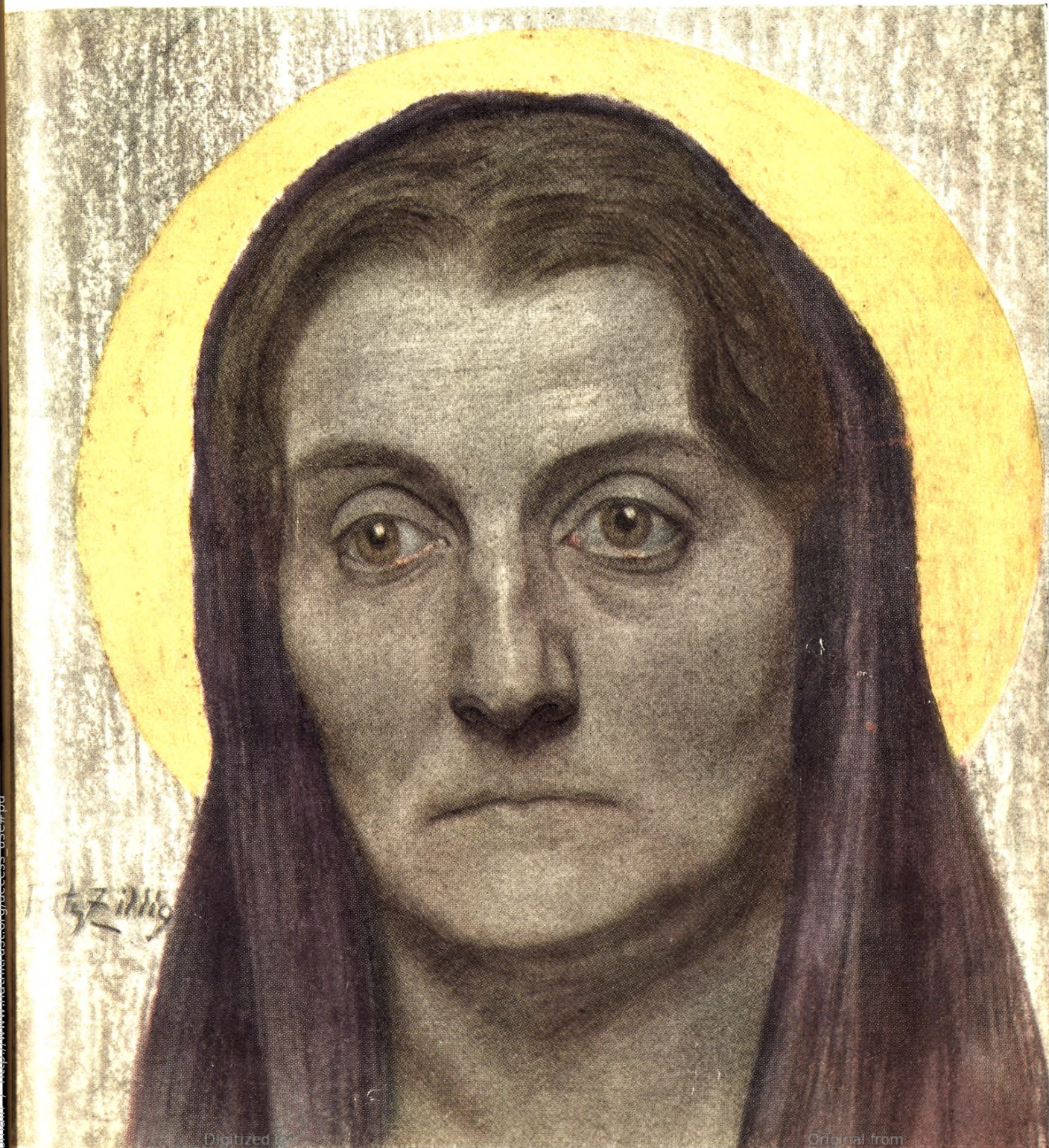


THE  
MASSES

OCTOBER 1917

15 CENTS



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# The MASSES

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## Orchids and Hollyhocks

Pins

SHE bathed laughing and dried her lithe body to a stinging rosi-ness. She touched her neck and her arms with faint perfume that had about it the shadowy elusive odor of the little snow-violets that grow in dark moist places in the woods. She smiled into her own eyes in the broad mirror of her bureau, as she put on the fresh white garments she had laid out, as she made fast around her head the two soft braids of her hair.

She swayed, lightly . . .

She thought of the quickening of this exquisite throbbing in her veins to ecstasy . . . to peace.

A clock began to strike slowly in the tower of a church down the street.

It was the hour.  
She held out her arms to herself in the mirror.

As she bent to pick up a pin from the bureau-cover, she saw that there were two pins there, and that they lay upon each other in the form of a cross.

"Jesu," she whispered, and made the sign . . . She stood looking at the pins that were a cross.

The clock stopped striking.  
She heard a step at the door.

MIRIAM VEDDER.

## The Foolish Virgin Lights Her Lamp

**I**N the first dreaming days,  
The day of dreams,  
A friendly generous phrase  
More than its words conveys  
Subtle and welcome praise;  
Smilingly gleams—

In the first dreaming days,  
The day of dreams.

Tender the darkness deep,  
Dear the deep dark.  
Psyche, o'er Love, asleep,  
At his closed eyes to peep,  
(Curiously, fondly peep,)  
Kindles a spark.

Dearer the darkness deep—  
Best the deep dark.

The eyes are alien eyes—  
His eyes estranged!  
Psyche, unwarned, unwise,  
In candle glow, surprised,  
An old fear verifies—  
Mocking and changed,

Malicious, stranger eyes—  
His eyes, estranged!

ELVA DE PUE.

## The Battle to Maintain Liberty in the United States Is Fast and Furious

Meetings are being broken up, men and women searched without warrants, men and women arrested for reading the constitution in public, or wearing a button "Our Rights, But No War," for asking Congress to repeal conscription, for talking on behalf of conscientious objectors, or for no reasons at all.

THE AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE LEAGUE was formed to fight for the freedom of speech and of the press, the right peaceably to assemble and petition the government.

*YOU know* the fight we have been making in the courts for all kinds of defendants, before Congress and by articles and speeches and advice to all kinds of people all over the United States.

*The people of the United States will continue to have as much liberty as they have the courage to hold and fight for. YOU can help those who fight your battles for liberty. We need funds immediately. Send at least "\$1 for liberty" if that is all you can spare. If you can afford a larger contribution, now is the time to make it. Make cheques payable to*

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# Special Announcement

THE November issue will contain the first of a series of articles by John Reed, who has gone to Europe for material to be published exclusively in THE MASSES.

He will positively report the Stockholm Conference and give us his impressions of that great gathering of socialists which may end the world war.

From there he will go to Russia and tell us what is really happening among the people of that vast republic and of whom the world is so eager to get a true picture.

He will write the first full history of the Russian Revolution.

John Reed is well known to all readers of The Masses.

He is eminently the man to do this work. As correspondent for the Metropolitan Magazine three years ago, he brought the first big story of Mexico to America. His account of the Colorado strike is ranked among the great pieces of journalistic writing.

For the Metropolitan also, he visited every battle front and belligerent country in Europe. His sense of color, his ability to make vivid the things he has seen has placed him head and shoulders above all other war correspondents.

The articles will undoubtedly be an event in the world's literature. And remember—they will be published exclusively in THE MASSES. Watch for them and tell your friends.

