other people and has none himself; who frowns upon crimes, yet commits them all; who created man without invitation, then tries to shuffle the responsibility for man's acts upon man, instead of honorably placing it where it belongs, upon himself; and finally, with altogether divine obtuseness, invites this poor, abused slave to worship him . . ."

Nor can I understand the purpose of the wasted stream of life that constantly flows over the Niagara of death. It was not so long ago when fifty per cent of the humans born died before the age of 15 years!

There has never yet been revealed to man what "God" wants us to do. Most "revelations" are merely the result of religious hallucinations. A proper understanding of the motivations of conduct would produce a better social order than a "spiritual" approach.

The realization of nature's indifference to the individual's development, or his wants, is as great a discovery as was Newton's that gravity was responsible for the falling apple.

This discovery has impressed man with the true condition of his existence as nothing else has; it has impressed him with

the truth that only from himself, and himself alone, will he be able to solve his problems and make better the conditions under which he must live. He has finally come to the realization that he, and he alone, is responsible for his progress and the solution of the problems with which he seems continuously beset. He knows now only too well, that he must no longer look to a God for the things that he must do for himself.

Not until we realize the frailties of man, his physical inequalities, his susceptibilities to the "ills of the flesh" and his mental inability to cope with the exigencies of life, will there be any permanent progress toward the amelioration of poverty or the prevention of wars.

Not until we know the basic cause of the troubles of society will we be able to effect a remedy.

The fallacy of free will must also be discarded before we can evaluate human conduct. Ignorance can only be replaced by knowledge and knowledge is a painfully slow process. Ignorance is the curse of the world, and as man is born without knowledge, he cannot be blamed for this deficiency.

Would that I possessed a magic wand to bring understanding to the mind of man!

It is those people who are always "talking" to God; those who say they know his will, and have been "apprised" of his plan, who have been the greatest enemies to mankind. So certain were they of their "mission," that hardly a spot upon the earth has not been stained with the blood of of martyrs.

What impressed me so greatly in your book is not only your comprehension of Swedenborg's thoughts, but the mastery of language with which you expressed yourself, as well as your remarkable style of writing.

Parts of your expression remind me of Robert G. Ingersoll, and I am sorry you did not read more of him. Some of his language is the most eloquent I have ever read. His sentimentality is unbounded. As for instance, he said: "I would rather live and die where love is king than have eternal life where love is not."

After writing this letter, I realize that your book was written many years ago, and perhaps your religious concept has undergone many changes.

## BOBBY GREENLEASE AND GOD \*

Bobby Greenlease is dead!

This was the headline in the newspapers recently which gripped in sorrow and anguish the hearts of the peoples of the civilized world. What made this announcement so tragic? It was because Bobby Greenlease was an innocent six years old child. He had committed no wrong, and his death was not caused by one of the innumerable diseases which so often take the lives of young children.

What made his death so tragic was the fact that he had been kidnapped, beaten unmercifully, frightened beyond his childhood endurance, and then heartlessly shot to death. Why, might you ask, in view of the millions of children who die early in life, should Bobby Greenlease's death be of particular significance to me?

I will tell you.

It is because Bobby Greenlease came from a very religious home, and I want to prove that religion has no value and that a belief in God is useless.

Bobby Greenlease was a wanted child. He was born to parents late in their years. He was idolized by them and given every loving care that parents could indulge.

They thanked their God for having "given" them little Bobby, and in appreciation they surrounded him with every religious ceremony, as a gesture of both their devotion, and as an added protection for the child. In addition, they taught him to perform his religious duties faithfully under the firm belief that God would protect him from evil. When Bobby was old enough to attend school he was sent to an exclusive parochial school—The French Institute of Notre Dame de

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, November, 1953.

Sion, in Kansas City, Missouri. This school is staffed by Nuns—women who have given up their normal associations of life to become “Brides of Christ.” Catholics hold them in greater reverence than other women. They consider them sacrosanct and their person, holy. Because of their devotion to the religious life it is believed that nuns are in constant communion with God. When not engaged in other work they count their beads, repeat the rosary and constantly move their lips in murmuring prayer.

At this parochial school—The Institute of Notre Dame de Sion—the children are taught that their first duty is to God, and that praying to God is their most important and foremost obligation. It is a duty that must not be neglected. They are also taught that their prayers to God will be answered. They are taught, and they firmly believe, that their belief in God and their prayers to him, is a Shield of Protection.

On that fateful October 6th, when Bobby Greenlease left home for school, it was inconceivable to those who loved him, that they would never see him again alive. He was doomed to be brutally murdered by two savage hyenas who had slipped through the process of evolution and appeared among us in human form.

When Bobby arrived at school, he, with the other children, went through the ritual of praying, as the first duty of the day, before beginning their class studies. Within a few hours, a woman who represented herself as his Aunt, called for Bobby and requested one of the Nuns to bring the child to her. Before complying with this request, the nun suggested to this female mad dog that she should go into the Chapel and pray while she went to get the child.

The woman is reported as saying that she did pray to God and had hoped that God had heard her prayer. This woman was Mrs. Bonnie Brown Heady and she came to the school for the sole purpose to participate in the kidnapping and murder of Bobby Greenlease.

Now I ask—where was God?

Why, I ask, again, when this Heady woman went into the Chapel to pray, did God not, then and there, stop her in her tracks before she could commit this horrible and outrageous murder?

The mockery of it all is that the Heady woman, bent on this

most heinous of crimes, said she prayed and felt the better for it!

Why, I must ask again, did not God rebuke her for her murderous mission, since he, and he alone, is supposed to know all secret intentions?

Failing in this why did God permit this nun—this Bride of Christ—to give to this strange woman, an innocent and helpless child instructed to her care? Of what purpose was her devotion and sacrifice to religion, of what value were her prayers if, at this vital moment, God betrayed her by utter silence? If she claims that she had heard the voice of God on other occasions, why did he fail her now at this most critical of all moments? When, oh when, was God's help so urgently needed as when that nun took Bobby's little innocent hand and led him to his doom!

What a glorious opportunity this was for God to prove his existence, and to show his mercy!

Oh false God!

Bobby had a private nurse, and the nun should have been aware that if the child was wanted, an utterly strange woman would not be sent for him.

Not only that. But when Bobby was kidnapped he was wearing a religious medal—which is usually "blessed" by a priest, and sold at an exorbitant price—which itself is a bare-faced religious fraud.

The nun now blames herself for her failure to exercise proper discretion. She should blame her God for having permitted her to commit the tragic error; for being responsible for giving little Bobby to his abductor.

One of the nuns of the school, has added insult to injury, by making the statement that little Bobby's death will not be in vain because, she says, "It has made people think. It has made them love their children the more."

What a monstrous perversion! You heartless creature, who never had a child, who knows not the affection between parent and offspring, you know not what you say. You deserve a public rebuke for this insolence, and I hope this serves its purpose.

Do parents need such a tragedy to make them love their children?

Did Robert Greenlease need such a tragedy to pour the fullness of his love upon his young son?

Shame upon you, nun, whatever your name may be, for casting such an insult upon all parents who love their children. Is it any wonder that we hate a religion that teaches such a perversion of the mind!

The newspapers printed pictures of the nuns and Bobby's school-mates kneeling in prayer, before a crucifix, for his safe return. Never was there a more useless and humiliating gesture. Praying for Bobby alive and having him returned dead is the cruelest kind of mockery. Their supplications are proof of the futility of prayers.

For when

"The Moving finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

To make matters worse, Carl Austin Hall, the male hyena of this pair of kidnappers has confessed that he had plotted Bobby's murder two years previously while serving a term in prison for a criminal act for which he had been convicted.

While bent upon this crime, why did not God enter his mind and disabuse it of his murderous plot?

Where was God and what did he do?

For two long years this man had plotted this irreparable crime.

When this savage struck down Bobby with his calloused clenched fists, he was not satisfied with this fiendish piece of brutality upon this helpless and terrified child—he then, in cold blood, fired a bullet into Bobby's brain!

Why did not God stay his murderous hand?

If God cannot help us to avoid the tragedies of life, of what value is He when we are dead? If He is impotent to the living, He is impotent to the dead!

One thing is certain and that is that Man is going to do what God failed to do, and that is to make the perpetrators of this foul and diabolical deed pay with their lives so they can never again commit such a crime.

Bobby Greenlease is dead. His beaten little body lies in its coffin. He is about to be buried. To add further insult to

injury, the priest, who conducted the services, tells the parents whose agonizing hearts are bursting with grief, that he cannot pray for Bobby's "soul" because Bobby had not taken his first Communion. Such nonsense is called the Consolation of Religion.

I offer to the bereaved parents whatever consolation, if they can be consoled, this thought—there is no further suffering beyond the grave. Do not believe that horrible doctrine called Hell and Purgatory. They are the inventions of the perverted minds of priests to torment the living.

Do you want me to tell you why God did not save the life of little Bobby Greenlease? I will tell you. Because—there is no God!

Away with the myth of Heaven!



## THE RESURRECTION OF THOMAS PAINE \*

*Address delivered June 8, 1953—and in the 177th year of the American Republic—at the unveiling of the tablet marking the site where Thomas Paine was buried on his farm at New Rochelle, New York. This event commemorates the 144th anniversary of his death.*

Let us for a moment, at least for this occasion, turn back the pages of history to April 19th, 1783. This is the day when the American Revolution came to a successful conclusion. On that day, when "the times that tried men's souls" was over, Thomas Paine stood, in the estimation of the American people, as the foremost patriot of his time. He was acclaimed the world over as the Apostle of Liberty. He was held in greater esteem than any other leader of that momentous and historic struggle.

What had Thomas Paine done to deserve this great honor? I will tell you.

He saved the American Revolution from defeat and disaster.

I need not tell you here that it was his pamphlet, COMMON SENSE, which provoked the struggle for Freedom, caused the Colonies to publish and declare to the world a Declaration of Independence, and aroused the American people to achieve Liberty.

But when the war started and defeat after defeat had been suffered by the Continental Army, it became a grave question as to whether we would be successful in the conflict. This concern was expressed time and again by the Commander-In-

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, July, 1953.

Chief of the Army. On more than one occasion, General Washington sent up moans of despair, which culminated in his final gasp of desperation, when he cried, "I think the game pretty well up"!

And now there has just come to public light an hitherto unknown letter which makes us realize the desperation of Washington's plight. This letter was written to George Mason, one of the leaders of the Revolution. Washington wrote: "We are without money . . . without provisions . . . the history of this war is a history of false hopes . . . our efforts are in vain."

If the Commander-In-Chief of the Army thought our struggle for Independence was a "false hope," and that our efforts to achieve Freedom "are in vain," what must have been the temper of the people in such a hopeless situation. They too had become discouraged, enthusiasm began to wane, many deserted the great Cause, and mutiny had already taken place in the Army.

It was during this time, in the very depths of despair, that General Von Steuben said that a pamphlet written by Thomas Paine "would produce a better effect than all the recommendations of Congress, in prose and verse."

He was right. It did. It began with these immortal words: "These are the times that try men's souls. . . ." It was called, **THE CRISIS**. Washington had it read to his soldiers, and I need not tell you what effect it produced. It was on the lips of all the people, and a revolution in sentiment and determination came over the American Colonies. They were once more determined that the war for Independence must be won. Whenever the situation became desperate, whenever another defeat was suffered, these words of Paine reverberated throughout the camps:

"These are the times that try men's souls. . . . He that stands *it now* deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

Whenever there was a shortage of food, whenever there was insufficient clothing, whenever there were mumblings of discontent, these words suddenly became audible:

"These are the times that try men's souls. . . . Tyranny, like Hell, is not easily conquered."

Whenever plagued by anxious thoughts of home and farm, the soldier heard these words:

"These are the times that try men's souls. . . . The harder the struggle the more glorious the triumph."

Whenever in moments of loneliness, thinking of wife and child, wondering whether his patriotic devotion to enlist in the Cause was too high a price to pay, he was answered by this gem:

"These are the times that try men's souls. . . . What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; It is dearness only that gives everything Its value."

When fighting seemed never to cease, these words rang out, drowning all despairing thoughts:

"These are the times that try men's souls. . . . Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated."

In these Crisis papers, thirteen in all, are to be found not only messages of inspiration, comforting and reassuring words, but sound military advice, valuable suggestions of administration, and equally as important, precious knowledge that was so essential for the proper guidance of the people during so serious a time. They also cemented the diverse forces when the country was so dangerously divided. While words can cheer, while words can inspire, while words can dry eyes wet with sorrow and soothe the heart gripped with fear, words cannot feed you, they cannot clothe you, they cannot protect you from chills of night, the winter's blast, the cold of snow, nor can they stay the pangs of hunger. While words can fortify the mind and make the timid courageous, something more practical is needed to meet the realities of life. More than words are needed to plant the food, fell the forests, turn the wheels of machinery, provide transportation for an Army, sustain the soldiers in battle, and to achieve victory in the struggle.

Many a genius has been lost because he needed first the wherewithal to feed and clothe his body.

Many a cause had failed because of the lack of the means of achieving it. Thomas Paine combined inspiration with action and deeds. And so at the crucial moment when the Army was without food and clothing and ammunition, Thomas Paine went to France to secure these things which we lacked, and which were so essential to hold our Army together.

His plea to the French Government resulted in a shipload of ammunition, clothing and money.

Such help in such a crisis is beyond the measure of words to tell. Only let it be known that it was Thomas Paine's efforts which accomplished these results!

No wonder John Adams said, that "History would ascribe the American Revolution to Thomas Paine."

Through seven long years of this struggle Paine continued his labors, both as a soldier and author until the publication of the thirteenth and last Crisis, beginning with these cherished words:

"The times that tried men's souls are over, and the greatest and completest revolution the world has ever known, gloriously and happily accomplished."

The entire Crisis papers cannot properly be read, nor understood, unless it is done in connection with the events for which they were written. Each having been designed for a particular purpose, or to solve a pressing problem, or to meet an unexpected situation. Only then can one get an idea of their value and the tremendous influence they exerted upon the people during the critical time of this momentous event.

The American Revolution cannot properly be evaluated without the reading of Paine's CRISIS, and THE CRISIS cannot properly be evaluated without understanding the critical times and situations for which they were written. Only then will one be able to get a proper understanding of the vitally important part that Thomas Paine played in not only preventing defeat, but in achieving victory. It is only then that one will be able to understand and appreciate the value and importance of each Crisis as it was published. The thirteen papers comprise a book of over 220 pages containing more than eighty thousand words; each word worth its weight in gold and more precious than diamonds and pearls. Washington knew what Paine had accomplished, not only for him, but

for victory and freedom. He knew as well as Adams that without the pen of Paine, his sword would have been drawn in vain.

Washington knew only too well that there would have been no United States of America had there been no Thomas Paine, and he—George Washington—would never have been the first President of the American Republic. When the war was over, and each and every one returned to his peaceful pursuits, it was only Thomas Paine who had no gainful occupation to resume, nor did he possess an independent income to sustain him for his labors. He did not profit from the war like others, nor did he come into possession of any of the confiscated property.

When Washington was made aware of Paine's financial distress, he wrote: "Can nothing be done in our Assembly for poor Paine? Must the merits and services of COMMON SENSE continue to glide down the stream of time, unrewarded by his country? His writings certainly had a powerful effect on the public mind,—ought they not meet an adequate return. He is poor! He is chagrined! and almost if not altogether, in despair of relief."

On another occasion, after inviting him to his Headquarters, Washington wrote: "Your presence here may remind Congress of your past services to this country, and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best services with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works."

And so, on August 26th, 1783, Congress voted unanimously this resolution:

"That the early, unsolicited, and continued labors of Mr. Thomas Paine in explaining and enforcing the principles of the late revolution by ingenious and timely publications upon the nature of liberty and civil government have been well received by the people and citizens of these States, and merit the approbation of Congress; and the benefits produced thereby, Mr. Paine is entitled to a liberal gratification from the United States."

With these sentiments of appreciation went the sum of \$3,000.00. The State of New York gave him this farm of 275 acres; the State of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey expressed their thanks with monetary gifts. To what other

patriot of that time did the people express so eloquently and so generously their sentiments of appreciation?

Messages of gratitude by the thousands came from those who had shared the dangers of the conflict as well as from the people. Here are but a few: General Nathaniel Greene said:

"America is indebted to few characters more than to you."

Joel Barlow said:

"The great American cause owes as much to the pen of Paine as to the sword of Washington."

General Lafayette said:

"A free America without her Thomas Paine is unthinkable."

I need not tell you of the cruellest conspiracy in the history of man that has been responsible for the failure of the American people to properly honor Thomas Paine. But those days are passing. He is rapidly assuming his rightful place not only in the pages of American History, but also in the hearts of the American people. And this tablet, for which we are so grateful to Mrs. Rowena Stillman, marking his violated grave, is another step in that growing recognition.

Significantly did Andrew Jackson express this truth when he said:

"Thomas Paine needs no monument made by hands. He has erected a monument in the hearts of all lovers of liberty."

While it is true that Thomas Paine needs no monument, it is only too true that the American people, and the peoples of the world, *do* need a monument to Thomas Paine.

The recognition of Thomas Paine's service to the Cause of American Freedom will not be complete, until there stands in the Nation's Capital, a memorial giving full expression to both our debt and gratitude to the author of COMMON SENSE and THE AMERICAN CRISIS.

And there should be carved upon its imperishable marble, these eloquent words of Thomas Paine, as a reminder that such a calamity should never befall the people of the earth. Paine wrote:

“When we contemplate the fall of empires and the extinction of nations of the Ancient World, we see but little to excite our regrets than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent museums, lofty pyramids and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship; but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass and marble can inspire. It will not then be said, ‘Here stood a temple of vast antiquity; here rose a babel of invisible height; or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but here, ah, painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of Freedom rose and fell.’”

And if this memorial is commensurate with Thomas Paine’s services to the establishment of the Republic of the United States of America, it should be more imposing than the monument of Washington and more classical than the one to Jefferson. It should possess the stately grandeur that belongs to the real founder of our Republic.

When the memorial rises in the Nation’s Capital, the admirers of Thomas Paine might well call it His Resurrection.

## PROFESSOR ALBERT EINSTEIN AND GOD \*

*(The following correspondence is published with the  
consent of Professor Einstein)*

Dear Professor Einstein:

I have delayed writing you this letter, as I wanted to make sure that I could make my thoughts clear about the subject matter, of which apparently there is some misunderstanding between us.

I need not tell you of my great admiration for you, and I remember most vividly as one of the great events of my life, my visit to you in your apartment in Berlin, in the early 30's.

At that time, we discussed the word "spiritual," and I mentioned that its use by you could be easily misunderstood as having some significance other than that of purely human evaluation.

I read with considerable interest the article in "The New York Times," March 28, 1953, by William L. Laurence. This article was in the nature of a review of your latest scientific findings in your new publication, **GENERALIZATION OF GRAVITATION THEORY**. In his article, Mr. Laurence quotes you as saying that you "cannot believe that God plays dice with the cosmos."

In view of the vast comprehensiveness of your scientific achievements in relation to the extant of the universe, this expression struck me as having been made by you as a facetious statement or it was a misquotation. When LaPlace presented his scientific findings on the nature of the physical world to Napoleon, the latter wanted to know where he placed God,

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, January, 1954.



and the great astronomer replied, "I find no need for such a hypothesis." I am also reminded of the statement made by another great astronomer—LaLande, who said, "I have searched through the heavens and nowhere have I found a trace of God." In the mathematical equation of your scientific findings—where, oh where, is "God"? If there is a God outside the cosmos who "created" the universe, then who created God and ad infinitum? We still can't conceive of a time when there was no time nor place without space.

Add to this the recent announcement by the astronomers of Mount Palomar that the universe, as far as they are able to determine, is over 600,000,000 light years old. If after 600,000,000 light years, man is still subject to all the ills of the flesh and the miseries of the mind, not forgetting the murderous impulse to kill each other, "playing dice" with the universe, if there is a God, is a mild term. Then again, you tell us that we are in an expanding universe. If that is true, then I think it quite reasonable that the secrets of the universe will be found, not in the immensity of space, but rather in the infinitesimal. Perhaps the power that causes the explosion in the nuclear atom may be the source of the genesis of existence and reveal the mystery of life—the formula of which, may differ in degree, but not in kind from  $H_2O$ .

With great regards and respect, I beg to remain

JOSEPH LEWIS

Dear Mr. Lewis:

There is no reason for excitement.

The sentence "God does not play dice with the cosmos" had been written by me in a private letter to a colleague who quoted it in a public lecture. This God was not Jahwe or Jupiter but Spinoza's immanent God.

What separates me from most so-called Freethinkers is a feeling of utter humility towards the unattainable secrets and harmony of the cosmos. It seems to me that most Freethinkers are so satisfied with the refutation of the benevolent Father in Heaven that they content themselves with a very shallow conception concerning the situation and the shortcomings of human intelligence.

A. EINSTEIN

## BISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN— TOP BANANA \*

When a clergyman leaves the pulpit and assumes the role of an actor on the stage, he is subject to the same criticism as any other theatrical performer. If he is good in his part, he should be praised, and if he is not, he should be criticised for what he is worth. He cannot claim the respect of a "gentleman of the cloth," and an actor at the same time.

There have been many clergymen who have left the pulpit for the stage, and many have, on occasion, played a special part in a particular performance, but I am acquainted with only one who has assumed this dual character. He is Bishop Fulton J. Sheen.

It is as an actor that I designate him Top Bananal

"Top Banana" in theatrical parlance means the comedian par excellence—a stage fool, a clown, a buffoon without equal.

Bishop Sheen is not adverse to associating himself with the other comedians of the stage. In fact, he is rather flattered. This is evidenced by the way he refers to Milton Berle, Bob Hope and himself as "Berle, Hope and Charity." His reference to himself as "charity" is significant. He does not want you to forget the contributions that he is after. More of this a little later.

On another occasion, he told of a letter he had received from a woman who mentioned how much her six year old daughter liked him, and how pleased she was to learn that he was coming back to television after a long absence. The mother told her young daughter that he was to appear that particular night, and when she tuned him in, and he came upon the screen, she asked the child who he was, and the youngster replied, "Red Buttons."

Milton Berle makes capital out of the fact that not all of his

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, March, 1954.

jokes are original, and like a perfect comedian he uses it to the best of advantage. After Bishop Sheen had appeared on television, at the same time and on another station as his competitor, someone asked Berle what he thought of Sheen, and he replied, "He uses old stuff too." There is more truth than humor in this remark.

Here are a few of Bishop Sheen's jokes. To an audience who came to hear him on his television program, he made this remark: "Well, I see you are back to have your faith lifted." And recently he "gave out" with this: "A Bishop was travelling through Texas, and a rich oil man put his car and chauffeur at his disposal. The chauffeur would, from time to time, turn to his clerical passenger and ask, 'where next, Rose,' or 'where now, Rose?' After the Bishop had departed, his host inquired of his chauffeur as to whether the Bishop had been pleased with his driving. The chauffeur replied that the Bishop seemed satisfied with his driving, but he thought that he had been a little annoyed with his calling him 'Rose.' 'Rose,' said the employer, 'why you should have addressed him as 'Your Excellency' or 'Your Grace.' With this, the chauffeur, striking his head with his fist, replied, 'Rose,' 'Grace'—'Grace,' 'Rose,' I knew it was a *woman's* name."

On one of his shows, he attempted to illustrate a point by the use of a bunch of dolls. It had something to do with Christmas. It was as clear as mud. "God gave his only begotten Son.—There was no room at the Inn.—He was born in a manger (he should have added that the Pope lives in a palace).—Sawdust.—Psychiatrist.—U.N.—U." In theatrical lingo it was the flop of flops. He did, however, manage to get a laugh by asking, "Which doll has the Toni?"

If Bishop Sheen, without his "make up," pulled this stuff at an amateur performance, he would "get the hook."

But Bishop Sheen does not always use "old stuff." He is not altogether too scrupulous of where or how he gets his material.

Here is, as Jerry Lewis would say, a "For Instance."

[From "The Devil's Share,"  
by Denis de Rougemont 1944].

[From a published radio script  
by Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen,  
1947].

For, if the Devil is simply  
the red demon armed with a

He will wear no red tights  
nor vomit sulphur nor carry a

large trident, or the faun with a goatee and the long tail of popular legend. . . .

This . . . masquerade has contributed to the success of the first trick that Baudelaire unmasks. "The devil's cleverest wile is to convince us that he does not exist."

The Prince of this world says to us: there is no other world.

If there is no heaven . . . neither is there any hell. . . . If there is no judge, neither is there any fault. . . . If there is no truth, neither is there any lie. . . .

To take your neighbor's wife . . . because you have discovered that this is "vital" to you. . . .

It is not true that because Bishop Sheen is a thespian that he is also a celibate. He is a celibate for an entirely different reason.

This prompts me to repeat a story recently told to me by a friend. At a dinner where both a Rabbi and Priest were present, and for which neither had paid for his ticket, the following conversation was overheard:

Priest: Max, is it true, that your religious scruples prohibit you from eating ham?

Rabbi: Yes Mike, it is true. We do not eat ham.

Priest: It's too bad Max; it is delicious. You should try it sometime.

Rabbi: Mike, is it true that your religious scruples prohibit you from marrying, from enjoying

trident nor wave an arrow tail as the Mephistopheles in Faust.

This masquerade has helped the devil convince men that he does not exist.

. . . "the Prince of this world" whose business it is to tell us that there is no other world.

. . . if there is no heaven, there is no hell; if there is no hell, there is no sin; if there is no sin, then there is no judge. . . .

. . . more divorces under the disguise that another partner is "vital". . . .

the sexual embrace with the woman you love?

Priest: Yes Max, it is true. We are not permitted to marry.

Rabbi: It's too bad, Mike. You should try it sometime. It is better than ham.

Sometime ago, I appeared on the "Mike and Buff" Television Show, a C.B.S. coast to coast hook-up, to discuss Atheism. I must say that I was treated most cordially. My appearance was in opposition to that part of the show that was either sponsored by, or was publicity for, "The Catholic Digest." When the interview was over, I was complimented by Mike, and politely asked to return. This I heartily agreed to. It was suggested, however, that on my next appearance, that Bishop Sheen or Clare Boothe Luce, should be my opponent. This too I heartily agreed to. However, my appearance created somewhat of a mild sensation, and letters by the thousands began to pour into the station. I was reliably told that the letters indicated at least a 30% average in my favor. I looked forward to my next appearance with a certain amount of eagerness. However, I never again appeared on the "Mike and Buff" show because, I was informed, a stern and peremptory order had been received from the "higher ups" that I was taboo, as far as that program was concerned, and that neither Bishop Sheen nor Clare Boothe Luce would appear with me. So much for that.

I mentioned my appearance on the "Mike and Buff" program because I was told by Buff, after the show, that her mother, the daughter of the late Irvin Cobb—the great American humorist—had been converted to Catholicism by Bishop Sheen. So it was not altogether with surprise that I read in the "Miami (Florida) Herald" Sunday, December 20, 1953, the following article with this glaring headline:

### COBB'S DAUGHTER GIVES BISHOP LIPSTICK PINK PAJAMAS

Buffie Cobb Rogers gave Bishop Fulton Sheen lipstick pink pajamas for his birthday.

He was getting presents like half a million dollars—(for

one of his foundations). Others sent madonnas—he has dozens.

So I called his secretary and asked, What does the Bishop NEED for his birthday?

I was told he needed desperately some pajamas—he's so busy he never gets around to buying them for himself.

I asked what kind of pajamas a Bishop would wear? Somber gray or beige maybe?

I was assured, on the contrary—find the brightest, loudest ones you can!

So the daughter of the late, world-famed humorist, Irvin S. Cobb, and mother of television's Buffie Cobb, selected brilliant rosy-hued pjs for the bishop's birthday.

And he was delighted.

What a contrast is "lipstick pink pajamas" from the glorified "Mother Hubbard" that the good Bishop wears when he struts across the stage to do his stuff. And I wonder how he feels when he changes from the one to the other. Tush, Tush!

A celibate-thespian is a new character to the American stage!

Bishop Sheen always has a pun or story to tell when he comes on the stage for his television program. I believe it was the start of his Fall program of this year that he made the statement, the substance of which was something like this. Before he entered the stage, he said a woman had warned him that if he continued his program she would refuse to give him a hundred dollars that she had intended as a gift. Her reason was that she believed that it was beneath the dignity of a Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church to engage in the type of performance that composed his television appearance. Hence, he told his audience, that his appearance that evening cost him one hundred dollars, and if the audience approved of his television conduct, they should make up this hundred dollar loss. Now, I don't believe that was a joke, and I don't believe the story. I believe it was a piece of clerical chicanery to stimulate the flow of contributions. Pious lying is condoned by the Roman Catholic Church.

So much for "Berle, Hope and Charity."

There is an old saying that Charity covers a multitude of sins. I might, with propriety, elaborate upon that statement

and say that Religious Charity not only covers a multitude of sins, but in addition, wears a Cloak of Hypocrisy.

Religious organizations should be made to make a public accounting of all the money they receive, as well as a detailed account of its distribution. A few months ago an investigation was begun in New York City which promised a thorough inquiry into the raising of money under the cloak of charity, but alas, it was short lived. It stopped short of the real evil. At this investigation, however, it was revealed that as much as 85% of the money collected went for salaries and administration expenses.

I am willing to wager that an investigation into some of the so-called "respectable" religious charities will reveal an equal shameful diversion of money, which gullible people, out of the goodness of their hearts, contribute, to help the less fortunate.

I am substantiated in this contention by Mr. Emmet McLoughlin who, for over fifteen years, was a priest of the Franciscan Order. He left the Roman Catholic Church because of "their greed for money" and their "lack of charity."

There is nothing worse; there is nothing more reprehensible; there is nothing more cruel than the religious racketeer.

It has been our intention for years to institute legal proceedings to force religious organizations and institutions to make a public accounting of the donations they receive from the public. We shall await a favorable opportunity to start this fight.

I still remember the furor created by the late Mayor John Purroy Mitchell of New York City, and the condemnation that was heaped upon him, when he attempted to investigate churches and other religious organizations, and to force them to make an accounting for the money that they had received from their charity appeals. I believe it was Bishop Potter of Brooklyn, who, when confronted with this situation, remarked that "No such thing should have happened in New York." The clerical confraternity stood shoulder to shoulder in their opposition and denunciation of Mayor Mitchell.

His tragic death, from an airplane, thousands of feet in the air, is still a mystery!

Come Top Banana—if you really want to show the public your honesty and integrity in this matter, make a public re-

port of all the money you received from your radio and television appeal, as well as a complete accounting of its distribution!!

There must be a spark of honesty and integrity in your system, because your uncle, an infidel, was at one time, associated with the law office of Robert G. Ingersoll!!!

Unless and until you are willing to do this, I shall continue to have doubts as to the worthiness of the distribution of the money received, and shall continue to feel that a large percentage of it goes to fill the coffers of the Roman Catholic Church.

Come clean Bishop Sheen or stand condemned!!!!

Bishop Sheen is best as a comedian when he attempts to discuss social and moral problems; scientific and philosophic subjects.

If you want to laugh you should watch him as he makes a clown out of himself by his utter ignorance of the subject he discusses, and he becomes a real buffoon when he adds black-board illustrations to "explain" his arguments. To be perfectly blunt, in these "black-board sermonettes," he makes a perfect fool of himself.

His comparisons and jesuitical abracadabras are too puerile for comment. It is a trick of theologians to throw words together that sound imposing, but that have no meaning.

Just as those who go to hear their favorite comedian are prepared to laugh at his jokes—good, bad and indifferent—so those who go to hear Bishop Sheen are already in a semi-hypnotic state, and are trigger-responsive to accept the pure unadulterated non-sense he utters.

This celibate-thespian's appearance in the role he plays on the program "Life is Worth Living" is a prostitution of one of the greatest of man's inventions, and the gibberish he mouths, under the cloak of piety, is an insult to modern intelligence.

The only saving grace is to consider him humorous—and the proper way to bill his TV show is to advertise it:

***"Life is worth Living***

***Starring***

***Bishop Fulton J. Sheen — Top Banana"***



## HOLY SMOKE \*

What makes a church building more "sacred" than any other building?

I have often heard the church referred to as the "House of God." I have seen many people tip their hats and make other gestures of reverence as they pass a church; devoted Catholics are known to make the sign of the Cross.

Many believe it is "blessed"; others believe that because it is dedicated to "God" that it has mystic association with the "divine." But is that true? During the Middle Ages, when the church exercised absolute power, the poor farmer had to pay tribute to "bless" his land—otherwise, the priest contended, there would be a dearth of crops. He led the people to believe that without his blessing the land would not bear fruit. Even today in Mexico, and other parts of South America, the priests warn the tillers of the soil that unless they pay tithes on the land, it will remain barren or suffer drought—or some other disaster will cause it to fail to respond to manual cultivation.

Of course as modern intelligence emancipates man from ignorance and superstition, and liberates him from the dishonest claims of the priests, he finds, as others throughout the ages, that, as Robert G. Ingersoll said, "to plow is to pray—to plant is to prophesy and the harvest answers and fulfills"; the priests' blessings or curses to the contrary notwithstanding.

When Benjamin Franklin invented the Lightning Rod, it was believed by the people of that time that a Prince of Power of the Air governed the atmosphere, and that a shaft of lightning was the manifestation of his anger. It was natural that Franklin's great invention should be called, indicating its devilish mission, "The Heretical Rod." The church would

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, August, 1953.

have no part of this invention and denounced as heresy its application. What were the results?

Those buildings which had erected Lightning Rods as a means of protection, curiously enough, were practically immune to being struck by lightning, while the other buildings which failed to erect these rods of protection, particularly churches, were continually visited by the "wrath of God."

This caused the curious to ask, "Why should the Almighty strike consecrated temples, or suffer Satan to strike them?"

Soon they discovered that neither the spire of the church pointing to "Heaven," nor bells, nor holy water, nor sacred relics, nor parishioners on their knees praying to God, could protect the church from the wrath of Heaven; *but Franklin's "Heretical Rod" did.*

Seventeen years after this invention, there occurred an event which finally convinced the most devoted religionists that more reliance could be placed upon Franklin's Heretical Rod than on the "sacredness" of the church and the "mercy" of God. There had been stored in the Church of San Nazaro, Brescia, Italy, 200,000 pounds of gun powder; the Clergy, refusing to bow to the entreaty of the scientific men of the time, to protect the church with Lightning Rods, saw it struck with a lightning bolt. The powder in the vaults exploded, one-sixth of the entire city was destroyed, and 3,000 people were killed! Today, Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City is well protected by numerous Lightning Rods, despite the fact that the roof of the building is built in the shape of a cross. Has the Church lost faith in God, and now relies more upon science and Franklin's heresy?

Despite the fact that the churches enjoy exemption from taxation on the grounds that they perform "spiritual" services, they, nevertheless, call upon the secular fire department, which is maintained by the taxing of other people, to save their "Houses of God" from the flames of destruction.

If there is a God and if the church is the "House of God," then as a demonstration of this truth, the church should possess at least qualities of asbestos. It should protect the faithful devotees of religion from the horror of being burned to death, as so many are, who are caught on their knees in a blazing church.

It is not uncommon to read in the press, reports of devoted

believers who rush into the burning building of a church to save "sacred" Torahs or "blessed" Crucifixes, only to be caught in the flames and burned to death with the objects which they sought to save. So few seem to realize that if these "hallowed" articles can not save themselves from fire, they are useless to those who sacrifice their lives in these foolhearted attempts. If the so-called holy articles came through the disaster unscathed then you might credit them with having some degree of "saving grace." But usually it is the Statue of the Virgin Mary, to whom so many pray for help, that is the first part of the church destroyed by lightning or consumed by flames.

Franklin's heretical invention will save more churches from being consumed by fire than all the holy water, sacred relics and mouthings of priests combined.

If the inviolable articles and mumblings of the Last Rites of the priests can not protect you from fire here on earth, where such acts could be demonstrated, how can they guard you from the fires of Hell after you are dead? The priest has no more power to bless or save than you have. If he can not protect people while they are living, when he can demonstrate his powers, then he is practicing fraud when he tells you that he can protect you when you are dead.

Churches will sooner or later appeal to science, which, in its discovery of "fire proofing," has done more than God and sacred relics to protect buildings from being destroyed by flames.

It has been reliably estimated that more than one hundred million dollars worth of church property was destroyed by fire during the past year. Many church officials have greater confidence in insurance companies, than they have faith in God. This is evidenced by the fact that these "doubting Thomases" have taken out fire insurance policies on their property with the result that they recover much of the damages sustained by these unholy holocausts. The rebuilding of these churches will not be through the "mercy of God," but rather through the cost of liabilities to the insurance companies.

How much longer will the poor deluded people contribute hard earned money to erect churches and waste time praying with such impotent results?

It is time believers became aware of the futility of the ef-

ficacy of Torahs, bells, Crucifixes and Holy Water, and stopped wasting valuable time and money in support of these fraudulent products of priests. And, above all, it is time they stopped running into burning churches to save inanimate objects, while jeopardizing their own safety by being caught in flames and suffering premature cremation—and so go up in Holy Smoke!

## STOP THIS PRAYING NONSENSE \*

"President Eisenhower's request for a prayer before his Inaugural Address was wholly uncalled for, and was a reflection on those American Citizens who do not believe in the efficacy of this nonsense. If the President or any other government official wants to pray, he should do it before assuming his public duties, either at his home or his church.

"Praying in public is a vulgar display of an exclusively personal matter. Prayer is something that cannot be done by proxy. Public prayer is, if nothing else, an undignified performance.

"It is quite apparent that President Eisenhower did not think that the prayers of one clergyman, at his Inauguration, were sufficient, so he had three.

"If President Eisenhower expects any results from praying he will be sadly disappointed."

The presence of a clergyman in the Hall of Congress is, in our opinion, a violation of the Constitution of the United States. This clergyman is not elected by the people to perform such a function. As to his prayers, they are utterly useless. The members of Congress will not gain an iota of intelligence from what he says. The words he utters are merely mumbo-jumbo. His prayers will not solve a single problem. Those members of Congress who bow their heads when prayers are uttered, make the most humiliating spectacle. What a mockery to our present day intelligence.

There has been so much said during the past months about praying to stop the war in Korea that I am constrained to quote Thomas Paine on the futility of such an act:

"We cannot serve the Deity in the manner we serve those who cannot do without that service. He needs no service from us. We can add nothing to eternity. But it is in our

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," March, 1953.

power to render a service acceptable to him, and that is, not by praying, but by endeavoring to make his creatures happy. A man does not serve God by praying, for it is himself he is trying to serve; and as to hiring or paying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is in my opinion an abomination. I have been exposed to and preserved through many dangers, but instead of buffeting the Deity with prayers, as if I distrusted him, or must dictate to him, I reposed myself on his protection; and you, my friends, will find, even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of a prayer."

Hardly a day passes that the newspapers do not print a picture of either Cardinal Spellman, or some other religionist, leading our soldiers in prayer. For what? Prayers have not only never accomplished anything, but become a dangerous practice which leads many to rely upon help from a source that only "echoes our ailing cry," and has the tendency to disarm us in using every ounce of our energy in fighting the enemy. Prayers are only wasted efforts on the desert air.

Our hearts bleed for the soldiers who die in battle. And yet what a mockery it is to have a clergyman, under the protection of guns, perform a religious ceremony. If religion were of any value, or if it could produce the results claimed for it, do you suppose that guns would be needed for protection? And then again, if the prayers of the clergyman were unable to prevent a soldier's death, of what value are his prayers to the soldier who has paid the supreme sacrifice? The best that can be done in such a tragic circumstance, is to give voice to Robert G. Ingersoll's sentiments, "Hands that help are better far, than lips that pray"; and that on the field of battle, "Cheers for the living, tears for the dead." All the prayers of the world have not prevented a single war, nor saved the life of a single soldier, nor healed a single wound!

