
THE OPEN FORUM



IN DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE

SIR: I cannot let certain remarks in Henry Gerber's letter in "The Open Forum" for July go by the board. In the midst of his precise clarification of terms anent the subject of homosexuality, Mr. Gerber comes out with the following statements:

"For reasons of posterity, the powers that be insist that all men marry, found a home and have children. Every man and woman, therefore, is indirectly forced [*sic*] to suppress the homosexual part of his or her bisexual constitution. Sexual intercourse outside of marriage is verboten.

"But nature cares little for man-made laws and taboos and we Americans are known as a nation of law-breakers. One cannot enforce taboos in a free nation. Prohibitions never succeed because free men resent political interference in private affairs."

Does Mr. Gerber realize what he is saying here? Does he honestly and seriously believe that it is only the conventionality of mere "man-made laws" that channels the sexual appetite of man into marriage? Would he really seriously deny that "heterosexuality" has been the only *natural* attraction of man's sexual make-up from the time when man first left posterity any records of his life, and that the homosexual and bisexual "states of mind" — to use Mr. Gerber's terminology — are aberrations from nature? And did he never suspect, then, that such might be the demands of an objective order of things — and not just of "the powers that be"?

Then I suggest that Mr. Gerber study Westermarck, and a host of more recent scholars, whose exhaustive scientific study shows that marriage — and monogamous marriage to boot — has, from primitive times, been dictated by man's individual physical nature and the social need for the fitting procreation and education of the human offspring. Does Mr. Gerber believe that this plan

was merely the arbitrary scheme of some primeval efficiency expert intent on increasing the market for his stone ax-heads?

Does Mr. Gerber honestly maintain that *any* sexual attraction a man may feel (*i.e.*, any of the three above-mentioned) should be followed out if a given attitude of society should allow it; and does he hold that marriage is merely society's present unnatural police attempt at "sex regimentation" for the temporal good of that society?

Well, I humbly suggest that Mr. Gerber inspect some of the hospital cases who are paying the penalty that *nature*, and not man, is exacting for the flagrant transgression of her, and man's, law. Yet Mr. Gerber says that "nature cares little for man-made laws and taboos." I think he will find, on the contrary, that nature guards far more jealously than man himself the laws which man has founded on nature's blueprint. So that if Mr. Gerber thinks "freedom" in a "free nation" means the freedom to violate the laws of nature I am afraid he has another think coming. Does he find himself free to fall uphill, or to breathe under water, or to build airplanes contrary to the laws of aerodynamics?

I suggest too that Mr. Gerber study scholarship's evaluation of the importance that the corruption of marriage had among the causes contributing to the collapse of ancient civilizations — that of Rome in particular. Mere chance?

I further suggest that Mr. Gerber study the failure of Communist Russia's twenty-year attempt (abandoned about 1936) to do violence to the nature of marriage. Perhaps Mr. Gerber will protest that this about-face of Communist policy on marriage was merely done to halt the disintegration of Soviet society. Then I would suggest that he ponder whether man was constructed as he is with the sole purpose of creating

social chaos and disintegration. But maybe Mr. Gerber would agree even to this, since he seems to take a strange pride in the fact that "we Americans are known as a nation of law-breakers." If Mr. Gerber were absolutely logical, then, I presume that he would advocate abandoning the UN, for example, and embarking on a universal spree of wine, women, and song. For what can be the sense, other than mere convention, in enforcing *any* "taboos" in a "free nation" if by so doing you are frustrating what is "normal," and therefore good, in man?

But perhaps Mr. Gerber, deep down, feels that there may be after all a higher law than convention behind this "sex regimentation." I hope he does. However, to *know* that this natural law exists, and to know the Lawgiver behind it, demands only some clear, honest, *unprejudiced* thinking. This solution to the problem cannot possibly be understood nor accepted by one who has antecededly and intolerantly decided dogmatically that any notion of a wise, creative God objectivizing his rational plan into the universe is a medieval "taboo." To investigate scientifically as to whether or not a thing is an actuality you obviously first have to assent to its possibility.

CLINTON E. ALBERTSON

Alma, Cal.

