

The Evening

Please be brief. As a rule 200 words should be enough. Your name and address must accompany each communication as an evidence of good faith. Your name will not be published unless you wish it, but signed letters will be given the preference.

Mr. Mencken Points Out An "Inadvertence" Of One Of His Critics

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVENING SUN—Sir:

In your issue of today the Hon. Claude J. Merrill, of Pocomoke City, in an effort to expose what he terms my "utter ignorance of prevailing conditions" on the Eastern Shore, says that "the lower counties are among Ritchie's most ardent supporters." This statement is surely an inadvertence. At the last State election the Anti-Saloon League, running the Hon. William F. Broening against Ritchie, carried Somerset county by 2,828 votes, Dorchester by 1,286, Wicomico by 290 and Worcester by 237. Governor Ritchie, in fact, carried but three out of the nine Shore counties—Kent, Caroline and Queen Anne's. And his total majority in all three was only half the majority of the Anti-Saloon League in Somerset alone.

H. L. MENCKEN.

Baltimore, Dec. 10.

To "Inconceivable Depths"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVENING SUN—Sir:

After carefully analyzing every possible deduction and inference that could be drawn from Mr. Mencken's article of last Monday, we have come to the one logical conclusion that Mr. Mencken must be either a Red or *non compos mentis*, and we can only hope, in his behalf, that it's the latter.

Mr. Mencken failed to make one statement in his article that was either true or sane, with the exception that there was a demonstration in Salisbury last Friday night. He criticized and scorned every denomination of religion except Catholic.

We all grieve at the inconceivable depths to which Mr. Mencken has so recently sunk. It is truly a shame that such a literary genius could descend to the unspeakable levels on which he now reclines. Undoubtedly a martyr to the cause, but ah—what a cause!

We offer our regrets to the Virginians, the "Arkansawyers" and those from Tennessee who were so unjustly libeled by Mr. Mencken.

CHARLES E. HEARNE, JR.

Salisbury, Md., Dec. 10.

"The Last Straw"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVENING SUN—Sir:

In your issue of December 7, H. L. Mencken describes the citizens of Salisbury, Md., as an "Alsatia of morons." I am a resident of that fair metropolis of the Eastern Shore, and I feel that Mr. Mencken is unjustified in his statement.

We all know that a Negro resident of Salisbury committed an inexcusable crime when he shot to death his employer, Daniel J. Elliott, prominent lumber dealer of Wicomico county. We also know that certain "citizens" of Salisbury committed a much more scandalous crime by lynching the Negro murderer shortly afterward. But not only does Mr. Mencken criticize the lynching, which he has a perfect right to do, but he goes on to say that every member of the citizenry of Salisbury was in sympathy with the second of these crimes.

Salisbury is a town of approximately 11,000 inhabitants. Certainly, about half that number are female, and at least 1,500 are Negroid. With due allowance for the fact that there were about one hundred white women in the lynching mob and no Negroes, that leaves only 4,100 of Salisbury's citizenry "eligible" for participation. Now, only about 2,000 composed the mob, leaving 2,100 of the "eligible" ones non-participant. This means that Mr. Mencken has wrongly accused 9,000 innocent citizens of Salisbury of participating in this lynching—a crime against the victim, against county, against the State, against civilization and against God.

The Sunpapers from the beginning have been very unjust in dealing with the situation from a Salisbury standpoint. Mr. Mencken's article is the last straw.

In respect for the circulation that *The Evening Sun* has enjoyed among Salisbury townspeople since the paper's first edition, and for that which it will undoubtedly continue to enjoy despite the slanders and false accusations of its writers, *The Evening Sun* owes the people of Salisbury an apology in the name of (1) H. L. Mencken, (2) the paper itself and (3) Baltimore newspaper men.

W. THETFORD LEVINESS.

Annapolis, Dec. 8.