The following incident contains more truth than humor: Two little girls were on the way to school. As they approached the school, the bell rang, which meant that all children should be in the school-house. One of the little girls, who had been brought up in a religious household, said to the other, "We are late; let us pray." The other little girl, the daughter of Freethinkers, replied, "Oh, no! Let us run." Moral: Self-reliance is a better crutch than the staff of religion.

I think it was Napoleon who said that God was on the side of the heaviest artillery. He should know. He was an expert.

The discovery of the indifference of nature to the morality of the person, subject to its laws, is as great an achievement of the human mind as was the discovery of the evolutionary process of life.

The earth will revolve on its axis, the sun will rise and set, the rains will fall, the seasons will pass according to their accustomed time, men and women will love, and children will be born, regardless of belief or disbelief in the Bible or its God, regardless of prayers or sacrifices.

The force of gravity acts alike on the good and bad; poison kills the purest-minded as well as the most vicious; cold will chill and heat will warm all alike; electricity lights our houses and runs our machinery with the same unconcern as it snuffs out the life of an innocent person; the planted seed will grow according to the soil and moisture, and not according to the social position of the one who planted it; water will drown irrespective of the character of the person unable to swim; fire burns the tender flesh of the child with the same intensity as the hardened criminal; disease attacks the innocent and guilty alike; and death comes to each and all "when it will come"—the inevitable ending of all that lives—as evidence of the inexorable law of life. There will be no mark to distinguish between the devout and the infidel. The atheist and the religious believer will suffer from the same ills and will enjoy the same fruits.

The discovery of the indifference of nature to the individual, subject to its unvarying laws, has liberated the minds of men from the myriad unseen forces which gripped them in fear. This emancipating discovery drove the evil spirits and demons from the sky, the malign agencies of a jealous and wrathful God; it was a warning to the ghosts "to cover their eyeless sockets with their fleshless hands and fade forever from the imaginations of men." It was the "Emancipation Proclamation" for the human mind.

*This statement was given to the Associated Press, immediately after President Eisenhower's Inauguration, and appeared in the "Detroit Times," "Chicago Tribune" and many other newspapers throughout the country.*

## CONCERNING THE ROBERT G. INGERSOLL STATUE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.\*

Some twenty years ago, I read in the newspapers that the Catholic Church intended to erect a statue of Jesus Christ in Washington, D.C. I thought how improper that would be in a country founded upon the principle of the separation of the Church and State. I immediately thought how much more appropriate it would be if a statue of Robert G. Ingersoll was placed in the Nation's capital.

I had become acquainted and developed a warm friendship—which lasted until his death—with Senator Royal S. Copeland of New York. I thought he was the proper man with whom I should discuss this matter. I wrote him a letter and asked for an appointment. He cordially invited me to come to see him in Washington. I shall never forget the first meeting. When I entered his office in the Senate Office Building and told his secretary who I was, she seemed delighted, and went immediately to Senator Copeland's private office to tell him that I had arrived. She came out smiling, and told me that the Senator would be glad to see me, and held the door open for me to enter.

When I entered his office there were several men in uniform. I apologized for having come into his office while he was busy. "Oh, no," he replied, "I am anxious to see you, I can see these men at some other time." He then introduced me to them, and if I am not mistaken, one was a general of the Army, and the other a Naval officer.

Senator Copeland saw that I was comfortably seated, and wanted to know how my work was progressing. You see, the Senator had been invited by me on several occasions to be the principle speaker at our annual banquets, and was somewhat acquainted with the work I was doing.

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," December, 1954.



He seemed highly pleased and congratulated me on our fight to destroy religious superstition.

I then told him of my idea to erect a statue of Robert G. Ingersoll in Washington. He was elated. I asked him to introduce a bill in Congress providing for a site upon which to erect the statue. He replied that he would do it with pleasure. I also asked him to be one of the principle speakers at the dedication, and he said that he would.

After expressing my thanks to him and with cordial greetings, I left his office. I cannot say that I walked out of the Senate Office Building on that afternoon, but rather was carried by a cloud. I saw visions of one of my greatest ambitions fulfilled. Within a few days the bill, called a "joint resolution," was introduced into the Senate.

At that time I was too naive and innocent to know the workings of a legislative body, or perhaps I should say that my anxiety got the better of my judgment. I thought that the introduction of the bill was all that was necessary to get something accomplished. I later found out, to my sorrow, that that was the least important part of the task. Before I realized it, that particular session of the Congress came to an end, and the bill "died in committee."

In the meantime I had contacted Gutzon Borglum, the noted sculptor, to make the statue. After the next election I wrote Senator Copeland and asked him what was the next thing to do. He wrote and said that it would be necessary to introduce a new bill in the new Congress. This he did.

I waited impatiently for months, but nothing seemed to happen. I wrote Senator Copeland again.

This time he asked me to come to Washington to see him.

I again went to Washington. The Senator was holding a hearing in one of the rooms of the Senate. As I entered, he recognized me, and motioned that I should wait until the hearing was over. When the meeting was over we went into the lobby of the Senate floor. Senator Copeland called a page boy and gave him a note. Within a few minutes Senator Alben W. Barkley, who was then the minority leader of the Senate, came over to us. Senator Copeland introduced me to Senator Barkley, and told him that I wanted the bill providing for a site for the Ingersoll statue brought out of the "Committee of the Library" for a vote. He promised that he

would do it. Senator Barkley told me, half apologetically, that his father was a minister. I replied so was Ingersoll's father. I thanked him and Senator Copeland for their help, and cooperation, and departed. Within a few days the bill reached the Senate floor and was passed unanimously!

The bill now had to go to the House of Representatives. Those clouds I spoke of before, picked me up and wafted me back to New York.

In the meantime, I told Gutzon Borglum, the noted sculptor, of my idea of the statue, and we drew up a contract for the work. In fact, a clause was inserted in the contract, making it Borglum's obligation to see that the bill was passed by the House of Representatives.

I was assured by Gutzon Borglum that there would be no further trouble regarding the bill. I relied upon him to contact the chairman of the Committee of the Library, of the House of Representatives. He not only told me that Congressman Kent Keller was a friend of his, but that Keller was also an admirer of Ingersoll.

I could not conceive of any obstacles that would interfere with the passing of the bill. I thought the people would accept with gladness such a valuable gift, so I paid Mr. Borglum the \$5,000.00 I had raised towards the statue. The balance was to be paid when the statue was erected and was ready for the dedication.

We then went to see U. S. Grant, 3rd, who was in charge of the park property of the Capital. Grant was the grandson of the hero of the Civil War. He pledged his cooperation to get us a suitable site for the statue just as soon as the bill passed Congress, and was signed by the President.

I saw a vision of the statue of Robert G. Ingersoll in the Nation's Capital for all the world to see, and for all the world to become acquainted with the eloquence of his words and the majesty of his thoughts.

I waited and waited. Nothing happened. Weeks, months passed. I was becoming impatient with the delay. I prodded Borglum. I insisted upon a visit with Kent Keller.

On each occasion when we met him, and there were many times, Keller gave us the assurance that the bill would be brought up for approval. The days of that session of Congress were rapidly coming to an end. The country was in the

grip of a great crisis. Herbert Hoover had been defeated; Franklin Roosevelt had been elected; a new regime was about to be ushered in. I had lost confidence in Kent Keller and Gutzon Borglum.

Realizing the seriousness of the matter, I asked Mrs. Probasco—that is, Maud Ingersoll—to accompany me to Washington to see Kent Keller. She agreed to do so. We went. I told her that I believed that Kent Keller was beginning to weaken, that our enemies had frightened him, and that her presence was the only thing that could save the situation. We arrived at Kent Keller's office. He was most apologetic and solicitous. He told us to get seats in the gallery of the House of Representatives, and faithfully promised that he would bring the bill out of his committee and demand its passage.

We found seats in the gallery.

In the mad rush of the closing session of Congress, bills by the thousands were pushed through. In rapid-fire succession "pork barrel" bills were passed that cost the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. All we wanted to do was to honor a great man, and help the country honor itself. We asked nothing from the government. We were to assume all expenses.

Every time we heard of a "Joint Resolution" coming up for passage, our hearts would beat the faster. I would say, "Here it is . . ." But we waited in vain. I became too impatient to sit in the gallery. I decided to go to the floor of the House of Representatives and speak to Kent Keller.

He tried to avoid me. When I collared him, he gave me excuse after excuse. He was afraid, he deceived us—he was a hypocrite. He was trying to lie his way out of the situation. It was useless to talk to him any further; he refused to look me in the eye, and he exhibited every symptom of the coward that he was.

I was keenly disappointed. I was cut to the quick. Our trip back to New York was not upon a fleecy cloud. Our hearts were filled with grief.

I do not know where Kent Keller is now, and frankly I do not care, but I do know that no act of his would have equalled in honor his efforts towards the passage of the bill providing for a site in the Nation's Capital, upon which to erect a

statue of Robert G. Ingersoll as a symbol of our Freedom of Speech, and as a signpost of our intellectual progress.

Again and again, since that time, the bill has been introduced into Congress, but without success.

Let me here and now, publicly declare, that I will contribute the first \$5,000.00 for a statue of Robert G. Ingersoll in the Nation's Capital the moment a bill has been passed by Congress, and signed by the President, providing for a site upon which to erect such a memorial to this Great Agnostic and the Greatest Orator of modern times.

## “LIFE” AND RELIGION \* (1st Article)

Ever since the wife of the editor and publisher of LIFE Magazine was converted to Catholicism, this publication has gotten “religion.”

Many and varied articles on religion and its various phases have appeared from time to time in this publication. And as religion has many sects, superstitions, rituals and other forms of observances, the mere publishing of these various phases becomes a valuable instrument in emancipating the different peoples of the earth from their own particular brand of religious nonsense.

Robert Burns uttered a great truth when he said if we only had the power to see ourselves as others see us.

This new series of articles on religion by LIFE deals with the religions of different countries and is entitled, “The World’s Great Religions.”

The first in the series deals with the religion of India, which is Hinduism. It appeared in LIFE, February 7th, 1955. Its educational value in comparative religion should be enormous.

Since Hinduism is considered the world’s oldest religion, with the greatest number of followers, it is appropriate that it should have been the first of the series. Hinduism is also considered the “mother of religions.”

If the religious believers in Judeo-Christianity of the Western World will read these articles, they will receive an enlightened mental awakening. They will find that there is a religion older than theirs, and that the God of the Bible did not create the universe for their particular benefit on a particular day! They will find, as revealed in the opening paragraph of the article, this statement: “Thousands of years ago, before the time of Moses, or of Buddha or of Christ . . .” people, igno-

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, April, 1955.

rant of the world about them, lived, worshipped idols, performed superstitious religious ceremonies, were born, reproduced and died, without the benefit of a single word from the God of the Bible or his "only begotten son."

Here is another quote: "One single Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata* is three times the length of the King James Bible. The Hindu heaven teems with 330 million gods . . ." How paltry seem the Judeo-Christian sects in view of the head-start of Hinduism! It is said that many missionaries who go to India to convert the heathen Hindu find so many facets to Hinduism that they are generally swallowed up by the multiplicity of forms and rituals to satisfy the most fanatical religious believer. And why not? They even have a day to honor the saints of other religions!

"Chosen People," "Washing in the Blood of the Lamb" and "Jesus dying for the sins of the world" are childish platitudes when compared with the age-old schemes of salvation that are part and parcel of Hinduism.

How equally puerile seem the rituals of the followers of Moses and Jesus when compared with the myriads practiced by the Hindus, as for instance: the ritual washing of the body, the praying to images, the segregation of the Untouchables, the caste system that separates the devotees into herds, the branding of the forehead and other parts of the body in ceremonial fashion, the use of strings and knots for initiation, and many more too numerous to mention. I am constrained to mention but one more—the looking into the direct rays of the sun for a glimpse of the divine spirit and to secure salvation! Despite the fact that this insane ritual has caused blindness in thousands, without a single blessing, it continues today.

Like Christianity, nothing that the perverted imagination can conceive is too ridiculous, hazardous or fatal for the devout to indulge in. While the cow is the Sacred Animal in India, it has its counterpart here in Popes, priests, images and Bible.

I am constrained to quote this paragraph:

"Some of their own people, particularly among the lower castes, are also too literal about their religion, the Hindus admit. In worshiping and taking care of images of the gods, these Hindus treat the images as if they were living beings with all the needs, weaknesses and passions

common to humans. The worshipers give food to the images, bathe them, put dresses, jewelry and wreaths of flowers on them, tuck them in bed at night. In at least one temple the goddess is even brought into the god's bedroom at dusk to spend the night with him. In another temple the image catches a cold when he is bathed and then has to convalesce for several weeks."

What words of wisdom did Thomas Paine utter when he said: "Why do men continue to practice on themselves the absurdities they despise in others."

The curse of the world has been the tyranny that religious superstition has had on the minds of the people, and there is no hope for mankind until it has been completely emancipated from the paralyzing dogma of these creeds based upon ignorance and fear.

India, and its particular brand of religious superstition known as Hinduism, has been the main cause of the frightful conditions under which the people live in that impoverished country.

The principle of secularism in government and the intellectual emancipation of the people, is the only hope for social and political progress as well as peace among the peoples of the earth. This much needed enlightenment is beginning to break through the dark clouds of ignorance among the peoples of India, and this ray of hope is best stated by the following quotation from the current article:

"Because of caste and certain primitive elements which still cling to Hinduism like moss, Westerners are likely to underestimate its challenge to the other faiths of the world. Some optimistic Christians—those living outside of India—believe that with modern education Hinduism will crumble of its own backwardness. They say that orthodox Hinduism is losing ground and that much of the social change within India has been initiated by secular leaders. They point out that even Prime Minister Nehru, who was born a high-caste Brahmin, is not a practicing Hindu."

If this series of articles on The World's Great Religions, now appearing in LIFE Magazine, does nothing more than to make people "see" their own superstitious practices, it will prove a valuable contribution to intellectual enlightenment.

## “LIFE” AND RELIGION \* (2nd Article)

The most important article in “LIFE” Magazine’s series dealing with The World’s Great Religions, as far as I am concerned, is the one which appeared in the June 13th issue and entitled, “Judaism.”

This article is not the most important from a literary point of view, or because it deals with the “greatest” religion, or the one with the greatest number of devotees, or because it is the “oldest”—because it is none of these things—but rather because it deals with the religion which concerns us the most.

It is the religion of Judaism, with its Bible, upon which Christianity is supposed to be founded, and which combined, has exercised such a stultifying influence upon Western Civilization.

There is nothing in the history of man that compares to the mental and moral mischief, or that has been more destructive of human progress, than the birth of Judaism, and its illegitimate offspring, Christianity.

That these twin vultures of Superstition have held their devotees in mental bondage for over two thousand years is attested to by every available fact in history. That they have exercised a pernicious influence upon others is equally verifiable.

But for the purpose of this article I do not intend to go into the details concerning its baneful influence, or its idiotic and degrading ritual, or of the crimes it has been responsible for, or the wars, misery and horrors that it has provoked, but rather to bring to light that it was founded upon myth and fable, lies and deception, fake and fraud. And that its masquerade as a divinely inspired religion is a cruel hoax.

This expose also offers a striking example how lies and deception, associated with religious superstition, can become so

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, August, 1955.



deeply rooted as to make them almost impossible to eradicate. "Life's" article on Judaism begins with the statement that "the voice of Judaism can be heard in one sentence." Here it is:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."

This sentence, or rather this prayer, or supplication or statement, or whatever you wish to call it, is itself a delusion. It is an expression of a primitive, ignorant people, raising its voice to its anthropomorphic god to be spared some of the heart-aches, sorrows and miseries of life. It is the expression of an abject mental slave seeking to appease an angry, jealous and vindictive god.

There does not exist in the universe any god that such a prayer can be addressed. That is why it has never been answered. And the Children of Israel are the best proof of the futility of their supplications. Two thousand long years of their mournful appeals have been cruelly fruitless.

But back to the article—and what makes Judaism such a hideous falsehood is the statement that "These tremendous words, spoken to the Jewish people, by God, through the mouth of Moses, mark a sharp dividing line in the world's religions. For they created a new concept of God. Not only for Judaism, but Christianity and Islam rest on this concept—strict Monotheism."

Stuff and nonsense.

Judaism is not a concept of monotheism—nor was it intended as such. The Biblical Hebrews did not possess the intelligence, nor did they have the mental capacity for such a conception. They were a primitive minded people with the same superstitious beliefs as were the other ignorant tribes of their day. To go into details regarding this phase of Judaism and its primitive minded Deity would divert attention from the purpose of this article. (This phase has been fully covered in my book, "The Ten Commandments").

My purpose here, and I do not want to be diverted from it, is to prove that the very foundation of Judaism was based upon a carefully calculated and an unadulterated lie.

No God ever spoke to the Jewish People through the mouth of Moses—or through the mouth of anyone else for that matter. The God of Mount Sinai was not only a myth, but a monster created out of the fraudulent designs and the lying mouth

of Moses. The whole story of Moses' sojourn on Mount Sinai, his conversation with the God of the Old Testament, his narrative concerning the Tables of Stone and the Ten Commandments, are as deceptive a piece of pious fraud that was ever perpetuated upon an ignorant and superstitious people.

If the Biblical narrative concerning Moses' conduct on Mount Sinai is true, then he perpetrated the greatest crime, not only upon the Children of Israel, but the whole human race.

If you are acquainted with the Biblical narrative concerning Moses and Mount Sinai, you will find that originally God is supposed to have given Moses a set of Tables of Stone containing the Ten Commandments written with God's own finger. (This alone brands the God of Israel as anthropomorphic and an utterly primitive concept of a Deity).

Now what did Moses do with this precious manuscript written with God's own finger, as related in Exodus, Chapter 32, Verse 16. I quote:

"And the tables were the *work of God*, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tablets."

And in Exodus, Chapter 31, Verse 18, we read:

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

If this narrative is true—that Moses received "two tables of stone written with the finger of God"—then he had in his possession the most valuable document ever possessed by man—the handiwork of the Deity, with words of his own writing.

Reflect for a moment on their inestimable value! Moses should have guarded this priceless possession with his life—if need be. Instead, what did he do?

So little did the Children of Israel believe in Moses and his tale about communing with God on Mount Sinai, who is supposed to have delivered them from bondage in Egypt, that they listened not to him but to the voice of Aaron, who told them to take all of the jewels of gold and silver, and in Exodus, Chapter 32, Verse 3, we read:

"And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aa 1."

and,

"with a graving tool . . . he had made it a molten calf,"  
and the people worshipped the Golden Calf as

"thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the  
land of Egypt."

(Note the use of the plural word—Gods).

(There is an inference in the Biblical narrative that Aaron had double-crossed Moses with the Children of Israel, and was seeking to become their God-appointed messenger. But we are not concerned with that piece of deception here).

When Moses came upon this scene, what did he do? He smashed these precious words of God to pieces and thereby committed the greatest crime in the history of man.

Who was Moses to commit such a monstrous deed?

The Bible God did not sanction such destruction. And if there was a real God he would have smitten Moses for his downright insolence.

However, Moses was on such personal and familiar terms with the Bible Deity that when he was made aware of what had happened, he promised Moses to rewrite upon another set of tables of stone "the words that were upon the first tables." That is, the same set of commandments.

There is no mistaking the meaning of the narrative.

Here is the Biblical text of the promise of the Bible God. I quote Exodus, Chapter 3, Verse 1:

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest."

But what happened?

The amazing difference is this. Instead of the Bible God writing with his finger upon the second set of the tables of stone, it is Moses who proceeds to engrave upon them the text . . . the Commandments as dictated by the God to him on Mount Sinai.

Here is the Bible's own testimony regarding the amazing contradictory performance. I quote Exodus, Chapter 34, Verses 27-28:

"And the Lord said unto Moses, write thou these words: . . ."

" . . . And he (Moses) wrote upon the table the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. . . ."

Not only does not the second set of Commandments in Moses' handwriting have the same validity as God's own writing, but the Commandments themselves are entirely different from the set which was written upon the first tables of stone with the finger of God! ! !

Who was responsible for the change? And why the difference?

What a dilemma does this contradiction present.

Could anything be more palpably false? There can be but one conclusion concerning this narrative—the whole story is a jumble of nonsense with the deliberate attempt at confusion and bewilderment. Are there no limits to credulity?

I would like to borrow a statement from Robert G. Ingersoll and ask "God" to write beside my name that I brand this Biblical narrative a lie!

The Biblical story leading up to the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh, and their puerile performances of magic, and the visitation of the diabolical punishment upon the Egyptians as recorded in the Book of Exodus, are too revolting for words.

Despite the revulsion one experiences after reading the Biblical narrative of the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, there is one consolation: the story is not true. The events related never took place!

There were no miracles performed before Pharaoh; his heart was not hardened; there was no plague of frogs; no dust turned into lice; no river of blood; no grievous hail; and no passing over the first born of the Israelites by the blood thirsty Deity; no killing of the first-born; no drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; no manna falling from Heaven. The entire story is a monstrous fabrication imposed upon an ignorant and superstitious people, and deserves exposure and the severest condemnation.

How could such extraordinary events of such vital importance to the peoples of the earth, particularly to the Egyptians, as described in Exodus, have no corroborating evidence, while minor events of no particular significance or value have abun-

dant documentation? Not a single item of historical value exists to prove the events related ever took place or that the Children of Israel were in Egypt, though they were supposed to have lived there over 400 years! Not a single authentic piece of evidence is in existence to substantiate any one of the events described in the narrative, or of the emancipation and deliverance of the Israelites. The whole narrative is a cruel hoax!

The entire story must be regarded as an imaginary tale without the slightest semblance of truth;

“it is a  
Tale told by an idiot, full of  
sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.”

The best Biblical scholars and the most trustworthy historians maintain that not only were the Hebrews never enslaved in Egypt, but they never were in Egypt during the period implied in the narrative!

This is significantly substantiated by the fact that according to the oldest Hebrew manuscript, the words “out of the house of bondage” do not appear in the First Commandment. As additional evidence is the fact that in the Bibles of Hebrews living in Egypt today there is no mention that their home was a former land of enslavement.

I have unimpeachable authorities to testify to the truth of the above statements: Mr. Joseph B. Alexander, Secretary of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, authoritatively states that “there is no definite evidence outside of the Bible regarding the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt.”

Mr. William C. Hayes, of the Department of Egyptian Art, New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, states that “so far as Egyptian records are concerned, there is no historical evidence to show that the Hebrews were ever in Egypt, in bondage or otherwise.”

Dr. Philip Khuri Hitti, Professor of Semitic Literature, Princeton University, says: “Other than Biblical, there is no record of Jewish enslavement in Egypt.”

Mr. John A. Wilson, Director of The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, states that not only did James Henry Breasted, the noted Egyptologist, during his forty years of research, fail to find any “specific evidence on the oppres-

sion of the Children of Israel in Egypt," but neither "has any other scholar found any clear evidence of that phase of history."

Dr. Sydney Smith, Curator of the British Museum and one of the world's greatest authorities on Egyptology, states: "I do not think there is any positive evidence that the tribes of the 'Children of Israel' were in Egypt prior to their invasion of Palestine, outside the Old Testament."

Abram Leon Sachar, formerly Associate in European History at the University of Illinois, now President of Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, was forced to admit in his book that there is "No conclusive proof" of the existence of Moses, and that "the most influential personality in Jewish history may be merely the product of Jewish imagination." He further states that "actual evidence for a Hebrew settlement in Egypt is . . . of the scantiest and most doubtful kind."

Professor Salo W. Baron, in his book, "A Social and Religious History of the Jews," not only admits that there is no authentic evidence to prove the exodus of the Jews from Egypt, but that if such an event did take place, it was such an insignificant matter that the Egyptians did not even take the trouble to record it!

Additionally significant as disproving the truth of this Biblical narrative is the fact that even the Feast of the Passover, including its ritual of eating unleavened bread and the slaughtering and sacrifice of the lamb, did not originate with the Hebrews as the result of this supposed event. They were customs that were practised long before the supposed exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt. It is commonly believed that eating unleavened bread is commemorated among the Hebrews because of the event related in Exodus, Chapter 12, Verses 34 to 43, but this is without historical confirmation.

Among the Arabic Bedouins, a Semitic tribe, unleavened bread is eaten even to the present day at religious and even secular festivals, while slaughtering a lamb is an important ritual observance among the people of the Near East. The latter represents a symbolic sacrifice of the blood of a human being as an appeasement to the angry God, practised by the primitive, savage tribes who lived in fear and awe of the elements of nature. Both customs long antedated the time of the supposed events in the Biblical narrative.

If the Children of Israel were never in bondage in Egypt; if

Moses never performed miracles before Pharaoh; if the Exodus to the Promised Land never took place, then the Feast of the Passover is a cruel memorial, imposing self-punishment upon a suffering people for an event that never happened and in memory of hardships never endured. The Children of Israel have enough to mourn over without adding fictitious events of suffering to their overloaded tragic memories.

The Biblical story of the origin of Judaism, of the enslavement of the Children of Israel in Egypt, of the magical performance of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh, of the terrible and frightful plagues which the Bible God inflicted upon the innocent Egyptians, of the Exodus to the Promised Land, of Moses upon Mount Sinai and the tables of stone and the Ten Commandments has but one conclusion. The story is not true!

The statement,

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,"

is false. The Bible God is a myth.

Is it not obvious, in the fictional story just related, that the part played by the God of Israel was merely Moses masquerading as the priest-magician god?

In ancient times the magician was not only king, but God. The people looked to him to perform miracles. Through his magic powers he protected them from evil. All good was attributed to him. He brought rain in times of drought. He made crops grow. He led the army to victory. If the people were defeated or overcome by misfortune, if plagued by insects and disease, he berated them for their sins and chastised them for their disobedience. He ordered them to do penance and make sacrifices. He proclaimed days for fasting and prayer. When full recompense was made for the evil ways which provoked the anger and displeasure of their god, he would proclaim the happy event by the resumption of the natural order of things and the rekindling of the affection of God for his people.

Magic and religion are so closely related that it is sometimes difficult to separate one from the other. It is a definitely established fact that religion and its ceremonies evolved from magic, sorcery and incantation.

Not acquainted with the natural order of cause and effect of the universe, the primitive mind is stimulated to awe and adoration by that which it believes is unusual and unnatural. It thrives on miracles. Knowing the limitation of its own powers, it attributes that which it cannot understand to the supernatural abilities of the performer. "Not conceiving the existence of natural law," says Sir James Frazer, "primitive man cannot conceive a breach of it." A miracle to him is merely the demonstration of the supernatural ability of the performer.

It is not difficult, then, to understand why the Bible story of the Exodus was believed true by the ignorant and superstitious people of Biblical times. But it is difficult to understand why otherwise intelligent people today cannot see the interchangeable characters of Moses and the Hebrew Deity. Aside from the anthropological aspects of the primitive mind in relation to the priest-magician god, the unusual familiarity with which Moses and the Bible Deity interchanged, and the ease with which the thoughts of the one were conveyed to the other, admit of no other conclusion than that of the dual nature of the same character.

I challenge the world of Judaism to prove me wrong regarding the fictitious story of the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt; of the duplicity of Moses on Mount Sinai and the tables of stone, and the falsity of the Ten Commandments as a revelation from God.

The series of articles which appeared in "Life" entitled, "The World's Great Religions" will prove utterly useless if those who have eyes will not see, and those who have ears will not hear.



## “LIFE” AND RELIGION \* (3rd Article)

I am so glad that when LIFE published the Special Issue on Christianity (December 26, 1955) in the series of “The World’s Great Religions,” it also included the advertisements which appear regularly in this magazine.

How appropriate it was to have this Special Issue arranged as it was.

For instance, as I turned the pages and found the article, “The Testimony of a Devout President”—who, by the way, was never a member of any church until he was elected Chief Executive—on the next page was an advertisement for “Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour.”

The article captioned, “Believe in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and Earth” was followed by full page advertisements for “Jello” and “Campbell Soups.”

“The Onward March of Christian Faith” had as its counterpart “Betty Crocker’s Answer Cake.”

“Stand up, Stand up for Jesus” was matched with a full page advertisement for “Super Anahist.”

There was far more important advice in the advertisement for the coffee industry, that “If you take one for the road, make it coffee,” than in relying upon religious faith to get you home safely.

“Resting up for Lost Souls,” the Billy Graham piece of religious fanaticism, is balanced most appropriately with an advertisement for “Tums for the Tummy.”

“Harvard Revival” and “Faiths in New Forms” is paired with Alka Seltzer and a Cadillac car.

Advertisements for Bibles in this particular issue are, what is called among the advertising agencies, “a natural.”

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, February, 1956.

And the "Blue Cross" will prove a better friend in need than the Cross of Christianity.

And even Grandma, from a full page advertisement, shouts,

"From where *I* sit  
Nothing *does it*  
Like Seven-Up."

"Pray, But Don't Leave the Fun to the Devil" is levelled off with a tempting color page for "Log Cabin Syrup."

When one finishes the reading of the conglomerate articles on Christianity and the Bible in this Special Issue of "Life," one needs some sort of "Peace of Mind," and I am happy to say that this can be secured far more satisfactorily with an insurance policy from the State Farm Mutual, and for "Security," there is nothing better than an Equitable Life Insurance policy.

The Insurance policies will pay off. Faith in Jesus Christ will prove a cruel mockery.

I am also glad that "Life" carried an advertisement for "Bufferin." One needs it after reading this Special Issue, and "Howard Johnson's Ice Cream" will prove a delectable change.

It was a relief to turn to the last page of "Life" and find the familiar Coca Cola page. It gave me "The Pause that Refreshes." I needed it.

No article concerning Christianity would be complete without this Biblical description of the birth of Jesus, and so I quote it:

"And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

This is accepted as the sacred record of the birth of the Son of God of this vast universe! It is too childish and puerile for words.

If such piffle were written today, kindergarten children would be ashamed of such nonsense.

With all the knowledge at our disposal, and in the face of the tremendous scientific and intellectual progress, both in defiance of, and in spite of religion, made during the past century and one half, such gibberish that appears in print in this Special Issue of "Life"—that is supposed to appeal to intelli-

gent people—is an insult of such magnitude that words seem inadequate to express one's detestation.

In view of the irresistible evolutionary processes of nature and of the ever present problems that persist day after day and year after year, it seems too incredible for words that people persist in humiliating themselves by these silly "Acts of Faith."

Scientific research has determined the age of the universe—within the limits of our observation—to be about 600,000,000,000 years old. Life on this earth is estimated to be about 4,000,000,000 to 6,000,000,000 years old; and yet Christianity has the effrontery to offer as a bait for "salvation" the fable that the God of this vast universe—if there be one, which I doubt—murdered his only begotten Son as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and that "he who believeth on Him shall be saved, and him who believeth not shall be damned."

Is it true as Shakespeare said:

"O! Judgment thou art fled to brutish beasts and men have lost their reason."

Even Mr. Paul Hutchinson's greatly restrained article on Christianity, in this Special Issue of "Life," with the great mass of murders, horrors and bloodshed left out, is alone sufficient to make one shudder at the credulity of people who accept such trash as a "revelation from God." Add to this story the mental misery, the fear, the hatred and personal antagonism which Christianity has produced, and you wonder how such a monstrous and perverted system of religion could have ever blighted the human race. In one paragraph he says:

"From Constantine on, the Christian record undergoes a fundamental change. Many will contend that it was not a change for the better. 'After Constantine,' said the late Dean William Inge, 'there is not much that is not humiliating.'"

Here is another edifying paragraph:

"... rival Popes hurling anathemas at each other and, in the end, three Popes, each claiming to be legitimate successors of Peter ..."

It is needless to state, I am sure, that all three Popes were frauds, as was Peter himself.

The business of religion, though reprehensible, is a very profitable enterprise. At the moment, as I write this, without any reference books available, I cannot recall whether it was a Gregory, a Leo or an Innocent (!) who said—"What profit hath not this myth of Jesus brought us." (By the way, it was Pope Boniface VIII).

Mr. Hutchinson makes this statement:

"The Papacy sank in public esteem . . . and was the beginning of the most violent struggle in the annals of the church."

Only in the pages of the bloody religious wars can one find the records of these antagonistic Christian creeds.

In the United States alone there are more than 225 warring Protestant sects, who through value received by contributions, are vying to save your souls with the "blood of Jesus." The billions of dollars that pour into their coffers each year testify to their successful mission despite their failure to fulfill their promises.

I can "guarantee" you a seat on the "Right Hand of God" for much less money, and with the same results.

However, if I did, I would be arrested for fraud. The clergymen should not be exempt from this dishonest scheme.

Not to mention the conflict between Protestant and Catholic Christianity would, in view of this Special Issue of "Life," be a serious omission. I take the liberty of quoting the following from Mr. Hutchinson's article:

"To a Roman Catholic or an Orthodox believer, the church is a divinely instituted body with a priesthood primarily ordained to re-enact at the altar the miracle of the Mass, by which in a symbolic manner, through the consecration of the elements of bread and wine into the veritable Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man is really present, offering Himself as the "food of souls." The Catholic, therefore, and likewise the Orthodox, when he enters a church of his persuasion enters a place of mystery. His devotion focuses on the altar, where the miracle of his redemption is re-enacted; there, in the tabernacle, he believes that Christ Himself is mysteriously present. But if a Protestant finds himself in this sanctuary, he is bewildered by this mys-

tery and repelled by the notion of a sinful man, even though he be an ordained priest, possessing the power to transform bread and wine into the true flesh and blood of Christ."

If the reader gets the full significance of the meaning of the mass and the delusions and aberrations caused by trying to understand its jargon, then he will be able to appreciate Robert G. Ingersoll's observation, when he said—and how succinctly did Ingersoll put it:

"Christianity has made more people insane than it has provided asylums to care for them."

It would be remiss on my part, in dealing with this Special Issue of "Life," not to make some mention of the illustrations depicting the different phases of Christianity.

The inside pages abound with crude, primitive expressions of this crude primitive religion, but the picture on the front cover, the crucifixion, symbolizing Christ being nailed to the cross, the most sadistic piece of art ever conceived, has been a dagger thrust into the heart of humanity.

The devilish cruelty it has inspired, the merciless persecutions it has been responsible for, and the slaughter of the helpless and innocent human beings by the Torquemadas and Hitlers are beyond human description. And this is called the religion of civilization and the harbinger of peace on earth!

Could there be a greater mockery?

The instruments of torture of the Inquisition are a living testimony of how Christianity perverted the mind of man into the savageness of the jungle.

How long, how long will this nonsense continue?

What a "curse" Christianity has been to this earth. Hardly a grain of sand has not been stained with its blood.

No wonder Thomas Paine observed:

"We admire the wisdom of the ancients, yet they had no Bible nor books called 'revelation.' They cultivated reason and arose to eminence."

If this Special Issue of "Life" had been devoted to an exposure of the falsehoods of Christianity, of its perversion of the mentality of man, of its adulteration of the educational processes, of its infantile conception of the universe, and its

distortion of the purpose of life, then this Special Issue of this magazine would have been of commendable service to the progress of the world and the enlightenment of mankind.

But, it will prove otherwise.

One last word. The people of the earth would have been ten thousand times better off if Jesus Christ, either in the flesh or in the imagination, had never been born.

## COMMENT ON DELINQUENCY \*

Each year, with almost clock-like regularity, we hear the clamor for some remedial measures to cope with the problem of juvenile delinquency.

When I was a child we were admonished not to read the "Jessie James" stories. Since that time the "funny papers" and the comic books have come in for condemnation. The radio and television have been condemned for dramatizing crime episodes. However, there is something far more basic regarding this problem than the reading of stories of crime or the dramatic presentation of the crime problem. These stories usually have a "moral" ending because the villain finally pays the penalty for his wrong doings. However, no one can deny that they offer examples of anti-social acts that stimulate the instinctive impulses of youth. A bad example is like a bad apple; it can corrupt others.

While good reading habits have their educational value, and examples of virtuous conduct their beneficial influences, they are not in themselves sufficient to solve this menacing anti-social problem. There is something "dangerous" in youth when measured by the standard of modern society. The youth-pattern in society has never been properly analyzed; nor have measures, based upon a scientific study, been provided to remedy this serious problem. Repressive measures have not been successful, and punishment has only intensified it. The impact of blind and driven youth upon the conventional rules of a matured society requires something more than these unsuccessful palliatives.

Education is the great solvent, and training for a useful occupation will provide fruitful dividends, for "the devil finds mischief for idle hands to do."

\* Reprinted from "The News-Times" (Danbury, Conn.), August 22, 1955.

The "dangerous age" of youth must be studied and a code of conduct for that period must be carefully and watchfully carried out. Inculcating in the mind of the child a proper regard for the rights of others, a high ethical code of conduct and its moral obligation to society as a whole, will certainly do much to ameliorate the seriousness of this problem.

A formula of conduct to "bridge" children over this dangerous age will produce amazingly successful results.

Of course religion has been a failure. That is because it is foreign to the problem. The primitive instincts of man, inherited from his savage ancestry, manifest themselves in ebullient youth. And this evolutionary factor must be taken into consideration for a proper understanding for the motivations of his conduct. Much of his incorrigibility can be traced to an atavism.

To understand the problem is the first step towards its solution. Make provisions to cope with this "dangerous age" of children and we will be making definite progress to solve the perplexing problem of juvenile delinquency.

Many think that juvenile delinquency is a modern problem. It is nothing of the kind. It has existed from time immemorial, and it will continue to exist until we apply the same scientific study for its solution that we have used to solve other problems of society.

Even Shakespeare was aware of it and in his inimitable language expresses it thus:

"I would there were no age between ten and three and twenty, or that youth sleep on the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting . . ."



## THE AMAZING AND REMARKABLE HELEN KELLER \*

I was in the beautiful City of Paris in the middle of January, 1937.

I was there for the purpose of dedicating a statue of Thomas Paine, on January 29th, commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of his birth.

This statue represented Thomas Paine as a World Citizen, and Paris was selected as the World's Capital.

Thomas Paine was an Englishman by birth, a French citizen by decree and American by adoption. The principles of his social and political philosophy are universal.

Gutzon Borglum, the sculptor of the statue, was also in Paris at this time.

Helen Keller, and her companion, Polly Thomson, came over from England to participate in the ceremonies. Helen Keller was to be one of the principal speakers.

In fact, this celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Thomas Paine was to be a gala event.

George Bernard Shaw was to speak by radio from London, and Alexander Woolcott was to deliver a radio address in New York. Celebrations to honor Thomas Paine as a World Citizen, on this occasion, were to take place in almost every country.

While in Paris, Helen Keller expressed a desire to visit the Rodin Museum. As Helen Keller is blind, Gutzon Borglum had asked the American Ambassador to get permission from the museum authorities, to permit her to "touch" the statues so she would be able to "see" them. This unusual request was granted and we started off for the Rodin Museum.

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, March, 1956.

My recollection is, that when we entered the building, we saw standing on a high pedestal, directly in front of us, Auguste Rodin's world famous statue "The Thinker."

I shall never forget how Helen Keller walked up the ladder, provided for her, to "touch" the marble, and as she did, she would describe, accurately and in detail, every portion of it. When she passed her delicate and sensitive fingers over the head of "The Thinker," she exclaimed—"He is going through the same torture of expression that I did when I first began to think."