## "The Insolence of Office and the Law's Delay"

THE September issue contained a chronological history of THE MASSES' fight against the Post Office up to the time of going to press. Roughly, what happened was this: The August number was presented for mailing and declared unmailable by Solicitor Lamar of the Post Office Department on the ground of violation of the Espionage Act of June 15th, 1917. Failing to get a declaration from Lamar as to the specific article or cartoon which he considered in violation of the law, injunction proceedings were entered against the Postmaster by Gilbert E. Roe, our attorney, to force the Post Office to transmit the number through the mails.

Judge Hand, who heard the case, decided the case in our favor and upheld THE MASSES on every point for which it contended. Directly, the Post Office obtained an order for a hearing on a stay of execution of the injunction, returnable before Judge Charles M. Hough, at Windsor, Vermont, several hundred miles from New York.

About that time we went to press.

The course of events since then has been so amazing as to astonish even those who are most skeptical as to justice in law and the value of constitutional rights.

In the first place, the hearing on the stay was purposely brought before one of the most reactionary and Tory judges on the bench. That was part of the game, of course. But the fact that a stay was asked indicates more clearly than anything else the tactics the Department resorted to in order to win.

A stay of execution on an injunction, it would seem, is a procedure that has long been in disuse among lawyers. Technically, it is perfectly legal, but the bar generally and the bench have recognized the immense amount of confusion that would result if one judge got into the habit of staying an injunction granted by another and have consistently refused to make use of it. Judge Hough himself admitted that in his thirty years' experience he had never known of a similar case.

In spite of this, the order for the stay was granted. This meant that our first victory was nullified; that the August MASSES could not pass through the mails until after the regular appeal on Judge Hand's decision which the Post Office will bring some time in October. For all practical purposes, the Post Office had won.

In granting the stay, Judge Hough said that the only damage resulting to THE MASSES would be that connected with

the August issue, and should THE MASSES win ultimately suit could easily be entered to recover what monetary loss had been sustained. In fairness to Hough it is, perhaps, right to say that he was not cognizant of the full plan which the Department had worked out to destroy us.

What came later left no doubt how ruthless was the intention of the Post Office to "get" us.

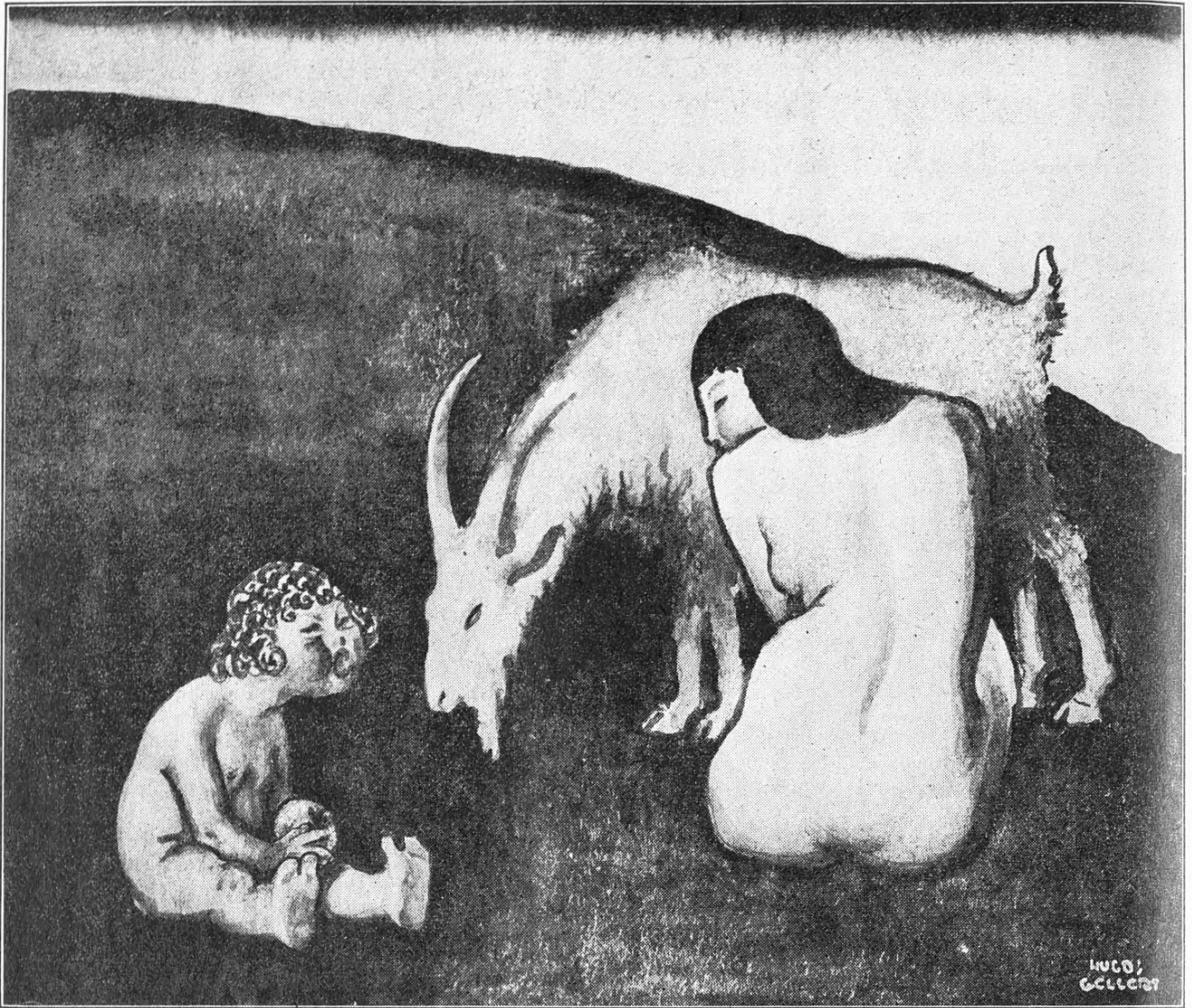
The September issue was presented for mailing in the usual way and word was sent that it would not be allowed to go through the mails until advice was received from the Solicitor at Washington. For about ten days we were unable to get any word. Gilbert Roe was in Washington and demanded of Lamar that he render a decision. Lamar told him the Department hadn't made up its mind; apparently it would take as long a time as it pleased.

Almost coincidentally, came a letter from the Department requiring us to appear in Washington, August 14th, to show cause why our second-class mailing privileges should not be taken away. The reason advanced was that we were irregular in publication and therefore not entitled to the privileges. The reasoning was simple. The August issue had not gone through the mails. Therefore, by reason of such irregularity THE MASSES had ceased to be a "newspaper or periodical within the meaning of the law." The fact that the August issue had been presented for mailing and refused; the fact that we had standing in our favor a court decision requiring the Post Office to allow the issue to go through the mails was of no consequence. The privileges were taken away.

Just previously to this, we had applied to Judge Hough to revoke his stay of Hand's injunction. We contended that the Department was making a use of the order which was never intended. Hough said that the new facts were technically immaterial and the order could not be vacated. But he remarked that the Postmaster's assigning as a reason for his second-class mailing action an omission on our part for which he was solely responsible sounded like a poor joke.