HOMOSEXUALITY AGAIN

SIR: A letter from Mr. Henry Gerber anent homosexuality versus heterosexuality contributes I believe some valuable information but fails to plumb the depths of the problem involved. Sex is not merely glandular or organic as in the case of dogs, cats, etc. Only man experiences a sense of shame when he indulges his appetites and this gives the point of departure; namely, man alone has the power to use or abuse sex (domesticated and caged animals are man's doings). He differs from the animals in that he changes the survival instinct into one of power and power finds sex one of its quickest occasions for expression (Solomon's harem, etc., polygamy, etc.). Christianity offers the most adequate interpretation of sex life. Its view is that sex is not evil *per se* as the Platonists, etc., thought. Asceticism is discounted. The evil, it says, lies in the fact that sex is used to gratify selfishness or self-love. Most of the sex perversions are man's expression of loving himself unduly and wrongly. In fact, all sex indulgence carries with it a degree of selfish satisfaction. Man, in his freedom of choice, has broken with his true center and source of being, God

(the true good as love and brotherhood) and hence has thrown his inner life into disharmony trying to complete his life around his Self instead. Looking within he finds a clamor of various appetites, sex being the most imperious, and having no higher god to serve than himself, seeks to gratify these impulses. Out of this come our sexual aberrations and aberrations. Sex is twisted out of its true context which is for the continuation of the race and made an occasion for self-gratification or self-escape. Here lies the seat of the evil in sexual matters and this generation is singularly asperse in this direction because it has an undue amount of self-love growing out of our military victories and economic advantages and which someday will lead only to grief. . . .

PAUL BRINKMAN, JR.

Portland, Ore.

SIR: In regard to the Henry Gerber-Bergen Evans controversy. [See "The Open Forum" for July.]

By no means are homosexuals effeminate in every case. Your tough bruiser may be a confirmed sodomist, but he will scorn fellators and fellatrices and maybe knock you down if you compare him to them.

Many effeminate men are not by any means homosexual, but such fellators as I have known were effeminate and utterly unashamed of their stunts (for a while only).

Mr. Gerber refers to "the crime against nature, or buggery, as it is called in some Southern states." I never heard the expression "buggery" in a year's residence in the South. The word is English to the core, and is heard over there right and left.

Neither Mr. Gerber nor Mr. Evans says anything about bestiality, masochism, sadism, cunilinguism, or what have you. (Let's not overlook the Lesbian sisters either.)

In the days of horse cavalry the stables were carefully policed at night, and a light was kept burning; the beast fancier seldom went in for any other form of vice.

It is a favorite sport these days to accuse every great man of the past of being a "queerie," e.g., Caesar, Nelson, etc. I cannot speak for Caesar, but it is unlikely. As for Nelson, a man with guts enough to steal a huge section of the British Navy and go off on a cruise of his own to call on his girl (Lady Hamilton) is not likely to have been a degenerate.

Yes, the "queeries" are quite a gang when they get together, but I believe both Mr. Gerber and Mr. Evans are stretching it when they say we are, all of us, homosexual.

Another writer says that one per cent of us are "queeries"; while this is too low for some streets of Manhattan, it is too high for the average American village.

Mr. Gerber ridicules "gland" treatment, but I will say that the young science of endocrinology has fairly won its place, and I will recommend a study of "Practical Endocrinology" by M. A. Goldzieher, M.D.

The whole situation is saddening; all these departures from the normal are just so much weakening of the social structure, and anything that will eradicate this thing or lessen its incidence is that much help to suffering, sinful, mankind; and the cavalier attitude of fellows like Mr. Gerber will not help the situation.

Medical examinations, endocrinology, occasionally surgery and — more than any of the foregoing — a regard for the laws and ethics of the land and for religion, are of value. And I would remind Mr. Gerber also that the suicide rate among the fellators is very, very high. The poor wretches do not take their misfortune too lightly.

JOHN D. LANE, M.D.

Bennington, Vt.

SIR: I wish to thank you for publishing the letter written about homosexuals by Dr. Gerber in the July MERCURY. . . . Dr. Gerber certainly knows what he is writing about, and I agree with every sentence. . . .

WILLIAM HAMILTON

Arlington, Va.