The next Rodin statue which Helen Keller "touched" was on the floor, to the right of "The Thinker." As she passed her fingers over the body, she exclaimed—"She is suffering great torture." It was the statue of a woman in labor pains!

When Helen Keller came upon the heroic and unique bronze figure of Balzac, she said—"He could have left many things unsaid."

We next came to the famous statue of the "Burghers of Calais"; the five men who offered their lives to redeem the city from the Hundred Years War. When Helen Keller sensed the meaning of this group-statue, she shook with emotion. She touched the figure of each of the men, and "felt" the agony of their sacrifice. When she passed her fingers over the bowed head of one of the men, she opened her hand, lowered it about a foot from his head, and said—"I can feel the hot tears as they drop into my hand."

We then took the elevator to the second floor, and as we passed many of the works of art of Auguste Rodin, the greatest sculptor since the Greeks, we came upon a bronze figure, lying upon a table. Helen Keller passed her hands over the body, with its sunken chest and lifeless limbs, and with an amazing reaction, cried—"I must not touch it. It is death." She was right. It was the figure of a girl who had died in her teens!

For some reason they did not permit Helen Keller to touch many of Rodin's masterpieces, for which he is so famous, such as "The Kiss" and other amorous marbles, for fear of embarrassment. This was wrong. What makes Helen Keller one of the most remarkable women who ever lived is her knowledge of all phases of life. She would have understood their meaning. Getting a "mental picture" of these statues would

not only not have shocked her, on the contrary, she would have appreciated the artistry of them all the more.

My experience, in company with Helen Keller's visit to the Rodin Museum, is one that I shall never forget. My only regret is that we did not have a photographer with us to take her picture with the statues, and an expert stenographer to take down all of the thoughts and expressions of Helen Keller as she commented upon these marvelous works of art, with her uncanny perception of their meanings.

Helen Keller, deaf, dumb and blind, yet her sensitive fingers carry and illuminate to her brain, the images of the objects which she touches, with the same exactness that is performed for us by our eyes.

It is often said that when a person loses an arm, greater strength is developed in the other one. Is it possible that when Helen Keller became blind, in her childhood, that Nature developed her sense of sight in the tips of her fingers? I say this because of another uncanny ability which she possesses. If Helen Keller should meet you, and if she passes her fingers over your face, she gets a mental picture of what you look like, just as we do when we see a person with our own eyes.

It seems incredible but she never forgets the image of a face she has once "seen." If she should ever meet you again, she could, by merely placing her fingers over your face, tell you who you are! I know this to be an indisputable fact, because she has performed this amazing sense of recognition upon me.

Let me give you an illustration. Helen Keller has "seen" both President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Churchill. If both of these men came unexpectedly into the room where Helen Keller was, and she was unaware of their presence, and she placed her fingers over their faces, she would instantly say: "President Eisenhower"—"Winston Churchill."

Here is another instance. We had gathered some flowers from my garden, and among them was an unusual and beautiful specimen of blood red petals closely grown together. We were in doubt as to what it was. Polly Thomson suggested that we ask Helen Keller to identify it. We did. After holding it in her hand, Helen Keller said: "Zinnia." It was.

One of Helen Keller's favorite games is checkers. Yes, I said checkers, because I have played checkers with her. She usually sits on the floor to play this time honored game. You

might ask, how can a blind person, like Helen Keller, play checkers. She does. And she plays an unusually good game. She beats me at it. How does she do it? When you make a play, she passes her hands over the board, and she then knows the move you have made, and the entire position of every checker on the board. She knows what her next move should be, and she makes it. There is only one difference in the set of checkers she plays with; instead of the usual red and black colors, the checkers are round and square. That is why she can tell your moves as well as her own!

What a perfect mental picture does her sensitive fingers carry to her illuminated brain.

Helen Keller types and signs her own letters.

My visits with the amazing and remarkable Helen Keller are one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life.

## JOSEPH LEWIS ANSWERS PREACHER JACK COE

*Address delivered over Radio Station WMIE, Miami, Florida,  
March 21st, 1956*

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is Joseph Lewis speaking. Yes, this is Joseph Lewis involved in the Preacher Jack Coe case. It was I who secured the evidence and presented it to the proper legal authorities, which caused Jack Coe to be held for trial. I am the same Joseph Lewis who was mentioned in the thousands of leaflets distributed throughout Miami by Jack Coe and which he reproduced in the newspapers as an advertisement. I am the Joseph Lewis who has been the subject of numerous radio talks by Jack Coe. In these radio talks Jack Coe has quoted out of context many statements to be found in my books. He mentioned me as the author of "The Bible Unmasked," "The Ten Commandments," "Atheism" and other books.

Yes, I am the author of these books and I am proud of it. I am the author of some fifteen volumes and whether you quote out of context or the complete paragraphs makes no difference to me. They are not only my sentiments but my profound conviction of more than forty years of study, research and reason. I stand by everything I have written.

Let me state here in all modesty that my books and activities have had the praise and approval of such men as Thomas A. Edison, Professor Albert Einstein, Luther Burbank, George Bernard Shaw, Clarence Darrow and other eminent persons in all walks of life.

In view of the support of these famous people I do not think I need to be concerned with what Preacher Jack Coe thinks of me and my work.

But I am concerned with his radio talks. He has been attacking me now for the past five or six weeks.

A friend of mine who heard Coe on one of his broadcasts tells me that he called me a "Communist." If this is true and I am able to secure the proper legal evidence he may have a million dollar libel suit on his hands in addition to his other troubles.

In these broadcasts he usually mentions that I am president of The Freethinkers of America. He is correct. I am, and have been for many years. As head of this organization I have instituted numerous legal actions where the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States has been violated. I have been successful in some and have lost in others. Even where I have lost the decision of the court it has been somewhat of a victory because it awakened the public to the seriousness of the violation of the great fundamental American principle of the separation of church and state.

I do not know of a greater patriotic service I can render my country than by trying to preserve inviolate the Constitution of the United States of America.

As I just stated, I have been involved in many such cases and if any are interested in these matters you may find details concerning them as well as the titles of my books, when and where I was born, in any issue of Who's Who in America.

I shall continue my activities in this respect whenever and wherever I find that this great principle—this principle of secularism that has made this Republic so great and powerful—is being violated. I place the so-called faith healing money-making activities of Jack Coe in this category. That is why I entered the case.

My attention was directed to Jack Coe when the newspapers of Miami exposed his activities. I sent a letter to that great humanitarian, Jack Bell, and offered to the Variety Children's Hospital—which I consider one of the most worthy of causes—the sum of One Thousand Dollars if Jack Coe would cure but one child, now confined in that hospital, who had been crippled by polio. An honest man would have welcomed this opportunity to prove his sincerity.

When Jack Bell printed my offer regarding Preacher Jack Coe he stated that he would like to hear a debate between Coe and myself.

But what did Jack Coe do? Instead, he placed a half page advertisement in the newspaper with this blaring statement:

**Rev. Jack Coe Does Not Debate  
Because Debaters Go to Hell.**

An enlightened ministerial association disagreed with Jack Coe and in a published announcement urged him to debate, stating it was one of the most effective ways of bringing the facts to the attention of the public, and to determine the truth of a subject.

But he paid no heed to their advice; on the contrary, he denounced those who opposed him as "agents of the Devil." You will have to search far and wide to find a more monumental religious demagogue than Jack Coe. When he cannot answer the charges against him he resorts to the sophistry of name calling. However, he defeats his own purpose in this respect, because he stoops too low to be considered a worthy opponent.

I do not have to tell you that I disagree with Jack Coe about debaters "going to hell." Debaters do not go to hell. Does he think that Abraham Lincoln is in hell? Does he think that William Jennings Bryan is in hell? Well, let me state as emphatically as I can that Abraham Lincoln—the Great Emancipator—is not in hell. That William Jennings Bryan is not in hell. Though Coe may wish it, the great and eloquent Robert G. Ingersoll is not in hell. And for the edification of Jack Coe let me state that I am not going to hell. Even Jack Coe—though he may deserve it—is not going to hell, and I will tell you why. Because there is no hell.

Hell was invented by the perverted minds of Preachers like Jack Coe to frighten and torment the living. It is one of the most monstrous ideas that was ever born in the conniving brain of man.

If I could reach all those who believe in hell, by my voice over this radio, and relieve their minds of this horrible belief, I would consider that I had rendered a service of inestimable value to mankind.

I do not believe that if there is a God of this vast universe that such a God would create a hell to torment for all eternity helpless and innocent human beings.

I defend the God of the religionists against the libels of his own believers.

In my letter to Jack Bell I said that if Jack Coe refused to accept my offer that I would seek evidence to drive him out of Miami as a religious fraud. The court hearing was the result of that effort.

Judge Hugh F. Duval, Jr. did not think that, under existing laws, Coe could be held for trial. However, there are many well versed in the law who think otherwise; as well as hundreds of thousands of intelligent people. At the present time the evidence gathered as the result of the hearing before Judge Duval has now been presented to the Dade County Grand Jury for action.

At the hearing before Judge Duval, Preacher Coe denounced me as the man responsible for his plight. Let me state that I am not on trial.

It is the people of the State of Florida—it is the people of the United States of America who are on trial. It is for them to determine whether the laws on the statute books are in keeping with 20th Century progress and whether such a charlatan and mountebank can ply his dishonest trade of robbing ignorant and superstitious people of their hard earned money without interference.

Coe expects to be indicted.

I have in my hand one of the hundreds of thousands of letters, signed by him, pleading for funds so he can carry his case to the United States Supreme Court. I hope he gets that opportunity. If he wins, let me tell you that the shadow of the Dark Ages will fall upon this Republic. But I have full confidence in the Supreme Court of the United States and that day will be a day of triumph when religious frauds such as Jack Coe will be prohibited from hoodwinking and robbing the people of this country.

When I spoke before the Wednesday evening Forum of the First Unitarian Church of Miami a few weeks ago on "Faith Healing," I raised my offer to Jack Coe to Ten Thousand Dollars if he could cure one child crippled by polio. I further stated that if he performed such a cure I would nominate him for the Nobel Prize in Medicine. This prize carries with it the recognition and the honor of being a world benefactor, and in addition goes the sum of about \$40,000.00. When I made this offer at this meeting, a man in the audience rose from his seat and said he was willing to add another \$10,000.00—thus making a total of \$60,000.00. This, ladies and gentle-



men, is no small sum. If ever a man stood before the world as a religious fraud it is Jack Coe for his refusal to put his so-called healing powers to the test.

I might as well have offered a million dollars knowing full well that this hell spouting evangelist would not dare accept this offer.

Jack Coe will not win the Nobel prize in Medicine.

But I will wager I know who will win it.

It will be won by a young man whose unselfish labors will save millions of children of the future from being crippled by polio.

I am referring to Dr. Jonas Salk, who gave his great discovery to the world, spurning all monetary considerations.

When preacher Coe seeks to hide behind the skirts of his God by saying that he does not cure, "It is Jesus who cures," he is convicted by the words out of his own mouth. Jesus does not heal, and furthermore, Jack Coe knows it.

His subterfuge recalls to my mind the statement by Abraham Lincoln. During the most critical period of the Civil War an old woman called upon the President. She said that she had been sent by God to convey a message of great importance to him. Lincoln replied: "My dear lady, since I am one of the most important characters in this mighty struggle, don't you think that if God wanted to convey a message to me, that he would tell it to me directly, and not to a silly old woman like yourself."

Does any one think for a moment that if Jesus heals that he would pick out a charlatan like Jack Coe to perform his deeds? That is like adding insult to injury.

If God sought to perform such a deed, is it not obvious that Mrs. Clark, little George's mother, who is so directly concerned with the child's welfare, would be the one to be selected to perform this act of healing?

I do not know what others think, but let me tell you that that man is a callous scoundrel who will raise the hopes of a mother of a three-year-old son, crippled by polio, and let her believe that her innocent and unfortunate child will be cured of this horrible affliction, only to have her hopes dashed and her heart crushed by the keenest disappointment that a mother can experience.

Let me state here and now, that if I had the power that the New Testament narrative says that Jesus had, I would not

cure one person of blindness, I would make blindness impossible; if I had the power that the New Testament narrative says that Jesus had, I would not cure one person of leprosy, I would abolish leprosy completely! Every honest, enlightened and intelligent man and woman knows that the New Testament narrative concerning the miraculous cures of Jesus, is a fake and a fraud. No wonder Pope Boniface VIII said, "What profit hath not this fable of Jesus brought us."

If the present laws on the statute books of the state of Florida exempt a man because he claims to be a clergyman, from the Medical Practices Act, then I say that such a law is a disgrace and an insult to the enlightened and intelligent people of this great state and I shall continue to expose such quacks and frauds until the people become fully aware of this outrageous situation.

Is stealing an act of honesty because the theft perpetrated is committed by a man standing in the pulpit? Is murder any less murder because the fatal shot was fired by a preacher? Is fraud and deception any less fraud and deception because the crook quoted Scriptures?

How well Shakespeare knew this kind of hypocrisy when he said:

"In religion,  
What damned error but some sober brow,  
Will bless it and approve it with a text."

Is the \$800,000.00 intake, which Coe admitted on the stand he received for his Faith Healing Campaigns, to be called "The profits of Religion," and accountable only to himself?

Are we going back to the days of "Benefit of Clergy," when "men of cloth" were free from all prosecutions for "every crime on the calendar" from that of petty larceny to rape and murder? Were I to offer to the public a bottle of medicine and guaranteed a cure for a serious ailment, I would be arrested for fraud. If I misbranded an article of merchandise, I would be restrained by government officials.

Faith healing was born in the dim and primitive past.

It came into existence because man is born without knowledge and he was awed and bewildered by the strange universe about him. He acquired knowledge through the bitter school of experience.

It was trial and error, tragedy and death.

It was no wonder that strange superstitious beliefs grew in abundance. His mind was incapable of understanding the natural order of the universe, and the only way he could account for disease was as a punishment for some "sin." He created a God based upon his own image and possessing the same attributes.

If he became angry he inflicted punishment, and as his mind was limited in its comprehension, he gave his God the same passions that he possessed. He did not know that he had inherited his nature from his savage ancestors—the viciousness of all forms of life that must kill to live.

As a result of man's ignorance, strange and fantastic methods of seeking relief from the things that tormented him were resorted to, among them were "miracles" and "Divine intervention."

Until modern times it was believed that disease was sent as a punishment for sin.

The discovery of the nature of disease was, in itself, a great triumph of the human mind.

Disease is not a punishment for sin. Disease is a natural consequence of the processes of life, and the "ills of the flesh" inevitably follow when one form of life lives upon the other and where, as Henri Fabre so aptly said, "at the banquet of life each in turn is a guest and a dish."

It is only by understanding the nature of disease that man has been able to protect himself from the ravages of its destruction.

The use of prayer to cure disease has been responsible for epidemics that have, on many occasions, almost wiped out the human race.

Prayer has had no more effect upon disease than it has had upon health. It merely permits the disease to continue its course and increase the suffering of the victim.

If ministers of religion—of all kinds and varieties—were free of disease and immune to death, then there might be some claim to their mission.

But these so-called "men of God" are victims of the natural course of life, even as "you and I." They suffer the same ills; they feel the same sensations; they are subject to the same passions of the body and they meet inevitable death just as any other person. They are not free from a single rule of life; what others must endure, they likewise must experience.

They cannot protect themselves from the forces of nature, any more than you can. What they can do you can do, too. Their claims of being "anointed" and "vicars" of God on earth are false and hypocritical.

I do not have time in this talk to tell you of the heroic struggle that man has made against the forces of religious superstition to establish modern medicine.

Even the discovery of anesthesia, the most humane of all of man's accomplishments, was branded as an impious intrusion, and as an effort to circumvent and defeat the so-called "will of God."

Timothy Dwight, a gentleman once president of Yale College, preached a sermon against vaccination on the ground that small pox was a decree of God and it was a sacrilege to avoid the disease.

Small Pox is practically abolished.

The Pox-faced victims of my early days are no longer seen. Even George Washington bore the terrible scars of this ravaging disease. He was Pox-faced. Diphtheria, which was a scourge only a few years ago, has been conquered by modern medicine, and Typhoid Fever, which once killed more people than wars, is practically unknown today. Until recent years, even the dissection of the human body was prohibited by ecclesiastical decree.

Every step of progress has to be fought for.

Men were put in chains and burnt at the stake for declaring that the earth was round. Galileo was imprisoned for finding the moons on the planet Jupiter, and Copernicus concealed his great discovery of the movement of the heavenly bodies, for fear of torture, until his lips were sealed in death.

Precious blood was shed for the liberty we now enjoy, and one of the most terrible wars in all history was fought that man, regardless of race, color or creed, might enjoy equality under a constitution guaranteeing Freedom to all.

Does any one think for a moment that if a man possessed the power to heal, as Jack Coe so blatantly claims he does, that he would use a circus tent to demonstrate his ability—and then only after he has made an appeal for funds, prompted no doubt by "plants" in the audience, to stimulate others to give?

When Jack Coe invites all who suffer from disease—contagious as well as helpless victims—to come and mingle to-

gether in his tent, he is violating the laws of public health, and menacing the life of the community.

Are our quarantine laws to be suspended for this unscrupulous specimen of humanity to satisfy his insatiable greed for money?

Suppose a mother, induced by the promises of Coe, as did Mrs. Clark, takes her child, suffering from Measles or Scarlet Fever, to his tent to mingle with the hundreds of others, what will happen? That he will not cure the child is a foregone conclusion.

But what would our health authorities say if others contracted the disease and an epidemic of this serious affliction followed? Who would be at fault? Who would be held responsible for a situation like this?

Again I say that it is the people of the State of Florida, it is the law enforcement agencies of this State that are on trial in this case.

Do you suppose, if I had the power to cure disease, that I would ask a "love" offering in the form of money to perform my services? If I had such power my services would be free, for the honor and glory of having performed a great public service.

I would sacrifice my life, as others have done, for the sake of humanity, if I could just cure the world of blindness. Think what it means to live in total darkness, where sight is so necessary to existence! Think what it means to be crippled, when our legs are so important to our body! Think of the agony and suffering of the human race, victims of all kinds of diseases lying helpless in their beds of despair, while a mountebank such as Jack Coe struts the streets, living in luxury from the money wrung from the sweat and tears of his deluded victims!

But do not be surprised at what Jack Coe does.

He is callous and cold hearted.

He is mercenary to his finger tips.

He operates a cruel money-making scheme.

Where are the people that Jack Coe is supposed to have cured? If he has cured one person of that dreadful disease of cancer, let that person come forward and be properly examined by a reputable physician. We want fact, not delusion. We want the truth, not religious hallucinations.

Fake testimonials only add insult to his reprehensible conduct. The testimonials he offers are from people who are

deliberately dishonest, deluded, never had an ailment, or are lying for the glory of their religious delusion.

When I spoke before the Wednesday evening Forum of the First Unitarian Church of Miami, a man on three or four different occasions interrupted my address by shouting that he was cured of heart trouble by "the name of Jesus" and said that he "would furnish me with an affidavit." It was later discovered that he was a henchman of Coe, and I am still waiting for the affidavit. But that is of no consequence.

His statement recalls to my mind, a remark made by a celebrated New York Judge. He said that "sometimes, sometimes even in an affidavit, you may find the truth." There are more lies committed under oath than were ever uttered in polite conversation.

While Preacher Coe refuses to debate with me, either over the air, in the press, or on the platform, he repeats continuously in his radio talks that this is "the Joseph Lewis fight."

I accept this challenge.

I do not know how to better express my thoughts about this matter than to quote the words of Thomas Paine. You know who Thomas Paine was. I consider him the foremost patriot of the American Revolution. I go further and say that if there had been no Thomas Paine there would have been no United States of America. I even wrote a book to prove that he was the author of the Declaration of Independence. When Thomas Paine wrote his pamphlet "Common Sense" which aroused the American Colonies to their Independence, a Dr. William Smith sought to answer Paine and defend the English rule of the Colonies in a pamphlet signed "Cato." Here is Thomas Paine's classic reply to Dr. Smith and it expresses my sentiments toward Preacher Coe.

"Remember, thou hast thrown me the glove, [Preacher Jack Coe] . . . and either thee or I must retire . . . I fear not the field of fair debate, but thou hast stepped aside and made it personal. Thou hast tauntingly called me by name; and if I cease to hunt thee from every lane and lurking hole of mischief, and bring thee not a trembling culprit before the public bar, then brand me with reproach by naming me in the list of your confederates."

So much for Fake Healer Jack Coe.  
I thank you for listening.

## IF FREUD HAD READ SHAKESPEARE

Psychoanalysis might never have been born \*

Yes, if Dr. Sigmund Freud had read Shakespeare psychoanalysis might never have been born.

Some might take this remark as an over-statement, but I believe that a reading of this essay will convince them that it has a firmer basis than they first believed.

One of the major fundamentals of psychoanalysis is that dreams reveal the motivations for emotional disorders and the interpretation of these dreams is the structural basis of Freudianism. If both prove to be false, the very foundation of psychoanalysis is shaken.

The reason I make this statement about Freud and Shakespeare is due to the fact that two or more interpretations can be placed upon the same dream, and each will be just as logical and just as reasonable as the interpretation placed upon that dream by the psychoanalyst.

The reading of Shakespeare will substantiate the fact that different interpretations can be made of the same dream, and each equally as acceptable as the other.

From time immemorial man has not only been bewildered and awed by his dreams but he has devoted his time and his energies in trying to solve this mysterious manifestation of his brain. Dreams have fascinated and frightened him to such an extent that the dream interpreter was consulted more often than the physician. Primitive man feared dreams more than he feared disease—and many still do!

That is why, in my opinion, when Freud made his announcement that he had discovered the secret of interpreting dreams, and their significance as foreshadowing future events, as well as uncovering the motivation of human conduct, he found a fertile field for its acceptance.

From dreams man has built a fantastic superstructure of fantasy. He has conceived gods and devils, heavens and hells,

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," December, 1956.

ghosts and goblins, angels, imps and fairies. It was from a dream that he believed that he possessed a "soul"—something separate and distinct from his physical body.

This is understandable in the mind of primitive man. In the dream world he moved from place to place—places he had never seen and never believed existed; he visited areas totally unknown to his waking self, and conversed with a variety of people that did not exist in his mundane sphere. He even spoke to those who had long been dead. He was sure there were gods because he had seen them! He did not know that imagination and memory are attributes of the mind, and that is why he gave himself a spirit independent of his body. This primitive man did not know that without his body his mind could not function. This was too difficult for him to understand and believe, he did not know that "We are such stuff that dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

The Bible itself offers abundant proof of man's fascination with dreams. The numerous dreams related in the Bible and their close relation and connection with the Biblical Deity is another proof of the persistence of this deep rooted belief in the mind of man.

Dreams are equally prevalent in nearly all the religious books of the world, and many religious systems are founded upon dreams.

Even today most children are familiar with the Biblically recorded dream of Potiphar and its interpretation by Joseph.

These Biblical narratives of dreams, and the general belief in dreams, conditioned modern society to be receptive to Freud's announcement that he had discovered, not only the meaning of dreams, but by psychoanalytical interpretation he could reveal the innermost motivation which prompted them.

This seemed to the eager, superstitious world, like the discovery of one of the great secrets of life. To many it was like a new religious dispensation.

That Freud's early indoctrination in the Bible, and there can be no doubt about it, left an ineradicable imprint upon him, is revealed in his writings expounding his psychoanalytical doctrine. It is inescapable that Freud was fascinated by the dreams narrated in the Bible, as well as their interpretation, and there is internal evidence of their influence upon him in propounding his theory.



This is borne out by the fact that many of the dream interpretations of the Bible, as well as those of Freud himself, are based upon what James G. Frazer calls, "Sympathetic Magic."

In fact, Sympathetic Magic is the Key to Freud's interpretation of dreams!

Freud's use of symbols, as a complementary instrument of interpretation, is additional proof of this premise. Both are unreliable as revealing the meaning of dreams.

Here are two instances of Sympathetic Magic by way of explanatory examples. The basis of the commandment "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk," is not a wrong from a dietary sense, but is based upon the superstitious belief that the cow resents cooking its young in the milk of its mother. If the meat and the milk are cooked together then it was believed that the cow would refuse to give more milk. For no other reason did primitive and ignorant man account for the drying up of the cow's udder. In Genesis, Chapter 30, we find a striking instance of the belief in Sympathetic Magic in the bargaining between Jacob and Laban in the division of the cattle Laban was to receive for the labor he performed. The division of the cattle was to be determined by the number of "Brown among the sheep" and the "speckled and spotted among the goats." This was to be accomplished in the following manner; and I think it can best be told in Biblical language: (Genesis 30—Vs 37-43).

"And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink.

And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the

cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses."

All so simple by Sympathetic Magic. "Simple" as psychoanalysis!

It is regrettable that Gregor Mendel, the geneticist, spent so many years in scientific research to determine the law of inherited characteristics, when all he had to do was to consult the Bible for this great biological secret!

I need but give an example of symbols that are used currently to give you an idea of how confusing and unreliable they are in reaching conclusions.

Here is a simple instance. If I use the letters "N.Y.C." it might be understood to a traveler to indicate the "New York Central Railroad"; but to an immigrant it might well mean "New York City." The same illustration might be applied to the letters "N.B.C." To the radio and television listener it would mean the "National Broadcasting Company," but to a person in the grocery business it would mean the "National Biscuit Company."

Therefore symbols, without the certitude of their actual meaning, are utterly worthless in the fantastic realm of the dream world as having meaningful significance.

Then again, how still further removed from understanding are pictures or animals, or water or trees and of even strange people and places.

That is why when one dreams of a pencil, or an umbrella, or a box, or an open cave, they would have entirely different meanings to different persons, that is, if they had any meaning at all!

That some dreams are of an erotic nature is as natural as are dreams of traveling or of fighting.

Who hasn't been aroused to an emotional pitch in his waking hours, in his desire to inflict punishment upon another for having suffered an injustice or for having been betrayed? And then again, Freud gives dreams, in his psychoanalytical doctrine, many and varied meanings, such as indicating "wish

fulfilment," or as having their genesis in some form of sexuality, and then again as "guardians of sleep."

However, it is only from the point of view of interpretation that I want to deal with dreams in this limited essay. For certainly, if dreams cannot be relied upon to furnish us with the proper interpretation of their meanings, how utterly useless are they as guide posts in determining our actions and conduct? How far we could go afield in going into all phases of psychoanalysis can be gathered from this one quotation from Freud himself. He said, that "Dreams are the removers of sleep-disturbing psychic stimuli by way of hallucinated satisfaction."

I prefer Shakespeare's meaning of dreams. He said: "A dream itself is but a shadow."

No discussion of the meaning of dreams should fail to include the dreams that come from the taking of drugs. There is no monitor of the mind that will protect it from the disturbing influence of these artificial stimuli, or keep the mentality in a rational state while under their influences.

Those who have been under the influence of anaesthesia will testify to the peculiar dreams that followed the administration of ether.

What great fascination has the user of narcotic drugs except that it stimulates his mind to dreams of grandeur and Elysian fields that makes him a slaving victim to its uses?

Has the dream of a person suffering from delirium tremens any significance?

Is there a psychoanalyst bold enough to say that dreams, under such an influence, denote Wish Fulfilment, Erotic Desires, or are a Guardian of Sleep?

What more graphic illustration does one need than this tragic case. One of America's greatest songwriters, suffering from continuous and hideous nightmares, consulted a leading psychoanalyst. The psychoanalyst, who also happened to be the translator of Freud's work, analyzed his "dreams" as resulting from "infantile inhibitions" and "repressed desires" and treated him accordingly. It was discovered, however, only too late, that the patient was suffering from a tumor on the brain, and died under the surgeon's knife. Had this great songwriter been properly treated for his mental disturbances he might be alive today. The pressure of the tumor on the

brain was the cause of the horrible brain sensations and had absolutely nothing whatever to do with his libido.

It is a well known fact that external physical contacts produce dreams. For instance, if one were to take a feather, and pass it lightly over the face or body of one who is asleep, he would dream that a spider, or some other insect was crawling on him, or the sensation which the external stimuli created that resembled the feeling caused by the passing of the feather on the body produced in his mind.

As many such illustrations could be given as there are experienced sensations of the mind.

With these facts in mind how much reliability can be placed upon dreams that spring purely from the unrestrained flights of imagination in the brain in the unconscious state?

What about the perverted thoughts of religion that have poisoned and paralyzed the brain of man? What horrible dreams have the doctrines of original sin, and eternal damnation produced in the brain of the ignorant believer; what torments are suffered by the innocent victim of these insane theological dogmas?

If such dreams could be properly interpreted would the psychoanalyst have the courage to condemn religion for poisoning the mind—causing undue obsessions—producing sadistic thoughts and homicidal tendencies?

On the contrary, many psychoanalysts insist that religion is the panacea for such conditions. This is not only a case of the blind leading the blind, or adding fuel to the fire, but rather poisoning the poisoned!

How many mothers and how many fathers have protested that they have killed their offspring because God visited them in a dream and told them to commit their dastardly act as an expiation for some sin?

More than ninety per cent of the mental ills of the religious believer can be traced to the hallucinations and aberrations produced by the fantasies of their religious beliefs.

Our mental hospitals can tell much that they are not willing to reveal. And how many potential religiously insane are walking the streets, and are apprehended only after they have committed an irreparable crime.

That the brain is a peculiar and mysterious piece of physical mechanism there can be no doubt. How it functions no one knows. But one thing is certain, dreams are too variable, too

uncertain, too unsubstantial to be a guide or the interpreter of the emotions of man. Dreams run the whole gamut of life, and everyone, at some time or another, passes through these multitude of phases, and since we are not all alike, and do not have the same thoughts, the same experiences, the same desires and motivations how then can a dream be interpreted alike to each and all?

A false conclusion is worse than none at all, because it precludes a scientific study of the various manifestations of the mind.

Psychoanalysis is no more valuable in the analysis of the mind than astrology is to astronomy, or alchemy is to the science of chemistry.

Shakespeare used dreams as he used other manifestations of the mind merely to "hold the mirror up to nature" and revealed man, a victim of his own fears and ignorance, that so bewilder his senses.

Let us see what Shakespeare thought of dreams and how unreliable he considered them as indicators of conduct and as motivations for wish fulfilment. Shakespeare says:

"True, I talk of dreams;  
Which are the children of an idle brain,  
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy;  
Which is as thin of substance as the air,  
And more inconstant than the wind."

—Romeo and Juliet 1-4-97

What Freud and the other psychoanalysts have done, and still do, is to invent, out of their imagination, what they conceive to be the meaning of a dream; this is quite different from Shakespeare, who invents the dream, as part of the plot of his play, and gives it his own meaning utterly foreign to the psychoanalytical interpretation. Shakespeare was most skeptical of dreams as having any significance, and he did not consider them as keys to unravel the mysteries of the mind, nor to foretell future events, much less to uncover the innermost secrets of the heart.

This one example of Shakespeare's use of the dream and its interpretation should suffice. In Shakespeare's drama, Julius Caesar, he has Calphurnia, Caesar's wife, to dream, which she

interprets as an ominous warning that he should not go to the Capitol this day. Caesar accepts her interpretation, and when the messenger Decius Brutus, comes to fetch Caesar, he says:

“And you come in very happy time,  
To bear my greetings to the senators  
And tell them that I will not come today:  
Cannot, is false, and that I dare not, falser:  
I will not come today; tell them so, Decius . . .”

Calphurnia, in order to offer an excuse to Caesar's not coming says to Decius Brutus:

“Say he is sick.”

But Caesar will have none of that, and retorts:

“Shall Caesar send a lie?  
Have I in conquest stretch'd my arms so far  
To be afraid to tell grey beards the truth?  
Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.”

And Decius replies:

“Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause,  
Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so.”

Here is Caesar's answer:

“The cause is in my will: I will not come;  
That is enough to satisfy the senate:  
But for your private satisfaction,  
Because I love you, I will let you know:  
Calphurnia here, my wife, stays me at home:  
She dreamt to-night she saw my statue,  
Which, like a fountain with a hundred spouts,  
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans  
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it:  
And these does she apply for warnings and portents,  
And evils imminent; and on her knee  
Hath begg'd that I will stay at home to-day.”

To this, Decius Brutus replied, with another meaning of the dream:

"This dream is all amiss interpreted;  
It was a vision fair and fortunate:  
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,  
In which so many smiling Romans bath'd,  
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck  
Reviving blood, and that great men shall press  
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.  
This by Calphurnia's dream is signified."

Caesar agrees with Decius Brutus' interpretation and speaks:

"And this way have you well expounded it."

And in support of his interpretation Decius Brutus continues:

"I have, when you have heard what I can say:  
And know it now: the senate have concluded  
To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.  
If you shall send them word you will not come,  
Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock  
Apt to be render'd, for some one to say  
'Break up the senate till another time,  
When Caesar's wife shall meet with better dreams.'  
If Caesar hid himself, shall they not whisper  
'Lo! Caesar is afraid?'  
Pardon me, Caesar; for my dear dear love  
To your proceeding bids me tell you this,  
And reason to my love is liable."

Caesar is now convinced that Calphurnia's dream was not an omen of evil, and is embarrassed by this childish fear. He speaks with alacrity:

"How foolish do your fears seem now, Calphurnia!  
I am ashamed I did yield to them.  
Give me my robe, for I will go."

Shakespeare improvised the dream, as part of the drama, to have but one meaning, but he, himself, gave it two, and each interpretation equally as logical as the other; only that the *false interpretation was more persuasive than the true.*

In the field of speculation where the false is as reasonable as the true, by what infallible yardstick are we to determine the one from the other?

In the realm of fiction and on the stage the dream finds a proper place for "analysis," but as an instrument in treating a "mind diseased" it is a hindrance, a snare and a delusion.

I repeat, that if Freud had read and properly understood Shakespeare, psychoanalysis might never have been born.

How appropriate to conclude this essay with these words: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than were ever dreamt of in (Freud's) philosophy."



## AN ATHEIST'S REACTION TO A HEART ATTACK \*

I will always remember this date. It was a Sunday morning, October 15th, in the year 1953 after the myth of Jesus.

On Saturday, the day before, I was in perfect health, and was enjoying to the fullest degree the crisp air of early Fall. My home at Purdys, fifty-five miles from New York City, never looked more beautiful. It was dressed in all the splendor of its new Fall garments. It was one of those rare days, when the beauty of the forests and the leaves of the trees have changed into a thousand variegated colors:—the golds, the browns, the reds and the purples blended into a hue of harmony that is the envy of the artist's brush. Added to this, the gentle breeze through the branches of the trees made the air sound like the "music of the spheres."

This was a setting that would make Omar Khayyam sing, "Oh, wilderness were paradise enow!"

My house is worth mentioning too. It is made from hand cut stones, taken out of the ground, and is of a French Norman Castle type. I might mention that the house was built by a banker who spared no expense in its construction and I was fortunate enough to purchase it at a fraction of its cost. It is situated on one of the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains, and is about eight hundred feet above sea level, and offers a commanding sight of the surrounding territory, almost unequalled for sheer beauty.

Many artists who have visited me have used these scenes for the theme of their paintings.

Directly in front of my house, about three hundred feet below, is Lake Titicus, which now forms part of the water supply for New York City. As the water rushes over the Dam, about one hundred feet high, the noise of the falling waters

\* Reprinted from *The Age of Reason Magazine*, March, 1957.

gives one the impression of the waves of the ocean as they break upon the beach.

On Saturday evening, I retired as usual about eleven o'clock. At about 4 A.M. Sunday morning, I was awakened with a terrific pressure pain in the upper left part of my chest. I might mention that I have always been what has been termed a "poor sleeper." Were it not for this fact I might never have awakened, and would have died, as the expression goes, "in my sleep."

I had never experienced such a pain before, nor did I realize its seriousness. I believed it was only of a temporary nature and that it would soon pass away. I had heard of people having heart attacks, but to be frank and truthful, I had not the slightest idea of its nature; nor did I ever think it would happen to ME!

The pain not only persisted, but became more intense, and then I decided to mention it to my wife, and suggested that she call the doctor. This she did. When the doctor answered the telephone, I took the receiver from her, apologized to Dr. A for calling him at this hour in the morning, and then began to describe the symptoms. Dr. A told me that from the description I gave him it must have been an "attack of indigestion." He also said, since he had examined me but a week before—the usual yearly examination which he had given me for nearly twenty years—that I was "too healthy" to have anything "seriously wrong."

While talking to Dr. A the pain subsided.

Dr. A assured me that "there was nothing wrong," but if I felt uneasy about it, I could come to his office later in the morning for an examination.

Rather tired, I fell asleep again, and awoke about eight o'clock. I got up, took a shower, ate my usual light breakfast, and about 9 o'clock was in Dr. A's office.

He gave me the same routine examination as he had given me on previous occasions—pulse, listened to my heart-beat through the stethoscope, took my blood pressure, etc., and after the examination, said: "I told you that you were too healthy to have anything the matter with you," and that I was "the healthiest specimen for a man of my age he had ever seen." I left his office happy in the thought that there was nothing seriously wrong with me.

After leaving Dr. A's office, I went to my newsdealer and

bought the Sunday papers. The only disturbing influence of the day was the newspaper report of the apprehension of the kidnappers of little Bobby Greenlease. This news really upset me, and late that Sunday morning, unable to dismiss it from my mind, I sat down and wrote my reactions to this cruel and callous murder in an article entitled "Bobby Greenlease and God."

That Sunday afternoon, I remember very distinctly, there were two television programs that I was keenly desirous of seeing. One was the "You Are There" program, which dealt with the death of Cleopatra, and the other was Orson Welles' first television performance of King Lear. I saw them both. "You Are There" was highly impressive and very well done, and Orson Welles' performance of King Lear was a masterpiece.

I still feel a thrill when I think back in retrospect, and hear Orson Welles say: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child," and "We are not the first who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst." And how deeply emotional was my reaction when Lear cries to dead Ophelia "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life and thou no breath at all?"

After these highly stimulating programs we sat down to dinner and discussed at great length the "miracles" of this modern scientific age.

We retired as usual about eleven o'clock. I went to bed with every expectation of getting a good night's sleep so as to be refreshed for the visit to my office on Monday morning.

But Nature decreed otherwise.

Almost twenty-four hours to the minute, I was again awakened, about 4 A.M. Monday morning, with the same excruciating pain in the upper region of my left chest. Since Dr. A after examining me, had assured me there was nothing wrong, I did not consider the pain of a serious nature.

Although it was extremely severe, more so than my first attack, I decided to endure it for at least fifteen minutes to see whether the pain would subside. Instead, it gradually got worse and the pain more intense. After a full three-quarters of an hour of suffering, I again woke my wife, and told her to call Dr. A; that this pain was something I had never experienced before and it was becoming unendurable. She called Dr. A. I again took the receiver, apologized to him for call-

ing at such an early hour, but told him I did not think it was "indigestion" that I was suffering from, and that I did not know how long I could endure the pain.

I could tell from the tone of Dr. A's voice that he realized that my attack was more serious than he had first considered it, and he said that he would be "right over."

In the meantime, the severity of the pain was such that I could hardly contain myself, and I began to walk around the room as a means of relief. The best I can describe the pain is that of a terrific pressure around the heart. My good wife suggested that I go back to bed, until Dr. A arrived—but that was impossible.

Dr. A arrived within fifteen or twenty minutes, and realized that he had failed to diagnose my first attack properly. He immediately gave me an injection, told me to go back to bed and remain as quiet as possible. Before leaving, he left some pills to be used if I should fail to go to sleep. I did not sleep; on the contrary, the pain continued just as severe. After another thirty minutes my wife called Dr. A. told him that I was still suffering and wanted to know what to do. Dr. A told her to give me the pills he had left and that he would see me later in the morning.