And the Post Office is going to realize some day just how poor a joke it is. We have no intention of letting up on this fight. We are absolutely confident that ultimately we are going to win—and in the process we are going to show the people the essential viciousness of bureaucracy. For the present we must ask subscribers to have patience and make use of our newsstand distribution.

M. R.



Hugo Gellert

## RAINY SONG

**D**OWN the dripping pathway dancing through the rain,  
Brown eyes of beauty, laugh to me again!

Eyes full of starlight, moist over fire,  
Full of young wonder, touch my desire!

O like a brown bird, like a bird's flight,  
Run through the rain drops lithely and light.

Body like a gypsy, like a wild queen,  
Slim brown dress to slip through the green—

The little leaves hold you as soft as a child,  
The little path loves you, the path that runs wild.

Who would not love you, seeing you move,  
Warm-eyed and beautiful through the green grove?

Let the rain kiss you, trickle through your hair,  
Laugh if my fingers mingle with it there,

Laugh if my cheek too is misty and drips—  
Wetness is tender—laugh on my lips

The happy sweet laughter of love without pain,  
Young love, the strong love, burning in the rain.

Max Eastman.



# President Wilson's Letter To The Pope

An Editorial by Max Eastman

PRESIDENT WILSON'S letter to the Pope was published after the *MASSSES* for October had gone to press. It has so far altered the international situation, that we cannot see the magazine go out without some comment upon it.

When war was declared we called for some proof that it was a war for democracy. "Will you state your terms of peace with Germany," we said to the President, "making a settlement with the Reichstag, and not with the Imperial Government, the essential and only indispensable item in those terms? If it is a war for democracy, you will."

When Russia appealed to the Allies to declare for a peace upon the wise and democratic basis of "no punitive indemnities, no forcible annexations, free development for all nationalities," and the President echoed the British government in a flat refusal to consider these terms, declaring that "past wrongs must be righted," and otherwise vaguely intimating that he was adopting the whole animus of the British war on Germany, we assumed that our question was answered in the negative. We gave our whole energy to denouncing a war with such an animus. We supported the People's Council, which was organized in response to the Russian Council's appeal to us to compel our government to accede to those terms of peace. And we denounced, as adding insult to injury, the conscription of American citizens to such a war, or to any war whose purposes were not concretely specified.

When the President made his Flag Day address, emphasizing the necessity of breaking up Germany's sphere of influence in the East—which is simply the necessity of defending England's exclusive empire in the world—when he emphasized that and that only, we were reinforced in our belief that in accepting the war animus, he had abandoned every elevated and just ideal and purpose that had been expressed by him in his Peace without Victory message. We know the sinister egotism of the imperial classes in Great Britain, and we fear them, when we contemplate the future of the world, only a little less than we fear the German autocracy. We were amazed at the foolhardy support that our friends were giving to a government apparently unconscious of this danger—unconscious, too, of the rights of its citizens to know what they were fighting for, willing to blindfold its eyes and swallow all the partisan sentimental blather of wartime patriotism. We were amazed and we were outraged that this thing could be done in the name of democracy.

These things are considerably altered by the President's letter to the Pope. In that letter he does declare, as we demanded, that he will enter into peace negotiations as soon as he can treat with a government responsible to the people. And he makes this plainer in a supplementary statement (through Lansing) that he means what is commonly meant by a "responsible ministry."

He does accede to the Russian peace terms in almost their own language: "No punitive damages," "no dismemberment of empires," "vindication of the sovereignty both of those that are weak and those that are strong."

He does separate our purposes absolutely from the imperialistic ambitions of the ruling classes in the Allied countries, both by the manifest implication of these peace terms, and by dissenting from the "economic war" against Germany agreed upon by them in their Paris conference.

He does state in concrete language what it is our citizens

are being drafted for, and this removes a little of the insult, at least, from the injury of conscription.

He still fulminates in a way that seems a little forgetful of our own failings against lies and crimes committed by the enemy, but a good deal of that may be discounted as the necessary self-righteousness of the mood of combat. For he renounces vindictive intentions so completely as to make us feel that he has recovered, or will recover, at least, when the day of action comes, the justice and elevation of the Peace without Victory address. There is high hope, in this letter to the Pope, of permanent just peace and international federation for the world.

It is interesting to speculate as to the reasons why President Wilson should ignore the appeal of his ally, the Russian republic, to declare peace terms for which her free citizens could be persuaded to fight, should ignore the indignant demand to the same effect of some three millions of his own citizens who elected him, should ignore them placidly for five months, and then grant all that they have been asking, not to them, but to the Pope at Rome. It may be that he has done this inadvertently, as he rather pretends in accusing us of being "deaf" to the repeated statements of his war purposes. But we doubt it. We credit Woodrow Wilson with knowing what is going on. We believe that he understood perfectly well the motive of the People's Council, and that he was not in any wise misled by the criminal and ignorant slanders launched against us by the uneducated American press. He knows that he did not state his war purposes until he wrote to the Pope, and he knows that he did state them then, and he knows why.

Perhaps the President's reason for waiting was that he wanted to lend enough money and guarantee enough support to the Allies, so that he would be in a position to *tell them* what their peace terms were to be. If that was the reason, we make our bow to him as the most astute and really powerful statesman of the world, and we give thanks that he really likes peace better than war.

But perhaps the reason that he finally made this declaration, was that we "pro-Germans" and "traitors" (names which now merely signify people who insist upon using their brains) compelled him to. The agitation conducted by the People's Council was more widespread, more rapid-moving, and more determined, than anything of its kind I have ever seen. It was a startling notice to the Government that the American people could not be led to this war without a plain-spoken guarantee of the purposes for which the war was being fought. The President's letter to the Pope was published two days before the People's Council was to convene. In that letter he yielded our original and our chief demand. It may be that the People's Council was in large measure the cause of the wording of his letter—in which case we make our bow to ourselves.

But these things are only to be guessed at. Woodrow Wilson has established himself in a position of power which enables him to keep his own counsel. He is in very truth—albeit we hope temporarily and only through personal force—the strongest autocrat in the world. And while denouncing his autocracy, and its employment to silence criticism and quell the struggle for liberty within our borders, we are thankful for this evidence that he still intends to use it beyond our borders, if he can, to the great end of eliminating international war from the world.

Max Eastman.

Supplement to *THE MASSSES* for October.







# The MASSES

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Issue No. 76

## News From France

Louise Bryant and John Reed

THE uninteresting war begins to be interesting to liberals.

Out of the dull twilight that has hung over the world these three years like a winter mist in Flanders, tremendous changes begin to leap, like bursting shells. Events grand and terrible are brewing in Europe, such as only the imagination of a revolutionary poet could have conceived. The great next-up is coming.

Russia has shaken off the evil spell that bound her, and rises slowly, a gentle giant, hope of the world. Not a day passes without revolt in Germany, though every day revolts are put down there with cannon. British labor and British soldiers are chafing under the platitudes of Lloyd George.

Italy people talk openly of refusing to suffer another winter without coal, for the doubtful rewards of imperialism. And France is at the end of her men, resources and patience. Stephen Lausanne and André Tardieu keep reiterating monotonously that France is in "better condition now than the beginning of the war;" but the French people themselves greet such phrases with bitter anger. Intelligent Frenchmen know that there are no more men in France from which to build new armies; that food is shockingly lacking, and fuel too; that formidable strikes are occurring all over the country, wherein soldiers on leave join with the strikers against the police; that the women swarm to the railway stations and try to prevent their men from returning to the front.