MORE ON THE GI IN FRANCE

SIR: In the August issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY there is a letter in "The Open Forum" by a certain Merton Stickley, who seems to be quite agitated by the behavior of American troops in France "in the closing period of the war." I think that if Mr. Stickley had got over to France a little earlier, as I did, and seen a little combat, his attitude might have been different. He might not have been so ready to throw up his hands in pious horror at the sight of a few Americans who'd had too much to drink. He might not have been so ready to proclaim that the American troops were just as arrogant as the Germans. He might not have been so ready to sneer at the argument that the Americans won the war for France, and were entitled to some fun after V-E Day.

War is a pretty grim affair, Mr. Stickley, and it's about time you grew up to the fact that a man who's seen 100-odd days of combat is not

going to be the prim little gentleman that you seem to idealize.

HARRY A. SPEED

St. Petersburg, Fla.

PEACE WITH RUSSIA

SIR: Of late our relations with Russia have become somewhat strained. Since the two nations have been on the most friendly terms from the foundation of our republic — this in spite of the fact that their ideologies have always been very different — all good Americans and good Russians will regret the change. It would also seem almost axiomatic that under such conditions everything possible should be done to avoid further irritation, which recalls your three articles in the August MERCURY — "Wallace and the Communists," "I Was a 'Free' Russian," and "How Karl Marx Won the Civil War."

With the validity and logic of these three efforts I have no concern, nor do I impugn the motives of Lyons, Buligin or Kinel, the authors. However, I would call attention to the fact that the general effect of all these articles — and many others similar — is to irritate our former friend, and while each of the dissertations may contain some truth, their general tone and sentiment are unfortunate at this time. No one in this country today — except a few military officials and a few church officials — wants a war with Russia, and it is doubtful if anyone in Russia wants a war with us. Therefore, everything possible should be done to avoid further irritation rather than otherwise.

Both Buligin and Kinel stress the enormity of the official Russian methods of poisoning the minds of the youth with false propaganda. It is agreed that no crime is more heinous than this, yet are we in America guiltless? Witness our teaching of the fables of the mythical Jesus, the existence of a heaven and hell — taught, not as theories or beliefs, but as facts. Our histories are oftentimes so distorted that they are almost grotesque. Kinel mentioned the Russian teaching with reference to Lincoln and Washington. The Russian authors would certainly have to exert themselves if they misrepresent these two historical characters more than we do in America. A thousand books have been published on Lincoln. Very many of them are so absurd that they are silly. One popular volume claims Lincoln solved most of his problems by prayer. A foreword to one volume, written by a President of the United States, states that Lincoln "literally lived on his knees" in prayer, this notwithstanding

ing the fact that there is no authenticated case of anyone ever having seen Lincoln at prayer. So with Washington; our school histories, as well as our birthday celebrations, invariably have him praying at Valley Forge, yet he was never known to indulge in prayer at any time.

Buligin dwells upon the unfairness of the Russian elections. Does Russia tolerate anything as ridiculous and atrocious as our elections in the Southern states?

It is maintained that the Russian press is not free. Is the American press free? Is there a newspaper in the country which dares print the truth in regard to the church?

Russia's control of her "satellite" states is deplored in one of the articles. After we stole Hawaii, Panama and Puerto Rico, how much freedom did we allow them? In other words, we of the land of the free and home of the brave are not in too favorable a position to criticize any other country in regard to mistreatment of minorities.

Let us have peace!

IRA D. CARDIFF

Yakima, Wash.

THE REALITY OF HELL

SIR: In the August issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY [see "The Open Forum"] Clara Dwight Fulton gave a few verses from the Bible trying to prove there isn't a hell, a life after death. Writer Fulton is very ignorant and misinformed on the issue of immortality according to the real interpretation of the Bible.

Her references were as true as could be, but anyone can take a single verse from the Bible and misconstrue or interpret it a hundred different ways. To get the true meaning of a verse it is necessary to read several verses or even chapters before and after it.

She referred the reader to twelve verses which were very deluding if read as a single passage. I wonder if she has ever read The Revelation, or maybe she has and is afraid to admit to herself and others what will actually take place after death. Of course, the body goes to the grave, but our souls live on forever.

