

LEGENDARY LITERATURE

E. V. STONE

Leading Article in the *Knightly Knews*—A.D. 691

The recent conference held by King MacArthur and his brave knights at the round table in Londinium has been fraught with much disagreement and has resulted in the unhappy withdrawal of Sir Stenalot from the brotherhood.

It is reliably reported that Sir Stenalot put forward the proposition that the concept of chivalry should be widened, and went on to explain how he applied this in his demesne. By denying all rights to the Common People and by making himself generally as hateful as he could, he let everybody benefit by comparison with himself. This, he maintained, was the true chivalry, for are not spiritual values to be valued more highly than temporal ones?

Despite his eloquence, he failed to convince the rest of the fraternity and has felt constrained to withdraw his allegiance. In withdrawing, he felt impelled to add that this was the beginning of the end of chivalry and of the break-up of the Round Table.

It is rumoured that on return to his castle, he was welcomed by all his serfs with tears in their eyes and lumps in their throats.



Extract from the *Middle Ages Chronicle*—A.D. 1169

The Witanagamot must be congratulated in that it passed almost unanimously the long-awaited Extension of Rights Bill which has been before it almost six months. In spite of repeated attempts to introduce retro-

gressive amendments and to delay the passing of this historic measure, it has now become law.

Among the more enlightened provisions of the Bill are: the right of vassals and villeins to accept more abuse and ill-treatment without retaliation or recourse to the shire courts; the right of all serfs to send their children to inferior schools, where they will be given a good grounding in the ordering of society; the inalienable right of serfs to stay where they are, provided they aren't already where they shouldn't be; the right to hoe the squire's potatoes while residing at the squire's expense in the squire's pigsty, this as an alternative to imprisonment for heinous and devillishe crimes like failing to produce a passe; the right to be separated from wife and children when serving in the King's Mines; the right to aspire to the heights of serfdom and acquire a true patriotism. All these reforms are long overdue and should go far towards removing the causes of alleged discontent.

Readers will be grateful and proud to know that the two reactionary gamoters who voted against these reforms are to be tried for treason at the next session.



Letter from the published correspondence of an anonymous leper—A.D. 1196

'Dear Fellow-sufferer,

Here I am squatting outside the city wall, and with my back up against it. There is no charity in the world, as you must surely know, and those self-healthy prigs within have left me no alternative but to withdraw.

I have been criticised for withdrawing; but had I not done so, it is virtually certain that I should have been ignominiously expelled. As it was, I betook myself from their midst with dignity. This is a miracle, the wonder of which fills me with awe and gratitude. The only condition on which they were prepared to accept me was that I go to the miracle-worker and be cured of my leprosy; but as you know, we lepers have our pride. If I am not good enough for them as a leper, then I am not good enough and that is that. No self-respecting leper could tolerate such interference in his internal affairs.

Such is the depth of human infamy that many of the citizens are saying that they will refuse to buy the dough I kneed with my own hands.

Fare thee well, dear friend. It will be a hard struggle, but it is wonderful to feel free at last.

Yours without,

(The signature is indecipherable—Editor)

Book Review from the Inquisitors Herald—A.D. 1490

A New National Dictionary by A. L. Deurmekaar. Published by the Turnscrew Press, Toledo.

This scintillating and ingenious work is long overdue, and all those who hold religious purity dear to their hearts have felt the need of such a work for the last twelve or thirteen years.

Such praise as I could give this masterpiece would seem dull and shabby beside the lustre of the work itself, and thus to commend it, I cannot do better than provide a few quotations which must act as the hors d'oeuvre to the rich feast awaiting those wise enough to purchase it.

Communism—the doctrine that the Inquisition is wrong and cruel and un-Christian. (Hence *Communist*—any person who criticises adversely the Inquisition, the Grand Inquisitor, or any of the officials of the Inquisition).

Agitator—one who advocates the seven deadly sins (see *Liberty*).

Good-Neighbourliness—the art of keeping one's neighbours at a distance.

Liberty—one of the seven deadly sins, the others being *Equality*, *Fraternity*, *Justice*, *Love*, *Righteousness* and *Humility*.

Miracle—the art of calling an inevitable disaster a well-manoeuvred success.

Patriotism—the ability to ignore one's own vices.

Priest—A species of *Agitator*, which see.

Professor—See *Priest*.

Treason—An inexplicit offence punishable by four years' trial.



Extract from a paper read by Professor Dichotomy to the Southern Association—A.D. 1916

In the last century there was a monk called Mengeling who, having nothing better to do, spent his time actually crossing different coloured flowers, white and red. Trust a priest to be doing mischievous and ungodly things like that behind the monastery walls! A priest, above all people, should know that if God had wanted a salmon-coloured race, He would have made it.

Not content with this, this meddlesome monk actually claimed to have discovered a law about it. This is obviously nonsense, since if there were a law about it, the law would have been repealed long ago.

Worse still, this wretched fellow was allowed to die peacefully in his bed.

Now this pernicious doctrine is creeping into the affairs of the animal world, and some farmers are even crossing dairy shorthorns with beef longhorns. Soon we shall have our pastures covered with a beery middlehorn race, and then where shall we be? I've said it before and I'll say it again, that if God had wanted there to be a Beery Middlehorn breed, He would have made it.

More than this, who knows where such ideas will finish? If the animal world has to endure this man-made affliction, why should not the idea be extended to humankind itself? If this final tragedy were to occur, how could our children and our children's children ever forgive us?