As always, the French are the first of the peoples to face the truth—and the truth is, that the world is defeated. There is and can be no victor in this war. There can be no decisive military success. The French realize this, and they do realize that no ambiguous "democracy," as mouthed glibly by the exploiters of mankind, is worth the extermination of the race. Alone among all the belligerent peoples the French can be depended upon to meet the truth significantly, as they did in 1789, in 1815, 1830, and 1871.

Splendid in defeat, the French, whose clear skeptical intelligence always ultimately conquers sentimentalities and whims, are beginning to probe the depths of this world madness. Go to France to-day—or even read the much-censored French papers. You will find there sublime ridicule of

jingoism, military glory, patriotic twaddle; immense satire upon the tremendous stupidity of war; a low, bitter growl against diplomats, financiers, statesmen, and all the respectable powers which plunge peoples into war on false pretenses; and a growing fury about the profiteers whose patriotism never has prevented them from preying upon the masses of the people, whether as workers or soldiers. How is it that these insatiable beasts have been allowed to cook up this horrible thing? Of course when a people like the French—and there is no people like them—begin to think about such things, then there is trouble coming. When the French are defeated they look searchingly into themselves, and then they proceed to remove the cankers.

Suppose there is public announcement that France bleeds for Alsace-Lorraine—well, the ordinary Frenchman on the street candidly admits that Alsace-Lorraine isn't sure that it wants to return to France, and that the people ought to have the say. Suppose the French figureheads gush about the Belgians; the French people don't like the Belgians, as everyone knows who has been in France since the beginning of the war. The brutal fact is that all the French care about is the expulsion of the Germans from French territory. France officially may deny it, but the truth remains that the French army and the French workers, male and female, are ready to accept the Russian peace terms, and even less. If the Germans were simply to offer to withdraw from France, the government which dared to reject that offer would go down in a whirl of bloody dust.

The proof of all this lies in a book, "Le Feu," by Henri Barbusse, which to my mind is the biggest thing next to the Russian revolution that the war has so far produced. In France it has run into an edition of more than three hundred thousand copies; literally every Frenchman has read it or talks about it.

It is the story of a squad of poilus, simple soldiers, who have been through it; it is a fearful biography of the war. The book opens, with the effect of an immense curtain rising upon a stage as big as the world, to music grander than any known:

"The great pale sky is peopled with claps of thunder; each explosion exhibits, falling from harsh lightning, at once a

Louise Bryant has just returned from a trip to France where she has been gathering material for the Bell Syndicate.



column of fire in the remainder of night and a column of smoke in what there is of day.

"Up there, very high, very distant, a flight of terrible birds, of powerful and staccate breath, heard and not seen, who circle up to observe the earth . . ."

Then the earth! The vast sterile plain, glistening with wet mud heaped in little masses, with shell-holes full of water, and the trenches, soaking, filthy, where from little holes and caves creep forth the soldiers at daybreak, covered with lice, stinking, broken with fatigue.

The book shows these poilus in the trenches, relieved, sent back for a period of rest, under bombardment, on leave, in an assault, at their frightful work of digging trenches out on the plain between the lines at night, and the final dawn. It tells how they act, what they say and how, without any circumlocutions whatever. There are descriptions of the dead, what bursting shells do to the human body, how men and women you know and love look when they are rotting; and there are tales of how men die.

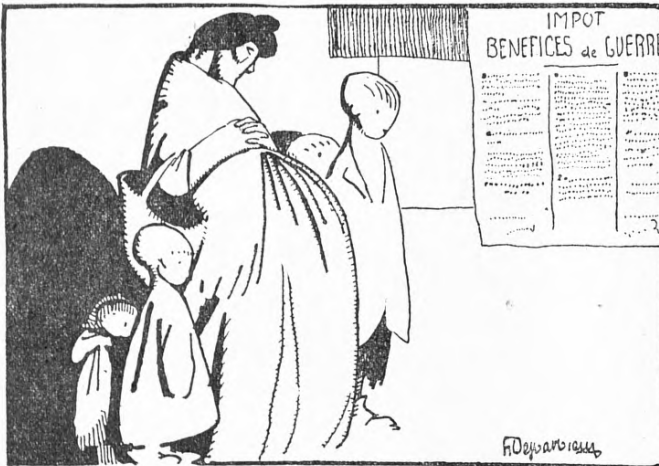
When the soldiers are sent back of the lines to some little village for a few days' rest, quartered in some leaky old barn full of vermin, without fuel, often hungry, the civilian population preys upon them, overcharging them hideously. They see the rich men and their friends in gay uniforms, who have managed by hook or crook to escape the actual fighting. The townspeople patronize them, look down upon them because they are filthy, and stink. Yet these humble men of the people endure all, complain not.

In the trenches one time they make way for the African troops to pass, and someone comments upon their fighting fury.

"These boys are real soldiers," says one.

A big peasant speaks up. "We're not soldiers," he says, proudly, "we're men!"

Yes, they are men—clerks, farmers, students, storekeepers—and they do not like to kill. "Ignorant," Barbusse describes them, "narrow-minded, full of common sense . . . ; inclined to be led and to do what they are told to do, hardly resistant, capable of immense suffering." Just ordinary men.



As replenisher of the armies, my share is the war tax—not the profits.—(From *Les Hommes Du Jour*, one of the most radical of French papers.)

"And so each one sets himself, according to his intelligence, his activity, resources and audacity, to combat the frightful discomfort. Each one seems, in showing himself, to be confessing: 'This is all I have known how, could, dared to do, in the great misery into which I have fallen.'"

But like a thin scarlet thread through the story runs the theme of coming change. The preface ends like this:

"The future is in the hands of the slaves, and one sees well that the old world will be changed by the alliance which will be built between them by those whose number and whose misery are infinite."

It is never absent, that note. And there is little socialist doctrine preached, for these men are not socialists. They are, as the peasant said, men. They speak of the "peoples of the world (not the masters), joining hands." They talk of Liebknecht as the bravest man in the whole world. They tell how they have been thinking it out, and it is not really the Prussians who are to blame, but the system which keeps wars going, and makes sudden enemies out of friendly peoples. One man complains that the German poison gas is not sportsmanlike, and the rest of the squad turn on him fiercely and call him a fool. Does he think it any more sportsmanlike to blow a man to the worst death possible with a steel shell? Of course there are fools,—men who say, "the Kaiser, is a vile criminal, but Napoleon,—ah, there was a great man!" But it is astonishing what mordant intelligence is working everywhere, everywhere.

There is not one page without at least one little picture of war, of death, disease, torture, misery, the beauty and the ghastliness but always the pitifulness of the human spirit. There is painted, against the background of the vanished peaceful life of simple people the immensity of war, too vast for the human spirit to stand. One can never, for example, forget the field where the deserter was shot, with his comrades standing in the dark about his dishonorable grave and pitying him, calling him brave, writing loving messages on the wooden cross they have put up over him. And at the last, that awful dawn, where the poor human wrecks gather in the midst of that sea of sterile mud, on the vast plain, and cry aloud that there must be no more war.

Every line of this book is a horrible exposure of the colossal idocy of war—nor are the Germans blamed altogether for it. War is what must be defeated, not the Germans. And that thought leads inevitably to other thoughts, to an examination of how war is caused. We are all familiar with the logical outcome of that chain of reasoning. We have watched the process of war-making in this country, and like Henri Barbusse, we know who is the common enemy—ours and the French and the Germans and the British.