Several pages of Bible verses could be given to prove without a shadow of a doubt that there is after death an eternal heaven for the saved as well as an everlasting hell for the unsaved.

LAURICE WALKER

Thomasville, Ga.

SIR: With THE AMERICAN MERCURY as my guide I sat down for Bible study. I thought, "Hell De-

bunked." Alas, confidence in my teacher (Clara Dwight Fulton) evaporates when I see her faulty exegesis and the tenuous logic upon which she supports her thesis: There is no life after death.

The only passages deserving serious consideration are those cited from Job and Ecclesiastes. Job says those that go down to the grave come up no more. Is our experience to the contrary? Though we may believe as Job does (19-26) in the bodily resurrection, we bury our dead with finality. The writer of Ecclesiastes carries us with him through his excursions into doubt, materialism and extreme pessimism into his conclusions, among which is: "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Ecc. 12-13, 14.)

It is gratifying to know, if true, that there is "much discussion . . . as to whether there is a hell." From my observations, man is too little concerned with his ultimate destiny. Christ says: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

WARREN N. POTTS

Jackson, Miss.

SIR: In your August issue Clara Dwight Fulton refers to Psalm 145-20 and other passages. According to these verses, she says, there is no life after death. So what? She doesn't believe the Scriptures, does she?

THEODORE SIEK

Grand Coulee, Wash.

THE ALCOHOLIC AGAIN

SIR: Mr. Thomas F. McCarthy's comments [see "The Open Forum" for August] on Reverend Smith's article, "New Facts about the Hang-over" [see the April MERCURY] are interesting but not constructive. Even if only *one per cent* (his italics) are problem drinkers or alcoholics, we have 1.3 million such problems. If you multiply that by those caught in the dizzy merry-go-round — family, associates, accident victims, etc. — you have a considerable number, probably near five million, with its resultant wide damage to life, limb, property and economy.

Mr. McCarthy suggests that we call the doctor rather than the patrol wagon. But what use would the doctor be? Give him a shot, paraldehyde, or another drink of whisky? Or call in AA? Old doc, and young too, is pretty helpless.

To effectively treat the alcoholic, and hope to get a cure, requires institutionalizing him, as one does the tubercular, or cardiac or mental patient. If ever a cure would have at least one

well-staffed and properly conducted sanatorium, alcoholism would be reduced to 1/100 of one per cent.

A small portion of the taxes collected from the industry and the alcohol-consuming public would adequately finance such a program, long since overdue.

Let's start the ball rolling and save the alcoholic. The contemplated Federal Hospital program would be a good beginning.

MAURICE KOVNAT, M.D.

Staten Island, N. Y.

LYONS VERSUS WALLACE

SIR: Your Mr. Eugene Lyons in his article in the August *MERCURY* on "Wallace and the Communists" charges Wallace with being confused, or worse. Some think that Mr. Lyons is confused, or worse; that he is confused or that Mr. Lyons is just plain lyin'. Men will do that when emotionally aroused, as Mr. Lyons evidently was when he wrote the article, men who would spurn to distort the truth otherwise.

Wallace has been frequently "disposed of" by editors and columnists as a crackpot, a dreamy theorist, a fool, a traitor to his country, etc. It would seem that one who thinks everybody should have enough to eat and to wear is not normal. That is what Wallace is consistently urging, that with proper administration there is enough for all to live in peace and security.

The throngs that packed the Wallace meetings in the West didn't pay merely to see a show; they represent the people who are tired of the baloney and shenanigans of both Republicrats and Demopublicans — Tweedledum and Tweedledee as at present constituted.

JOSEPH SANTOS

Savannah, Ga.

SIR: I want to extend my appreciation to Mr. Eugene Lyons for his forthright, sincere and honest enlightenment. . . .

ANTHONY ARTHUR KOPAZ

Dublin, Ireland.

"MRS. EDDY"

SIR: I wish to register my admiration of your criticism of the book *Mrs. Eddy* by H. A. S. Kennedy in the August number of the *MERCURY* [see "The Check List"]. It is very refreshing to find an editor who frankly and boldly discusses a book dealing with a religion, in view of the fact

that such criticism, because of the financial loss which it might entail, is almost always considered taboo in the public prints.