I took the pills and now begins the story.

To the best of my recollection it was eleven o'clock Monday evening, an elapse of almost 16 hours, when I was awakened, by a man in a white suit, sitting alongside my bed, who said that he was Mr. W, my nurse. To the foot of the bed were standing three men. One I recognized as Dr. A, another one said that he was Dr. B, and the tallest of the three said he was Dr. C. Dr. C apologized for having awakened me at this hour but he said it was necessary for him to take an electric cardiogram.

The nurse prepared me for the examination, and almost as soon as the machine started to operate I noticed that the "needle" began to do a "jitterbug" dance as it passed over the paper. Dr. C took one look at the cardiogram, said "that was enough," and that it was unmistakable that I was suffering from a severe heart attack.

Dr. C then turned to my wife, who was also in the room, and said: "If he lives until morning we may save him, but there is no guarantee, as he is in a very serious condition."

I remember then the three doctors and Mrs. Lewis leaving the bedroom for a consultation.

After they left the room, I must have fallen asleep, as I remember nothing more until I awoke the next morning about nine thirty. At the foot of the bed stood Dr. A. He spoke very calmly and said: "I know Mr. Lewis that you love your home, and while we believe that you can get excellent care here, we suggest that it is better for you to go to the hospital for treatment." I replied that I thought he knew best and that I would go. He told me to remain quiet, not to move a muscle, and that when the men came with the ambulance they would do all the work. Within the hour the ambulance arrived; I was put on the stretcher most gently by two men, and carried down the stairs to the ambulance. They had also provided a tank of oxygen in case of emergency.

I never dreamed that I would ever be taken out of my house in an ambulance!

Dr. A and my male nurse accompanied me to the hospital. On the ride to the hospital I told Dr. A that even the Police Department was more considerate than Nature. If you are arrested the Police Department gives you an opportunity to make at least one telephone call, but when Nature strikes, she is not concerned with your personal affairs!

When I arrived at the Northern Westchester Hospital in Mount Kisco, New York, I was carefully transferred to a roller cot, and taken to my room, where I was again carefully put into bed, with the admonition not to move and to remain as quietly as possible.

Within a few hours the effect of the sedation had worn away, but I no longer felt any pain, and could not understand why it was so important for me to remain so perfectly quiet. I made some telephone calls and was peremptorily stopped. The telephone was removed from the room. I became a medical prisoner.

The following is an instance of where a little knowledge is a dangerous thing and how good intentions may sometimes prove fatal.

Dr. A came to visit me daily and Dr. B, the cardiologist, who now had taken charge, visited me twice a day for the first ten days. Dr. C who was the consultant kept in constant touch with doctors A and B. He seemed to have taken a spe-

cial interest in my case. Dr. C is one of the leading internists and cardiologists in the country.

In the meantime, believing that it would be beneficial, one of my well-intentioned nurses made sure that I had at least one full glass of orange juice a day—this was in addition to the meals served by the hospital, and prescribed by the doctors.

On the third day in the hospital, while I was still in a critical condition, I suddenly began to have cramps in my stomach. Since my bowels were not functioning regularly, and since Dr. A and Dr. B did not seem to consider this condition of too much importance, I nevertheless asked for an enema, which was given me. This temporarily relieved the cramps. The next day I had my large glass of orange juice as usual and the following day the cramps returned. They were so severe that even the sedatives had no effect upon me. On the evening of the fifth day, when I was unable to sleep because of the cramps, I asked my night nurse for an enema. He told me that he could not take the responsibility upon himself; that I was in a very serious condition, and that he would have to get Dr. B's approval. He left the room and evidently telephoned Dr. B who consented to the enema. However, he gave me the enema with great reluctance. I was again relieved, but I began to notice that my extremities were getting cold. I was given a hot water bottle for my feet, and began to wear the pants of my pajamas. It did not help much. The following evening, when the cramps returned, I again asked for an enema and the night nurse absolutely refused to comply with my request.

The next morning after Dr. B examined me, he called my wife out of the room and told her to notify members of my family, as my condition was getting worse and he did not think he would be able to save me! When my wife returned to the room, I could see concern over her face and her expression belied her smile. But I did not know that I was dying!

It occurred to me then, that, since I was not functioning daily, the orange juice was fermenting in my stomach and was causing the cramps! Vitamin C is the only vitamin that is eliminated daily by the body, and since I was taking more than I eliminated, it was causing this distress. That afternoon when the nurse prepared a glass of orange juice for me, I refused to drink it, and gave my reasons for it.

What a fortunate observation that was for me! From then on I suffered from no more cramps. And it is well to remember that while orange juice has its great value, it can prove highly detrimental when taken in too large a quantity at the wrong time.

My temperature, which was steadily rising, reaching a high of 104°, began to subside until it fell slightly below normal. There is a time and place for everything, and it is a truism that at times, what is "one man's meat, is another man's poison."

It took me almost a week to recover from the effects of too much orange juice. I finally dispensed with the hot water bottle.

At the end of two weeks, after Dr. B examined me, he said: "I think you are out of danger, but that does not mean that you must not be extremely careful." I told him that his words were welcome news and I thanked him for his attention. He also told me that I had been a "good patient," and it was a pleasure to take care of me, and since no complication had set in, I was on the way to recovery. I was told by the nurses that Dr. B seldom talked to his patients, but that he eagerly looked forward to his visits to me, to engage me in conversation, and that while he left his other patients after his examinations and instructions, he seemed reluctant to leave my room.

I forgot to mention that when I was admitted to the hospital, my wife had to supply the office with the details of my age, occupation, etc. The receptionist at the desk, in filling out the usual admittance blank, asked Mrs. Lewis what my religion was. Mrs. Lewis replied: "Atheist." The clerk, with an exclamation, said, "Oh! No." Mrs. Lewis, equally as emphatic, replied, "Oh! Yes." I believe they compromised by using the designation, "Freethinker."

I remained in the Northern Westchester Hospital at Mount Kisco for nearly four weeks. I went through the usual routine of getting "back on my feet." This consisted of sitting on the right side of the bed with my feet hanging down, with the instruction to wiggle my toes to bring circulation back. This "exercise" was of a five minute duration, that is, if I did not get "dizzy." I assure you that five minutes is about all that you can stand after such an attack. An hour later I sat on the left side of the bed and repeated the performance.

The next day, I was helped out of bed and sat in a chair for fifteen minutes. The following day, I sat for thirty minutes. After that, I was to make an attempt to walk. With the help of my nurse I walked from one side of my bed to the other and I was happy to get back.

Each day something additional was added to my routine. As I grew stronger the nurse took my arm and walked me out into the corridor. However, my complete recovery seemed a long way off. I was still very weak, and unable to walk alone. A day or two before I left the hospital my nurse put me in a wheel chair, took me down the corridor, wheeled me into the elevator, to the X-ray room. My chest was X-rayed, and on the way back I told the nurse of the great discovery of Dr. Roentgen.

During the last few days in the hospital I was permitted to go to the wash room. The first time I went I took a "good look" at myself. I must confess that I was "a sight to see." While one of my nurses shaved me daily, my hair had not been cut for nearly six weeks; I had lost over ten pounds. I looked like a "ghost." You can take it from me I was in no condition to fight for the middle weight crown. Sugar Ray Robinson or Bobo Olson or whoever he is, did not need to lose any sleep for fear of losing his championship to me.

While in the hospital, clergymen were popping their heads in and out of different rooms, but none came to see me. My reputation had preceded me and I do not think that any clergyman wanted to "cross swords" with me even on a hospital bed. I did have many interesting conversations with my nurses, and I told them very frankly that while I did not fear death, I would accept its inevitability whenever it came. I told them that I agreed with Thomas Paine that there was more consolation in "silent resignation" than in "the murmuring wish of a prayer."

I also had some interesting conversations with Dr. B, who, by the way, was a Catholic. I am sure he knew of my convictions but never once did he bring up the question of religion. I do think, however, that he often wondered how I could lie in bed, and remain so calm, considering the seriousness of my attack. There were occasions when I would express my "disbelief," as some called it in the hospital, but I was in no condition to discuss religion with anyone. Frankly, I was too weak, and the uppermost thought in my mind was when I



would get out of the hospital. I counted the year-long hours of my stay. Each day seemed a light-year.

When I was recuperating in the hospital and Dr. B came on his daily visits to me, one of his penchants was to tell me a joke, particularly about priests, but always in good humor. I in turn had one for him where the butt of the story dealt with a minister or rabbi. This light banter did not interfere with the seriousness of his examination of me. And on one occasion, I asked him, "Why did this happen to me?" I had already told him that regularly, for almost twenty years, I visited Dr. A for a physical check-up. He wisely replied that there was no way of telling in advance when you would have a "heart attack." He said that he could take an electrocardiogram of a patient in his office, and while it would indicate a normal heart condition, the patient could drop dead immediately after leaving his office. He said it had happened many times with patients who have visited their doctors for such an examination.

He also made an interesting observation, particularly from a Catholic doctor. He said that Nature, in her evolutionary process, had "slipped up" by giving us only one heart. He said we had two lungs, two kidneys, but only one heart!

Strange to say that within six months after Dr. B had "given me up," he was dead! He died from acute pancreatitis at the age of thirty-nine years. He left a wife and seven children. His patients were called upon to help his family out of their tragic situation.

The almost interminable stay at the hospital came to an end. On a rather balmy day in November, I dressed, was put into a wheel-chair, taken down the elevator to the main corridor, put into my car and driven back home.

What a welcome sight it was! My house never looked more beautiful. The bright Autumn sun glistened against the multicolored stones of the house. When I got out of the car, I put my arms about my housekeeper and frankly confessed to him that I never expected to return. When I entered the house, my good wife had had printed, and had posted about the different rooms, cards which read—"Take it Easy"—"Slow Down"—"One Step at a Time," etc.

For three weeks I had to remain on the second floor of my house. For the first week I was too weak to walk alone. My wife would hold me by the arm and walk me for a few steps

at a time. As I grew stronger, I would hold on to the banister or railing of the staircase in the hall and walk by myself.

When I grew a little stronger I named the hall and the different rooms—"Fifth Avenue," "Madison Avenue," "Park Avenue," and "Broadway" and when it was time to "take a walk" I would ask my wife if she would like "to take a stroll with me down the avenue." And we did.

When one of my friends came to see me, and I related the story of my attack, he replied: "This is the first time that I ever heard of an atheist getting a second chance." Neither did he know, nor did I ever suspect, that within a year I would have another heart attack!

When my strength began to return, I was permitted, if the weather was mild, to bundle up and go outside on the terrace for some fresh air and sunshine.

However, Dr. B ordered me to Florida to recuperate, as he felt that the weather in Northern Westchester was too severe for a rapid recovery. As I stated before, my house is situated on a hill over 800 feet above sea level and the strong and bitter cold winds of winter are no place to recuperate from such an attack as mine. On many days during the winter the temperature drops to 10 and 20 degrees below zero. I had never been so weak in my life, and so to Florida I went.

I know now what Dr. B meant when he said that I must "take it easy." I do not believe that I could have walked a block alone. Slowly, however, the warm sunshine did have its beneficial effects, but I did not attempt to see how strong I was. I was content with the slow progress I was making. Slowly, but surely, I began to feel stronger. The few months of mental idleness and the physical relaxation combined proved highly beneficial. One morning I awoke with the feeling that I was getting to be myself again. After breakfast, I sat in the sunshine and read my morning newspaper. Later that morning I had an urge to write something that had been in my mind for months.

It was an article on Bishop Sheen. I went to my typewriter, and within a short time, I had written an outline of it. I entitled it, "Bishop Fulton J. Sheen—Top Banana!"

How often do you read in the newspapers and hear a voice over the radio telling you that "heart disease" is the greatest

killer and at the same time admonishing the people to "be careful," to "slow down," and "take it easy," etc.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company deserves great credit for its program—"Good Hints for Good Health," and particularly for its booklet "Your Heart" which contains much valuable advice.

But do you think the people sense the seriousness of this advice? They do not. Do you want me to tell you why those warnings are not heeded? It is because you do not know what a heart attack is until you have had one! Then it is too late to heed this advice.

If, perhaps, those who give this advice could make it a little more graphic, it would have a better effect.

When I was convalescing in Florida, I read in the papers that Dr. James D. Herrick had died. Who was Dr. Herrick? The short obituary notice merely stated that he was the first physician to properly diagnose coronary thrombosis.

Before his time, when a person died of a heart attack, it was believed that his death was caused by "acute indigestion." Even today many doctors still make the same mistake (I know this only too well), because the symptoms are very much the same.

Was my observation correct, after reading the article regarding Dr. Herrick's death, that it was, only within our time, that this great discovery was made of the nature of coronary thrombosis? After an investigation, which proved my surmise was right, I wrote, as "a member of the heart league," the following letter, expressing my thanks to Dr. Herrick. I think it worth reprinting here.

Not until we change our standards of values will mankind understand and appreciate his benefactors.

At the present time, more publicity is given to prize fights, motion picture actors, baseball, horse racing, scandal and murder, than to the benefactors of the human race.

What a travesty, and what a mockery!

These remarks are prompted by the death notice of one of the greatest benefactors of our day. I am referring to the death of Dr. James B. Herrick. Dr. Herrick died in Chicago on March 8th. Do you know who Dr. Herrick was?

I wonder if one in one hundred could tell, aye, I wonder if one in ten thousand know of his valuable contribution to the human race.

Dr. Herrick was the first physician to properly diagnose coronary thrombosis.

Do you know what that means? It means that as a result of his remarkable discovery, hundreds of thousands of people are alive today—alive because of his great scientific achievement.

Dr. Herrick discovered the key that opened the door to the treatment of man's greatest killer—Heart Disease.

How much more honorable on the part of our newspapers, and of our educators, if instead of merely recording the death of this great man as one, among the many, who died on March 8th, the public was informed of the great contribution he made to the advancement of modern medicine. The debt of gratitude we owe him for his bequeathing to mankind such a valuable contribution in the prolonging of human life is difficult to express in words.

I have said before, and I think it worth repeating again, that, perhaps when our educators take cognizance of this important fact, place more stress upon the achievements of our benefactors, and direct the minds of our children to more important and worthy channels of thought, many of our social and political problems will vanish as if by magic. Teaching an appreciation of, and devotion to, man's intellectual and material progress would possess within itself the solvent to vitiate the majority of the vexations that now plague society. Our conduct in society would then be predicated upon a higher concept of social solidarity.

I, for one, wish to place upon the brow of Dr. Herrick, my laurel leaf of thanks.

After my return from Florida to my home in Purdys, in the middle of April, I had one obligation to fulfill and wondered if I would be able to do it.

I had undertaken to restore and dedicate, as a public memorial, the house in Dresden, New York, in which Robert G. Ingersoll was born. The dedication was to take place on August 11th, the one hundredth and twenty-first anniversary of his birth. I began to write my speech. It was longer than

I had expected to make it. It was more than an hour in length, but on scheduled time, I delivered it.

After delivering the speech, and my return home, I was beginning to feel that complete recovery had "set in." I had almost forgotten my heart attack, and I resumed, more and more, but with restrictions, my normal activities. I was even permitted to drive a car.

One Monday morning, while driving to New York, the driver in the car behind me suddenly gave a loud blast with his horn. For a moment I felt a certain "shock." My wife was with me and I told her that the shock I felt from the sudden blasting of the horn seemed to cause a small bubble to burst near my heart. I paid no further attention to it.

I even remarked how callous and thoughtless people are who "blow" the horns of their cars, without realizing the effect it has upon others. It is indeed a shock. I hope those who read this are made aware of the harm that such an act can cause, and will, in the future, refrain from doing it.

As I said before, I paid no particular attention to what had happened, and continued with my usual routine of work. However, the following day I felt "pressure" in that area but again could not realize that it had anything to do with my heart. The symptoms were nothing comparable to my first attack, and there seemed to be no relationship between that and my first heart attack. Towards the end of the week the "pressure" was becoming more noticeable and occasionally I would feel pain in that area. Early Sunday morning, the pain was becoming so severe that I decided to call the doctor. Mrs. Lewis called Dr. C, since he was a noted heart specialist and was the consultant in my previous attack. I was in such pain that I could hardly wait for him to arrive.

When Dr. C arrived, he immediately took an electrocardiogram, and said that I had had another heart attack.

When Dr. C told me this I replied, "Oh! no," and he answered, "Oh! yes."

Dr. C said he did not think that this second attack was as severe as the first one; that while the first attack affected one of the larger vessels to the heart, this one, in his opinion, affected one of the smaller vessels, but it was nevertheless serious because of the delay on my part in calling a physician.

I then asked him what I should do, and he said, "Back to the hospital." I pleaded with him that I would much prefer

to remain at home and be treated, but he was emphatic and ordered me to the hospital. I asked him whether I could be driven to the hospital in my car, and he said, "No."

Again the ambulance and again the trip to the hospital.

My ride to the hospital was not pleasant. After I had been settled in my room and Dr. C gave me a more thorough examination, I was put on the "critical list," and I was not permitted to have any visitors.

Again, it was another ten days before I was informed that I was "out of danger provided there were no complications," and that I would have to go through the same treatment as the previous attack.

Again, the long monotonous stay in the hospital. Again, no desire to read or discuss weighty problems. I did not even want to read a newspaper.

There were several other heart patients on the same floor of the hospital with me, but many were less fortunate than I was. Deaths were occurring daily. It was inevitable, that occasionally, the nurses would bring up the question of death in our conversations. And again I told them that I did not fear death. I was reluctant to "go" I said, but as long as I felt that I had some "work" to do, and there was still much that I wanted to do, and since I felt that I had ability to do it, I would like to stay and "finish the job."

I also wanted to write another book. In fact, while on my back in the hospital, I jotted down some notes for my book, "An Atheist Manifesto."

I told one of my nurses that I fully realized the danger I was in, and that even while talking to her, and I seemed well on the road to recovery, I was still at the "brink of death" and could die any moment. She replied that she had never had a patient who faced death so calmly; that most of her patients were gripped in fear at the thought of dying.

As I have often done before, I quoted Shakespeare's famous lines:

Cowards die many times before their death;  
The valiant never taste of death but once.  
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,  
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;  
Seeing death a necessary end,  
Will come when it will come.

I did say, however, that since death was inevitable it seemed rather incongruous that a person, in full possession of his mental faculties and enjoying unusual good physical health, should die while the insane, the crippled, the deformed and the helpless should continue to hold on to life with a tenacity that seems incredible. Or are these people like those described by Shakespeare, when he said:

The weariest, and most loathed worldly life,  
That ages, aches, penury, and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature, is a paradise  
To what we fear in death.

When you think of all the great and famous people who have died, it should be a consolation to know that your fate will be the same as theirs.

Let me repeat, that when you consider that Aristotle and Archimedes, Leonardo da Vinci and Rembrandt, Newton, Copernicus and Kepler, Lecky, Draper and Buckle, Shakespeare, Byron and Shelley, Columbus and Magellan, Beethoven and Wagner, Darwin and Einstein, Roentgen, Eva and Pierre Curie, Voltaire, Thomas Paine and Ingersoll and the hundreds of thousands of other great men and women who have lived and died, besides the myriad millions who have suffered death, including members of your own family, you have nothing to fear from death. It is the inevitable and inexorable law of life.

It is as Shakespeare says:

All that live must be  
Passing through nature to eternity.

Only fraudulent religion offers you "eternal life," that is, if you pay them enough money to escape from "eternal fire."

The time finally arrived for me to leave the hospital.

Again the same regime for convalescence.

A minimum of three weeks on one floor; no steps to climb and the usual sedatives for sleep; again, the admonition to keep calm; keep away from annoying situations; do not get excited and above all, avoid any undue provocation. Yes. My wife put back the same signs that greeted me on my previous return home. I again began to learn to walk and visited the same "avenues."

Two heart attacks in one year and I survived both of them!

I often wondered what my friend would say about "an atheist having a second chance."

After my period of rest at home, I was again ordered to Florida. I was still very weak, much more so than the first trip the year before.

Before leaving for Florida, I visited Dr. C for a check-up. The same advice: rest, simple food, sunshine and the extra warning to keep my weight down. Taking a rest after lunch is vitally important and proved highly beneficial. I was told that every excess pound requires so much more work for the heart, and while I watched my weight after my first attack, I was far more careful after the second one. If I gained a pound one day, I ate less the next day. My scales became an important part of my daily routine. Keeping your weight down is difficult, but it is extremely necessary. I make sure that I am at least six pounds lighter than I was when I had my first attack.

During my second convalescence I wrote "An Atheist Manifesto." I believe in it you will find the answer to those who tell you that infidels "recant" on their death beds.

I can truthfully say that from my first book, "The Tyranny of God" to my latest, "An Atheist Manifesto," I have maintained with firmness and conviction the philosophy of my life.

After having had two heart attacks, I was never more convinced, that for the welfare and happiness of Man, it is far more important for him to learn how to Live, than it is for him to learn how to pray.



## THE BUCKLE ON THE BIBLE BELT IS BROKEN \*

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is Joseph Lewis speaking.

The title of my talk tonight is

"The Buckle on the Bible Belt is Broken."

The South is known as the "Bible Belt."

This means that the South has had too much Bible religion for its own health and benefit.

It means that Bigotry, Narrowmindedness and Intolerance prevail in the South, to a greater degree, than in other parts of the United States.

Now, let me state, right here and now, that when I repeat this criticism of the South, it must not be understood that it is motivated by any personal prejudice.

I love the South. My roots are here. I was born in Alabama. But this affection for the South shouldn't blind us to its faults. And this criticism is made to eradicate this defect.

I do not like prejudice in any manner, shape or form. I detest bigotry. I abhor intolerance. I vigorously oppose those people who hate other people only because of their race, color or religion. However, I am convinced, that it is religion that is responsible for this hatred and prejudice.

John Adams—the third President of the United States—said that "this would be the best of all possible worlds if there was no religion in it."

When I say that the Buckle on the Bible Belt is Broken, I mean that a ray of intellectual light has penetrated the South in the matter of religious and racial tolerance.

The Bible fakers are having a more difficult time to sell their dishonest wares and the pulpit-pounding evangelist of

\* Radio address delivered over Radio Station WMIE, Miami, Florida, Sunday, March 3, 1957 at 9 P.M.

sin and damnation and the hell-spouting preacher have taken a back seat.

They are no longer feared. On the contrary, they are now the laughing stock of religion's stock and trade. People go to see them, as they do the freaks in the side-show of the circus.

The church is losing control of the people of the South and the fanatical religionist is no longer its leading citizen.

I think I can claim a little credit for having prevented Fake-Healer A. A. Allen from coming to Miami. He was due here this week. He was scheduled to open at the Dinner Key Auditorium on March 5th. He must have gotten some advance information that I was preparing a "reception" for him. A "reception" that would be very difficult to describe as "affectionate." However, just as I was preparing to "greet" him on his arrival, he cancelled his meeting.

I had, in my possession, indisputable evidence that this "man of God" had been arrested for drunken driving and had forfeited his bond of \$1,000.00 ! ! ! !

This performer of "miracles," who could make the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and raise the dead, could not prevent alcohol from going to his head ! ! ! !

I do not think it necessary to go into details of my fight with the late Jack Coe. The only difference is, that if I had died instead of him, he would have shouted from the house-tops that it was God's vengeance. Yes, the Buckle on the Bible Belt is Broken, and this is a warning that I do not intend to let up in my attacks upon these religious fakers and frauds.

This is my last broadcast of this series.

In many respects it may be the most important.

In this workaday world there are very few who have time to devote their energies to some Ideal. There are even a lesser number who have either the time, the inclination or the courage to fight for the rights of others. Thomas Paine said: "He who would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression." He also said that: "If all were soldiers all would starve, and if there were no soldiers, all would be slaves." But this we do know, that while precious blood was shed for the freedom we enjoy, unless we guard that freedom, we may lose it.

That is why the motto "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" should never be forgotten. If we fail to be on the alert; if we fail to see that justice is administered impartially, we ourselves may be the victims of tyranny and injustice.

This brings me to the subject of my broadcast tonight.

In my first broadcast—on February 10th—I mentioned that I had been invited by a member of the Board of Trustees of the Dade County Public Schools to speak at their public meeting which was held January 15th in the Administration Building of the School System on the subject "Religion in the Schools." As this meeting was reported in the Miami press, there began to appear, in the Letters Column of the Miami Herald, a series of letters discussing the merits of the proposal. To the credit of the Miami Herald it printed both sides of the controversy.

I myself was a participant.

In the Miami Herald of February 4th there appeared a letter with a four column headline with this caption:

"Religious Instruction in Public Schools Won't Improve  
Students' Behavior."

This letter was signed "Thomas C. Robinson." I read it very carefully. And I can well understand why the editors gave it a four-column headline. It deserved it. It was an erudite communication. The writer of the letter expressed his views clearly and forcibly. I was extremely pleased that the letter favored my position on the subject, and gave additional testimony in support of my premise.

Many of my friends called me on the telephone, and wanted to know if I knew the writer of the letter. I replied that I did not, but would like very much to know him. Through the efforts of a friend, who contacted the Miami Herald, Mr. Robinson was located. This party advised him to contact me. This he did.

On the Thursday evening following, Mr. Robinson called me on the telephone. On the following Monday I received this letter from him as well as a copy of the letter he had sent to the Miami Herald.

I shall read these letters to you so there will be no misunderstanding of the facts in this case.

Mr. Robinson wrote:

Dear Mr. Lewis,

I want to thank you for your effort to contact me and for the information you were able to supply in our telephone conversation. Although I haven't received the literature on the Freethinkers of America you are sending, I am interested in joining any organization which attempts to help free men from belief in myths.

If social scientists could lift men above belief in magic, the supernatural and superstition, it would be of greater benefit to mankind than that which may accrue from the release of atomic power.

The particular reason for writing this letter is that I wanted to send along a copy of a letter I just mailed to the Herald. Since the Herald sometimes fails to publish my letters I thought it would be well to send a copy to you.

I have been attending the University of Miami, as a part-time student, since 1952 and I had a letter of acceptance for internship this semester. When I attempted to register for this semester today, I was asked if I was the author of the letter appearing in the Herald on February 4th. I assured them that I was and, after a long conference between the Dean of the School of Education and the committee on Secondary Education, the last part of which I was present, I was informed that they could not accept my registration.

The whole affair came as a complete surprise and shock to me as I never felt a University would exclude a student for what he believed.

During the conference it was suggested to me that if I would cease my activities in regard to religion, that they "might" find some school that would accept me for internship, but that it would be difficult for me to be accepted as a teacher.

They pointed out that the Dade County School System has a question in their application form asking if you believe in God. Although they refused to admit that this question definitely eliminated atheists, they inferred that this was the purpose of the question.

They also asked me what I would do about the Florida law requiring the reading of the Bible, and also if I would lead

the students in saying the Lord's Prayer, which is apparently required in some schools. I replied that I would follow the law and obey any orders I might be given by a superior, but that in case I was questioned on my own feelings toward these matters, I could only answer honestly.

I made it very clear to the committee that I believed in the separation of the Church and State and that I did not intend to teach my own personal beliefs in the matter of religion. However, I pointed out that as a private citizen, outside of the school system, I intended to carry on my present activity of letter writing and that I intended to request radio stations in our area to give atheists air time to off-set the free time they are providing religion on Sundays. (This really shocked the committee.)

Although this brings to an end a goal I've been working toward for many years, I'm not particularly discouraged as I've learned long ago to expect these things. I'm happy with life for all of this.

Well, let me offer my best wishes for a successful radio program this Sunday, as I'm sure it will be.

Sincerely yours,  
Thomas C. Robinson

Here is Mr. Robinson's letter to The Miami Herald:

February 8, 1957

Editor The Herald:

The Herald recently printed my views on religion and I am grateful that you are willing to bring unpopular ideas before the public.

When I attempted to register at the University of Miami today for internship in secondary school, for which I had previously been accepted, the advisor informed me that they had been waiting for me and that I was to report to Dr. Hindman who was in charge of this program.

Dr. Hindman asked me if I was the author of the article appearing in the Herald and I confirmed that I was.

I was informed that I had been placed as a student teacher in South Dade High School but that the directing teacher and principal had later inquired if the article appearing in the Herald was written by the internee they had accepted, and if so they could not accept an atheist.

I was told that I would have to wait while they held a faculty meeting before I could complete registration. After the conference to which I was later admitted, I was informed that I could not be accepted for registration. The committee said it would be impossible to place me as a student teacher if they revealed my religious beliefs, which they felt impelled to do.

As a private institution the University has a right to exclude any person they desire and for whatever reason. If I could not be placed because of my beliefs, the University was justified in refusing to admit me, but the Dade County School System is placed in a hypocritical position.

Our schools teach, or at least I thought they did, respect for other people's attitudes and beliefs, and religious tolerance. On the other hand they include a religious test as a basis for employment and deny a man the right to teach, not because of what he teaches, or his ability to teach, but simply because of what his personal beliefs are.

Thomas C. Robinson

When I received these letters, I was shocked. I wrote Mr. Robinson, acknowledging receipt of his letter and asked him to call to see me, as I had some plans which I wanted to discuss with him before taking any action.

Mr. Robinson called. This was the first time that I had ever seen, or met him. I found him a highly cultured and intelligent young man. If all the adults of the United States were of the caliber of Thomas C. Robinson our country could well boast of its high cultural standard.

When Mr. Robinson called to see me, I had him elaborate upon the conditions surrounding his experience with the Dean of the School of Education and the Committee of Secondary Education of the University of Miami.

That evening I called two members of the Committee of the School of Education on the telephone, and pleaded with them to hold another meeting where Mr. Robinson could be present, with perhaps some one to represent him. I was told that the matter was closed and that such a meeting would be useless. One of the members called Mr. Robinson a "fanatic."

However, I persisted. I told them that this was a matter of extreme importance, and that it would reflect upon the University if the case received public notice. Their answers were

that nothing could be done, and that if the matter became public, it would damage Mr. Robinson far more than the University. I was of the contrary opinion. I had a very kindly feeling toward the University, because I had once spoken before some of its students, and did not want to do anything that might reflect upon it.

Undaunted, I called others connected with the University, and tried to impress upon them the importance of settling this matter in a peaceful way. I told them that I thought Mr. Robinson was the victim of a great injustice; however, they thought otherwise, and said they would abide by the decisions of the members of the Committee. I did my best to solve the matter in a dignified way, but my efforts were frustrated. I was told emphatically that nothing whatever could be done, and that as far as the University was concerned, the matter was closed.

In view of the fact that the door was definitely closed in my efforts to seek some justice for Mr. Robinson, I decided to send the following letter. It was addressed to Dr. Jay F. W. Pearson, President of the University of Miami.

This is the text of my letter.

February 12th, 1957.

Dear Dr. Pearson:

When I was invited to contribute to the University of Miami, I was under the impression that I was contributing to a liberal institution of learning that was keeping abreast with modern times. I got this impression because of my acquaintance and friendship with a number of professors of the University.

I have just been informed, and I am going to be very frank, by stating that I was highly shocked, by the action of one of the Departments of the University.

You have a student attending the University by the name of Mr. Thomas C. Robinson. Mr. Robinson came to the University from Minnesota—with a B.A. Degree. This young man came to the University of Miami because he thought that the educational facilities would be more suitable for him to finish his education for the purpose of becoming an instructor or professor. He made an application as a part-time student for an Internship in the Dade County Public School System.

This internship was part of his training to become a teacher.

After a thorough examination, in which it was found that his scholastic average was far above the minimum requirements, he was assigned an Internship at a South Dade Public School.

On February 4th last, he entered the controversy, in which I myself was engaged, that was appearing in the "Letters Column" of The Miami Herald. Mr. Robinson's letter was captioned by the editor: "Religious Instruction in Public Schools Will Not Improve Students' Behavior."

In this letter, Mr. Robinson, in a most scholarly and dignified manner, submitted cogent and pertinent facts to support his premise.

Now, it was because of this letter, for which, in my opinion, he should have been highly commended, since he quoted notable and educational authorities to support his contention; that he was, instead, called before the Board of School Education and the Committee on Secondary Education and his assignment of Internship summarily revoked.

The members of this Committee are Dean Berry, Dr. Baker Hindman, Wilton Smith and Alma Williams.

This action was taken by the Committee merely because Mr. Robinson affirmed that he is an Atheist.

Are the principles of Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Opinion, and Freedom of Expression to be denied a college student in the United States of America in this period of our history?

I cannot think of anything more reprehensible, that an educational institution can be guilty of, than what has happened in the case of Mr. Thomas C. Robinson by this Committee of the University of Miami. It is bigotry and intolerance twice compounded.

I am an Atheist. And if you accept money from an Atheist, how can you deny an Atheist his fundamental rights?

I am reluctant to write this letter, but I can see no other alternative than to put this matter before you on the following basis.

Either Mr. Robinson is to be recommended unconditionally for the Internship which he had been assigned, before his belief in the philosophy of Atheism came to light by the publication of his letter on February 4th last in The Miami



Herald, or kindly refund to me the two hundred and fifty (\$250.00) dollars which I sent you some months ago as a Sustaining Member of the University of Miami.

Respectfully yours,  
Joseph Lewis

In response to my letter I received the following reply from Dr. Pearson.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
Coral Gables 46, Florida

Office of  
The President

February 18, 1957

Dear Mr. Lewis:

After your letter discussing the problem connected with one of our students came, I checked into the matter with the appropriate deans. I find that the proper channels of procedure were used in this case as in all cases of student teachers, and I do not feel that as president I should overrule the actions taken by our staff.

Since you have made a request that the gift which you made to the University of Miami in the amount of \$250.00 be returned to you, I am instructing our Treasurer to send this amount to you.

Very truly yours,  
Jay F. W. Pearson  
President

Now shall I let the matter rest here?

I do not think so.

Must Mr. Robinson's years of labor go for naught?

Must his years of self-sacrifice, study and tuition expenses be wasted?

Must his laudable ambition to become a teacher—a most worthy profession—be frustrated because of bigotry and religious fanaticism?

By temperament and education Mr. Robinson is ideally suited to be a teacher.

His scholarship is undisputed.

His marks are way above the average.

He had three times the necessary counts to qualify.

One thing more.

Mr. Robinson had a civil service position which paid him \$4,500.00 a year. He kept this position so he could accumulate enough money to sustain himself while he prepared for a \$3,000.00 teacher's job! Imagine that ! ! ! Sacrificing \$1,500.00 a year to become a teacher.

While unnecessary, I am constrained to mention the fact that Mr. Robinson entered the army as a private and by diligence in the performance of his military duty rose to the position of lieutenant. When mustered out of the army he was highly commended by his superior officer.

When Mr. Robinson entered the army and was asked how to be classified, as to religious affiliation, he answered, "Atheist," thus giving the lie to the oft repeated statement that, "there are no atheists in the foxholes." But since religions flourish upon lies, do not be surprised if you hear this canard repeated again and again by religious hypocrites and sanctimonious army officials.

All of which prompts me to say that while religionists are continuously provoking wars, atheists are constantly striving to abolish war.

Now what happens?

After Mr. Robinson had qualified for an internship, and had been assigned for the position, he is disqualified for the position only because his honest thoughts and convictions do not harmonize with those of religious bigots.

What an outrage!

Must Mr. Robinson begin life all over again?

Must he begin at the bottom of the ladder for a new livelihood?

I do not think so!

I believe the action of the Committee of the University of Miami is a crying disgrace.

I am one who feels that, as others fought to establish the Liberty I now enjoy, that it is my duty to fight, to the best of my ability, for others who have been victims of injustice.

I decided to enter this case and fight for the right of Mr. Robinson to become a teacher in our public schools.

Years ago, before the Buckle of the Bible Belt was broken, it may have been impossible to bring such a case to public attention; it may even have been impossible to come to the

aid of a man like Mr. Robinson—the pressure would have been so great. Certainly, he would not have been able to express himself so openly.

The \$250.00 which I received back from the University I will use to start a fund to secure legal talent to fight for the rights of Mr. Robinson, and if necessary, carry the case to the United States Supreme Court. I hope in a few days to be able to name the attorney we have retained in this case.

Now before saying “Good Night,” I want to thank the many people who were kind enough to call me on the telephone and write me letters about these broadcasts.

I deeply appreciate your flattering compliments and your kind words of encouragement.

I hope to resume these broadcasts next year.

Thank you for listening.

Good night.

## SHAME ON YOU EVANGELIST

### BILLY GRAHAM \*

When the announcement was made that you were to bring your evangelistic campaign to New York City, I sent you a telegram and warned you that if you persisted in this hypocritical activity, I would greet you with a reception that could not be considered cordial, but certainly provocative.

Now that your plans are definitely made to come to New York I shall keep my promise.

I shall meet you "head on."

This is my first attack.

Your campaign is purely a mercenary undertaking. The only thing "spiritual" that you are interested in in this New York "crusade" is the religious motto on the money you will get.

Your accountants are undoubtedly beginning to analyze the profit that you will make from this venture to save New York from "sin." Their report should be captioned "The Profits of Religion" because your visit here will not, in the slightest degree, help the people of New York either morally, ethically or even religiously.

You will preach the same hocus and bunk that has been preached from time immemorial, and the only results will be that those who contribute to your campaign will be financially poorer to the extent of their contributions, even if it be only one cent. Yes, even one cent, because the people will not get value received for their money.

You will be doing as Robert G. Ingersoll so succinctly said of your predecessors, "Sit, like an owl, on the dead tree of knowledge and hoot the same hoots that have been hooted for hundreds of years."

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," May, 1957.

The conditions that existed in New York before your visit will be the same as when you leave. It will be just as "sinful" after you leave as it was before you came.

Can you point to a single benefit for the millions of dollars you took out of England, Scotland and the other countries you visited in your hypocritical "Crusade for Christ"? Is there not just as much "sin" in those countries today as there was before you visited them and took the poor people's hard-earned money?

What a price to pay to be fooled and hoodwinked!

You know as well as I do that there is no such thing as "sin." There are wrongs and injustices, but no sin. Sin was invented by the priests of religion to terrify the ignorant and to rob the superstitious.

Now, the tragic thing about this campaign is that you know this.

You know, deep down in your heart, that you are preaching a falsehood.

You know, deep down in your heart, that the Bible is a fake and a fraud and has been the most detrimental influence upon the social and intellectual progress of man.

You are not blind or ignorant of what the Bible has done to the progress and advancement of civilization.

If you are ignorant of this most tragic fact it would give me a great deal of satisfaction to enlighten you upon it. Aside from the deep rooted prejudices produced by the religions based upon the Bible, as well as the intolerance and bigotry it has caused, it has been a brake upon the social and political progress of man.

Its detrimental influence is enough to make every sincere and intelligent man and woman weep for shame. They have nothing but contempt for those who pander this obnoxious volume as a divine inspiration, and as containing the moral pattern for modern man to live by.

You preach Jesus Christ as the "saviour" of mankind. How can you be so naive? You are acquainted with the statement of Pope Boniface VIII as well as I am. You know what he said. These are his words, "What profit hath not this fable of Jesus brought us"! How can you persist in preaching such a lie?

You are not so callous to the truth as not to know how morally reprehensible your conduct is.

Shame on you!

What about the peoples of the world who never heard of Jesus Christ? What about the untold billions who lived before the myth of his birth?

What about the other "16 crucified saviours"? What about the "saviours" of the other religions, those of the Arabs and those of the Hindus? Of what value are they? Why don't you accept them as your personal saviours? You do not accept their "saviours" for the same reason they reject yours. All are pure myths. It depends upon where you were born and the particular brand of superstition with which you were inculcated.