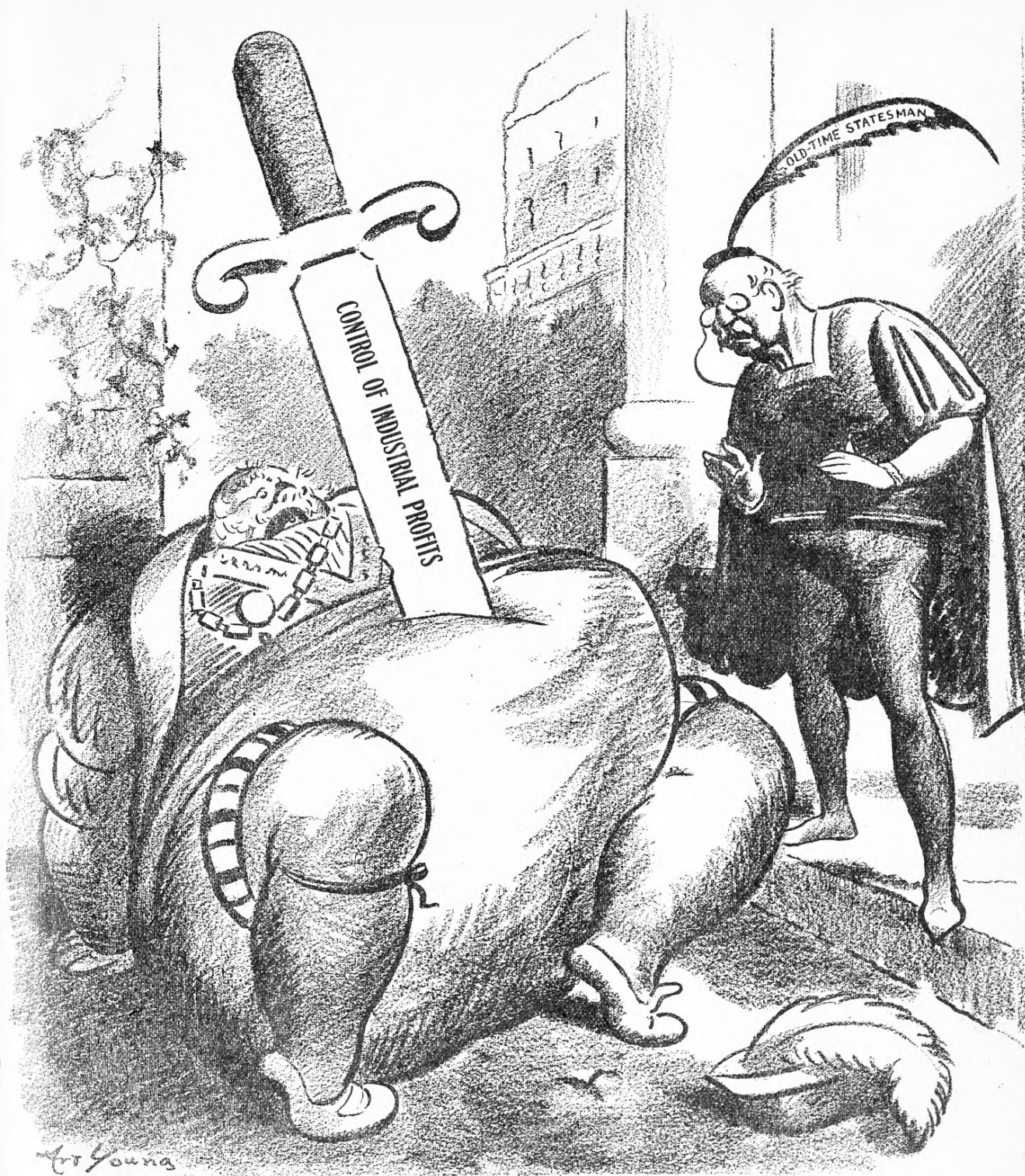
Why did the French government allow "Le Feu" to be published, because all France has begun to think as Barbusse thinks. Because the French people are facing the truth. Because even the truth about this war, that there are really no great ideas in it which any simple man cares to fight for, is running like wildfire over the world.

"All men ought finally to be equal," said one.

"The word seemed to come to us like a rescue.

"Equal . . . Yes, yes . . . There are the great ideas of justice, truth. There are things one believes in, toward which one turns always to fix upon like a kind of light. Above all there is equality.'

"There is also liberty and fraternity. . . ."



Arthur Young.

Romeo: "Courage, man; the hurt can not be much."

Mercutio: "No, 'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church door; but 'tis enough."



"But above all equality. . . ."

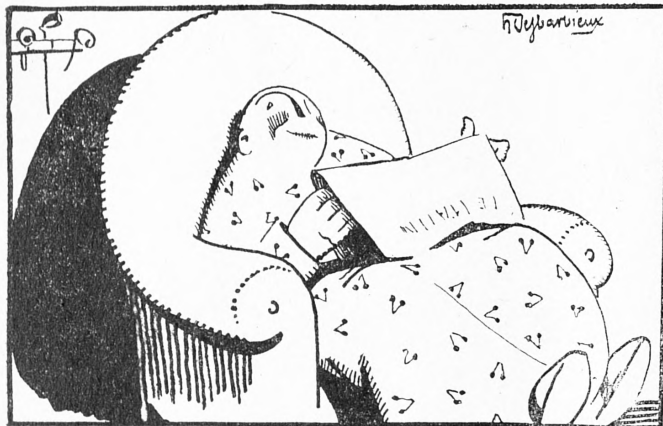
"I told them that fraternity is a dream, a cloudy sentiment, inconsistent; that it is contrary to a man's nature to hate an unknown, but equally contrary to love him. One can base nothing on fraternity. Nor upon liberty, either; it is too relative in a society where all the groups prey upon each other.

"But equality is always the same. Liberty and fraternity are only words, while equality is a thing. Equality (social, for individuals have each different values, but each ought to participate in society in the same measure—and that is justice, because the life of one human being is as big as the life of any other), equality is the great formula of mankind. . . ."

## Apocrypha

ON the evening of August 16th, the Root mission to Russia was received in the Union League Club, as was appropriate for an embassy returning from representing this flawless democracy in revolutionary Russia. Charley Russell and Jim Duncan were there, moving around in their party clothes as if they had been born and raised in the clubhouse. And the Colonel was on hand with the late lamented Mr. Hughes to welcome them into the company of the angels.

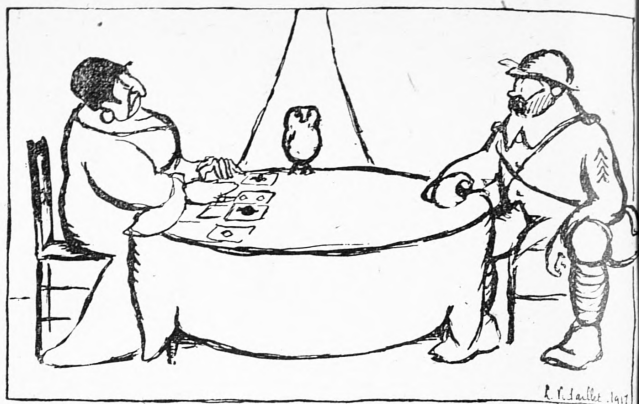
Messrs. Root and Russel had, it is reported, a good deal to say about the splendid future of the youngest and most democratic of the democracies, and they let it be clearly inferred that Russia owed no small debt to the expert advice and guidance of that seasoned old democrat Elihu Root—not to speak of Comrade Russell, lately of the proletariat. There were complaints—yes, at first the mission was regarded with suspicion, because of the "pro-German" machinations of the exiles who had returned from America. Charley Russell, for example, in a voice full of indignation reported how these traitors had told the Russians that the American government was "capitalistic." The idea! But when Mr. Root's liberty-loving lips, erstwhile quivering with the defense of Boss Tweed, opened—when the golden words of hope and freedom



### Sweet Satisfaction

Two thousand Boches killed! That may not be true, but it pleases me mightily, just the same.