I find too that most of my Christian Science friends read avidly all literature written by "Scientists" and their publicists and thoroughly believe in them. Anything of a critical nature is rarely read and never believed.

Their attitude reminds me of the time-honored dictum of Confucius, who preceded Mrs. Eddy by some 24 centuries: "Learning without thinking is useless. Thinking without learning is dangerous."

Again I thank you for being more interested in the truth than in the worship of Mammon.

ALBERT S. TENNEY, M.D.

East Orange, N. J.

LOUIS BRANDEIS AND COMMUNISM

SIR: I read Alpheus Thomas Mason's article, "Louis Brandeis: People's Attorney," in the April *MERCURY*. It couldn't have been more timely. He quotes Brandeis as saying: "The greatest factors making for communism, socialism or anarchy among a free people are the excesses of capital. The talk of the agitator does not advance socialism a step. The great captains of industry and finance . . . are the chief makers of socialism." According to this, the way to destroy or circumvent communism is to reform capitalism. . . .

WM. CROCKER

Prescott, Ariz.

MORE EVIDENCE ON BATS

SIR: Re Bergen Evans' "Skeptics' Corner" in the July *MERCURY*: I've never known bats to get into the hair, but I take it it's possible and probably has happened, since I have a friend who was struck twice in succession on the forehead by the same bat. We can probably assume an abnormality in that particular bat; or the conditions under which he flew. It was in her kitchen, in the afternoon on a sunny day. I have never had bats in the house during the day, but one did fly straight past me as I lay in the hammock. It went to the nearest tree trunk, where it clung against the bark, apparently asleep and unconcerned that I was watching it only a yard or so away.

MARGERY MANSFIELD

Monterey, Mass.

BOOKS and WORLD RECOVERY

THE desperate and continued need for American publications to serve as tools for physical and intellectual reconstruction abroad has been made vividly apparent by appeals from men of learning in many lands, and by Americans who have seen this need. The American Book Center for War Devastated Libraries has, during the last year and a half, shipped nearly 1,000,000 volumes of highly selected books and periodicals abroad.

The Book Center, continuing its program through 1947, is making a renewed appeal for donations of books and periodicals, for publications of intellectual merit in all fields, and especially for volumes published in the last ten years. Of particular value are complete or incomplete files of AMERICAN MERCURY. Such donations will help in the reconstruction which must preface world understanding and peace.

Ship contributions to the American Book Center, % the Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C., freight prepaid, or write to the Book Center for further information.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page 504)

cessful are startlingly beautiful. "To Dear Daniel" is one of the most lyrical, most tender, most perfectly written things in all American literature. It recalls John Donne and Emily Dickinson, yet it has an individuality of its own. It is overwhelming in its impact. Greenberg also was talented in his prose, as his autobiography shows, though his heart clearly was in his verse. Allen Tate contributes a cautious preface. It adds nothing to the value of the book.

MISCELLANEOUS

STOP ANNOYING YOUR CHILDREN, by W. W. Bauer. \$2.75. *Bobbs-Merrill*. Dr. Bauer, who is director of the Bureau of Health Education of the American Medical Association and an old and valued contributor to THE AMERICAN MERCURY, shows with case histories of so-called problem children that what ails them chiefly is their problem parents. He takes in every aspect of the child's life — eating, playing, sleeping and being a member of society — and has much to say that is obviously sensible and should be helpful to all parents — and their childless friends who play with their children. There are several useful bibliographies, but an index is lacking.

THE RED PLOTTERS, by Hamilton Fish. \$1.00. *Domestic and Foreign Affairs*. The blatant vulgarity of Mr. Fish's journalism is on a par with the Communists'. In this confused, rambling and chaotically organized book there are, however, a number of points of interest. Mr. Fish is still attempting to combine isolationism with anti-Communism, and the result is that in many instances he winds up on the same side of the fence as the fellow-travelers: the Truman doctrine he attacks as "dollar imperialism"; the UN, despite its defects, should be given "a decent chance"; the Chinese Communists are "Agrarian Socialists," rather than totalitarians. A large proportion of the book is made up of quotations from such experts on Communism as Monsignor Fulton Sheen, Upton Close and Clare Hoffman, and when all else fails Mr. Fish quotes himself.

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