

Poor Judge Lindsey.

A pathetic incident in the life of Herbert Spencer is recorded for us in the last issue of the Ave Maria, which transcribes a page from the memoirs of Mr. H. Murray, in which the author writes: "Walking up and down the lawn of Buchanan's home in Maresfield Gardens, I told him (Spencer), in a momentary absence of our host, what a load of personal obligation I felt under to him for his 'First Principles,' and added that I intended to devote the reading hours of the next two or three years to a thorough study of his output. 'What have you read of mine?' he asked. I told him. 'Then,' said Spencer-- and it was the only time I have ever heard such a counsel from the lips of a writer regarding his own work -- 'I should say that you have read quite enough.' He fell silent for a moment and then added, 'I have passed my life in beating the air.'" (The italics are ours.)

Poor Judge Lindsey is now beating the air, and, because present-day publishers do not scruple to exploit a man's dotage, he is doing it in the circus, where all may see. He is advocating free love, and striving with all his might to call it by another name. He wants poverty abolished, because poverty has brought much crime to his bench; he forgets that wealth merely refines crime; he forgets that our country was a much cleaner country in poverty than it is now in prosperity. He does not believe in continence because he does not find its existence in the children of nature who appear before him. He does not believe that religion can cure any human ills, because he turned his back on religion many years ago and now takes it as a foregone conclusion that religion can do nothing.

The Judge is advocating nothing new. His theories have been tried and have brought forth their proper fruits, and "by their fruits you shall know them." Sparta used the stud-farm method of manufacturing man-power for the state. Perhaps it showed even more cunning in its selective process than Judge Lindsey advocates: it made no haphazard guess at what children would be defectives if allowed to be born; it let them be born and killed off the defectives. Sparta is one of many; they have all gone, or will go, the way of natural decline and death. Germany had practically legislated poverty out of existence before the War. The decline of Athens followed swiftly upon the Golden Age with its intellectual concubinage which Lindsey calls "companionate marriage."

After years of battling with sex without the aid of divine grace, Judge Lindsey has developed a sex obsession; and since his clinical material has been almost exclusively human nature at low ebb, he has forgotten that even nature can fight. To see the effects of divine grace he needs only to study our own Religious Survey; but if he will accept only pagan testimony, he can look into Dr. Foerster's recent book, "Marriage and the Sex Problem." Here he will find passages like these: "To secure the mastery of man's higher self over the whole world of animal desire is a task, however, which demands a more systematic development of will-power and the cultivation of a deeper faith in the spiritual destiny of humanity than are to be found in the superficial intellectualistic civilization of today. To achieve such a result it will be necessary not only to have recourse to new methods and new ideals, but to make sure that we do not allow what is valuable and in any way worthy of imitation, in the old, to be forgotten. The ascetic principle, in particular, is today in danger of being undervalued...

"....Properly to understand the significance of asceticism, it should be remembered that natural life does not flourish unless the spirit retain the upper hand; and since we are surrounded for the most part by striking examples of lives in which spirit plays anything but the leading part, it is in the highest degree desirable that living and striking examples of men and women who have fully freed themselves from the distraction of the world and the domination of natural desires should be continually before our eyes..." -- Space precludes further quotation, but the point is made: we need elevation, not lowering, of standards; and what we advocate can be done, because it has been done and is done.