You know as well as I do that the idea of a "saviour scape-goat" has permeated the primitive mind of man for ages because his feeble intellect was unable to grasp the realities of life. We have advanced from the Totum Pole and the Tabu of our primitive ancestors.

Shame on you for pandering to such ignorance and delaying the advance of education!

The story of the birth and crucifixion of Jesus Christ is as sadistic a piece of fiction as ever sprang from the cruel imagination of man. Were this story written today it would be rejected as too revolting for serious consideration and would be considered repulsive and obnoxious by even kindergarten children.

Do you suppose for a moment that if there is a God in this vast universe that he possessed the carnal body of a man who committed fornication with a woman "already betrothed to another"? Such a belief is pure idiocy. Shame on you for propagating such a story as "Holy Writ."

You preach "The Bible says." You know as well as I do that there are parts of the Bible that you would not dare read aloud to a public audience. You know as well as I do that the Bible contains filthy, obscene and revolting stories.

How dare you have the effrontery to say that the Bible is the word of God and that you accept its inspiration from "cover to cover"?

Shame on you.

You talk about saving souls for Christ. What a mockery! You know there is no such performance.

You mentally delude the ignorant and terrify the superstitious and make them poorer indeed both mentally and financially by your evangelistic gibberish.

You have already expressed doubt about the inerrancy of the Bible and the questionable propriety of your evangelistic work. Have you courage enough to acknowledge the truth and manhood enough to publicly proclaim your past mistakes?

You know that the promises of religion are not nor can they be fulfilled. Religion cannot solve a single problem and the promise of a life after death is a cruel sham.

If religion could cure the ills of the world we would today be living in Paradise, but religion does nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it is the cruelest fraud ever perpetrated on the human race.

Finally you ought to know, if you do not already know, what Thomas Paine said: "No man ought to make a living by religion. It is dishonest so to do. Religion is not an act that can be performed by proxy. One person cannot act religion for another."

Accept this challenge—renounce the false creed of Christianity and repudiate your hypocritical past, and take your place among the honest thinkers of our time.

If you fail to do so only these words can properly characterize your conduct—Shame on you!

## MIKE WALLACE INTERVIEWS JOSEPH LEWIS ON TV

*The following dialogue took place on Mike Wallace's program "Night Beat" over TV Station WABD, on Wednesday night, May 22, 1957, from 11 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. Mr. Wallace's estimated audience was between 3 and 4 millions.*

WALLACE: Our first guest tonight is the President of the Freethinkers of America, self-described as a society organized for maintaining the separation of Church and State. He is Joseph Lewis—a man who not only denies the existence of God, but says that "the Bible has been the most detrimental influence upon the social and intellectual progress of Man." What are Mr. Lewis' views on Sunday Schools, Communions, religious wedding ceremonies? Why does he say that prayer is a form of self-humiliation and what code of morality does Mr. Lewis live by himself? We'll ask these questions of atheist Joseph Lewis in a moment.

Atheist Joseph Lewis has been disenchanted by religion almost all of his life. Born in Montgomery, Alabama, 68 years ago, he was educated for a while in the public schools, leaving them when he was nine. At twenty-five he wandered into a Freethinkers of America forum, took the floor and made such a vigorous speech, that he was elected President on the spot. He has held this post ever since, publishing a monthly magazine called, "The Age Of Reason." During his life, Mr. Lewis has initiated at least fifteen legal proceedings against what he termed "the encroachment of religion upon the public school system." He is the author of such books as, "The Bible Unmasked" and "An Atheist Manifesto." Mr. Lewis is a man of decidedly unpopular views. He is expressing only his own views here tonight. They should not be



construed as my own, those of the station or of our sponsors.

Mr. Lewis, first off, if I may, let me read to you from the Old Testament for just a moment. Chapter one, verses one, two and three: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said 'Let there be light' and there was light." Do you believe that?

LEWIS: No, sir, I do not. That's a fairy tale.

WALLACE: It is a superstition?

LEWIS: It is, sir. No such creation took place. A creation predicates a time and place when and where there was nothing. Such a concept is impossible to an intelligent mind.

WALLACE: And the Bible is a fraud?

LEWIS: I say so. Yes sir.

WALLACE: More than a fraud?

LEWIS: I think it is worse than a fraud because it has been the cause of untold misery to the human race and has arrested intellectual progress for the past two thousand years.

WALLACE: I understand that you say that the Bible is full of obscene and revolting stories.

LEWIS: It is. I need but mention a few if you'd like to hear them. The story of Lot being made drunk by his two daughters and then committing incest with him is one of the most revolting stories that I know of.

WALLACE: I don't think that it's necessary to go on. Do you consider The Ten Commandments to be a good code of morality for mankind?

LEWIS: No, sir. I do not.

WALLACE: For what reason?

LEWIS: Because they're outdated. They're outmoded. They're primitive taboos that were made into a religious system. The very first Commandment has no meaning or significance whatsoever. In fact, the three religious systems which accept The Ten Commandments do not list them the same. The Hebrew the Protestant and the Catholic differ as to the First Commandment.

WALLACE: I understand you feel that The Ten Commandments rather than having any value are a detriment?.

LEWIS: I say so. Yes, sir. I can give you many instances of their detrimental influence upon mankind.

**WALLACE:** Well, before we go any further, may I read to you what Rabbi William Berkowitz of the Congregation B'nai Jeshurum here in New York told us today regarding your attacks on the Bible and on The Ten Commandments. First of all, on the Bible. The rabbi said, "The theme and the aim of the Bible is to elevate—the theme and the aim is to elevate man to his noblest purpose through its ethical teachings and moral doctrines, making man partners with God in the creation and maintenance of the Universe. It has and shall always withstand the test of time and the attack of cynics and of atheists." And as to the Bible containing what you have called obscene stories, Mr. Lewis, the rabbi said as follows: "Within its pages are, of course, stories of human beings which tell of both their greatness and their shortcomings." He said, "My answer to Mr. Lewis' charge would be simply to repeat 'to err is to be human, but condemning the entire Bible as a work of obscenity is foolish and unintelligent.'" Any further comment before we get into the rabbi's answer on The Ten Commandments?

**LEWIS:** On the contrary, he's defending his position and of course he wants to find out or say something that's going to be beneficial to him; but he is not right. He is entirely wrong about the matter. If obscenity is in the Bible, then there must be some reason for it, and the reason was not for elevation, nor to inspire goodness.

**WALLACE:** What in that case, in your mind, is the reason for what you call the obscenity in the Bible, Mr. Lewis?

**LEWIS:** It is a collection of obscene stories gathered together solely for the purpose of expressing the lasciviousness of human nature, and that is why they are put in the Bible. It reflects the sexual depravity of its authors. If it were one or two instances it would be different; but the Bible is filled with these obscene stories.

**WALLACE:** Isn't that what the rabbi says? He says, "it points out the shortcomings and the greatnesses of man and points out that to err is human."

**LEWIS:** The stories as related in the Bible and the narratives themselves do not point such a moral. The rape of Tamar by her brother Amnon, does not show anything that's good or point out a moral that might come from such a narrative. It is a story of the satisfaction of a vicious, lustful desire.

Probably the most despicable story ever recorded is how David seduced Bathsheba the wife of Uriah, and then sent Uriah to the forefront of the battle so that he would be killed—and David is depicted in the Bible as a man after God's own heart.

WALLACE: On The Ten Commandments, Rabbi Berkowitz said, "No document has ever exercised as great an influence on the religious and moral life of man. It not only civilized an uncivilized people—the Jews—but remained as the core of a moral code for all peoples. The present-day problems and moral crises can best be met in terms of the categories described in these commandments." Any comment to that, Mr. Lewis?

LEWIS: Of course, I don't believe it. It is not true. As I told you, the First Commandment is not accepted by all the religionists in the same manner.

WALLACE: Would you . . .

LEWIS: For instance . . .

WALLACE: I beg your pardon.

LEWIS: . . . the First Commandment states, "I am the Lord, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Now, the Catholics and the Protestants do not accept that part of the Commandment about the house of bondage and out of the land of Egypt, because they were never in Egypt and they were not even in existence at the time this Commandment was written.

WALLACE: Would you also discard the Sermon On The Mount—the code adhered to by people of Christian denomination?

LEWIS: You can take what's good in the Sermon On The Mount, but the parts that are certainly not good and are too silly for words should be eliminated.

WALLACE: Such as?

LEWIS: Such as if your eye should offend, pluck it out; or if your hand offends you, cut it off. I think that's an utterly ridiculous code to follow.

WALLACE: We talked with Dr. Langmead Casserley, an Anglican of the General Theological Seminary today. He told us as follows: "Living up to the Sermon in an obvious literal sense is of course impossible, but when men do great and noble deeds, the Kingdom of God will be at hand. Peo-

ple follow the Sermon every day, everywhere. These deeds do not get publicity. You do not turn to a newspaper and see 'Extraordinary Devotion Of Accountant In Toledo.' Sanctity lacks news value," Dr. Langmead Casserley said, "but these are the moments when men live up to the Sermon On The Mount that makes life worth while." You disagree?

LEWIS: I disagree most emphatically, sir.

WALLACE: All right. Just . . . I have gone through this as you can understand, just to get the difference of opinion.

LEWIS: That's right.

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis, let me ask you this. There are undoubtedly thousands of Atheists in the United States today, but very few of them launch attacks as you do on the Bible, The Ten Commandments, the Sermon On The Mount, on all organized religion. They seem, most of them, to be perfectly happy to live by their own beliefs and let others live by their own. What I would like to get at is, why this bitterness, this destructiveness on your part? Why are you so passionately opposed to religion and desirous of tearing down the house of religion?

LEWIS: Well, because I think it has done a great deal of harm and when you have the ability to do something, I think it's your duty to do it. You might say the same thing about Abraham Lincoln. He looked upon slavery as an institution that he thought was harmful, he thought it was detrimental, he thought it was reprehensible. And so he devoted his life to the abolition of slavery, which, by the way, has Biblical sanction.

WALLACE: What crimes—what harms have been done in the name of religion, sir?

LEWIS: Oh, religion has committed so many crimes it would take an encyclopaedia to record them.

WALLACE: All right, then, let me ask you this question. Let me put it to you this way. Is not the good that organized religion—or for that matter disorganized religion—is not the good that religion has done over the years—has it not outweighed the bad that has been done in the name of religion by possibly a thousand to one?

LEWIS: No. I think the contrary is the truth. I would say the harm that it has done outweighs the good by ten thousand to one. Religion invented Sin; it invented Hell; it in-

vented blasphemy; it invented witchcraft. Why those four things alone, if you recorded the crimes committed in their names, would be sufficient to condemn it before the world.

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis, let me find out, if I may, about your own code of morality—the precepts that you live by. Mr. Lewis, would you kill?

LEWIS: I would be very reluctant to kill.

WALLACE: That's not answering the question.

LEWIS: Ah, probably in extreme self-defense I would, but otherwise no.

WALLACE: You would not kill, except in self-defense?

LEWIS: I believe so. I hesitate to kill even an insect. I believe with Shakespeare, that, "The poor beetle that we tread upon, in corporal sufferance, finds a pang as great as when a giant dies."

WALLACE: Would you commit adultery?

LEWIS: No, sir. I would not. I consider Loyalty the most important of the Virtues.

WALLACE: Would you steal?

LEWIS: No, sir. I would not.

WALLACE: Would you bear false witness against someone—would you testify in court falsely—commit perjury?

LEWIS: No, sir. I would not.

WALLACE: Well, Mr. Lewis, you say that you will not do any of these things. Would you tell me then, what is the difference between your code of morality and that of The Ten Commandments whose content essentially I have just read and whose content you say that you condemn?

LEWIS: Because you haven't given the full meaning of The Ten Commandments. When you ask me whether I would bear false witness—if The Commandment read, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," if that were all to the Commandment, it would be a very good commandment, but the Commandment reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness, against thy neighbor." That reduces it to a provincial code of conduct. That means only for your neighbor—you must not bear false witness against him.

WALLACE: Well you're . . . aren't you . . .

LEWIS: It's a primitive concept—it was a primitive taboo. But to the stranger beyond the gates or to other peoples, it was perfectly all right to bear false witness, and the Biblical

testimony is in support of that premise by the conduct of the primitive Hebrews themselves. If the Commandment simply stated "Thou Shalt Not Lie," there would be no doubt as to its meaning. The purpose of the Commandment was for provincial solidarity. It was never intended for universal truth telling.

WALLACE: Well I think that in the standards by which we interpret The Ten Commandments today, the bearing of false witness is not only against the neighbor who may be next door or sitting next to you but against your neighbor in the broader sense. But that does not . . . you say I would not kill, I would not commit adultery, I would not bear false witness, I would not steal; these are the same things. Is not your morality exactly the same as that set forth in The Ten Commandments?

LEWIS: No, it is not, because these things that you mention are basic rules of life and were in existence long before The Ten Commandments were ever written or even printed. The basic rule of life is that you protect yourself in society.

WALLACE: Well, then, The Ten Commandments are reflective of what is right in life and you condemn them.

LEWIS: No, they're merely repeating some of the old codes that are as ancient as man himself.

WALLACE: Well, it's not bad to repeat old codes if old codes are valid.

LEWIS: No, but you separate those which have very little value, very little significance, very little influence. Take those about creating a Sabbath Day. Do you realize what that has done to man? People have been beaten to death—people have been killed. Trying to observe the Sabbath made the Earth an insane asylum until recent times. Take the third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, Thy God, in vain." That has brought about blasphemy. People's tongues have been ripped out. People have been burned at the stake. You must take them all. You can't take just a few. And when you say, "Thou shalt not kill," what do you mean when you say, "thou shalt not kill"? Moses, himself, the so-called law-giver, killed a man without the slightest provocation. Does anyone suppose that a God of the Universe would give a murderer a Commandment to tell other people, "Thou shalt not kill."

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis, an author by the name of F. Scott Fitzgerald once wrote as follows: He said, "The easiest way to get a reputation is to go outside the fold, shout around for a few years as a violent atheist or dangerous radical and then crawl back to the shelter." Would this, in any way, describe the motivation or the possible future of Joseph Lewis?

LEWIS: No, sir. I don't like to say this but he may have been inebriated when he made that statement, because it's not true.

WALLACE: What did you say?

LEWIS: I said that when Fitzgerald made that statement he was inebriated, I would much rather quote Coleridge—Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who said, "Not one man in a thousand, yes, I repeat it, not one man in a thousand has strength of mind or goodness of heart to be an atheist."

WALLACE: Strength of mind or . . .

LEWIS: . . . goodness of heart.

WALLACE: . . . goodness of heart. Would you explain . . .

LEWIS: Samuel Taylor Coleridge . . .

WALLACE: Would you explain what you mean or what Coleridge—Samuel Coleridge Taylor—Samuel Taylor Coleridge . . .

LEWIS: Samuel Taylor Coleridge . . . that's right.

WALLACE: . . . meant and what you mean when you interpret . . .

LEWIS: Because he was then associating with the English atheists who were the intellectual leaders of their time. They were the finest men of England, and he made that statement because it takes a great deal of courage to express your thoughts on this particular philosophy.

WALLACE: Uh-huh. I'm certain that that is true. I'm certain . . . How did you become an atheist? Your parents were Jewish, is that not a fact?

LEWIS: They were. Yes, they were Jewish.

WALLACE: Orthodox?

LEWIS: No, sir, they were not. One of my brothers brought a copy of Ingersoll's lectures into the house. It was left for me, when I found the book, to read those lectures to my mother.

WALLACE: At the age of . . .

LEWIS: I started about the age of thirteen or fourteen;

probably fifteen. They impressed me very much. They impressed my mother very much. One thing led on to another. After I read Ingersoll, I began to read Thomas Paine and between the two they became my educators.

WALLACE: As a boy, before you got to Ingersoll, had you attended synagogue or Sunday School?

LEWIS: I have a very slight recollection of having attended Sunday school probably once or twice in my lifetime and at a very early age.

WALLACE: You were not Bar Mitzvahed? Confirmed?

LEWIS: No. No, sir. I was not.

WALLACE: We asked Rabbi Berkowitz to tell us his earliest recollection of going to temple and he recalled as follows. He said, "When I was nine years old, I went—to shul—I went to shul with my parents and grandparents. I remember watching the beauty of the worship and listening to the choir. I remember feeling a wonderful sense of solidarity with my family and feeling a link between myself and all my peoples through the ages. It gave me great peace." Now, that is Rabbi Berkowitz' remembrance of religious feeling when he was just a boy of nine. Do you remember, prior to Ingersoll, your . . . any religious feeling in your life prior to the time when you began to read these . . . Ingersoll lectures?

LEWIS: No, sir.

WALLACE: None whatsoever?

LEWIS: None whatsoever. I felt a closer kinship with my parents when they gave me a new suit of clothes.

WALLACE: When, as many intelligent people as do subscribe to various religions, when they do subscribe to these religions, get as much solace, as much comfort, do as such good in the name of religion, how in the world can you . . . we are not here questioning your belief, your desire, your understanding of yourself as an atheist; what we are questioning here is your desire to tear down the house of religion. Why do you want to take away from these people something they find so fulfilling, so comforting?

LEWIS: I don't believe they find it comforting. I believe that they live in great fear. I believe they suffer from some form of fear complex. I believe that when they tell you that they get some kind of a consolation because they love God, they are not telling the truth. Why the necessity of loving



God? (If there is such a thing as God.) Does He need our love? What can we do for God? How does He know that we love Him? They "love" God because they fear Him; their so-called love is based upon a deep rooted fear of a jealous and vindictive God. They fear that He's going to inflict some punishment upon them, and therefore they devote themselves to prayers or supplications and fastings and what not to appease Him. They fear the wrath of God. I want to emancipate them from this frightful fear.

WALLACE: But if these people, if these people need this, want this, why do you want to legislate against them? Why don't you just leave them alone and then you go your own way independent?

LEWIS: Oh, no, on the contrary. I want them to let us alone. I don't want them to encroach upon the educational system. They're constantly hammering to break down the secular public schools of this country. The public schools were established for the purpose of educating our children. They were thriving, they were doing very fine, and all of a sudden you get released time. For what purpose? To send the children to religious school. Now they want to bring in some other things, like Bible reading. They want the people to bring the preacher into the public school. They want to teach religion in the schools. They want to get control of the public school system. What was the matter with the public school system when it was first established? When it was first started, it was perfectly satisfactory to everybody. It is they—the religionists—who are pressing themselves upon the body politic. We want to hold inviolate that wonderful Constitution of ours, and particularly that first article of the Bill of Rights. We don't want them to violate it. We also want them to pay their rightful share of taxes.

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis, have you ever in your life felt a real desire to pray, did you want to turn to somebody, some thing, some one and therefore want to pray?

LEWIS: I have never had the desire to pray. I may have gone to people in times of uncertainty and asked their advice about the matter, or talked to them about the problem, but as to praying, no sir.

WALLACE: No . . .

LEWIS: Absolutely not.

WALLACE: You abhor prayer?

LEWIS: I think it's wasted words on the desert air. I don't know to whom they're praying. No prayer in the whole history of mankind has ever been answered.

WALLACE: You say, I understand, that prayer is a form of humiliation.

LEWIS: I do, sir. I believe a man who prays humiliates himself because he hasn't the strength to fight his own battles, and he's calling upon some mythical force to help him.

WALLACE: In other words, you regard prayer, as used by those of us who are religious more or less, you regard it as a crutch.

LEWIS: I would say that self-reliance is a better staff than the crutch of religion. I think I can put it that way, and that would express it very well. I'd say no prayer has ever been answered and I say it's a humiliating gesture to get on your knees or raise your hands in prayer. No results can come from it, and it defeats its purpose by preventing you from using your own energies to solve your problems. Ingersoll puts it this way: "We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry."

WALLACE: We talked with the Jesuit, Father La Farge about your ideas about prayer. He said, "Mr. Lewis' idea of prayer is rather crude. Prayer is not just asking for something, but being attuned with God." And Dr. Langmead Casserley, whom we quoted earlier, said, "Prayer is not to get God on our side, but to get us on God's side."

LEWIS: I think what they are saying is utterly ridiculous and without foundation. What do they mean by getting on God's side? It's too silly for words. There's no such thing. They're talking in riddles. They're talking of things about which they know nothing.

WALLACE: Well, it is evidently . . .

LEWIS: Getting on God's side or God getting on your side, is just a lot of nonsense.

WALLACE: It is evidently something that they understand.

LEWIS: I don't believe that they do. If they say they know, then I believe that they are under some kind of a delusion. I don't think they can demonstrate in the slightest degree what they're talking about when they say they want to get on God's side or they want God to get on their side.

WALLACE: When was the last time that you stepped inside a church or a temple to witness a service, Mr. Lewis?

LEWIS: I have been invited to speak at many churches and I was in one in Miami two years ago. I spoke from the platform at a Wednesday night Forum, but did not attend the services.

WALLACE: That is the last time that you went to a service?

LEWIS: Yes, sir.

WALLACE: What kind of a service was it?

LEWIS: That's a Unitarian Church.

WALLACE: The Unitarian Church. They asked you to speak at their Wednesday night forum, not at a service?

LEWIS: That's right.

WALLACE: How can you remain a conscientious atheist if you do not know more of what is going on inside the opposition, so to speak?

LEWIS: I think I am perfectly acquainted with what goes on inside the opposition. I think I know all about the services and much of the ritual that takes place. It can be described as a form of post-hypnotic impressions upon the people who have become inculcated with this idea of God, and the religious ceremony, when they were children. The child would know nothing about these ceremonies unless the parent, or the preacher, had inculcated these things in his mind when he was in an impressionable state. I think I am as well acquainted with the origin and ceremonies of religion as the clergy are.

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis, let's up-date the story a bit now. There's a fellow in town, an Evangelist preacher by the name of Billy Graham, a man you've publicly attacked. In an open letter to Mr. Graham, you charge as follows: You say, "Your campaign is purely a mercenary undertaking. The only thing spiritual that you're interested in, in this New York crusade, is the religious motto on the money you get."

LEWIS: That's true. I did charge him with being mercenary.

WALLACE: What leads you to believe that you understand Billy Graham's motives so well and credit them so little?

LEWIS: Because it seems incredible to me that an honest man would preach such an obviously false doctrine, and he

certainly has given no evidence to support his claim; he is not performing what he says he can accomplish. He cannot fulfil his promises.

WALLACE: What's that?

LEWIS: And that is, he claims he is giving spiritual value to the people who come to hear him. He's preaching a doctrine that has no evidence to support it, and as Ingersoll said so many years ago, he's "hooting the same hoots that have been hooted for hundreds of years," and I don't know of a single instance where results have been obtained from it. He is preaching a false doctrine.

WALLACE: And you still cannot understand why thousands of people, tens of thousands of people, are coming to Madison Square Garden to listen, to pray, and some of them to come at his call?

LEWIS: I think I can explain that. Only yesterday I got a newspaper clipping from Detroit stating that Billy Graham's Crusade here has recruited 250,000 people who are being brought here by train and bus and other forms of conveyances to attend his meetings at Madison Square Garden. In other words, in plain language, he's packing the Garden with these people who are already believers in order to make it appear that he is a big success. To most of them it is an excursion to New York.

WALLACE: You mean these are people who are already there and he's . . .

LEWIS: Yes, he is bringing them here in "truckloads," he's bringing them here in trains; they're stopping in hotels and he arranges for their transportation. There is no doubt that they are coming to New York for a visit and they're obligated to visit Billy Graham at Madison Square Garden. I say that's packing the meetings.

WALLACE: We spoke with Billy Graham's office today and they reply to your charges this way: First, that he "packs" the Garden, illegally, so to speak. "Untrue and our files are open to the public on the bus accommodations we have made; all chartered buses are for groups from Brooklyn, Staten Island and elsewhere in New York. Middle Western people—only 40 have come from Chicago." Second, that he is making money from the crusade. "He's paid a salary of \$15,000 a year from the Minneapolis Evangelist Foundation. All offer-

ings at the Garden are taken only for defraying expenses of rental and publicity. They are handled by a gentleman who is an executive director of Macy's Department Store who volunteered to be our Treasurer."

LEWIS: I defy him to open his books to the public. I say that Mr. Billy Graham probably found preaching the gospel more profitable than being a Fuller Brush salesman. That is what he was before he became an Evangelist. I say that there is absolutely no proof, and particularly when he tells you that he wants people to accept Christ as their redeemer, there's no proof that a character such as Jesus Christ of the New Testament ever existed. He has no such proof. He is preaching a doctrine that has absolutely no foundation whatsoever spiritual or otherwise. He is preaching a false doctrine.

WALLACE: One final question, Mr. Lewis. When you are on your deathbed, do you think that it is barely possible that you might call either for a rabbi or a priest as so many, I think you will agree, as so many professed non-believers have done before you?

LEWIS: No, sir, that is not true. I don't know of any non-believer who has ever called for some clergyman to come to him. I was on my deathbed twice . . .

WALLACE: You were on your deathbed twice?

LEWIS: Yes, sir. I had two heart attacks. In both instances, I was given up and I had no intention then of calling for any priest or rabbi or any other clergyman. I believe with Thomas Paine that in silent resignation there is more consolation than in the murmuring wish of a prayer. What is the purpose of calling for a clergyman? He can't do anything for me. He can't do anything for himself. He will suffer from the same ills of the flesh. He'll die just as I will, as all others will die. He doesn't possess powers other than any ordinary human being. And the muttering of a prayer is as useless a thing as I can imagine.

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis . . .

LEWIS: Let me say this: It's often said that Thomas Paine and Voltaire recanted before they died. It is not true. Neither did Robert G. Ingersoll.

WALLACE: Mr. Lewis, are you bitter, perhaps, because there is no God in your belief?

LEWIS: Oh, to the contrary. I'm perfectly satisfied. I am

an emancipated human being, completely free from a belief in a tyrant God. It wouldn't make a particle of difference to me if there is a God or not. In fact, I would really feel sorry for an Omnipotent Being who couldn't make a better universe than we have. If, with all the resources at my disposal, I could not make a better world, I would be ashamed of myself.

WALLACE: Thank you, sir, for coming and explaining your point of view to us tonight, Mr. Lewis. In his book, "The Bible Unmasked," Joseph Lewis has written, "It is our duty to expose the Bible. We must continue to tell the truth about the Bible. We must continue to enlighten the people." And he goes on, "And if after the true facts are known, there are some who still insist the Bible is good enough for them, they are welcome to it." What would a religionist answer? In the Book Of Common Prayer, these words are set down: "We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep." For those who disagree with Mr. Lewis, his challenges to religion may possibly be worth while. For, possibly, many of us tonight will re-examine and, chances are, reaffirm our own religious beliefs.

## SIX LETTERS THAT SAVED THE UNION \*

It is now the considered judgment of history that it was Thomas Paine's pamphlet "Common Sense" which aroused the American Colonies to rise in rebellion against the tyranny of the English Crown. And it has been equally established that during the trying days of the Revolution, Thomas Paine's "Crisis Papers"—the first one beginning with these immortal words—"These are the times that try men's souls"—which appeared during the seven long years of struggle for Independence, that saved Washington's army from certain and imminent defeat.

No one realized the importance of Paine's writings during these critical times, more than Washington himself. When the first number of the "Crisis" appeared, the Commander-in-Chief had it read to his army. If Paine's words inspired Washington with renewed courage, he felt that it would have the same effect upon his soldiers. He was right. It did.

But these were not the only services that Paine contributed during the War for Independence. It would take too long to recount the other valuable help which he rendered, "over and beyond the call of duty," in our fight for Freedom.

Thomas Paine became truly the Torch Bearer of The American Revolution, and whenever a problem arose, if he did not anticipate a solution, he was called upon to find a remedy.

Such was his influence at that time, that General Von Steuben said, "A pamphlet by Thomas Paine would do more good than all the resolutions of Congress in prose or verse."

As the bitter conflict of the War continued the problem of finance became a serious one. How to raise money to carry on the struggle was the most pressing issue of the day. While victory was in sight, disaster was about to overtake the country

\* Reprinted from The Congressional Record, July 3, 1957.

for lack of funds. Congress sought means and methods by which to raise money. In desperation it passed a resolution to impose upon the different states a 5% tax on all imported merchandising, the revenue to be devoted solely for national defense.

Here is the resolution:

"In CONGRESS, February 3, 1781.

"*Resolved*, That it be recommended to the several States, as *indispensably necessary*, that they vest a power in Congress to levy, for the use of the United States, a duty of five per cent. ad valorem, at the time and place of importation, upon all goods, wares and merchandize, of foreign growth and manufactures, which may be imported into any of the said States, after the 1st day of May, 1781; except arms, ammunition, clothing, and other articles imported on account of the United States, or any of them, and except wool cards, and cotton cards, and wire for making them, and also except salt during the war: Also a duty of five per cent. on all prizes and prize goods, condemned in the Court of Admiralty of any of these States, as lawful prizes.

"That the monies arising from these duties be appropriated to the discharge of the principal and interest of the debts already contracted, or which may be contracted, on the faith of the United States, for supporting the present war.—That the said duties be continued, until the said debts shall be fully and faithfully discharged."

The State of Rhode Island objected to this 5% tax. When the Rhode Island Assembly convened in the fall of 1782 it rejected unanimously this urgent request of Congress, despite the fact that the other twelve states had approved it.

A critical situation arose.

Could any state refuse to abide by an act of the national Congress?

Did the state have the right to ignore such a request?

Could it be forced to comply?

Could the state claim sovereignty and secede from the union?

Was such a tax the beginning of a super national government at the expense of states rights?



Arguments on both sides gained enthusiastic adherents. The case of Rhode Island presented a grave problem to the new government.

Should the militia be sent to force the acceptance of the impost tax?

What was the solution to this perplexing situation?

What was to be the nature of the new government?

Political differences began to appear. The bitterness of partisan politics was becoming manifest. The selfish and the unscrupulous saw untold possibilities in our separation from England, and lost no time to take full advantage of the opportunities presented.

"Money was too precious to 'flitter away' on national defense. We can defend ourselves," said many.

Any new laws that interfered with their aggrandizement were bitterly opposed.

The welfare of the country and the consideration of the Republic was subordinated to personal profit and political preferment.

So concerned were the leaders of the Revolution at this critical situation that Washington himself declared, that unless Rhode Island agreed to the impost tax, "the blood which has been spilt, the expense that has been incurred, and the distresses which have been felt, will avail us nothing; and that band, already too weak, which holds us together, will soon be broken; when anarchy and confusion must prevail."

And James Madison saw ever more ominous results. He predicted "the breakup of the Confederacy, the formation of Northern and Southern Confederacies, and civil war between the two."

Another menacing aspect reared its ugly head.

Unless Congress secured enough money to pay the soldiers, demobilization was impossible, and an irresponsible military dictatorship was in the offing!

There was only one man who stood between the establishment of the Republic and disaster.

Washington remembered the words, "These are the times that try men's souls," and sent for Thomas Paine. Washington, Robert Morris and Robert Livingston, at the princely sum of \$800.00, commissioned Paine to start immediately of "informing the people and arousing them into action," regarding this serious situation.

Thomas Paine was the only man in this country at that time who had the proper concept, the ability and the knowledge of "informing the people and arousing them into action."

Only Thomas Paine knew the vital necessity of the solidarity of the States. He knew that only by being UNITED could a stable government be established, and the success of the new Republic assured.

Since the idea of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, and the representative system of government came from the brain of Thomas Paine, he was extremely sensitive to any breach that might destroy this new idea of government.

These words of Paine's are particularly significant at this time. He said:

"The Independence of America would have added but little to her own happiness, and been of no benefit to the world, if her government had been formed on the *corrupt models of the old world*. It was the opportunity of *beginning the world anew*, as it were; and of bringing forward a *new system* of government in which the rights of *all* men should be preserved that gave *value* to independence."

And so Thomas Paine jumped on his horse "Button," or borrowed one, or boarded a coach, and started on a five hundred mile journey to face and solve another "Crisis" that loomed so menacingly to the foundation of the edifice which he was struggling so hard to establish in the New World.

He began writing a series of Letters to keep Rhode Island within the Union. The first one appeared in the "Providence Gazette and Journal" in January, 1782. It was signed, "A Friend of Rhode Island and the Union." The last one—six in all—appeared in July, 1783.

As the public is little acquainted with the contents of these letters, with their sentiments expressing the political philosophy of Paine, as well as the fundamental principle underlying the establishment of this Republic, I think a few extracts are well worth quoting here.

Paine wrote:

"In this country, where every State is interested alike in the event of the war, and almost every man in it stands in the same predicament, there ought to be no occasion for

persuasion; and I might as well expect that the Citizen of Rhode-Island should undertake to persuade me to my duty, as that I should endeavour to persuade him."

\* \* \*

"Every man in America stands in a two-fold order of citizenship. He is a citizen of the State he lives in, and of the United States; and without justly and truly supporting his citizenship in the latter, he will inevitably sacrifice the former. By his rank in the one, he is made secure with his neighbours; by the other, with the world. The one protects his domestic safety and property from internal robbers and injustice; the other his foreign and remote property from piracy and invasion, and puts him on a rank with other nations. Certainly then the one, like the other, must not and cannot be trusted to pleasure and caprice, lest, in the display of local authority, we forget the great line that made us great, and must keep us so."

\* \* \*

"When the cause of America, like a new creation, rose into existence, it had something in it which confounded and yet enraptured the world. The boldness of the attempt, and the extent of its consequences, overawed the conjectures of mankind. A five per cent. duty, levied for our support, either on land or commerce, would not then have swallowed up our attention, or produced a debate dishonorable to our patriotism. The defence of our country against an unprincipled and powerful enemy, the establishment of our natural rights, the exalting the human race to their original freedom, and guaranteeing the blessings of civil government, were the great objects of our heart, and we were a united, though a suffering people.

"Why is it that so many little cares, unworthy our greatness, and injurious to our peace, have stolen upon our better thoughts? Are we tired of being successful? Is our domestic liberty of less value than formerly? or are we disposed to surrender to contention that which the enemy could never take from us by force?

"It would perhaps be quite as well were (we) to talk less about our independence, and more about our union. For if the union be justly supported, our independence is made secure. The former is the mother, the latter the

infant at her breast. The nourishment of the one is drawn through the other, and to impoverish the mother is famishing her offspring."

\* \* \*

"Besides, the European world, or any place we may trade to, knows us only through our national sovereignty, as UNITED STATES. Any infringement on our rights of commerce must be lodged before the United States, and every redress for any such injury must come to us through that line of sovereignty; consequently the regulation of it must reside in the same power.

"The United States are likewise accountable to foreign powers for all misconduct committed under their flag; and as it is their flag which privileges our commerce abroad, and on the seas, it cannot therefore be expected, that the United States should be thus accountable on the one hand, and afford protection on the other, to all the rights of commerce, without receiving an aid and assistance from it.

"I come now to consider a very striking injury that would accrue to Rhode-Island, by not coming into the measure with the rest of the States.

"The fidelity, patriotism, and well-affected disposition of Rhode-Island, has never been made the least question of; neither does her present dissent proceed from any source of that kind, but from a misrepresentation of it on some part, and a misconception of it on another.

"In the course of the debate she has taken up an idea, warranted by the articles of confederation, that each State has a prerogative to furnish its quota by such means as best suits its conveniency, and in this she is right. But the mistake is, that the five per cent. duty is not of the nature of a quota, and that for the reason I have already mentioned, namely, that trade is not local property, but is diffused over and promiscuously drawn from all parts, beyond as well as within the State. Neither is she called upon, in the character of an individual State, for a particular thing limited like direct property, within her own jurisdiction only, but in her *united character*, to concur in a measure common to all the States, and yet the particular property of none."

So persuasive were Paine's words, so unanswerable his logic that after the sixth letter appeared, the people of Rhode Island reversed themselves and immediately passed the Resolution asked by Congress to impose a 5% impost tax for national defense—and *thereby saved the Union!*

When did six letters ever accomplish so much? And in so short a time!

No wonder John Adams said that "Washington's sword would have been wielded in vain had it not been supported by the pen of Paine." He was there. He saw it happen. He knew.

There does not exist, to my knowledge, a more dramatic illustration when the pen proved to be mightier than the sword, than the effect produced by the Six Letters which Thomas Paine wrote to the Citizens of Rhode Island.

I cannot help but feel that, if during the administration of Abraham Lincoln, there had been a Thomas Paine, whom Lincoln could have commissioned to write six letters or sixty letters, or six hundred letters, or six thousand letters to the people of the Southern States on the importance of the preservation of the Union and the abolition of negro slavery, there would have been no Civil War!

## WAS THOMAS PAINE A "SCREWBALL"? \*

### AMERICANS TO REMEMBER: THOMAS PAINE †

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of men and women.

Nathan Hale's "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country" fired the patriotism of George Washington's Continental Army in the early, hopeful months of the American Revolution.

The words quoted above were written by Thomas Paine in December, 1776, after Gen. Washington had been chased into Pennsylvania following a string of heartbreaking defeats, and when many Americans feared that King George III would soon be their undisputed ruler again.

Paine's blast—the first in a series of fire-eating pamphlets published under the title "The Crisis"—bucked up the Continentals. Printed words alone don't win battles; but within weeks after this first issue of "The Crisis," Washington clobbered the British with a one-two punch at Trenton (Dec. 26) and Princeton (Jan. 3).

From that time on, extracts from Paine's writings were frequently read to the troops, by Washington's order.

Nor was "The Crisis" Paine's first service to the Revolution. In January of '76, he published his famous pamphlet "Common Sense," which summed up crystal-clearly the need for a complete break with Britain.

The "philosopher of the American Revolution," as Paine has been called, was a character from any point of view.

Born in Britain of poor Quaker parents, he educated him-

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," December, 1957.

† Editorial reprinted from "Sunday News," (N. Y.), July 28, 1957.

self, got a government tax job, lost it, got it back, lost it again, went broke, and departed for America, leaving his property to his creditors and his wife to her own devices. It was Benjamin Franklin who urged Paine to come over here. His first American job was that of editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.

He had a checkered military and civilian career during the Revolution. Afterward, Congress gave him \$3,000 and New York State gave him 300 acres of land at New Rochelle—both in gratitude for his Revolutionary services.

### *He Couldn't Settle Down*

Paine could have lived happily ever after on these rewards, but he wasn't that kind of man.

In 1787, he went to England, hoping to sell an iron bridge design which he had thought up, but also hoping to make some trouble for Prime Minister William Pitt, whose policies Paine detested.

Paine's big chance to goad the British government arrived in 1790, with the great political writer Edmund Burke's publication of his "Reflections on the Revolution in France"—which had occurred in 1789. Burke was against it. Paine replied with a furious diatribe entitled "The Rights of Man." It got under the British government's skin, all right; but it also got Paine indicted for treason.

At this point, the French revolutionists elected Paine—purely on his reputation—to their ruling body, the National Convention. The poet William Blake enabled Paine to duck trial in Britain by smuggling him into France.

He couldn't speak French, and he knew nothing of the ins and outs of the French Revolution. Before long, the revolutionists clapped him into jail, and he came within an ace of losing his brilliant, erratic head on the guillotine.

Meanwhile, Paine had begun work on what he seems to have considered his masterpiece. It was a book called "The Age of Reason," and it was about religion. Instead of making a hit, the book earned for Paine an undeserved reputation as an atheist.

### *He Loved To Fight*

He completed his term in the French Convention; then in

1796 wrote a long and abusive letter to President Washington for alleged treachery to Tom Paine. In 1802 he came home to America, and began picking political fights with almost everybody in sight. But "The Age of Reason" had killed off his old popularity, and his influence had vanished.