—(From *Les Homme de Jour*.)



### Prediction

I forsee a great event: the end of the war . . . . Or the end of the world.

—(From *Les Homme de Jour*.)

poured forth, the Russian revolution crouched at his feet like a tamed lion.

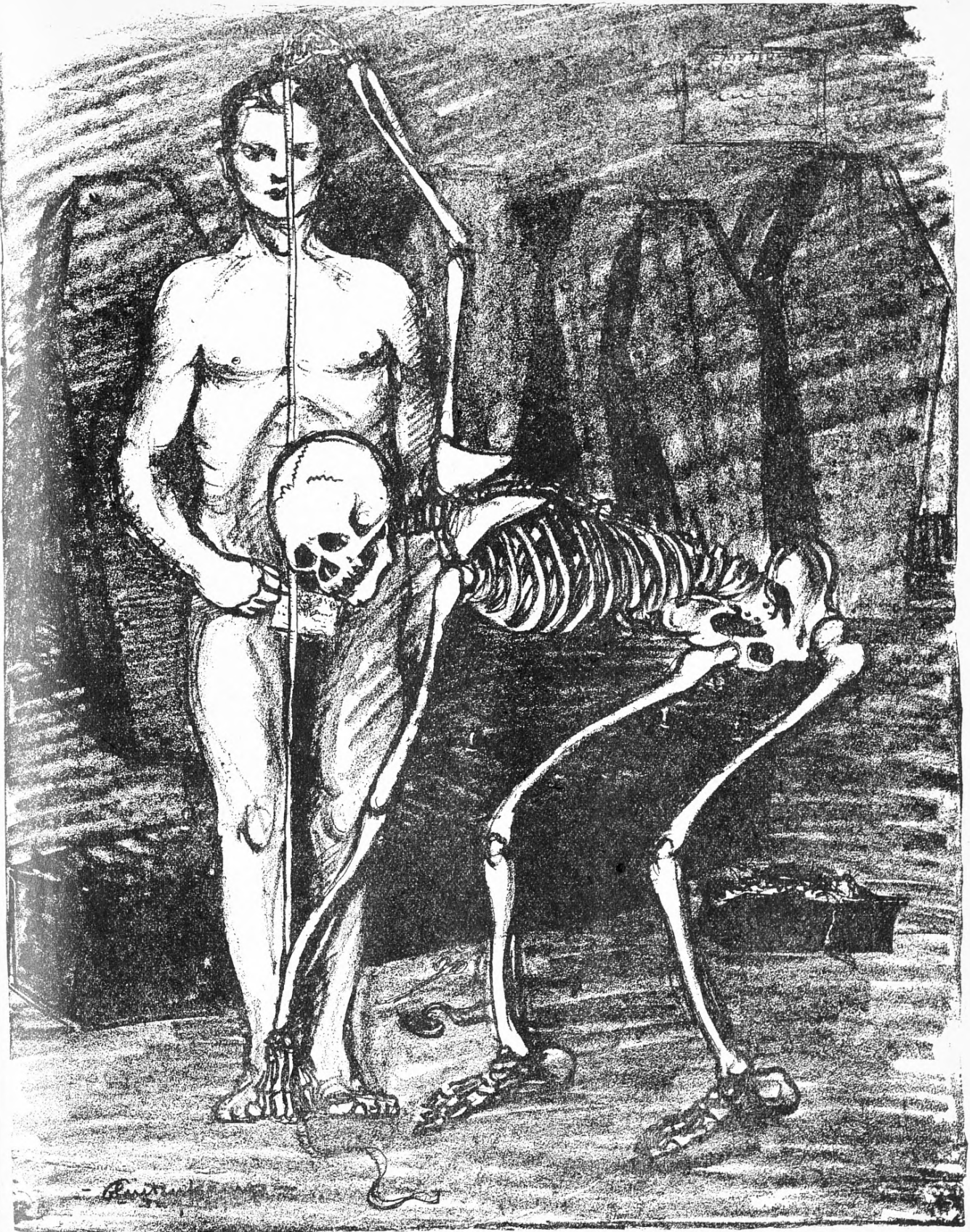
It was all in line with the accounts cabled by the American correspondents in Russia: how cheering crowds followed the mission about, how aged revolutionists, with the tears running down their cheeks, knelt to kiss Charley's hand, how turbulent and hostile mobs, incited by the Kaiser's agents were quieted by the eloquence of Elihu. To us it seemed even more miraculous, since Mr. Root can't get away with it at home. Do you remember the stories of how Admiral Glennon, by his bluff democracy, quelled a rebellion in the Black Sea fleet? And how General Scott, with his hearty manliness, shamed the Russian army into resuming the offensive? This is even more amazing, when one considers that the Russian soldiers and sailors don't bother much about military pomp and ceremony, and the American army and navy insist upon it. Certainly no Russian in these parts could be prevailed upon to believe all these things.

The next day, among other interesting reading matter appeared an article in the *Evening Post* by Mrs. Gregory Mason, who accompanied the mission, telling how Mr. Root's train was held up again and again by outraged Muscovites and something of the feeling which greeted him and his companions everywhere in Russia. It doesn't sound to us like a very enthusiastic reception. As a matter of fact, the Root mission in Russia was very much the same thing as the special train full of female millionaires and their synophants which toured this country trying to get Mr. Hughes elected.

One would expect that the sight and sound of that colossal adventure in human freedom would have impressed the members of the Root mission. Hundreds of thousands of people in this country waited with eagerness for the message they would bring to America from Russia.

In the Union League Club Messrs. Root and Russell delivered the message. Here it is:

*Free speech and liberty of opinion in America must be suppressed. All who do not agree with the government are traitors and must be shot at sunrise. To hell with the Constitution.*



H. J. Glintenkamp



# The Eye of the Beholder

Mabel Dodge

ONE wet summer afternoon I strolled over to Grizzlewood's place which lay sheltered from the warm, steady rain, under three great dripping maple trees.

I found him in his library—hanging over some old yellowish papers which he had lifted out of a square box of green lacquer that always lay on the table, and in his hand was the photograph—now turned yellow, too—of that woman who had spun time out into lyrical opaline hours, and dusky woe-freighted hours, in all the great playhouses of Europe—twenty years ago.

I took the inanimate square of cardboard in my hand and looked on that face once more, and in a flash all that other time was before me!

I had never spoken to Joyella Delmonte, but I had sat before her in the years of my youth and bathed until drenched in the poetry that she exhaled. Lost in the darkness of the house—we had sat before her—we the youths of the great cities—and we had had a vision of what a fine rapture life would be—of what a delicate and powerful thing love would be—

As we listened to Joyella's voice—and watched her entranced movements—we never thought of her as a woman. It seemed rather like listening to a magical evocation that summoned all women, and like watching their appearing while we watched her move.