Presentday U. S. Communists try to claim Paine as a man who would be a Red if he were living now. He wouldn't, in all likelihood, having always thought for himself and worn nobody's ideological collar.

In many respects, he was a screwball, an eccentric. But for his services in helping to keep up the morale of Washington's troops through the darkest years of the Revolution, Paine deserves the gratitude of us all.

\* \* \*

Editor, New York Daily News

I would like to take exception to one sentence in your otherwise excellent editorial on Thomas Paine which appeared in your paper, Sunday July 28. This line is "In many respects he was a screwball, an eccentric."

This is one of the libels perpetrated on Thomas Paine by his enemies. He had suffered the ingratitude of a callous people when he returned to America after having been imprisoned in France through the connivance of the detestable Gouverneur Morris, only because he tried to establish in France the same type of representative government which he so successfully did here, and for having voted against the death of Louis XVI. He suffered the slanders and insults heaped upon him with great restraint and magnanimity. Your otherwise fine editorial could have appropriately contained these words of John Adams:

"Without the pen of Paine the sword of Washington would have been wielded in vain," and

"History will ascribe the American Revolution to Thomas Paine."

JOSEPH LEWIS, *Founder and Secretary*  
*The Thomas Paine Foundation*

\* \* \*



Mr. Joseph Lewis, Secretary  
The Thomas Paine Foundation

Exception noted, but I still think that the editorial statement excepted to was correct.

REUBEN MAURY  
Editorial Writer

\* \* \*

Mr. Reuben Maury

Thank you for your kind note of July 31st, in response to my protest regarding your reference to Thomas Paine as a "screwball, an eccentric."

I maintain that by no standard can you characterize this man with such language, and I am rather surprised that you resorted to these slanders that have long since been disproved. I think that I am justified in demanding of you those acts of his which caused you to so characterize him.

I know you are a very busy man but I think this matter is of the utmost importance and deserves your immediate attention.

JOSEPH LEWIS

\* \* \*

Mr. Joseph Lewis

Answering your letter of Aug. 7, it so happens that James Reston in yesterday's New York Times came up with a striking passage from the writings of Thomas Paine. See clipping enclosed. A man who could write such a letter to a near-saint like George Washington necessarily had a screwball, eccentric streak in him.

REUBEN MAURY

Mr. Reuben Maury

Thank you for the courtesy of answering my letter of August 7th, regarding your editorial in The News, Sunday, July 28th, on Thomas Paine, and my exception to your reference to him as a "screwball, an eccentric."

I would have replied to your letter sooner, but I have been away and this is the first opportunity I have had to write a somewhat detailed answer concerning your baseless charges.

In your letter to me, you enclosed a copy of an item from The New York Times, August 8th, by James Reston, which

you seem to think substantiates and justifies your reference to Paine. Mr. Reston merely quotes one sentence of this now famous letter which Thomas Paine wrote to George Washington; he does not go into details of why it was written or the circumstances which prompted it. To offer such fragmentary and inconclusive evidence in support of your contention almost makes me exclaim—"Birnam wood DO come to Dun-sinane."

Mr. Reston was merely quoting, in this newspaper report, and included this sentence of Paine's as an example of some of the sentiments with which Washington was characterized before he left the presidency. Whether these criticisms were justified or not is left for the historians. Certain it is, that Washington went out of office with more odium heaped upon him than any other man who was president. But I am not concerned with that. Neither do I agree with President Eisenhower that Washington was the greatest man produced by the English-speaking race. I think that an obscure fellow by the name of William Shakespeare is entitled to a little consideration in this respect. Neither do I agree with you that Washington was a "half saint."

Before going into details regarding the motive which prompted the now famous letter which Thomas Paine had written to Washington, I want to mention what Paine said about Washington and what Washington said about Paine during the Revolutionary War. With this information the reason for Paine's letter is more understandable.

When defeat followed defeat, and the members of the Continental Congress were concerned with Washington's leadership, many thought that he should be replaced by General Milo Gates, whose successes were in marked contrast to Washington's retreats; it was none other than Thomas Paine who came to Washington's defense. Paine wrote, at this crucial time, in the second number of the *Crisis*, published January 13th, 1777, the following:

"The United States of America (by the way, this was the first time that the name of this country was published, and it is significant that it was coined by Thomas Paine) will sound as pompously in the world or in history as the 'Kingdom of Great Britain'; the character of *George*

*Washington* will fill a page with as much lustre as that of Lord Howe . . ." At another time, Paine wrote: "Voltaire has remarked that King William never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action; the same remark may be made on General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds which cannot be unlocked by trifles, but which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude."

These words of Paine saved Washington his generalship! This should be remembered.

When Washington suffered defeat after defeat and was ready to give up the struggle and run for his life, Thomas Paine wrote the first number of the *Crisis*, beginning with these immortal words: "These are the times that try men's souls. . . ."

Washington had them read to his soldiers, and you know the "miraculous" results.

Here are some of the little known facts of Washington's readiness to give up the struggle. He wrote: "I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things . . . I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of a hundred thousand dollars a year would not induce me to undergo what I do . . . Perhaps to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation." And in a final note of despair, he wrote: "Your imagination can scarce extend to a situation more distressing than mine. Our only dependence now is upon the speedy enlistment of a new army. If this fails I think the game pretty well up."

Paine's inspiring words were responsible for Washington's "new Army."

And now there has just come to public light a new note of despair, which Washington wrote to George Mason. He said: "We are without money . . . without provisions . . . the history of this war is a history of false hopes . . . our efforts are in vain."

It was Paine's pen that saved Washington from disaster and carried the Revolution to a successful conclusion. John Adams was there, he saw it happen, he knew, he said: "With-

out the pen of Paine the sword of Washington would have been wielded in vain."

Realizing what Paine had done for the cause of America's Freedom, Washington wrote him, after the Revolution, this letter:

"I have learned since I have been at this place, that you are at Bordentown. Whether for the sake of retirement or economy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you.

Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this country; and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best services with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleasure, subscribes himself,

Your sincere friend  
G. Washington."

And to Richard Henry Lee, Washington wrote:

"Unsolicited by, and unknown to Mr. Paine, I take the liberty of hinting the services and the distressed (for so I think it may be called) situation of that Gentleman:

"That his *Common Sense*, and many of his *Crisis*, were well timed and had a happy effect upon the public mind, none, I believe, who will recur to the epocha's at which they were published will deny.—That his services hitherto have passed of(f) unnoticed is obvious to all;—and that he chagreened and neccessitous I will undertake to aver.—Does not common justice then point of some compensation?

"He is not in circumstances to refuse the bounty of the public. New York, not the least distressed nor most able State in the Union, has set the example. He prefers the benevolence of the States individually to an allowance from Congress, for reasons which are conclusive in his own mind, and such as I think may be approved by others. His views are moderate, a decent independency, I believe, the height of his ambition, and if you view his services in the American cause in the same important

light that I do, I am sure you will have pleasure in obtaining it for him.—I am with esteem and regard, Dr. Sir, yr. most obdt. servt.

George Washington.”

And this is what he wrote to James Madison:

“Can nothing be done in our Assembly for poor Paine? *Must the merits and services of Common Sense continue to glide down the stream of time, unrewarded by this country?*

His writings, certainly have had a powerful effect on the public mind,—ought they not then to meet an adequate return? He is poor! he is chagreened! and almost if not altogether in despair of relief.

New York, it is true, not the least distressed nor best able State in the Union, has done something for him. This kind of provision he prefers to an allowance from Congress, he has reasons for it, which to him are conclusive, and such, I think, as would have weight with others. His views are moderate—a decent independency, is, I believe, all he aims at. Should he not obtain this? If you think so I am sure you will not only move the matter but give it your support. For me it only remains to feel for his situation and to assure you of the sincere esteem and regard with which I have the honor to be, D Sir,

Yr. Most Obedt. Humble Servt.,

G. Washington.”

When the American Revolution was over, Benjamin Franklin said to Paine: “Where there is Liberty, that is my country,” and Paine replied: “Where Liberty is not, that is mine.” And so the man who made the Republic of the United States possible left these shores to bring Freedom to the peoples of England and France.

The story is too long to go into details here, but these are the pertinent facts.

While in England, Paine wrote the “Rights of Man” in defense of the French Revolution. He was indicted for treason by the British Crown. He was informed by some of his friends in the British government of his imminent arrest, and if tried and convicted, would face the penalty of death. He

hurriedly packed, was taken to the dock at Dover, and was permitted to board a boat for France, because he had in his possession a personal letter from George Washington, minutes before the officers came to arrest him!

When Paine landed upon French soil, at Calais, he was elected by three departments to represent them in the French Assembly. Paine wrote the "French Declaration of Rights" for the French People and urged them to adopt a constitution similar to ours. But the leaders of the French Revolution preferred vengeance to the establishment of a stable government. They demanded the death of Louis XVI.

Facing the hostile convention of which he was a member, Paine pleaded for the life of the deposed monarch. He cried "Kill the king, but not the man."

This most eloquent and humane plea, was Paine's downfall. Through the connivance of the detestable Gouverneur Morris, our Ambassador to France, Robespierre marked him for death, and he was sent to the Luxemburg prison.

IT WAS WHILE IN PRISON THAT PAINE WROTE TO WASHINGTON FOR HELP. WASHINGTON IGNORED HIS PLEA AND DID NOTHING TO SAVE THE MAN WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO BE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!!!

By one of the strangest coincidences, Paine escaped the guillotine, and for nearly eleven torturous months, this great patriot, the author-hero of the American Revolution, lingered in prison, on the point of death, suffering untold misery with an abscess on his side. *And yet, Washington remained silent to the appeals for help from the one man, more than any other individual, that made it possible for him to attain his position of eminence.*

When Paine was arrested and imprisoned and marked for death, the Americans in France petitioned the government to free him. This petition, signed by eminent men, is worth quoting in its entirety, because I am sure you will agree that it wasn't written to liberate a "screwball, an eccentric."

"Citizens Legislators! The French nation has, by a universal decree, invited to France one of our countrymen, most worthy of honor, namely Thomas Paine, one of the political founders of the independence and of the

Republic of America. Our experience of twenty years has taught America to know and esteem his public virtues and the invaluable services he rendered her.

Persuaded that his character of foreigner and ex-Deputy is the only cause of his provisional imprisonment, we come in the name of our country, and we feel sure she will be grateful to us for it—we come to you, Legislators, to reclaim our friend, our countryman, that he may sail with us for America, where he will be received with open arms.

If it were necessary to say more in support of the Petition which, as friends and allies of the French Republic, we submit to her representatives, to obtain the liberation of one of the most earnest and faithful apostles of liberty, we would beseech the National Convention, for the sake of all that is dear to the glory and to the heart of free men, not to give a cause of joy and triumph to the allied tyrants of Europe, and above all to the despotism of Great Britain, which did not blush to outlaw this courageous and virtuous defender of Liberty.

But their insolent joy will be of short duration; for we have the intimate persuasion that you will not keep longer in the bonds of painful captivity the man whose courageous and energetic pen did so much to free America, and whose intentions we have no doubt whatever were to render the same services to the French Republic. Yes, we feel convinced that his principles and views were pure, and in that regard he is entitled to the indulgence due human fallibility, and to the respect due to rectitude of heart; we hold all the more firmly our opinion of his innocence, inasmuch as we are informed that after a scrupulous examination of his papers, made by the order of the Committee of General Safety, instead of anything to his charge, enough has been found rather to corroborate the purity of his principles in politics and morals.

As a countryman of ours, as a man above all so dear to Americans, who like ourselves are earnest friends of Liberty, we ask you, in the name of that goddess cherished of the only two Republics of the World, to give back Thomas Paine to his brethren and permit us to take him to his country which is also ours. If you require it,

Citizens Representatives, we shall make ourselves warrant and security for his conduct in France during the short stay he may make in your land."

Among the signers of this petition were: Joel Barlow, Peter Whiteside, William Haskins and fifteen other distinguished Americans.

When Gouverneur Morris was recalled as our Ambassador to France, and was replaced by the distinguished James Monroe, his first act was to seek the release of Paine, and here is the text of the letter he wrote to the man that Washington ignored:

"Is it necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of people, are interested in your welfare? They have not forgotten the history of their own revolution and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict.

The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered important service in our own Revolution, but as being, on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favor of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine, the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent . . . To liberate you will be the object of my endeavors, and as soon as possible."

After Paine's release from prison, he was taken to the home of the Monroes and Mrs. Monroe and the Ambassador nursed him back to health. It was while he was in the home of the Monroes, suffering from an "ingratitude more strong than traitor's arms," that he wrote his now famous letter to Washington. James Monroe persuaded Paine not to send the letter and it was never mailed.

Was Paine's letter justified? Was Washington guilty of ingratitude? The verdict is against you, Mr. Maury. You owe Thomas Paine an apology.

I want to conclude this communication with a letter which



Thomas Jefferson wrote to Paine when he learned that the author of Common Sense wanted to return to the United States.

"Your letters of October the 1st, 4th, 6th, and 16th, came duly to hand, and the papers which they covered were, according to your permission, published in the newspapers and in a pamphlet, *and under your own name*. These papers contain precisely our principles, and I hope they will be generally recognized here . . . You expressed a wish to get passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland to receive and accommodate you with a passage back, if you can be ready to depart at such short warning. Robert R. Livingston is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of France, but will not leave this till we receive the ratification of the convention by Mr. Dawson. *I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored, and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labors, and to reap their reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer. Accept assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachment.*"

It is significant to note, that Jefferson offered Paine the Postmastership in his cabinet *after* Paine had written his letter to Washington.

Did James Monroe and Thomas Jefferson render assistance to a screwball, an eccentric?

JOSEPH LEWIS

\* \* \*

Mr. Joseph Lewis

This could go on forever, with neither of us convincing the other, so let's chop it off here, shall we?

REUBEN MAURY

\* \* \*

Mr. Reuben Maury

I have your letter of August 23rd.

If you wish that this controversy regarding your unjustified, unwarranted, unsubstantiated, unsupported, unverified and inexcusable reference to Thomas Paine as a "screwball and eccentric" be concluded, I shall accede to your wishes. I cannot help, however, but feel that your letter is an acknowledgement that you have no evidence to support this contention.

I would like to end our dispute with this statement of Thomas Paine's: "How easy it is to find abusive words."

JOSEPH LEWIS

## LOU GORDON INTERVIEWS JOSEPH LEWIS ON TV

*The following dialogue took place over WXYZ-TV  
(The American Broadcasting Co.), Detroit, Michigan,  
August 12, 1957, to an estimated audience of several  
hundred thousand.*

LOU GORDON: Good evening, I'm Lou Gordon. Our guest tonight—Mr. Joseph Lewis. We'll ask Mr. Lewis about his charges that the Bible is a fraud, Billy Graham is a fake, and religion is a crude hoax. And now to our guest tonight for an unrehearsed, spontaneous interview. Mr. Lewis is president of the Freethinkers of America, an organization self-described as working for the separation of Church and State. He is editor and founder of "The Age of Reason Magazine," the Freethinkers' monthly publication. He has written eighteen books including "The Bible Unmasked," "The Ten Commandments," and "The Tyranny Of God." Mr. Lewis, one of your frequent assertions is that the Bible is a fraud. You once told an interviewer, and I quote, "The Bible is more than a fraud, because it has been the cause of untold misery to the human race and has arrested intellectual progress for the past two thousand years." Sir, why are you so certain that the Bible is a fraud?

JOSEPH LEWIS: The facts of history support my claim. The Bible is a fraud because: first, every historian of any repute has condemned it for interfering with intellectual progress. Almost every science that we're acquainted with has condemned it because it interferes with the progress of that particular science and their particular researches. All we have to do is to take, for instance, the story of Galileo. Galileo constructed a telescope, looked at the Satellite Jupiter, discovered three moons, made his discoveries public; the result

is he was put in prison for his scientific achievement, because it was contrary to what the Bible taught. Take the story of Bruno. Bruno, a great scientist of his day, was burned at the stake in 1600 by the Church because he promulgated doctrines that were contrary to the Church's teachings. He taught and supplied scientific proof of the Copernican theory of the motion of the heavenly bodies, regarding the rotation of the earth around the sun.

Even Copernicus was so concerned for his life, his great scientific discovery was not published in his lifetime, for fear of being burnt at the stake. It was only after his death that his great book saw the light of day. All this, because his finding was contrary to the Bible and the teachings of the Church.

So great was the fear of the Church, at that time, that even the great Leonardo Da Vinci wrote many of his scientific articles in a disguised handwriting. So great was the Church's power during the Middle Ages that dissection was prohibited and even anaesthesia was condemned as contrary to God's will.

When Columbus sailed to find a short cut to India, many people fell on their knees to pray for him for fear that he would fall into an eternal abyss.

The Church has fought intellectual and material progress at every turn. I could deliver a long lecture on the subject. The Church has been the ignorant bully standing in the path of progress. Religion and the Church have been mankind's greatest enemies. Therefore, I say, and I say again and again and I cannot repeat it often enough, the Bible has been the greatest hindrance to man's intellectual progress that has ever been known.

GORDON: Well, sir, if your assertion is true, how do you explain the fact that many, many great philosophers, writers and thinkers have accepted and followed the moral precepts of the Bible?

LEWIS: I think that's rather difficult to prove. I know of no great philosophers who have accepted the moral precepts of the Bible or have followed them. Certainly no great scientist endorses the Bible as an authority. There may have been people who, out of pure hypocrisy, have praised the Bible for its moral values. And yet it does not contain a moral guide. In fact, the Bible does not even contain the words "moral"

or "morality." These words cannot be found within its pages. And yet, within the pages of the Bible, will be found the most obscene and the most revolting stories to be found between the covers of any printed book.

GORDON: Well, interestingly enough, we had an interview the other night with a gentleman on pornographic literature in this case and the question came up for a moment, but let's go on if we may. I am wondering, sir, whether you are only against the Bible or whether you are against other religious books from non-Judaeo-Christian religions. I am referring specifically to the "Koran" of the Moslems, "The Tau Te Ching" of the Chinese, the "Bhagavad-Gita" of the Hindus, or even the non-Biblical sacred writings such as "The Book of Mormon" or "Science and Health With Key to the Scriptures" of the Christian Scientists.

LEWIS: I put them all in the same category. There's no more truth to the Koran than there is to the Bible, and I object to them being referred to as "sacred" writings. There is nothing sacred about them. When they are offered as divinely inspired, they are frauds.

GORDON: Have you read all these books?

LEWIS: I have read most of them.

GORDON: Most of them?

LEWIS: Yes, most of them. I've devoted my whole life, almost, to the study of religion and the different philosophies of the earth. I say that Christian Science, in the words of Upton Sinclair, "is a very strict religion—it is strictly cash." It is based upon the hallucinations of Mary Baker Eddy and there's not a particle of truth to it. If anyone relies upon Christian Science as a panacea, he'll find himself sadly disappointed. Not only that, but Mary Baker Eddy stole most of her stuff from a Phineas P. Quimby. Her whole book is a conglomeration of sheer nonsense. Mary Baker Eddy was an illiterate woman, and even with all her help the book is a volume of pure gibberish. The "Koran" was written by an utterly ignorant camel keeper who knew nothing whatever about the affairs of the world. There's no truth to be found within the pages of any of these so-called "sacred" books.

Do we need a better example of the utter folly of these "modern" systems of religion than that of Joseph Smith and the Mormons? Smith was a notorious liar and a thief. He

was so dishonest, unscrupulous and perpetrated so many frauds upon so many people, that when he was arrested his victims became so impatient with the law's delay that they broke open the jail and murdered him. So much for this religious scoundrel. He not only falsified the story of his receiving the Tablets of Gold from an archangel, but the whole story of Mormonism is a piece of rank fakery.

That two such systems of religion—Christian Science and Mormonism—too ridiculous for words, could be established in our time, when the intelligence of the people is the highest ever attained, when people can read and write, is utterly incredible. Where are the proofs of these religions? Does it not seem strange that the Tablets of Stone which God is supposed to have given to Moses, and the Tablets of Gold which the Angel is supposed to have given to Joseph Smith, are not in existence?

It merely proves, as Mr. Thomas A. Edison once told me, that the people are, it seemed to him, "incurably superstitious and will believe anything." The more utterly ridiculous the origin, the more acceptable it is to some people. There is nothing too fantastic in the realm of religion that some people will not believe.

That is the only way that I can account for the establishment of such religious systems in our time when the majority of the people read and write and have access to the facts.

GORDON: Well, sir, in 1935 you and your organization sued the Board of Education of New York City to enjoin the Board from using the Bible in schools. Judge Williams T. Collins dismissed the case in a fourteen-page decision and among the things Judge Collins said was, and I quote, "Authentic free-thinking involves the indubitable right to believe in God, as well as the unfettered license not to believe or to disbelieve in a deity." Do you agree with Judge Collins' definition of free-thinking?

LEWIS: I agree with him as to definition but disagree with him regarding the Government's right to impose the Bible upon society.

GORDON: I'm not referring to the case itself, but merely to this statement, which is that authentic freethinking involves the indubitable right to believe in God as well as the unfettered license not to believe or to disbelieve.

LEWIS: Yes. I agree with that statement.

GORDON: Why do you insist on carrying on this religious crusade against religion?

LEWIS: Well, I think I can best answer that in the words of William Shakespeare. Shakespeare said, "Time's glory . . . is to unmask falsehood and bring truth to light." That's my motto.

GORDON: Do many freethinkers believe in God?

LEWIS: A freethinker may be any one of these things. He may be an agnostic—he may be a deist—he may be an atheist. But I do not believe that a freethinker could believe in a personal God. That makes a difference and there is the distinction. However, it gives him the right to believe as he wants to believe and what his reason will dictate. We say the only light that we have—the only method that we can arrive at a conclusion—is to weigh all the evidence and use our reason to come to a decision. If we come to a determination, then we would say that is the result of reason and it's logical to our mind.

GORDON: Mr. Lewis, you've been in Detroit for three or four days now and if you've read the papers during these past few days, you found that there were two interesting news stories in which faith, religious faith, saved human lives. I refer to the airplane that was landed in Honolulu with two disabled engines. I talked to Major Samuel Tyson who flew this airplane (he was in New York this morning for an appearance on a TV program and I spoke to him on the phone) and he said to me, and I quote, "My faith in God gave me the courage and nerve to fly that ship a hundred feet over the waves for a thousand miles." Now, he took this enormous strato-cruiser airplane, flew it a hundred feet over the water to bring in that airplane and save sixty-seven lives. In yesterday's paper, there was a story of Mrs. Betty Rolfs who three years ago was told by the doctors that she had only six months to live because of leukemia. Now, she is still alive, active, and, believe it or not, has normal blood. She said, "I believe it was a miracle; I have no other way of explaining it." Her doctor, Dr. Bethel, said, and I quote, "Mrs. Rolfs said faith in her religion is what effected her recovery." Now Sir, my question is this. It's rather a long prelude. We respect the right, in this country, of everybody to worship God as he

pleases or not to worship God. We respect your right as a freethinker and that's why we invited you here tonight. If this faith in God enabled this pilot—gave him the courage to fly that thousand miles, a hundred feet over the waves on two engines rather than ditch the ship—if this courage enabled Mrs. Rolfs to face up to the facts—if this faith does so many things for so many people—why destroy it?

LEWIS: My dear man, I don't believe the stories you've just related. Now, let me make my position clear. At the same time that you mention that this man was supposed to have called upon God and brought his plane safely to . . .

GORDON: He didn't say that. He didn't say that, sir. He said, "My faith in God"—in other words, his belief was so strong, this is what gave him courage that somehow or other God was on his side.

LEWIS: If God was on his side, why didn't God prevent his plane from getting into trouble in the first place? Why wasn't God on the side of the sixty-seven people who were killed in Canada a day after the Major made his so-called safe landing?

GORDON: Mr. Lewis, that's not my point. I'm not saying that God brought that ship in. I'm saying that God gave Major Tyson—not God, maybe, but his faith, his religious conviction—gave him the courage to face up to a situation where, as he explained it to me, they had a . . . because the two engines were out on one side, they had to put pressure on the rudders constantly for hours to keep this ship from veering away. And this faith is what brought it through. Now, this is my point.

LEWIS: I don't believe it was his faith. Thousands of men throughout the ages have applied perseverance and determination to carry them through in crises far worse than his, and they did not attribute it to any particular faith. They did it as a matter of courage, as a matter of understanding, as a matter of knowledge. Let me say again, as a matter of determination, and Major Tyson merely gives you a false reason as to why that plane was brought in.

Do you mean to tell me that if Major Tyson had had no faith in God he would have given up hope and permitted his plane and all of his passengers to plunge into the sea and to certain death? Ridiculous. I was not with Major Tyson and therefore do not know the circumstances, but I am willing to



wager that self-preservation, his duty as a pilot, and many other considerations entered into his determination to bring his plane into a safe landing.

If faith in God is the major consideration of Major Tyson when he gets into trouble or faces a crisis, such as the one the newspaper described, then he is, in my opinion, utterly unfit to have a commercial pilot's license. It is too flimsy and unsubstantial a premise to be relied upon, because generally those who rely upon prayers and faith to save them in such a crisis usually go down with the ship.

His story makes headlines in the newspapers because the people like to read about the fantastic and the miraculous. Every day, men who fly our planes face many difficulties and were it not for their stable mentality and the knowledge and physical strength that they possess, we would have far more accidents. These men do not seek newspaper headlines. They are more interested in the safety of their passengers. They are unsung heroes.

There is a passage in the New Testament in which one is admonished to lie for the glory of God. In plain blunt language that is what Major Tyson did if the newspaper reports are correct in quoting him. Many people lie for the "glory of God."

Major Tyson brought his plane in to a safe landing, after he had discovered trouble, because he brought into play all of his knowledge and every ounce of his mental and physical strength to save his passengers and plane. That is what saved the ship and prevented a disaster.

I think it pertinent that I mention here how headlines are made. Some years ago Eddie Rickenbacker and his plane went down on waters, I believe, near the African coast. After his rescue he was asked by some reporter whether his faith in God was responsible for his rescue. He replied, and I am speaking from memory, that his religious conviction was a personal matter, and he did not wish to comment on it. However, the newspapers wanted a blaring headline, and Mr. Rickenbacker reversed himself. The papers wanted a "story" and he gave them one. He said that when they were without food, God sent a seagull to land on their plane so they could have something to eat and sustain himself and the crew until rescued. However, a few days later, there appeared in the

papers the statement of a noted scientist, who said that seagulls were not native to the area where Rickenbacker's plane had fallen, and lying for the "glory of God" can sometimes be terribly embarrassing!

GORDON: Now, Mr. Lewis, with all due respect to you, aren't you being a little presumptuous when you say, not knowing the man, not talking to him, that it's a false reason? He believes this. This is what he told me.

LEWIS: I repeat, I don't believe his explanation is honest. Many people are under a delusion and sometimes it's very difficult to explain it. You might say the same thing about this woman who suffers from leukemia. If God would cure her of leukemia, why doesn't He cure other people?

GORDON: This is not what the woman said, nor was this my point. My point is that of her faith. Now, you know, when people are faced with catastrophe and they have nothing to hold on to, that in many cases they break down completely. They succumb to the inevitable. But here is a question where people's faith enabled them to carry on until some medical miracle may have occurred. Now . . .

LEWIS: No, I don't believe there was ever a miracle and I think they're under a delusion because so many people with a great deal of faith pray and pray and pray and get no results from their prayers. The will to overcome misfortune will produce better results than faith. Does God have favorites and does He answer the prayers of some and not of others? No prayer has ever been answered.

The Bible says (and this is only one of the hundreds of instances in which the Bible is wrong) that faith can move mountains. It can do nothing of the kind. It cannot move even a single grain of sand. Many people like to attribute to God results that are the natural order of events, and when the results are not to their liking they then say, "It was God's will" that it should be so. I don't believe that God knows what's good for me. I think I know what's best for me. If God knows what is best for us, why is there so much misery in the world? Such mentalities are so stupefied with the superstitions of religion that truth cannot penetrate. Only the fantastic and the impossible appeal to their stultified imaginations.

GORDON: Well sir, I'm not . . . again I want to correct

you. I'm not saying that necessarily my premise is not that prayer produces results, or that the Lord can correct situations intact. I'm simply saying that when people have faith (as a great many people do) and religion means a great deal to many people in that it enables them to face the trials and vicissitudes of life. This was true of my own father, who had much adversity in his life and only his belief in religion enabled him to face up to the problems. Now, sir, . . .

LEWIS: Again I disagree with you. Many people have adversity; I have had adversities. I overcame mine without any faith in religion, and others overcome their troubles in the same way. I believe this is true of your father. He may have given faith credit for it, but there was something else that he did not give credit to, that was the determination to overthrow adversity and prove his metal.

GORDON: Sir, here's a question you don't have to answer if you don't want to . . .

LEWIS: It is perfectly all right. Ask it.

GORDON: . . . because it's personal. Have you ever been psychoanalyzed?

LEWIS: No, sir, I have not.

GORDON: Well, the reason I asked is that you're very obviously (from what you've written) a very brilliant erudite man . . .

LEWIS: . . . thank you very much.

GORDON: . . . and you carry on your crusade with such great zeal. I took the liberty today of talking to a local psychiatrist whose name I'm not free to divulge, but whose name I'll be glad to give you at the end of the program. The psychiatrist said (and I want to say that all he knows about you is what I have given him from the information I had—the records) that the reason for your ardent atheism is a very simple one. He said, "Mr. Lewis was forced to quit school when he was nine years old. He seemed to have lost his parents at that time. He had to go to work and in all probability, the shock of it set him to thinking: Why was I chosen to suffer all this injustice? Why was God so unkind to me? Consequently, Mr. Lewis, unable to find a satisfactory answer for his problem, began seeing the world as wrong as hostile. And to strike back at the world, he became a disbeliever and eventually, an atheist. If Mr. Lewis had had nice warm rela-

tives who would have cared for him, he never would have gone the way he went." Would you say, sir, there was any basis for this explanation of your becoming an atheist?

LEWIS: Absolutely none. It contains just about the same amount of nonsense that you generally find in psychoanalysis. I made a long study of it and I wrote an article not very long ago, the title of which was, "If Freud Had Read Shakespeare, Psychoanalysis Might Never Have Been Born." Because Shakespeare knew more about dreams than Sigmund Freud, he knew more about the motivation of human conduct than the founder of psychoanalysis. I did not lose my parents when I was nine years old. I happened to live in Alabama, in Selma, Alabama, when there was a terrible epidemic of yellow fever. The place was devastated—people were dying like flies; business conditions were very bad, and we had to suffer like everyone else and that's the reason I had to quit school at nine years of age and go to work. It was perhaps the worst economic period the South has ever suffered, and we were some of the victims. We overcame this terrible period without any faith, without a belief in God. Never once did I see, or hear my parents pray or call for help from the Myth of Heaven. My parents sheltered me and I lived with them under a great deal of loving care, so you see that the psychoanalyst is entirely wrong.

It is typical of the nonsense that they foster upon people. If what you say is true, then every child who is forced to go to work at an early age would become an atheist—or a rebellious member of society. On the contrary, many have become our leading citizens, and have achieved distinction in many fields of endeavor. Psychoanalysis is the primitive superstition which Frazer called "Sympathetic Magic" and put into a modern dress.

GORDON: Sir, if he's wrong in his premise, it's because the information that has been written about you has been wrong, because I gave it to him.

LEWIS: Even if he had the correct information, his premise is wrong because psychoanalysis has no basis on which to base anything that is truthful, in my opinion. I urge him to read my article. I will gladly send him a copy.

GORDON: All right, sir, if we may go on for a minute. During the past twenty-five years there have been two great

religious faiths. I refer to Judaism, Christianity, and the countries Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Millions of people were slaughtered in these countries and countless numbers were purged in slave labor camps. In both of these countries, the dignity of man fell to its lowest level. Don't you feel that it's ironic that these atrocities were perpetrated by men who were atheists and had no belief in a Supreme Being?

LEWIS: In the first place, I don't believe that Hitler was an atheist. Hitler was a devout Catholic. In fact it is generally believed that a priest helped Hitler to write "Mein Kampf."

GORDON: Well, he renounced the Church or the Church renounced him.

LEWIS: On the contrary, he made a concordat with the Pope the moment he came into power.

GORDON: But, I'm speaking of the last years after he had broken with . . .

LEWIS: Yes, but it was his intense religious hatred that caused him to be an anti-Semite. He had no knowledge of atheism. He was not a philosophical atheist, nor did he have the intellect to comprehend the philosophy of atheism. The eradication of prejudice is one of the basic principles of Atheism.

GORDON: Well, he did everything to destroy Catholicism and Judaism.

LEWIS: He did not do everything to destroy Catholicism at all. Most of his associates were Catholics. He arrested a few priests over there but he . . .

GORDON: Well, let's talk about Russia, then.

LEWIS: Russia and the Church presents an economic situation and has nothing to do with intellectual atheism. There, they look upon the Church as a vested interest, and it has been a thorn in the side of the world for a great many years. It happened to be one of the things they had to take action against, similar to what was done in many other countries. France drove out the Church. England had to break the power of the Church. And the Russian Revolution had cause to break the power of the Church because it had a strangle hold upon the people, but that was not philosophical atheism. Atheism does not believe in wars of aggrandizement. Atheism and Communism are in conflict. Atheism maintains

that the individual's rights in society are supreme. Communism believes in the supremacy of the State. Communism opposes the Church on economic and not intellectual grounds. In fact, if I am not mistaken, in those countries under communist domination, the Church is now subsidized.

GORDON: Would you agree that the dignity of man is at the highest level here in the United States of America?

LEWIS: Yes, I do say so. It is because of our Constitution. You mustn't forget we have the greatest Constitution that was ever written.

GORDON: Well, don't you think it's ironic that where the dignity of man is the greatest, it is in the country that has the largest church-going population in the world?

LEWIS: No. We only have the largest church-going population in the world because of the large population that we have. But the largest church-going population is in Italy, where the Church is strongest by proportion. The greater number of people (if you take the percentage) in Italy far outstrips the United States in church-going people. So every other religious country—take the South-American countries—ninety percent, eighty-five percent of the people are church-going, probably ninety percent. Here only forty percent attend church.

GORDON: Well, I'm still not speaking in terms of percentages, but in terms of numbers.

LEWIS: Yes, I know, but you have to take the percentage. If a country has a hundred and seventy-five million people, naturally there are more people going to church; but you must use percentages to be fair. Take a country that has thirty million people and twenty-five million go to church, that percentage is larger than ours as to the number of church-going people. If we have such a large church-going population, why are the preachers shouting over television and radio for people to attend church? Church-going is a failure in the United States. We have the largest secular number of people of any country on the face of the earth. That's because we have a secular Republic. And one of my great desires in this fight is to keep the churches out of the body politic, prevent them from getting special privileges and to make them pay their rightful share of taxes. If we succeed in that, the Church will collapse. It cannot exist without state support.

GORDON: Sir, in the "New Yorker Magazine" which appeared on November 4th, 1932, they did a profile story on you by the late Alva Johnson, and I quote him. He said, "Lewis is the atheist Pope. Lewis makes atheism pay. Mr. Lewis, how good a business is atheism?"

LEWIS: Well, now I knew Alva Johnson when he was a reporter on "The New York Times." When he did this profile of me, he had to be facetious because that was the principle by which the "New Yorker" printed these articles, but he's wrong about making atheism pay. I was successful in the publishing business. I published books by Margaret Sanger and Dr. William J. Robinson; they were books dealing with the scientific and medical phases of marital affairs. I contributed, I believe, in a great measure, to the success of Margaret Sanger and her birth control movement.

As to making Atheism pay that is another matter. I wish it were true. It would prove that the people are more intelligent and are willing to spend more money on education and enlightenment than upon superstition. It so happens that I am in a financial position to devote my time to the Cause of Atheism. I published Thomas Paine's "The Age of Reason" and a few other Freethought books as a contribution to the Cause. Is there anything wrong in that? Some men give much of their wealth to the Church, in the belief and hope that they will be rewarded in heaven for their contributions. They vision a seat on the right hand of God. How disappointed they will be. Why can't I support a cause that I believe will help advance mankind intellectually and morally and bring peace and understanding to the peoples of the earth? I believe in the HERE and NOW. My reward is in the satisfaction that I am helping to disseminate knowledge. Now, let me say a word about religion and profit. Religion is all profit. It has no goods to buy, no commissions to pay and no refunds to be made for unsatisfactory results. What a racket it is! It is the greatest fraud ever perpetrated upon the human race.

GORDON: Sir, our time is running out and I'm going to try to get a fast question in here. A week ago the Detroit Free Press (which is our morning paper here) ran the results of a Gallup Poll in which people here and in England were asked how they felt about religion. The poll reported that

ninety-two percent of the American people see religion as the key to the solution of today's problems. Do you agree or disagree with the Gallup findings, or would you say that the American people (at least ninety-two percent of them) are lying or crazy?

LEWIS: No, I don't believe the Gallup Poll. I don't think they were any more right in this instance than they were right during the Truman-Dewey campaign.

GORDON: Yeah, but for that one being wrong they've been right maybe five thousand times, but I don't think they deliberately stacked this one.

LEWIS: I would not bet any money on it. But I would be willing to bet they are wrong the second time in the five thousand times that you say they were right, and that is being very charitable. I might mention that I was on a Mike Wallace-Buff Cobb TV Program some years ago. It happened to be the Catholic Digest program and the question of the church-going statistics came up. A similar percentage was mentioned and I challenged it. After the program, I was told (off the record) that I was right. So much for the Gallup Poll.

GORDON: We have just one minute and I want to ask you your opinion of Billy Graham, before we go off the air.

LEWIS: All right. I say that Billy Graham (I'm glad you did that because I wanted to talk about him), I say Billy Graham is a fraud of the first degree. He is making money out of something that's the most despicable thing I've ever heard of in my life, and, of course, it belongs in the realm of religion. Billy Graham deals in sin. There's no such thing as sin. It's a fraud and it's a cruel fraud. He tells people there are sinful beings and they have to come and make a "decision for Christ" in order to be saved. He also believes in Hell, and Hell is the most monstrous idea that was ever born in the perverted brain of man. It was created by priests to torment and rob the living. I don't believe I have words strong enough by which to condemn Billy Graham and his crusade. He is preaching a fraud, a false gospel, and he should be made to pay the same penalty for his dishonesty as for other forms of thievery.

GORDON: I'm going to have to interrupt you, Mr. Lewis. Thank you very much for coming here.



**LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Gordon.

**ANNOUNCER:** The views and opinions expressed on this program do not necessarily reflect those of this station. This is WXYZ-TV, with studios in the Maccabees Building, Detroit.

## RABBI FEINBERG \*

*(If the incidents and circumstances related in this article have any reference to any particular person now living, it is purposely intended.)*

A little more than 25 years ago, when I was carrying on an intensive advertising campaign for my book "The Bible Unmasked," there came to my office a young man. This man bore the carriage of a cultured and educated person.

He told me that he was the assistant rabbi at a temple in New York City, with a wealthy congregation. He also told me that he was a graduate of a Hebrew University and had been an ordained rabbi for a number of years. He introduced himself as Rabbi A. L. Feinberg, the "A" standing for Abraham; presumably he was named after the Hebrew Patriarch.

He came to my office to tell me of something that had happened to him. He said he came to tell me of his reaction when he read the full page advertisement of my book "The Bible Unmasked" in "The Nation" magazine, and of the terrific impact this advertisement made upon his mentality. He told me that he had been mentally shaken from the top of his head to the soles of his feet, and that he had been shocked almost into a state of paralysis.

The caption of that advertisement read:

"Can That Be in My Bible?"