And then suddenly we had seen her no more. She disappeared. We lost her. And with her, for most of us, I am afraid, went the magic and the vision.

"Whatever became of her?" I asked Grizzlewood, as I handed back the faded picture.

"She retired from the stage after Dorilio left her. That is only the baldest fact of it, though. What really happened, as I saw it, is a story of one of the great mysteries."

We drew two chairs up before the window that looks out under the branches, and across the plain, and upon the misty green stage before us. Grizzlewood proceeded to spread his memory.

"The thing that happened between Joyella and Dorilio is a story of the creative and destructive power of vision." He got up and took Da Vinci's note book from the book shelf. "Listen to what Leonardo says on this:

"Those mathematicians, then, who say that the eye has no spiritual power which extends to a distance from itself, since, if it were so, it could not be without great diminution in the use of the power of vision, and that though the eye were as great as the body of the earth it would of necessity be consumed in beholding the stars; and for this reason they maintain that the eye takes in but does not send forth anything of itself—

"What will these say of the musk which always keeps a great quantity of the atmosphere charged with its odour, and which, if it be carried a thousand miles will permeate a thousand miles with that thickness of atmosphere without any diminution of itself? . . ."

"And

"Is not that snake called lamia, seen daily by the rustics attracting to itself with fixed gaze, as the magnet attracts iron, the nightingale, which with mournful song hastens to her death?

"It is said also that the wolf has power by its look to cause men to have hoarse voices.

"The basilisk is said to have the power by its glance to deprive life of every living thing.

"The ostrich and the spider are said to hatch their eggs by looking at them.

"And the fish called linno, which some name after St. Erno, which is found off the coasts of Sardinia, is it not seen at night by the fishermen shedding light with its eyes over a great quantity of water—as though they were two candles?

"And all those fishes, which come within the compass of this radiance immediately come up to the surface of the water and turn over, dead."

He closed the book and sat down again.

"I suppose that's what you would dismiss as 'twelfth century science?' he quizzed.

"Well—maybe it is—and maybe it's twentieth century science too. For just as Leonardo describes it—so I saw it happen between Dorilio and Joyella.

"First he hatched her by looking at her, like the ostrich, and afterwards he deprived her of the life he had given her, by his changed and deadly glance.

"She came within the radiance of the poet's eye and then she died of it. Certainly Joyella's history should be a warning to women to be wary of that radiance—that 'innocence of the eye' of the artist—powerful as a virgin!

"Dorilio met Joyella just before she was twenty. She was playing in a small Italian town one night with an obscure company of players. She was beautiful and she was young and she was ready, and that's about all.

Dorilio was thirty—he was a poet—but a poet in the fullest sense. He lived poetry—and I always fancied his brow was bound with an unseen wreath of mingled myrtle and laurel.

"For forty years his life was a living poem, and he was seemingly an eternally golden youth. He had crisp yellow curls turning back from his round poet's forehead—and his eyes were deep blue and of an intensity. Joyella's dark hair sloped back from her white face like two dusky wings—and her eyes, you remember them, were like two dark cups before he knew her. They were a little empty and waiting—afterwards he filled them full of himself—and they poured him back into the world in streams of fire. What a pair they made.

"He created her, so to say, the first night he saw her, on the mean small stage of the Arezzo Theatre. The stage—any stage was always Kingdom Come to Dorilio; he never saw, I think, any dust or meanness there. It was enchanted ground where Truth and Beauty walked unblemished.

"He looked across the narrow space between him and Joyella that first night and he saw her rapturously. He lifted her unmeasurably above him and then spread his poet's wings in the far flight towards her.

"Joyella was waiting—ready to be seen and lifted. It happened in an hour's time. They were off on their irrevocable journey.

"For ten years the world saw her thro' his vision—and she lived on in his vision. He wrote his great plays for her in those years and she played them before him and before us all, and to see her play them was to see life a little differently afterwards. That for what they gave us! But what they had of each other—who among us dreary everyday mortals can ever know?

"I don't suppose we can ever guess what a woman passes through who is living out the expectations of a great poet who has created her after his own image. What hours—what hours they must have had together! She becoming ever more his goddess—and he deepening continually the radiance he spread around them both. All we saw was that each year brought us a greater play from his pen, and from her an expanding, glowing presentment of it.

"Great days! Great days all gone forever! When the inevitable hour came and he turned away his eyes from her the glory all died out.

"Buddhists have a knowing phrase:

"Nothing ever takes place save in the presence of a Beholder."

"Dorilio was Joyella's great Beholder. When he saw her no longer, she became as nothing.

"Of course the world said that he had broken her heart. That was nonsense. It ceased to beat for Dorilio because Dorilio no longer quickened it by his glance. The world—regretting her—talked of her tragic face and of what she must be suffering, but once she said to me: 'Ahl to love is happiness—even to suffer is happiness, but not to feel—not to care—THAT is tragedy.' She simply ceased to exist, I think.

"The actual break between them was not without a certain beauty of its own. It had artistic form—just as every expression of their union had had it.

"She had been away for three months in her country villa resting and she had returned for a month's cycle of the plays. She had left him in Rome—where she believed him to be working on a new drama.

"I was there to see her that night—that last night.

"She was giving Dorilio's tragedy: 'The Sun Drowned,' which opens—do you remember it?—full in the central motive of hallucination.

"The curtain rose upon Joyella standing in an unearthly radiance of sunlight—and with the transfigured look in her eyes that Dorilio had written there. After the applause had died down—the applause that her enchanted presence always drew from us—she waited poised there for a fraction of time, seeming to withdraw herself slightly for the effort of projection.

"She closed her inner eye to us and looking towards Dorilio, spoke to him.

"Her lips parted on the opening words:

"As pettando la morte. . . . Awaiting death, my sunlord. . . . if it be death to dissolve in thy light. . . ."

"There was a movement and a disturbance of the atmosphere that she had created in the house.

"The audience was stirring and looking toward a box where two people had just entered.

"I glanced over too—it was Dorilio! Dorilio the magician had come!

"He was with a beautiful woman who was looking—not at the stage, but in a wonderstruck way, at Dorilio.

"And he was not looking at the stage. He was not looking for Joyella. He was turned away from her, and his powerful gaze was striking into the eyes of the woman with him. Once only he looked back to Joyella, absently, with a look all unseeing and uncaring.

"She knew with some certain instinct what had befallen her. She made a gallant effort to go on—to speak the lines. But her voice faltered—the virtue seemed to flow out of her limbs—and she swayed a little.

"The radiance streamed around her still and became a little cruel. Now it tormented her. She seemed to grow dim in it, to lessen, and to sink vaguely to a lesser level. Her movements became fluctuating and intellectual. . . . All this time the words were coming from her lips but with a disastrous lifelessness.

"Again she rallied. She wrestled with death, driving her spirit, with a great effort of the will, up to the intensity that had been its element.

"The dying beauty suffused her again for an instant and was gone.. She knew it. We all knew it.

"Dorilio's eyes had killed something in her. Then she made no more struggle. She quietly walked off the stage into the wings—and the curtain was rung down upon her forever. She went to her dressing room and wrote the one word: 'Apostate,' upon a piece of paper and sent it around to Dorilio in his box.

"She, as they say, retired then and there from the stage, and the rest of the story is commonplace. It is commonplace. I will not go on with it. . . ."