This is what intrigued Rabbi Feinberg to read the advertisement. He told me that when he read the text of this advertisement, his whole body shook with emotion, that he could hardly come to the realization that what he had been taught as the most sacred thing in the world, was being denounced as a fake and a fraud. He told me that I would never be able to realize the impact such a reaction has upon a person who

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," August 1957.

comes face to face with such a situation. Here in modern New York, was a full page advertisement, and for all the world to see, of a book denouncing the Bible as an immoral volume! He said when he saw this copy of "The Nation" on the news-stands, which he later bought, he thought he saw the eyes of the millions of New Yorkers staring at him.

That is why he came to see me at my office. He wanted to see the man who had written such a book and who had the audacity to sponsor such an advertisement. He came to buy the book and he did. I warned him that if the advertisement had such an effect upon him that he should be prepared for a greater shock when he read the book. He took a copy, left the office and said, as he departed, "I will see you again," and he did.

The next time he came to see me was at my home. He said never in his life did he ever think that he would be the guest in the home of a man who had so devastatingly destroyed his illusions of religion and had emancipated him from his religious beliefs.

We saw each other several times after that and on one occasion he told me that he had come to the conclusion that he could no longer remain a rabbi; that he had decided to quit the rabbinate, and he was going to deliver his last sermon on a particular Friday night, and I was his invited guest.

I did not know that when I arrived at the synagogue that there would be such an enormous crowd. The newspapers had prominently mentioned that this was to be Rabbi Feinberg's last sermon. I had to take a seat in the gallery. However, when I sat down, Rabbi Feinberg finally spotted me and gave me a nod of recognition.

He delivered his sermon. He made a renunciation of his religious beliefs and I remember he particularly said that more morality could be gained from a proper understanding of life than from the Bible. He delivered a strong and forthright disavowal of what he had previously preached; and at the conclusion, as he told me he would do, he took off his Rabbinical robe and threw it on the floor as a final gesture of his complete renunciation of his religious ties.

He came to see me on many occasions after that event and I remember once he showed me a manuscript which he had written which was in effect an autobiography telling of his

disillusioning experience as a student in a Theological College. I also asked him how he was going to make a living. He told me that he had a good voice and had a radio program which he thought would be successful.

As time went on, I heard nothing further from him. However, at a public dinner some years later, I saw Abraham Feinberg and as I went over to greet him, he seemed rather reluctant to meet me. However, we spoke for some time and he finally said "You will be surprised to hear this but I am back in the synagogue. I am assistant rabbi in a large Temple" (and he gave the name and the city). It was one of the larger cities in the United States. He later became Chief Rabbi of this Temple, and when I met him at another dinner some years later, he avoided me completely.

It was reported that he was receiving at that time a salary of approximately \$25,000 a year. He had also since married and was raising a family.

Now, I would have forgotten this incident completely were it not for the fact that I happened to read, by pure accident, that a Rabbi Feinberg was delivering a series of radio addresses on the "Message of Israel" Radio Hour.

I tuned in and I recognized his voice. I understand that he is now a rabbi of a leading synagogue in Canada. I now well understand why he avoided me the last time I saw him. It was apparently a question of making a livelihood and he took "the easiest way."

This brings to my mind the question—how many members of the clergy would leave their pulpits and express their honest conviction were it not for the money question. Being trained to preach does not prepare them to make a living in this highly industrialized age. The public is fully aware of this and that is why you hear so many people talk about the hypocrisy in the pulpit. These people know that deep down in their hearts the clergy themselves do not believe the nonsense they preach to their congregations.

I am sorry that Rabbi Feinberg did not pursue his career as a singer and remain outside of the fold, because I do believe he had the ability, and at one time the courage, to help in emancipating the world from the superstitions of religion.

## COLORFUL WILSON MISNER \*

During a moment of reflection I dipped into my memory cells of over 50 years ago, and recalled to my mind some of the unusual characteristics of one of the most colorful characters I have ever met.

I first met this man when I was a lad, working as a clerk in a retail store, on Broadway near 42nd Street, New York City. This store was his "hang out." It was also the meeting place of many celebrities of that time—celebrities in the sport and theatrical world. I shall never forget him—his name, Wilson Misner. He was "tall, dark and handsome." In fact, he was the most colorful and fascinating man I had ever met. He was also a brilliant conversationalist. I could, and did, listen to him for hours as he related amazing tales and told amusing anecdotes. Wilson Misner taught me a number of magic tricks, that I have not only not forgotten, but use them on many occasions, such as at dinner parties, meetings and informal gatherings, particularly when the conversation begins to lag and the party needs something to revive interest. These tricks are performed with coins, and on many occasions I have used them to distract the attention of children when they get unruly and to divert them from their tantrums.

Wilson Misner was also a great playwright. Two of his plays, which I remember distinctly, were "The Greyhound," dealing with a group of professional card sharks on an ocean liner, and the other was "The Deep Purple," that had as its theme, what I call the greatest of virtues, Loyalty. Perhaps the reason I remember these two plays that Misner wrote, best of all, is due to the fact that he gave me tickets to see them. My salary at that time was not sufficient to buy tickets for a Broadway production.

I also remember very distinctly the time Wilson Misner

\* Reprinted from "The Patent Trader" (Mt. Kisco, N. Y.), October 27, 1957.

came into the store one evening and showed me some fabulous pieces of jewelry. I was awed by the sight of them. As he took them out of the different pockets of his coat, each was more dazzling and sparkling than the other. One, in particular, which he was proud of, was a Black diamond. I remember how he put it in the palm of his hand, held it close to the light, so as to get the full beauty of this rare gem. I can fix the time of his visit, because it took place shortly after his marriage to a Mrs. Yerkes. She, to the best of my knowledge, was the recent widow of a steel magnate. Misner was married to her for about 10 days or two weeks, then left her. It was rumored that the jewels which he had showed me were from her collection. I think she made a public statement to that effect. What the outcome was I do not know, but it was quite some time before Misner visited the store again.

I think this is worth telling about Wilson Misner as it reveals the keenness of his mind without necessarily adding to its integrity. When he and his brother, who was a famous architect, were building Boca Raton—the fabulous winter resort in Florida—they sold a large tract from their original purchase, so as to get enough money to build the hotel. Wilson Misner was the salesman. He represented the land as being ideal on which to grow pecan nuts, and whoever bought it for that purpose would make a considerable sum of money.

It happened that one man, intrigued by this sales talk, bought considerable acreage. Try as he may, his efforts to grow nuts were fruitless, and ended in a failure. He then demanded his purchase money back on the ground of false representation. Misner refused to return his money, and the matter was brought into the court. At the trial, the man related how he came to make the purchase of this large tract of land, and repeated the claim that Wilson Misner had told him how he could make a fortune cultivating pecan nuts. When Misner took the stand in his own defense, his attorney asked him whether he had told the purchaser that he could make a great deal of money by planting pecan nuts, and Wilson Misner made this laconic reply, "I did not tell this gentleman that he could GROW nuts on that land, I told him that he could GO nuts on that land." Perhaps it was this instance that caused Wilson Misner to make this statement, that "It is criminal negligence to permit suckers like that to hang around to tempt honest men."

## A RELIGIOUS LIE! \*

My attention has been called to the statue of Christopher Columbus which was erected on park property in Columbus Square, in your City, on October 12, 1957.

If this statue merely represented Christopher Columbus landing upon the shores of this continent, as the reputed discoverer of America, it would be appropriate and desirable. But the statue has an altogether different purpose. It shows Columbus planting the Cross of Christianity upon our soil. Such a concept is utterly at variance with the facts.

Columbus did not sail from Spain on a religious mission. On the contrary, his journey was purely of a commercial nature. He was seeking a new route to India. You see, he did not believe in the theology of his time—that the earth was flat. He was a heretic in that respect. He had studied geography from the Greeks and got his concept of the rotundity of the earth from a globe that belonged to the great Egyptian Astronomer, Ptolemy.

Christopher Columbus was a Navigator and not a Missionary! He did not land upon these shores to plant the Cross of Christianity. He did, however, raise the flag of Spain and claimed it as territory for Isabella and Ferdinand.

No one was more certain that he would make his journey safely than Columbus himself. He was fortified with the knowledge of the shape of the earth. The religious fanatics, who fell upon their knees praying for his safety when he sailed, had no effect upon him. Priests did not accompany Columbus on his voyages. There was a good and sufficient reason for this; they were afraid!

And this is another point that gives the religious lie to this statue. Columbus was not a Christian. The noted historian, Professor Salvador de Madariaga, in his book "Christopher

\* Reprinted from the "Wilmington (Del.) Journal," November 20, 1957.

Columbus" marshals an abundance of imposing evidence in support of the Spanish Jewish origin of Christopher Columbus. In summarizing this evidence, Professor de Madariaga says, "Now there is only one reasonable way of explaining this fact: The Colombo family were Spanish Jews settled in Genoa, who, following the traditions of their race, had remained faithful to the language of their country of origin." That is one of the reasons why he was never sainted. What an embarrassment it would be for the Catholic Church to have canonized Columbus only to find that he was a Jew!

There is much historical proof to substantiate this premise. Only recently, there came to public light the discovery, that in his correspondence with his son, Columbus used a secret Hebrew symbol, in the upper right hand corner of his letters, to identify his origin. When Christopher Columbus lived in Spain, the Inquisition was raging in all of its brutal fanaticism, and that accounts for the reason why Columbus concealed many facts about himself, and professed beliefs solely for the sake of expediency.

This statue, in your City is a religious lie. It will become the laughing stock of all intelligent people. It should be removed.

It should be removed for two reasons. First, it violates the principle of the separation of Church and State for a religious statue to be erected on public grounds, and, second, the statue does not represent the truth. This makes it doubly reprehensible.

The people of Wilmington, Delaware, should wake up to this piece of religious fakery.

JOSEPH LEWIS, President  
Freethinkers of America



## ORAL WICKEDNESS \*

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is Joseph Lewis speaking.

The title of my talk this evening is "Oral Wickedness." It is a public challenge to Oral Roberts, the so-called Faith Healer.

I am addressing myself directly to *him*, but I want *you*, of the radio audience, to hear what I have to say.

Dear Oral Roberts:

I am in receipt of an undated letter bearing a facsimile of your signature.

In this letter you state that through your "ministry"

"... a little girl doomed to the life of a cripple is whole and her body restored! a man received his sight! a boy throws away his crutches! hearing is restored to the deaf!"

This is what you publicly claim, and what you announce to the world, over your own signature, that you have accomplished.

Now, I do not believe a single word quoted in your letter. I not only do not believe that you have effected such cures, but in addition, I brand you as a deliberate and unconscionable liar! And the best way I know how to characterize your preaching, is to condemn it as ORAL WICKEDNESS!

I am sure you are acquainted with my encounter with the late Jack Coe. He repeatedly mentioned the fact, both in his correspondence, and on his radio program, that he was in direct communication with you while my fight with him was going on. He made the statement that since *trouble* had started, all faith (fake) healers, such as you and he, should *stand together*, in the crisis that he was facing, or both would *fall* together.

\* Address delivered over Radio Station WMIE Miami, Florida, January 20th, 1958.

It is a matter of public record that it was I who secured the evidence that resulted in the arrest of Jack Coe. The Dade County Solicitor of Miami, Florida, acting upon the evidence that I had submitted, had Coe arrested, and he was held in \$5,000.00 bond. The local authorities in Miami wanted the Court to determine whether such mountebanks as Jack Coe and other (fake) healers were exempt from the Medical Practices Act of the State of Florida. However, despite the fact that the charges against Coe were dismissed by Justice of the Peace Hugh F. Duval, this important question has not, as yet, been adjudicated.

I am determined to have the Courts decide whether so-called faith healers can continue to hoodwink and rob the people in the name of God. The Courts have already decided that fraud cannot be practiced under the cloak of religion, and that the perpetrators of such frauds must pay the same penalty, as others, guilty of the same kind of deception. I am also determined to include in this category the question of your "ministry."

But back to your letter, in which you state that "God needs you," meaning, of course, the recipient of your appeal for contributions.

How do you know that God needs me—or any one else for that matter?

What does God need me for? What help can I render Him?

Isn't He supposed to be Omnipotent and All Powerful?

How can I render help to an Infinite Being?

If "God's power is limitless," as you say, what can we poor mortals do for Him? God is supposed to help us, not we Him.

Your statement and appeal is not only incongruous, but ludicrous and ridiculous.

And then, why must I send money to *you* for God to help me? What do you mean by giving money to God?

Are you God's representative?

Have you a license from God?

Do you pay him for a license?

By what authority do you speak for Him? By what authority do you claim to be God's intermediary? What and where are your credentials?

I demand to know.

I demand to know what you do with this money. I demand an accounting. I dare you to open your books to the public. I will not accept your own representation.

There have been too many liars like you in the past. I want corroborating evidence. I want a full statement under oath. If you fail to meet this challenge, I shall consider your silence, your failure to produce evidence of your claims as a healer, as a confession of guilt, a confession that you are a hypocrite and a fraud, and that you cannot do what you claim, that you cannot produce the results that you so brazenly boast that you have accomplished.

What you can do, I can do. I have as much power as you have, and you have no more power than I. But for all the money in the world I would not deceive a single human being. That's the difference. I would not take five cents from a person unless I gave full value received in return for the money.

To raise the hopes of the sick and suffering under the false promise of help, is the most dastardly of all forms of deception. There is, there can be, no more loathsome scoundrel than one who preys upon the suffering of a distressed human being, whose suffering, misery and afflictions cause him to seek help from any and every source which promises relief.

Isn't there enough misery in the world without your adding to it?

If God's power is limitless, and Jesus heals as you claim he does, why doesn't he cure everybody of disease and suffering? Why does he permit disease to exist in the first place? What kind of a God is it, what kind of a Saviour is Jesus Christ, who will torment helpless creatures with diseases that cause excruciating pain, only to be relieved of their suffering on payment of money to you?

No language has yet been invented that can properly characterize the kind of God and the kind of Saviour that you represent.

Could there be a more diabolical method of dishonesty than your hypocritical campaigns carried on under the cloak of evangelism? Talk about selling Indulgences during the Middle Ages! Why, man, they were pikers compared to you, and no less dishonest! When the book, "The Power of the

Charlatan" is rewritten, you deserve a special chapter entitled: "The Prince of Humbugs."

Now, what do you mean by your campaign of "saving souls for Christ"? Do you mean to say that if a person "accepts" Jesus as his "Saviour," all of the "sins" he has committed will be forgiven and he will, when he dies, "go to Heaven and sit on the Right Hand of God"? Is that all one must do to wipe out his sins? Is that all you must do to escape hell and have "eternal" life? In other words, the basic creed of your religion is: Commit any crime, any wrong, any injustice, any despicable act, any monstrous deed, and these sins will be forgiven, if only you "accept Jesus" and send *you* a contribution?

Let me repeat in no uncertain terms and with added emphasis that *there is no such thing as sin*. Sin was invented by the perverted minds of the ministers of religion, to frighten and rob the ignorant and the superstitious.

I want to reiterate again and again that there are wrongs and injustices, *but no sin!*

Man was not conceived in iniquity and born in sin. He is no more "sinful" than any other living creature.

And let me tell you another thing. A wrong act is irreparable. It cannot be wiped out. We can make amends, and try to atone for the injury inflicted, but the wrong *cannot be undone*. It cannot be eradicated.

Even a God is impotent in the face of a crime. For, when,

"The moving finger writes; and having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line  
Nor all your Tears wash out a word of it."

The better code of morality is to understand the consequences of your acts and try not to commit a wrong; restrain yourself from inflicting an injury upon another.

It is often true that virtue is its own reward and a clear conscience is better than gold.

Perhaps with your cunning brain you cannot understand such an ethical code in the field of morality.

Do you keep a record of the conduct of those you have "saved for Jesus Christ"? How do you know that many do

not commit the same "sins" over and over again—the so-called "back-sliders"?

The state is very much interested in keeping a record of its criminal population. Statistics are a valuable instrument in determining punishment and providing a means for the study of the elimination of crime. Must we, in this enlightened age, abandon all of our accumulated knowledge regarding the criminal tendencies of the habitual law-breaker, for your up-to-the-minute method of selling indulgences?

Look at the criminal records of the inmates in our penal institutions for proof that the religionists, and those whose "souls" have been "saved for Jesus," fill our prisons and penitentiaries.

Let me give you but one instance, and I could give you thousands of the falsity of your preaching, if such a thing were necessary.

Do you remember the Bible-carrying and daily-praying Ronald Morrone? This pious young man regularly attended Billy Graham's New York Crusade at Madison Square Garden this past summer. He made a "decision for Christ." What did it do for him? The following morning, after he had given his "soul" to Jesus, he viciously and brutally killed an innocent fifteen-year-old girl because she refused to submit to his savage lustful advances.

Did "giving his soul to Jesus" restrain his criminal tendencies; it did not. He believes as you preach—commit any crime and God will forgive you. And that was exactly his defense. While sitting in his cell, reading his Bible, he consoled himself with the thought that God has already forgiven him his horrible deed.

What a perversion of religion! What a perversion of Justice! Is it not obvious, even to the simple-minded, that such a system of religion breeds crime rather than prevents it? Not only that, but it makes the perpetrator callous to his own misdeeds!

Has Ronald Morrone any remorse for his dastardly crime? Is his conscience being scourged? It is not. On the contrary, he boasts that he finds consolation in his Bible reading, perhaps from the stories of rape and murder with which the "Holy Scriptures" abound and where the perpetrators find

forgiveness and consolation from the Bible God. Shades of Amnon and King David!

And if Ronald Morrone is released from prison with no remorse and with no lesson of restraint learned from his brutal murder, would he not commit the same crime and with the same feeling of impunity as when he so savagely killed his lovely school-mate?

So much for the saving grace of Christianity, which Robert G. Ingersoll so aptly said, "Sells crime on credit."

In addition to using the name of Jesus as an hypnotic medium to lull your audience into a state of lethargy, you resort to the use of the most degrading and horrible idea of fear ever conceived to stupefy the people. That is the doctrine of Hell. It is so monstrous that words are inadequate to properly describe it or to characterize the scoundrels who preach it. In your own words you call Hell "a place of torment" and "where the worm dieth not."

As an added technique in your method of frightening people to give you their hard-earned money, to save them from the so-called wrath of your God and your mythical hell (and this is your own quotation), "If we miss the first resurrection, then the body shall remain in the grave for another thousand years." Mind you, another thousand years of torment! But if you believe in Jesus, you say, if you "accept Jesus, the book will be open—the book of life, which has the names of those who believe in Christ . . ." and they shall be saved from this eternal torment! But, you continue, if you do not believe in Jesus, if your name does not appear in the book of life, then (and here are your own words again), ". . . whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

And how will it be determined whose names appear in the book of life—by the simple expedient of giving you a contribution for God?

Man, have you no conscience: have you no feeling of compassion for the sick and the suffering? Don't you know that fear produces one of the most poignant sensations of pain?

What kind of sadistic God, what kind of sadistic Saviour do you preach?

If I had the power to fashion the Universe, there would be no blind, no deaf, no dumb, there would be no crippled, and

each child born would live free of disease, and possess a mentality capable enough to withstand all the rebuffs and disappointments of life.

But you don't believe this pious rot about Hell. You don't believe this nonsense.

You are merely using this monstrous idea of Hell to make the poor deluded fools you preach to give up their hard-earned money for you to grow rich.

However, if there is such a place as the Hell you describe, then you are a fit subject for its torment. Here again, in your own words, is your own indictment. You say: "If you love money and you keep making money and you can't ever make enough and you're never satisfied, then you are in Hell."

I have a financial report of your condition—and how you must enjoy Hell! This report states that your wealth runs into the millions of dollars and that you are getting richer every day! And yet you call your evangelistic quackery a "non-profit organization"! Non-profit to the gullible and the deluded men and women who give you their money on your false promises. What an outrage!

While you full well deserve to go where you so glibly tell others will be the fate that will befall them, if they fail in their contributions to you, for God, you nevertheless will *not* go to Hell. You know as well as I do that there is no such place.

You are a scoundrel to preach such a depraved doctrine. Let me repeat, you are a scoundrel to preach such a depraved doctrine in order to grow rich. It is too monstrous, too despicable, too reprehensible for words. And if language is incapable of characterizing such a doctrine, how utterly inadequate it is to properly condemn the scoundrel who so brazenly, and so bare-facedly, preaches it!

You are as guilty of a crime as the man who sells contaminated food. You poison the mind just as surely as the contaminated food poisons the body. Only one who possesses the mentality of a cunning hypocrite could stoop to such a nefarious and unscrupulous scheme for deceiving people with such calloused indifference.

At one of your meetings you report that you "called for those who were suffering from tuberculosis to come forward." You say that "about 400 victims of the dread disease came and

stood in front of the platform . . ." You infer in your statement that you cured these 400 victims of tuberculosis.

Where are they? How do you know that they were cured? How do you know that they were not moved to do your bidding out of pure mental suggestion or hypnotic influence on your part, or out of a form of exhibitionism "to demonstrate for God"?

You know that by preaching the "saving grace of Jesus" your audience is stirred to an emotional fanaticism which stultifies their brain and paralyzes their intellect and makes them an easy prey to your charlatanism, only to leave them upon realization with nothing but a cruel delusion.

Well might they cry with Jesus: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

How do you know that these people had tuberculosis in the first place? Do you have the medical knowledge and are you capable of diagnosing this frightful disease? Why didn't you have a reputable physician present to examine these people when they came forward, and after they had been "cured," so you could be certain of the results?

What a wonderful opportunity you had to prove your powers. Do you know that there are thousands of institutions throughout the world who make it a specialty of treating tubercular patients who would have hailed your results with the greatest acclaim? But you know better than I do why you had no physician present. You know why. He would have given the *lie* to you!

And then again, don't you know that tuberculosis is a frightfully contagious disease, and if 400 sufferers gathered together in a public meeting of thousands of people, there was grave danger of infecting others and imperiling the health of the community?

You should be made to submit proof of your claims of healing or pay the penalty the law provides for misrepresentation.

Then you say, "I prayed for one boy who was suffering from epilepsy and he was cured." How did you know that he had epilepsy? Did he suffer a seizure in your presence? Have you enough medical knowledge to know whether a person is suffering from epilepsy? And if he really had epilepsy, how do you know that he was cured? What proof have you that he



did not suffer a seizure after you left? Epilepsy is a baffling disease. It has afflicted and plagued mankind for thousands of years. If you could cure any one of epilepsy, what a crown of glory would be placed upon your head. But you are lying. You are lying to make people believe that you have some kind of special power to relieve them of their afflictions. What a mountebank!

What a convenient scheme you have to make money! Your religion is all profit; your stock in trade is SIN. You have no merchandise to buy, no commissions to pay, and no refunds to be made for unsatisfactory results, and on top of this you threaten with Hell-fire all those who do not believe as you want them to. And to add insult to injury, you enjoy tax exemption on your 100% profit, while honest business men must pay taxes to support your chicanery! What a mockery!

Thomas Paine said—

“No man ought to make a living by religion.

It is dishonest so to do.

Religion is not an act that can be performed by proxy.

One person cannot act religion for another.”

Do you know that while you can carry on your Fake Healing in the State of Florida, a reputable physician would be put in jail if he tried to practice medicine without a special license?

I have a friend who is a distinguished physician, a graduate of Johns Hopkins University. He offered his services some years ago during an epidemic here in Miami, and he was told by city officials, that if he attempted to offer medical advice, he would be subject to arrest!

Imagine that! A qualified physician is prohibited from giving medical advice and rendering help to the sick and the suffering while you can carry on your fakery with brazen impunity.

Now listen to this and see how it sounds to your own ears, because they are your own words: You say that

“The most . . . exciting thing that took place (in one of your so called healing campaigns) was in the case of a man who *indicated* to me that his feet were crippled and he couldn't walk. He tried to walk with a large cane. I

prayed for him and then suggested that the man try to walk. And walk he did”!

How did you know that this man couldn't walk in the first place? Did you examine him? How could you tell whether or not he was a faker?

A writer whose father was a preacher told me that on many occasions he acted as a “shill,” as the gamblers call it, under conditions similar to your scheme. Imagine, using his own son to deceive his congregation! Was this man planted in the audience to act as a stooge for you?

Have you medical knowledge enough to know whether the man was really crippled and did not feign his inability to walk? Again, why didn't you have a physician there to examine him and why didn't you have the same physician to examine the man after your ministrations, to determine the results? And where is this man? What is his name? Have you a picture of him? And what proof can you submit that he was cured?

I make this public challenge to you. Come with me, and with three reputable citizens of your choosing, to a hospital where the blind are confined. Let the physician in charge bring you a person who cannot see. I will give the Variety Children's Hospital of Miami \$10,000.00 if you cure that person of his blindness.

I don't want any of your hypocritical excuses that “under certain circumstances” or that “God does not work that way,” or that you do not accept challenges. You either accept this challenge and produce results or suffer the consequences for your cruel lying. I demand that you produce one of your “miracles” today, not one of yesterday, or tomorrow, but today, in broad daylight, where honest men can witness it.

There is a special reason why I make this offer to you. It is because you have the dastardly and unmitigated gall to announce that you have printed some of your sermons in Braille for the use of the blind!!

Here is further evidence of your brazen hypocrisy and callous disregard for the feelings and afflictions of others. In all the history of imposture I do not know of a comparable instance.

In the first paragraph of your letter, from which I quoted,

you state that "a man received his sight," referring of course, to your healing powers because of your direct contact with Jesus. Where is that man? What proof have you that he was ever blind? What proof have you that his sight was restored? Until you produce such proof, certified by people of unquestionable integrity, you must stand condemned as a cruel imposter.

If you can cure the blind, as you say you have done, what need is there for them to read your sermons in Braille? Why not let them read your sermons with their restored eyesight? So insatiable is your greed for money, and so utterly indifferent are your feelings as to the sufferings of others, that you impudently beg from those who can see to contribute money to be used to print your nonsense and lies for the blind to read in Braille!

How utterly incongruous!

How utterly unbelievable!

To add insult to injury, you have the brazen effrontery to tell those who suffer from blindness that it is God's will that they are so afflicted! If so, then why do you tell them that you can restore their sight?

As Shakespeare would say, what "an odious, damned lie"!

If you cure but one person of blindness, if you cure but one person of tuberculosis, if you cure but one person of cancer, if you cure but one person of heart trouble, if you cure but one person who is dumb and make him talk, if you cure but one person of his deafness, if you make but one person walk who is crippled, if you relieve the pains of suffering humanity, as you so boastfully claim, then I shall go to Washington, D.C., our nation's capital and seek a personal interview with the President of the United States, and shall urge upon him that you be appointed the head of the nation's Department of Public Health, Education and Welfare, and I shall write to every United States Senator to approve your appointment. I shall, in addition, petition the American Medical Association to confer upon you its highest and most exalted honors for your achievements in the field of medicine, and I shall personally appeal to such philanthropic organizations as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations to give you a minimum of one million dollars for your services to mankind.

What more do you want?

An honest man who claimed to do what you so boastfully announce you have accomplished, would accept this offer with gladness. A liar, a hypocrite, and a scoundrel would not accept this challenge. In what category do you belong?

I do not believe that the First Amendment of the United States Constitution ("Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof") was ever intended to exempt from the laws applicable to others the fraudulent activities of the dishonest ministers of religion. Equal rights for all, special privileges to none, is the fundamental basis and principle of our Constitution, and the First Amendment was made part of the Bill of Rights solely to guarantee the rights of conscience and protect all conscientious believers. That, and nothing more.

Thomas Paine expressed this principle in *Common Sense*. He said, "As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of all governments to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith."

That is what is meant by the commonly used phrase "freedom of religion." It does not, nor was it ever intended to mean the support and protection of every crack-brained thought of the religious fanatic, or the hallucinations of the religiously insane. Religion and insanity are an all too common relationship.

The law must draw the line of distinction between the conscientious believer and the religious fanatic and racketeer.

The polygamy of the Mormons; slavery—the keeping of a human being in a state of bondage; the snake cults whose fanatical devotees endanger the lives of the rest of the community by publicly testing their deluded faith with poisonous reptiles; witchcraft—the bloodiest page in the history of the Crimes of Religion, with Biblical sanction equal to that of The Ten Commandments, have all been prohibited as being against public policy, despite the fact that they have the same Biblical authority as the faith healing of Jesus.

As I cannot express this truth strongly enough, I want to state with redoubled emphasis that the Bible is not a legal authority in the secular Republic of the United States of America.

To give you special exemption from the Medical Practices

Act is in effect to establish a religion in violation of the provisions of the First Amendment. The exemption which you now claim reverts to the medieval decree of "Benefit of Clergy," when "men of the cloth" could commit "every crime on the calendar," from that of grand larceny to rape and cold-blooded murder and be free from prosecution. If these exemptions for sanctimonious conduct do not cease, and cease immediately, the greatest Constitution ever conceived for a free people will slowly but surely be destroyed. If these special privileges do not cease, they will be like rats gnawing at the hull of a great ship until it sinks.

America! Wake up to this great danger—the imminent danger of the destruction of the most important and valuable provision of our Constitution!

We live in a society of laws, laws designed to protect the ignorant and the innocent from such charlatans as you and your ilk. That is why I want to bring you within the reach of these laws and make you subject to their provisions. I demand of our civil authorities that you be made to stand trial for your so-called Faith Healing practices. You know deep down in your heart, Oral Roberts, that you are masquerading under false pretenses as being the "representative of God," and that contact with you is a direct line of contact with the healing power of Jesus. You have no more contact with Jesus than I have.

The Bible is no longer a criterion of truth. Thomas Paine said, long ago, "Before anything can be admitted as proved by the Bible, the Bible itself must first be proved to be true."

How despicable can one get? To what depths of mercenary depravity can one fall who preaches that he has personal contact with an omnipotent God who has the power to heal the sick and relieve suffering? Do you suppose for a moment that by wrapping yourself in the cloak of religion you can get away, with impunity, with this pious scheme to defraud?

We shall see.

The Day of Judgment is coming, Oral Roberts—the JUDGMENT OF THE COURT!

Thank you for listening.

Good night.

## INVOCATION \*

Secretary,  
Florida Historical Society

I am in receipt of my renewal bill for membership in the Florida Historical Society. I have hesitated to send my dues and I think you are entitled to know the reason why. It is a question of the right of conscience.

When I attended the dinner of the Society in Miami, I was shocked to see that this historical function was opened with an invocation and an appeal for the blessings of God. We are not children, and as adults interested in historical matter, I think we can well dispense with this utterly anachronistic gesture. Of what value was this invocation? Was it answered? Did it do any good? Did it bring from "on high" any new historical knowledge? Did it reveal the historical truths that we are devoting our energies to discover? It did not! So why was it done? The purpose of this organization is to discover historical truths and disseminate historical facts. How on earth can an invocation contribute to this? Then again, the Florida Historical Society is, I take it, a purely secular organization, and the question of any religious ceremony is, in my opinion, puerile. No answers and no help have ever come from praying to the myth of heaven, so why continue it?

I could not conscientiously attend such a meeting knowing that an invocation would be part of the agenda, without making a protest as a violation of my right of conscience.

If the Florida Historical Society will eliminate this practice from future meetings, I will be happy to renew my membership.

JOSEPH LEWIS

Mr. Joseph Lewis

Our secretary has turned your letter of June 13 over to me.

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," September, 1958.

It is difficult to answer your letter. If you have been in the South for some time, you know that a tremendous emphasis is placed on form and appeal to divinity. To some extent this is a heritage of the Civil War. Southerners believed so firmly that God was on their side that at first they could not understand the reason why they lost. In time they developed the theory that they were God's chosen people and were being tested just as Job had been. Thus they had to appease the divinity on every occasion. This heritage together with the puritanism which moved into the South has resulted in the forms which are used.

We have had discussions in other meetings as to the question of an appeal to God for a blessing. Some people consider this no more than superstition and a reversion to primitive ways in which an angry divinity was appeased constantly by certain rituals. On the other hand, a majority of the people in the South are not satisfied unless we have some religious implications in all of our meetings.

In reality, what difference does it make? None of us believe that it will result in any aid in discovering historical truths about Florida. It is basically a form and does satisfy most of those present. It does not seem to be that it should make an essential difference to individuals who do not agree. Over and over again we close our eyes and ears to ritual that means nothing to us as individuals. If you have read the *Quarterly*, you know that we are attempting to find historical facts and to make valid interpretations of our past. We are not a religious organization but it is true that our members allow the local committee to determine the form used at dinners. Under the circumstances I know that the local committees will continue to have ministers and laymen offer a blessing.

PROF. R. W. PATRICK

Dear Prof. Patrick

I have read with considerable interest and with equal enjoyment your very frank and illuminating letter, and I deeply appreciate your writing me as you did.

Being a Southerner myself—having been born in Montgomery, Alabama—I did not know that my brethren considered themselves "God's special children." I cannot tell you how happy I am that I read the Lectures of Robert G. Inger-

soll early enough in life to emancipate me from this degrading superstition. Certainly, the results of the Civil War should have sufficed to disabuse them of this silly delusion. And, if nothing else was needed, this should have cured them of appealing for divine blessings, particularly so, since the Bible itself upholds slavery as a divine institution. Oh, how long, how long, will it take for people to realize the utter uselessness of asking for blessings from the Myth of Heaven.

But superstition dies hard. It knows no reason. It is dedicated to blind faith. No matter what the results would have been, it would not have changed their superstitious beliefs. If the South had won the war its people would have given their God credit for the victory. That they lost, did not shake their faith. Only those poisoned with the virus of religious nonsense can fully understand the Biblical precept "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13-15).

No wonder our educators have such a difficult task, and which is made even more difficult when religion is introduced into our educational institutions. I think one of the great faults with the South—the Bible Belt—has been that it has permitted education to be adulterated with religion until it has become so saturated with superstition that it is sometimes difficult to separate the one from the other.

In the instance of the matter which prompted my letter, I cannot help but feel that to permit such an intellectual demoralizing act to take place, and make no protest concerning it, would be, in the words of Thomas Paine, that, "it is an affront to truth to treat falsehood with complaisance." For an historical society to engage in the puerile gesture is inexcusable.

Where is the Southerner who will rise up and emancipate his people from this degrading superstition?

JOSEPH LEWIS



## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND BIRTH CONTROL\*

Honorable Louis J. Lefkowitz,  
Attorney General of the State of New York

In view of the action of Dr. Morris A. Jacobs, Commissioner of Hospitals of the City of New York, in refusing to permit a physician to prescribe a contraceptive device to a married woman whose physical condition indicated such a need, I respectfully urge you to bring charges against Dr. Jacobs, for the purpose of having him removed from office, for his failure to support the physician's absolute right to prescribe the contraceptive device specified in Section 1145 of the New York State Penal Law, and court rulings in connection with that section.

The church is always opposed to intellectual advancement and particularly the progress of medical science. Modern medicine is the greatest enemy to the "profits of religion." Religion opposed the dissection of the human body. It opposed anesthesia. It opposed vaccination. It has opposed blood-transfusion. It now opposes birth control. Birth control is one of the most vital necessities in a growing population in our industrial world.

If a Catholic doctor finds the performance of his public duties to be repugnant to his religious belief, then he should resign—and if all Catholic doctors hold the same opinion, then there should be no Catholic doctors in city hospitals. Because a doctor is a member of the Jehovah Witnesses, does that give him the right to refuse to save the life of a patient who needs a blood transfusion, because blood transfusions are contrary to his religious belief? No person of the Jewish faith

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," October, 1958.

should hold a public position if he considers his religion above that of his public duty, and by the same token, no person of the Protestant faith should hold a public office if he considers his religion above that of his public obligation.

If a person's religion protected him from a disease and saved him from the inexorable law of life, that would be an entirely different matter. Disease is no respecter of a person or religion, and the religious belief of a person, specially in a public institution, who considers his religion above the law, is not only incongruous but utterly indefensible. No religion or religious institution is above the law of the State! Imagine the confusion that would prevail in our social and political activities if the multitude of religious warring sects dominated our civil life. That is why the principle of the Separation of Church and State is of paramount importance to us. When you become a public servant your religious beliefs are subordinate to your sworn public duties.

Scientific prevention of conception in the marital state, where child-bearing may prove fatal to the mother, is condemned as immoral by the hypocritical and sanctimonious ministers of a religion which imposes celibacy but not chastity upon its lay priests. The denial of the natural functions of the body is a perversion compared to the normal satisfaction of them. How far removed is this religious fanaticism from that of the Sabbatarians who refused to help a ship in distress and save the passengers because it was Sunday?

Then again, what does a celibate priest know about the marital relations, unless it be those who have been flagrantly guilty of the adulterous act—such as Father Hans Schmidt who killed his woman companion, cut up her body, and threw the severed parts into the Hudson River. He paid for this dastardly crime with his own life in the electric chair at Sing Sing Prison; or Father Joseph J. Leonard who was caught in the adulterous act with a teen-age wife, in the Knights of Columbus Hotel, and was shot to death by her Bible student husband; or the priest in France who, but a few weeks ago, was convicted of murder for having killed his pregnant paramour; or the priest who was found dead in bed from asphyxiation with his female companion, some months ago, in a motel out West.

When a person's religion interferes with the public duty of a physician, it becomes dangerous and a menace, and it is imperative that such religious fanaticism be restrained by the State.

JOSEPH LEWIS

## FAMOUS PERSONS LABELED “FOOLS” \*

To the Editor

When you can't answer a person's arguments, call him a name. This has been a convenient form of argument for many years, in fact for centuries, by those who refuse to face reality and who ignore the facts of life.

This is what Rita B. Edgett does in her letter of October 2nd to The Patent Trader. She called me a “fool.”

Well, I am in good company. Columbus was called a fool because he said he could prove the earth was round. He was the heretic of his day. Benjamin Franklin was called a fool when he invented the lightning rod and defied the heavens. Dr. Ignatz Semmelweiss was called a fool when he announced that he had discovered the cure for puerperal fever. Charles Darwin was called a fool when he discovered the great principle of Evolution and when his great book “Origin of the Species” was published. Dr. Morton was called a fool when he said he could make a person immune to pain, while being operated on, by the use of an anesthetic. Thomas A. Edison was called a fool when he sought financial help to develop the electric light. The Wright brothers were called fools because they said they could produce a “flying machine.” They were called fools by the religionists because they said they were “flying in the face of God.” Lindberg was called the “Flying Fool” when he made his historic trip across the ocean.

Perhaps the best explanation I can give of Rita B. Edgett's letter and her use of the word, “fool” is contained in the words of Thomas Paine, when he said:

“It is so easy to find abusive words.”

\* Reprinted from “The Patent Trader,” Oct. 9, 1958.

Thomas Paine also said:

"To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead."

Rita B. Edgett's blind faith reminds me of the words of Job, when he said "Though He slay me, yet will I love Him." I cannot subscribe to such a slavish creed. I prefer to follow the advice of Thomas Jefferson, when he said:

"Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of God; because, if there be one, he must approve the homage of reason rather than of blindfolded fear. Do not be frightened from this inquiry by any fear of its consequences. If it end in a belief that there is no God, you will find incitements to virtue in the comfort and pleasantness you feel in its exercise and in the love of others it will procure for you."

If I believed as you do, Rita, that I have an immortal soul, I would not hesitate for a single moment, in view of the vicissitudes of life, to "shuffle off this mortal coil" and enjoy eternal bliss. However, I am not such a fool as to believe in that superstitious delusion that I have an immortal soul, and that I should become a mental slave to save it. I will leave such nonsense to Rita B. Edgett.

JOSEPH LEWIS

## SEPARATE COURTS \*

I had occasion recently to visit the Court of Appeals at Albany. While waiting for my case to be reached I listened to four legal arguments. Two concerned the interpretation of New York City's intricate Sales Tax Law, one sought a new trial for a man convicted of murder in the first degree on the ground that his act was provoked and not premeditated, and one sought interpretation of the Election Law. The case in which I was interested dealt with a violation of the Constitution of the State of New York.

It occurred to me while listening to the arguments of those cases that improvement could be made in the procedure of our trial and appeal courts.

Without casting the slightest reflection upon the learned judges of the Court of Appeals, it came to my law mind that one would have to be a proverbial Solomon to decide flawlessly all the intricate questions presented in these four cases alone.

I noted that the two cases where the tax question was involved were argued by a representative of the Corporation Counsel; the one dealing with the act of murder was argued by a representative of the District Attorney. These are two separate branches of the law—civil and criminal. From what I understand from the lawyers of my acquaintance, they are as definitely distinct as the general practitioner and the surgeon are in medicine.

I do not believe that Clarence Darrow and John W. Davis could sit upon the same bench and arrive at the same conclusions upon these two different questions of the law.

This prompts the suggestion that the Court of Appeals be divided into two branches—one to consider criminal cases and

\* Reprinted from "The Patent Trader" (Mt. Kisco, N. Y.), November 6, 1958.

the other to deal with cases involving breaches of contract and constitutional questions.

Criminal acts may be the results of heredity, social conditions and circumstances wholly beyond the control of the perpetrator. Infractions of civil law certainly cannot be put in the same category. To appraise fairly and determine justly the results of acts in the criminal field may require a medically trained mind equally as much as one legally trained.

Just as we have separated the prosecution of these two branches of the law into separate and distinct departments, we should, for obvious reasons, try criminal and civil cases before separate courts and before justices who are specialists in their particular field of jurisprudence.

## IMPERIAL CROWNED HYPOCRITE \*

When inevitable death comes, it is final destiny. We are then "one with yesterday's seven thousand years," and that is all.

The death of certain people, however, cannot help but be the cause of some measure of evaluation, particularly people of prominence in public life, as well as scientists, inventors, explorers, statesmen, artists, and others who, by their labors, influenced their generation for good or evil.

The death of Pope Pius XII prompts this observation and causes me to make the following comment. The Pope is the so-called spiritual head of millions of people who call themselves Catholics. They consider him, and he boldly states that he is—The Vicar of God on earth; that he received his divine authority directly from Jesus Christ himself; that he is Infallible; that his commands must be obeyed; that any violations of his edicts are mortal sins which are to be punished by eternal damnation.

What significance has this with the death of Pope Pius XII? It is this. He left a Will, and in that Will he asks forgiveness from anyone that he might have offended by word or by deed.

Here are the exact words as they appear in his Will: "I humbly ask pardon of all whom I may have offended, harmed or scandalized by word or by deed."

What do these words mean? Are they a confession, on the part of the Pope, that he was *not* Infallible; that he had made mistakes, and that he had injured certain people by his actions and had even scandalized others?

Could there possibly be a more devastating statement and confession of the utter hypocrisy of the claim of Infallibility of Popedom—or that this "Vicar of God" was nothing but a

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," November, 1958.



common mortal subject to the frailties, shortcomings and limitations of a mere man?

To ask forgiveness for your mistakes and for the injuries your actions have inflicted upon others, is a commendable trait coming from an ordinary being who is cognizant of his imperfections and limitations, but coming from one who pretends Infallibility and divinely inspired intelligence, it is nothing but pure unadulterated hypocrisy.

The sham excuse of the dual character of Pius XII of fallible man and Infallible Pope, only compounds the sophistry—especially when he had the brazen effrontery to proclaim that he had seen the Virgin Mary “The Mother of God”—in her heavenly abode—when as a matter of fact, he was under a delusion, suffering from religious hallucination, or was deliberately uttering a pious lie!

Surely the Pope should know as well as I do that a wrong is irreparable; it cannot be undone. You can ask forgiveness for a misdeed but the deed itself cannot be eradicated. Even a God cannot change an act once it is committed. He is impotent in the face of a fact.

Many who do not claim perfection and infallibility have a better moral code than the Pope. It is to so live that you do not have to ask that you be pardoned for having “offended, harmed or scandalized” others. Their standard of ethics is to restrain themselves from committing deeds that might inflict harm upon others. Such ethical conduct does not require the asking of forgiveness. Virtue is still its own reward.

I prefer the ethical and moral precepts of Robert G. Ingersoll to that of the Pope. Ingersoll said:

“To my mind it seems clear that you had better injure yourself than another. Better be a spendthrift than a thief. Better throw away your own money than steal the money of another . . . There is but one blasphemy, and that is injustice. There is but one worship, and that is justice! . . . Right and wrong are not revelations from some supposed god, but have been discovered through the experience and intelligence of man. There is nothing miraculous or supernatural about morality. Neither has morality anything to do with another world, or with an infinite being. It applies to conduct here, and the

effect of that conduct on ourselves and others determines its nature."

And like Ingersoll, "I would rather go down to the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust," than to have been that Imperial Crowned Hypocrite, known as Pius XII—Pope of Rome.

## XMAS IS NOT CHRISTIAN \*

It is not inappropriate at this time of the year for a Free-thinker to give his version of Christmas—its meaning and origin. To the Freethinker, Christmas and its celebration does not in any way refer to the birth of Jesus Christ. There is an abundance of historical evidence to prove that when Christianity came into power, it merely converted a pagan, yes, a very primitive custom, for its own use.

The Standard Dictionary defines Christmas, as "the 25th of December, which is celebrated as the birth of Christ." This definition is extremely significant, as it does not say that on the 25th day of December Christ was born. The reason for this is that the birth of Christ was not always celebrated on the 25th of December.

Previous to the fifth century, Christians in various parts of the earth observed the birth of Christ on the 5th of December, the 6th of January, some in the month of May, and others in the month of June. Because of this wide divergence of opinion regarding Christ's birth, the church finally established by law the 25th day of December.

Even now, the day, the month and the year of Christ's birth is decidedly uncertain. The 25th day of December was selected to replace the pagan feast of Saturnalia, which was marked by simplicity, virtue and joviality. In substantiation of the above fact permit me to quote St. Chrysostom (A.D. 390), one of the early church fathers who, in referring to the pagan celebration, says:

"On this day, also, the birth of Christ was later fixed in Rome, in order that, whilst the heathens were with their *profane* ceremonies, the Christians may perform their *holy rite* undisturbed."

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," December, 1958.

For nearly a thousand years the celebration of Christmas by Christians was a most solemn day, and all manifestations of joy and happiness were rigorously prohibited. Regarding this, let me quote Gibbon in his monumental work on the Roman Empire (vol. 2, page 383):

“The Roman Christians ignorant of the real date of his (Christ’s) birth, fixed the solemn festival of the 25th day of December or Winter Solstice, when the pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol.”

In India, in China, in Egypt, in Scandinavia and other countries in and around the same latitude, celebrations were held at this time of the year, or what is astronomically known as the Winter Solstice.

From time immemorial, the birth of Gods and the sons of the Gods were always celebrated at this time of the year. Noteworthy are Buddha, Mithrae and Gairis; most significant of all, however, is that of Adonis whose birth Tertullian, early church father, says was celebrated on December 25th and that the ceremonies were held in the cave where Jesus was born! Tertullian condemned the celebration and called it rank idolatry!

There are many peculiar and interesting ceremonies connected with this celebration, the basis of which comes from ancient Sun Worship, when primitive man offered thanks and supplication because the days began to lengthen and the fear of destruction had passed. Christmas is merely the name applied to this primitive custom and has been appropriated as the birth of Jesus Christ.

Santa Claus and the custom of gift bearing is of comparatively modern origin and has no religious significance whatsoever. Santa Claus is non-sectarian and non-religious. He knows no distinction of race, color or creed. While Jesus Christ came, not to bring peace, but the sword, Santa Claus came as the Harbinger of Happiness. He is the Jolly Good Fellow for all the world to love. If we must have a mythical God let us have one of Joy and Happiness and call him Santa Claus.

## WHAT CHURCH? WHICH GOD?\*

*(The following letter was reprinted from "The Patent Trader" Mt. Kisco, N. Y., October 26, 1958)—*

In view of the fact that a controversy was started in The Patent Trader because of your publishing a news item about my suit against Dr. Morris A. Jacobs, Commissioner of Hospitals of the City of New York, for his refusal to permit physicians to practice the therapy of birth control in the City's hospitals, I think it no more than right that I should enter this discussion—particularly, since a clergyman and others have injected religion into the subject.

While I appreciate others coming to my defense, I do not need anyone to defend my convictions. I think I should do that myself.

When the Rev. Robert W. Sawders, Pastor of The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Yorktown, enters the controversy, he must realize that he is not entitled to any special consideration, especially when he states that he speaks for "God." I would like to know what are his credentials? Has he a special dispensation? Has he a contract with God? And by whom is it signed? By what authority does he speak for God? He talks about humility and yet has the brazen effrontery to say that HE represents God. What irony!

In matters of this kind "blind faith" will not do, we want evidence. If he cannot produce written, verifiable evidence, then I would like to know if he knows God by "speaking" to Him? And if so, what language did he use? And did he understand Him?

It is so easy to be deluded. Our insane asylums are filled with people who have "spoken" to God and who "know" Him. Remember, there is no monitor of the mind to keep it

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," December, 1958.

from believing that which is untrue, or from restraining the tongue from speaking that which is false.

Recently a young mother killed her two children, and when asked why she committed such a horrible deed, replied, "God told me to do it." Last year, only a few miles away, in Ridgefield, Conn., a man, a confirmed Bible student who worked in a prominent restaurant, suddenly, in a moment of religious frenzy, left his place, taking a large carving knife with him, and when he arrived home, plunged the knife into the heart of his child. When questioned by the police as to why he murdered his only child, he replied, "God told me to do it." *This monstrous crime was reported in our local papers.*

No wonder Robert G. Ingersoll said, that, "Christianity has made more lunatics than it has built asylums to care for them."

The Rev. Robert W. Sawders invites us to come into his church to find God. If I should come into your church would God speak to me? By what way can I know God and God know me? How can you identify God? Would you know a God if you saw one? If God is in your church, He is also in other churches. If so, why does each church claim that it is the only true church, and all others are fakes and frauds? How do I know that your church is not one of the multitude of warring sects? And if all churches are the same, why are there so many conversions taking place? Why so many missionaries? Why does one try to outdo the others? Is it basically the profits of religion that they are after?

Let me repeat: I want authenticated evidence that you represent God. If you cannot produce such evidence then how do I know that you are telling me the truth—and that you are not masquerading under false pretences?

The Rev. Robert W. Sawders attempts to ridicule Darwin. Now, isn't that too bad. He calls Evolution "an obnoxious theory." This merely proves that intellectually and scientifically the reverend gentleman still lives in the 17th century, and he, himself, offers a perfect example of how religion can stultify the brain. It's incredible, but true, or as Shakespeare says, "'Tis true, 'tis sad; 'tis sad, sad 'tis true." I have a feeling that the Reverend still believes in the flatness of the earth.

If the Rev. Mr. Robert W. Sawders has a friend who is a physician, he should ask him to take him into the dissection

room of a reputable hospital for absolute proof of the evolutionary processes of life. There he will see, at the end of the spine, the os coccyx, the remnants of a rudimentary tail, which we inherited from our ape-like ancestors.

And let me tell the Rev. Mr. Sawders, in no uncertain terms, that I would rather be the descendant of an honest ape, who "ate bananas or worms or something," than to be born in iniquity and conceived in sin, and at death face hell fire and eternal damnation. I also want to emphatically state—religion, church and God to the contrary—that man is not a sinful being. He is no more sinful than any other form of life. And like Ingersoll, if there is a God, I ask Him to write beside my name that I denied this lie for Him.

The concept and enunciation of the principle of Evolution is one of the greatest achievements of the human mind.

Every new achievement of science destroys the myth of the Bible Deity.

Our new earth satellite, Pioneer, attaining an altitude of 80,000 miles, with a velocity of over 25,000 miles an hour, and with an accuracy and precision that equal the elements of nature, broadcasts vital information from the celestial regions, but no discovery of God in the heavens. It confirms the statement of the great astronomer, LaLande, when he said, "I have searched the heavens and found no God."

What a mockery does this great scientific achievement of man make of the petty religions of the earth. How can prayers be answered when there is no God in heaven to hear them?

We are on the threshold of robbing nature of her intermost secrets. We are about to discover the secret of life and the mystery of the universe. The forces of the universe are no longer an enigma to man. Man is the only God that man can know.

This great scientific achievement should prove to be a day of mental emancipation for all religionists from the superstitious beliefs in their antiquated and discredited creeds, which have held them in mental bondage to a jealous, revengeful and vindictive God.

If religious people are happy, why do they pray so much? Why are they always asking God to forgive them? Why are they always asking God for mercy and pleading with Him not to punish them for their sins? Why is death such a horror to

them, when we know that "it will come when it will come"? Religion or no religion, God or no God—

"When the Moving Finger writes, And having writ,  
Moves on; Nor all your Piety or Wit,  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

If I have an immortal soul I do not need Jesus Christ to save it for me. He couldn't do anything for himself, how can he be of help to me?

If God found it necessary to kill someone for the sins of the world, He should have killed Himself. That is what any decent father would have done. For a father to have killed his son, for the acts for which he himself is responsible, is too repulsive for decent people to condone. This is sadism that even insults the savage.

I say, stop making yourself miserable for the "love of God"; stop trying to appease this mythical Sadist of the Air for the false promise of "eternal" life of which you know not.

I can speak from experience. The joy of the intellectual emancipation from the superstitions of religion and the belief in a jealous, vindictive and revengeful God, "passeth all understanding."

Enjoy life here on earth.

These precepts are also still good. "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched," and a "Bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

As Omar Khayyan said "Take the cash and let the credit go." You'll be the happier for it.

The following letter DID NOT appear in "The Patent Trader." WHY?

To the Editor:

How often must one answer the arguments of his opponents before they are convinced. There is an old adage, "Convince a man against his will, and he is of the same opinion still."

Jean Doyle's "questions" are so hackneyed that it seems utterly ridiculous to even dignify them with an answer. She wants to know whether man can make a thumb or produce something as useful if he should lose one. Most emphatically he can. When you lose a finger or an arm, God does not grow a new one for you, but man has provided artificial limbs that



are a pretty good substitute. Many an armless and legless person is living a useful life with artificial appliances made by man. We are even now providing eyesight for those who have become blind.

I cannot worship a God who, if He thought it necessary to give us eyes, hands, arms and legs, did not give us perfect ones. If He could, and He did not, He is beneath contempt for his utterly callous and cruel indifference to man's welfare. If He could not, then He is impotent, and is not worthy of the designation of a "God." If He could, He would; if He doesn't, He can't and that's that. Take your choice.

If I had the power to fashion the universe and "remake it nearer to my heart's desire," there would be no blind, no deaf, no dumb, there would be no crippled, and each child born would live free of disease and possess a mentality capable enough to withstand all the rebuffs of life. There would be no deaths by accident. There would be no earthquakes, cyclones or tornadoes. And, unless, and until, such a condition comes to pass when man may live free of disease, sorrow and suffering, there is no God in this vast universe worthy of our homage.

I would not presume to impose upon The Patent Trader a letter lengthy enough to fully explain the many facts concerning life and the universe, and the utter impossibility of the existence of a "God." But perhaps a paragraph or two will prove sufficient for those who are willing to accept facts, and who do not outrage their own intelligence.

Before we can predicate a God as a "Creator," we must first solve the problems of the existence of the universe, and the nature of its composition. For instance, we cannot conceive of a time when there was no time, nor of a place without space. Matter cannot be destroyed. It is a basic law that matter is indestructible. Since matter cannot be destroyed; it was not "created." In scientific terms, an absolute vacuum is an impossibility. How then can we conceive of a God living in a vacuum, and out of this vacuum create this vast universe? A vacuum is nothing, and nothing from nothing leaves nothing, and that is all that the word "God" signifies. If God created the universe, who created God, ad infinitum?

The idea of anthropomorphic Creator of the universe, in the face of our scientific knowledge of today, is too puerile

even for the kindergarten. When Darwin proved that man was not "created," but evolved, as the result of millions of years of the evolutionary process, he made utterly ridiculous the idea of a Biblical Deity.

We also know that man is born without knowledge and the remarkable progress he has made is an achievement that deserves our homage.

If all the money now spent for the foolish and deluded ceremonies of the superstitions of religion was used for the advancement of intellectual progress, what a mighty surge of material and scientific advancement would be made.

If there is a God, why didn't He give man the knowledge so necessary to his existence, which he has so painfully acquired over the centuries, and which has proven so beneficial to him?

Think of the multitude of millions who have died in agony, but whose lives could have been saved, and whose sufferings could have been avoided, if man possessed the knowledge we have today to cure the diseases which he has already conquered. Of what value is the knowledge acquired today to those who have perished in the past?

The idea of God has been man's greatest stumbling block to his advancement and progress. It was not so long ago when man was threatened with eternal damnation by the religious leaders of the time if he interfered with "God's plan" in the matter of disease.

The church told us that disease is a punishment for sin. It is nothing of the kind. Disease is a natural consequence of the processes of life, and the "ills of the flesh" inevitably follow when one form of life lives upon the other, and where, as Henri Fabre so aptly states, "at the banquet of life each in turn is a guest and a dish."

Even the discovery of anesthesia, the most humane of all of man's accomplishments, was branded as an impious intrusion, and as an effort to circumvent and defeat the so-called "will of God."

Timothy Dwight, a gentleman once president of Yale College, preached a sermon against vaccination on the ground that smallpox was a decree of God and it was a "sacrilege" to avoid the disease. Smallpox is now practically abolished. The pox-faced victims of my early days are no longer seen. Even George Washington bore the terrible scars of this ravag-

ing disease. He was pox-faced. Diphtheria, which was a scourge only a few years ago, has been conquered by modern medicine, and typhoid fever, which once killed more people than wars, is practically unknown today. Until recent years, even the dissection of the human body was prohibited. And now the frightful disease of poliomyelitis, that has maimed and killed millions of children, has been conquered by another great humanitarian, Dr. Jonas Salk.

The stumbling blocks that religious superstition has placed in the path of progress would require a book to detail.

What God conceived and plagued man with cancer, tuberculosis, pneumonia, paralysis, epilepsy, meningitis, and the hundreds of other diseases that we must endure throughout life? If you accept the sun, the moon and the "order" of the universe as God's handiwork, you must also accept the multitude of diseases that have plagued mankind from time immemorial. You cannot have the "one without the other."

If, with unlimited time and with all the resources at my disposal I could not make a better universe, I would be ashamed of my efforts, and would consider myself a humiliating failure.

Jean Doyle asks if I have seen a "pound of honor, a package of happiness, a box of peace—two quarts of beauty or thought." I most certainly have. I have seen them many, many times. But have you ever seen God? Many people in our insane asylums are there because they say they have. I have never seen a prayer answered nor have I ever seen a single dram of God's mercy.

There are no exemptions to the inexorable law of life. The innocent and the guilty suffer alike. As Robert G. Ingersoll says, "We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry."

If you have never seen the joy on the face of a person who has been made happy by the thoughtfulness and the goodness of another, you have missed experiencing one of the greatest of human emotions.

Whoever tells you that at death "God will be waiting with open arms at the Gates of Heaven to welcome you into a life of eternal truth, beauty and goodness," is a callous charlatan. He should be arrested, tried and punished like others who have been guilty of similar schemes to defraud.

You say that man cannot make a tree; your God cannot write a poem. And if I made a tree, I would not let it be slowly eaten to death by a disease.

Let me conclude with this thought: I would rather be the author of the immortal "The Rubaiyat" than be the "maker" of the diseased elm, dying and helpless, that stands on my property.

JOSEPH LEWIS

*"Suffer Little Children . . ."*

## THE FLAMES OF GOD\*

When tragedy strikes, it evokes a universal reaction of sorrow. Shakespeare was right: "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." And nothing is more poignant than when helpless children are caught in the holocaust.

The supreme tragedy of our day is that of the fire which destroyed (the mockingly sardonic name) "Our Lady of the Angels" parochial grammar school in Chicago, where ninety-two children were burnt to death, unnecessarily; burnt to death in a building which should never have been permitted to be occupied as a school, much less to hold so many children. In addition, the school building lacked adequate fire protection. There were not enough fire escapes, no fire extinguishers, and many other essentials for emergencies against such a destructive agency as fire.

Most of the schools under Church jurisdiction take full advantage of the exemption they enjoy from taxation. They know that they will not be "pressured" to meet the minimum requirements of safety in those departments under government regulations and, therefore, are reluctant to comply with these provisions of the law. Inspectors are loath to bring violations against church buildings.

The love of child knows no boundaries. Even religion cannot completely kill this affectionate attachment between parent and child. Some primitive religions practiced the killing of their first born for the "love of God." Others, even in our time, are so fanatically religious, that they prefer to see their children die of a disease rather than to use the knowledge of modern medicine to effect a cure. If there is any

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," January, 1959.

difference between these different forms of insanity, it is a matter of degree, and not of kind. The Christian Scientists, the Jehovah Witnesses, and the followers of Jack Coe and Oral Roberts are additional examples of the perversion of the parental instinct.

But aside from this fanaticism, the Catholic parents love their children; the Protestant and the Jewish parents do likewise. But how they can continue to believe in the religious rot that they are taught—that religion is a “shield and a protection,” in the face of such demonstrable proof as this Our Lady of the Angels parochial school fire, is more than I can understand.

Despite the fact that they are taught the Biblical precept—itself a mockery—“Even though He slay him, yet will I love Him,” there are limits to endurance. This is especially so, when mockery is added to insult, by the leaders of the Catholic Church in using this indescribable tragedy for cheap publicity, by holding a mass funeral service in a public building, with all the fanfare and advance notice of a prize fight. And as if the parents of these children have not suffered enough, these hypocrites used as their text, this Biblical piece of nonsense, “Suffer little children to come unto Me. . . .”

What scoundrels to tell suffering and heartbroken parents that God wanted their children to come to Him in charred bodies, utterly beyond recognition, after such an ordeal as being burnt to death!!! And this is called the consolations of religion!!!

And to add insult to injury, the whole scheme is designed for profit! An unmitigated fraud!

If a priest accepts money from heartbroken and bereaved parents for such a funeral service under the pretext of saving their children’s “souls” from Purgatory, he ought to be put in jail as a cruel and heartless thief.

Aside from the lesson of negligence learned from this tragedy, there is another lesson equally as important to be gained from this frightful disaster. The primary function of the parochial school is to bring religion into the educational system. The children in these schools are taught to pray on the opening of the school session and are forced to pray many times during the school day. Prayer is an essential part of their curriculum.

Now, what is the purpose of prayer?

The children are taught that their first duty is to pray to God, and if they perform this duty faithfully, God will reward them. I am sure that most children, in the tender and impressionable age, firmly believe that this "adoration of God" will prove highly beneficial to them, and will be an added protection in case of trouble.

In addition to these prayers, the children are also sold amulets that have been blessed by high Church officials. The children are told, if they buy and wear these "blessed" medals, they will act as a "shield and protection" for them against accidents. God, they are told, will always be beside them. Nearly all Catholic children wear these useless trinkets. The falsity of this religious teaching was never more poignantly demonstrated than when ninety-two children were horribly burnt to death in Our Lady of the Angels parochial school, because, the children who attended the school were wearing amulets around their necks! Imagine, identification of some children, who were burnt beyond recognition, could only be made by the particular medals they were still wearing around their fleshless necks!!

This conflagration demonstrated beyond the peradventure of a doubt that FIRE is far more potent than prayers and amulets and God.

How long, O, how long will it take mankind to learn this bitter lesson? How long, O, how long will it take them to come to the realization of the utter futility of religion? There is no substitute for safety, and the reliance upon prayers will only prove a tragic failure.

There is no consolation in religion. There is only sorrow and suffering, disappointment, disaster and despair. If you saw the agonizing suffering on the faces of the bereaved parents, you would know that religion is no balm for the heart rent by the loss of a loved one.

## CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS—FAKE HEALERS \*

*The following Statement To The Press was issued when the newspapers reported Edward Whitney's assault upon Christian Science Practitioner William F. Rubert, who had "treated" his deceased daughter.*

Deplorable as we consider all acts of violence, we nevertheless feel it our duty to offer legal assistance to Edward Whitney for his felonious attack upon a Christian Science practitioner. Under the stress of having lost a daughter because of the ill advice of this practitioner, he was obsessed with the primitive impulse of revenge.

It is not easy to forgive one who is responsible for the death of a child. This irreparable loss preyed upon the mind of Edward Whitney.

This case far transcends that of one angry man seeking revenge for a great wrong. Its fundamental premise is whether anyone masquerading under the cloak of religion can practice medicine without a license to the detriment of the community. This Christian Science practitioner had absolutely no right to give medical advice. He is not qualified. When he advised Edward Whitney to discontinue the treatment of insulin for the child suffering from diabetes, he was prescribing medicine in violation of the Medical Practice Act, and should be punished for this gross violation of the law.

An adult may do as he pleases with his life provided he does not injure another, but a child is the charge of the State in the matter of disease.

Only recently, in the City of Philadelphia, parents were arrested and charged with involuntary manslaughter for re-

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," March, 1959.



fusing to follow the advice of the physician who had prescribed insulin for a diabetic child. The parents, Christian Scientists, followed the advice of their practitioner—the child died. Another recent case was the forcible taking, by the health authorities, of a child suffering from tuberculosis, from his parents and putting him into a local hospital for treatment. These parents were also fanatical Christian Scientists. These cases are becoming too numerous to be ignored by the proper legal authorities.

How long must the people of the United States—in this year of great scientific progress, permit fanatical religionists to cause untold suffering and even death upon innocent victims and, at the same time, imperil the health of the community?

The Christian Science practitioners are no different from the Jack Coe and Oral Roberts type of Fake Healers.

We stand ready to have the Courts determine the legality of practicing medicine by utterly incompetent and unqualified people under the guise of religion.

JOSEPH LEWIS, *Secretary*  
*Freethinkers of America*

## HENRY MORGAN INTERVIEWS JOSEPH LEWIS ON TV \*

*The following interview and programs took place over TV Station WNTA, June 19, July 10, and July 17, 1959, to an estimated audience of approximately one million.*

June 19

HENRY MORGAN: Here's another little thing, this comes from The New York Times, as of a Sunday. It says, "From the pages of the Bible come these startling revelations." You with me, Doc? From the pages of the Bible come these (where's the monitor) okay. We show it to you even though I know on your screen it's no better than it is on my screen but at least you know I'm holding a piece of paper that is legit. Up in the upper right hand corner is a sort of a semi-sexy picture. Down in this corner it says, "The Bible Unmasked," by Joseph Lewis. The Bible Unmasked. Now let's face it, Doc, you know me well enough. I've been around a long time. I don't sell religion; I wouldn't think of it, you know. This is a highly personal thing with people. You don't do this on television unless that's your basic business and it certainly isn't mine. The Bible's been around a long time. I'm not even going to make a pitch for the Bible. We'll just say it's there; we both know it's there; the Bible. Not much you can do with that pro or con. It exists as much as the earth practically; it's the Bible. Says here, "Was two dollars and a half now only ninety-eight cents," and you know what? You read the copy, this man's going to show you what's dirty in the Bible. I said that's pretty amusing. I remember when I was a kid a man put out a book like that. He's going to show you

\* Reprinted from "The Age of Reason Magazine," September, 1959.

the dirty parts of the Bible. Well, look, there's no sense even in mentioning The New York Times. You know, the Times is a business like everything else. They sell the space, that's all, that's all their concern is and I suppose they have some rules about taste but the thing that fascinated me about this, in this little semi-sexy picture up in the corner, underneath it says, "Greatly reduced in size, one of seventeen full-page graphic illustrations in this new edition of The Bible Unmasked." So it says now in tiny print, "He left his garment in her hand and fled," Genesis, Chapter 39, Verse 12. So, I got to tell you, honestly, I'm a Bible reader. I don't read the Bible for any reason that I can explain to you. I read it for my own reasons. Once in a while, you know, not two hours a day or anything like that, but I know the Bible pretty good for a layman . . . ah, come on, will you, Doc, but I got caught anyway, so I take my Bible and I look up Genesis, Chapter 39, Verse 12, because it says in the advertisement here, it says, "Only after reading the story in The Bible Unmasked will you be able to understand the quotation from the biblical text, "He left his garment in her hand and fled." Well, now I know that any of you who owns a Bible is no longer paying attention to the program anyway. You've gone to look this thing up. It's a fraud, it's a fraud. The Bible, as usual, says precisely what it means. You don't need this book to understand what the Bible says because the Bible's written exactly the same way it was when King John (Ed.: of course, Mr. Morgan meant King James) hired seventy scholars to translate it into English for the Douay Bible or any of them is . . . it says what it means. You know something, for a bum like me who, as I say, doesn't spend too much time on this kind of thing, I was enraged at this. Now, I don't want you to write me a letter and say, "God bless you, Henry," because I get enraged at that. You know, who are you to God bless me? I don't need you. My God goes with me the same as yours goes with you but I think this is his fraud, this kind of nonsense, since the Bible very simply is a story of people and people always being precisely what they are, naturally, some of the things people do are a little this way; some are a little that way. The Bible just says it in what most reputable people still recognize as magnificent English. How dare they sell a thing like that? I find myself a little embarrassed at being

even in this position, but I recognize that basically I'm almost an uncontrollable loud mouth and I've got to do it, you know. I ain't going to sell you no Bible but I'd like to unsell you on books like that. Well, God bless you, Henry. See, you don't have to write me, I do it myself.

July 10

**HENRY MORGAN:** About a month ago, loud mouth me, I read an add in The New York Times book review. There was an ad about . . . It says, "From the pages of the Bible come these startling revelations," and it was . . . the book's called "The Bible Unmasked." It says, "Was two fifty now only ninety-eight cents." I said, "That's a livin' disgrace," and got off it and we had a phone call from the author. This gentleman with me is Mr. Joseph Lewis who is the author of The Bible Unmasked which you can now buy for ninety-eight cents, if you're so inclined. So, actually, I said to Mr. Lewis, "What are you going to prove?" and he said . . . What did you say?

**JOSEPH LEWIS:** Well, I said that many people told me that you made the statement that the advertisement was a fraud.

**MORGAN:** No, I said it was in terrible taste and that the book was something I wouldn't have in the house.

**LEWIS:** Well, that may be true but that isn't the way I received the information, but I'll take your explanation for it. The trouble with most people is they don't know anything about the Bible. They take it as a matter of course. I always try to give, as an illustration, the story of the little Sunday school boy whose teacher questioned the class, "Now, I'd like to know if any of you children know what's in the Bible?" And this little boy got up and said, "Yes, teacher, I know what's in the Bible, there's a lock of my hair when I was a baby, a picture of ma when she graduated from school, and a pawn ticket for pa's watch." Now, that's just about as much as most people know about the Bible. Your statement, which I received from many people who heard you, said that the picture and the inference of the picture in the advertisement were not true as to the text in the Bible.

**MORGAN:** Well, that part went this way. It said, there's a picture here of a lady and a gentleman in peculiar state of semi-dress and says, "He left his garment in her hand and

fled," Genesis, Chapter 39, Verse 12, and it said, "You can't understand the Bible unless you have this book," and I said, I understand that fine, open the Bible and really what about it? Do you have a whole book here of exposing what the things mean in the Bible? The Bible's in English.

LEWIS: That's perfectly true, but as I said people do not read the Bible, they do not know what it contains. I would almost make a wager, that you would not read the complete chapter of this story to your TV audience. It's too obscene and it's too suggestive. I do not know of another book within the covers of a binding that contains as much obscene literature, obscene material, disgusting and revolting stories that you will find within the covers of the Bible.

MORGAN: The Bible, Mr. Lewis, to me and to many other people, is one of the eternal verities, eternal in the sense of man's viewpoint as to what does last and what doesn't. Since it is a picture of life, there are many facets of life which can be taken out of context and they're not brought to television and put into your home, because out of the context of the whole fabric of living, they become poor taste.

LEWIS: The Bible is not an eternal verity and these stories are not taken out of context. Stories in other books usually have a moral ending but there is no moral to be learned from these stories in the Bible.

MORGAN: The Bible is history. The Old Testament is history.

LEWIS: If it's history, I feel sorry for the people of whose history it is. But it is not considered as history; it is accepted as a sacred volume.

MORGAN: I'm sorry for them, too.

LEWIS: Yes. It's a history of warfare, deception, murder, rape, seduction, adultery and everything that you'd think about that's repulsive to a normal, healthy human being in our modern society.

MORGAN: Are you familiar with other histories?

LEWIS: I'm familiar I think, with a great many histories. The Bible is accepted as a revelation from God to man and not as history. If it were merely accepted as history, it would be discarded as trash.

MORGAN: Wouldn't you say that the history of anybody

on earth is identical with the history of the Old Testament people?

LEWIS: I doubt it very much. I haven't been able to find a single instance that compares with the Story of David and his arrogance in taking another man's wife and then sending the husband . . .

MORGAN: Have you seen today's paper?

LEWIS: I see the papers all the time, but David took another man's wife and then sent her husband to the forefront of the battle in order that he might be killed.

MORGAN: Good thinking.

LEWIS: It may be good thinking for David, but under our present laws and our present day society, most of the people who do anything like that go to jail.

MORGAN: Yes . . .

LEWIS: Instead of that . . . Instead of that, let me just say this, David was a man after God's own heart and therefore I say that such a character is reprehensible to our modern sense of decency.

MORGAN: That's quite possible if you take that instance from David's life that it's reprehensible but wouldn't you say that it's remarkable that the historians who finally put the Bible together from the old stories told the truth about people and didn't present us with just a glossy little thing about how wonderful everybody was?

LEWIS: Certainly not! I think, it shows the lasciviousness of the writers of the Bible and the filthy language they use. Previously, I challenged you to read the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife to your TV audience. Let me say another thing, there are passages in the Bible of which, I am sure, you are not aware. For instance, 2 Kings, Chapter 18, Verse 27. I am sure you did not know that such language appears in the Bible. If such filthy language is in the Bible how can it be considered a book of moral value?

MORGAN: Let's say rather that there are passages in the Bible which I don't think have quite the importance that you do. I don't lift little things out of context and go running around and saying, "Say, do you know what that fellow did in the Bible?" The Bible is presented to society at large as simply the Old Testament, at least (and much of the New) as exactly the history of how people lived and in many instances

of what many people claimed God thought and God said. That's all. If these people were real people, this only seems to me at least and to many other people to give them reality.

LEWIS: Now, let me just say a word with the reference of God or what God said. I make this statement most emphatically and unequivocally that anyone who fosters the Bible upon mankind as a Divine revelation, or as a word of God, is perpetrating the greatest fraud upon the human race. It's a fraud of the first water. It's a despicable fraud to call the Bible the word of God and my object in fighting this thing is to stop the Government from supporting the people and the institutions behind the teachings of the Bible.

MORGAN: Oh, our Government . . .

LEWIS: There is not one story that I have in this book. There are nearly twenty of these obnoxious stories from the Bible in my book.

MORGAN: Maybe more.

LEWIS: If there was only one obscene story in the Bible, I would pay no attention to it.

MORGAN: Mr. Lewis, we operate under a system of what we call the separation of Church and State.

LEWIS: We are supposed to be.

MORGAN: Our Government doesn't force the Bible on anyone.

LEWIS: Oh, yes it does. They are introducing bills continually to have Bible reading in the public schools. Churches are receiving tax exemption to which they are not entitled and we have to support these institutions against our will. They preach doctrines which are contrary to our beliefs.

MORGAN: If you had to, in one sentence, tell me the message of the Bible, would you pick it from one of these passages?

LEWIS: If you wanted a message from the Bible, you would not find anything that would be superior to the stories I have picked out which are in my book.

MORGAN: Superior in what way?

LEWIS: For instance, they pick out Abraham as being a great leader. He is represented as the father of the Hebrew people. Yet, Abraham panned off his wife as his sister in order that someone might lie with her and he'd be protected and saved. I think that was a despicable act on his part. Unless

you mean Jehovah, a cruel, vindictive and jealous God; a monstrous God who visits the sins of the fathers upon innocent children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him. You can have that kind of a God.

MORGAN: Very likely, if you'll forgive my . . . I seem to be rushing along here, maybe we ought to come back and do this at greater length (although I'm sure that everybody else would cancel) but there is . . . there was a man, his name was Maimonides . . .

LEWIS: Maimonides, correct. He was a great Spanish physician and wrote the book, "A Guide For the Perplexed."

MORGAN: Yes, and he said, about the Bible, he said, "The Bible says, 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you' " or words to that effect. He said, "That is the Bible; all else is commentary." I have a strange feeling that you are bemused by commentary rather than the essential message of the Bible.

LEWIS: I do not think Maimonides said that. However, I think you have him confused with someone else. By the way, Henry Thomas Buckle, the great historian who wrote "The History of Civilization in England," said this, "That which is good in the New Testament is not new and that which is new is not good." The precept that you just gave came from Confucius and did not come from Jesus.

MORGAN: Oh, Confucius never read the Bible. However . . .

LEWIS: No, he did not.

MORGAN: No, he did not.

LEWIS: And fortunately China did not have a Bible, neither did Greece and neither did Rome. Only our civilization was cursed with this book.

MORGAN: Well, maybe we're not doing so well.

LEWIS: The influence of this Book has been most detrimental.

MORGAN: I don't think the Chinese are doing too well, either at the moment but some other time, perhaps. I'm sorry our time ran out.

LEWIS: Present day China has nothing to do with the matter. Before the present Christian era, China had attained a civilization of high cultured and intellectual development equal to that of any other nation—and without a Bible.



**MORGAN:** This is Mr. Joseph Lewis. Thank you very kindly for coming by.

**LEWIS:** Thank you, Henry Morgan.

July 17

**HENRY MORGAN:** Last week, I had a gentleman on who had written a book explaining what's wrong with the Bible and I announced that he'd be back. Well, he won't. I gave it some more thought; I read some of the mail, too. It put me in this kind of predicament. One lady, for example, wrote a letter (a lady who is from Pelham Manor, New York) she said, "What on earth was your purpose in inviting him. I'm listening." Well, the purpose was quite simple, that the man has a point of view and when this program is really miserable, it's when nobody has a point of view. A lot of times we have guests who have really nothing in particular to say and those are pretty dull. This man had something to say. He's a Free-thinker, by the way. A lot of people wrote in and wanted to know what his religion is. He didn't have any. He's a Free-thinker. Well, then I had that kind of letter, "Why was he on?" Well, I thought you'd be interested. Then I got this kind of letter. "After listening for three quarters of an hour to your asinine and idiotic program, Friday evening in anticipation of hearing Joseph Lewis (as stated in the papers) it made me exceedingly angry and disgusted to see the way your interview with him finally went off during a short time in the last quarter hour." So, you see, the atheists objected that the time is too short. People who were pro-Bible objected because he was on at all. Here's a note from a man who says, "You must have an exaggerated idea of the size of your audience if you feel you can be so prodigal." Now, I can't afford to keep a show going this way. Mr. Lewis lost me Catholics, Jews, Protestants and atheists. I can't do this show just for me and my mother. She doesn't have any money. I support her. It's a thankless thing. So, if you'll forgive me, Mr. Lewis, I say forgive me to the people and there were some who said, "I don't agree with him but I'd like to hear him some more." Well, not around here. I like to run . . . I run this like a saloon, really. We really shouldn't discuss politics or religion.