## SORROW

OUT of a broken heart  
I'll make a song!  
And I will sing it on bare, bare hills,  
Myself, alone!

The stormy sombre clouds  
Will weep to see  
The ever-hungry, tearless eyes,  
Of Misery.

The birds will fly in circles  
Silently,  
Knowing full well the joyless song—  
Captivity.—

Yes, captive am I of Sorrow,  
Fear, and Care.  
Walking—my hand in the clinging hand  
Of dumb Despair!

Emilia Berrington.



# REVOLUTIONARY PROGRESS

Max Eastman

## The Uses of Dictatorship

ONE of the most vigorous and admirable efforts of the exploited classes to win liberty and the power to control their own lives, is that of the I. W. W. under James Rowan in the Western States of America. It is a real struggle for democracy. Although its immediate demands are extremely moderate, they are voiced with a quiet consciousness of power which promises a more drastic democratization in the future. I quote the statement of James Rowan after his military arrest by the United States Government:

"The principal object of the strike of the lumber workers is the eight-hour day, and sanitary conditions in the camp. We do not know of any reason why we should be arrested and detained or why our hall should be closed, as we are not breaking any law. We are not unpatriotic. Our principal demand is for the eight-hour day, which has been adopted as standard by the United States Government on all Government work.

"There is nothing unlawful about demanding clean and sanitary conditions in camp. The things we demand and have gone on strike for are the things which would be beneficial, not only to ourselves, but the whole of society, and would tend to put the nation on a more secure foundation.

"We have been accused of being unpatriotic and working against the United States Government in the interests of the German Government. It has also been stated that the lumber workers' strike has been financed by German money. This is absolutely untrue.

"The money which supports the lumber workers' strike has been contributed by the working class from all over this country, and some from workmen of other countries, but we have not yet got any from the Kaiser.

"We do not stand for the destruction of property. We have no wish to burn up the forests or to burn up the crops. All we ask is decent conditions to live under and to work under. We court investigation. We demand that this strike and this organization be fully investigated by the United States authorities, and the results published.

"We believe that the great mass of the people of the country are in favor of things which are advocated by the I. W. W. We know that the only reason that we are subjected to persecution is because if the conditions we demand are granted, it would decrease the profits made by the capitalistic class."

It is not quite true, I think, that the decrease of profits in case their demands are granted, is the only reason why these workmen are being persecuted. It may be indirectly so, but they are being persecuted by a military government and strictly for military reasons. The issue of this war depends largely upon the supply of food and munitions (which includes almost all the products of industry) and the government is aware that a wide strike in these Western States would weaken the power of its armies in the war.

Therefore, the government is compelled, as a matter of military tactics, to settle this controversy between the lumber workers and their employers without a strike.

There are two ways in which this might be accomplished. One would be to summon these employers, and inform them that the eight-hour day and sanitary conditions are "sanctioned by the best judgment of society," and that it behooves them to grant the demand of the workers on pain of governmental confiscation of their property, because the nation is at war for democracy and may be seriously crippled by their insisting upon a special privilege that is not sanctioned by society. That is the way proposed in Congress by Jeannette Rankin. That is the way in which I think a government which was really at war for democracy would proceed. The other way is the Prussian way. It is to assume that the "lower" classes are wrong whenever they demand anything, to put the military forces of the government at the disposal of the industrial junkers, arrest and jail the leaders of the workmen, hold them as military prisoners, without any civil or republican rights whatever, and so kill the struggle for democracy. This Prussian procedure Woodrow Wilson has at this date (August 20) adopted.

A man with the creed of democracy and the temper of an autocrat, vested with that peculiar authority which democracies depute to their chief executives in war-time, he has been tested as few men would wish to be tested. He has failed altogether as a leader or even a defender of democratic life. We have refrained from making this judgment heretofore, because many of the acts of his government which most aroused our personal anger were acts of injustice only to those who opposed the war. And there is some extra-legal precedent, some vague sanction in republican history for such acts of injustice. The illegal suppression of our Socialist press by an appointed bureaucracy, for instance, is a thing that we will fight to the last ditch—not only because it is an intolerable interference with our purposes now, but also because it holds dangers for the future that the war-shouters never imagine. And yet we fight this injustice without very much extreme indignation, because we know that the bureaucracy cannot conduct their war at all if we keep telling the truth about it. And they cannot back out of it without a good deal of embarrassment. And they continually persuade themselves that it is a war for the "defense of the republic." And in the defense of the republic anything goes—even the guillotine. We cannot ignore the tradition that supports our friends and enemies at Washington in underhandedly and illegally suppressing us who oppose their war.

But we can extend no such tolerance to the President's attitude toward those who, without opposing the war, are engaged in a struggle which impedes the war, and which might be settled by emergency action from the chief executive upon either side—either the side of democracy or of class rule.

In the matter of the Arizona deportations the President failed to take action on the side of democracy. The industrial junkers hold sway absolutely in that state.

In the matter of the suffrage pickets the President failed to take action on the side of democracy. The rule of the male sex continues to perpetuate itself by brutal and criminal assault under his very windows.

And now in the matter of these striking workmen in the Northwest, he has not only failed to take action on the side of democracy, but he has taken the most drastic action conceivable under our institutions on the side of and in defense of the notorious plutocrats of that section.

Whatever may be our tolerance of the delegation of power to the executive for the prosecution of war, we can have no tolerance of his exercising that power to oppress the commons and buttress the lords in the industrial struggle that obtains within our borders. Those who love democracy very much will rally in unanimous opposition to the administration while this continues, whether they believe that the foreign war is a war for democracy or not.

## The War Creed

THE thing that makes me hate war so much is not the bloodshed, but the sentimentality and the decay of candor and clear thinking. In the trenches there is filth and physical degeneration, but a great deal of true speech. At home there is only falsehood, prejudice and mumble of cant from the most gifted minds. I always felt an intellectual kinship with William Marion Reedy—he had a platonic and serene interest in poising ideas. The fact that he believes in this war would not in the least disturb my feeling, if he believed in it liberally, with his mind, and like a gentleman, or a scholar, or a man, or anything else but a denominational fanatic. Like all of the patriots, he believes in the war as though it were a church. He re-echoes the childish, water-brained liturgy of denunciation against all of his good friends—who, he perfectly well knows, are only trying to use their brains without prejudice of nationalism—as “pro-German.” It makes me sick to see Reedy’s mind wandering down to this level. And everybody’s mind. That is why I hate war. War is a sentimental religion—it means universal dementia, inane fixation, sacrosanct one sidedness, bigotry and bunk in the highest.

## Bunches of Justice

HERE is a clipping from the Buffalo EXPRESS of July 26th:

“A United States court has decided that THE MASSES cannot legally be barred from the mails. This ought to be good, convincing evidence to Max Eastman and his kind that we have a much juster government in this country than they supposed—much juster, in fact, than they deserve.”

This convincing evidence of the justice of our country lasted about six minutes. For no sooner was Judge Hand’s order to the Post Office signed, than the United States District Attorney appeared with his order from a superior judge compelling us to show cause why he should not stay the execution of Judge Hand’s order, pending an appeal to be

argued in October. We did “show cause,” namely the injustice of holding up a magazine until its monthly value was lost in order to find out whether it should be held up or not. The stay was granted, nevertheless, and Judge Hough in granting it, began his decision with the following statement:

“After considerable experience in appellate practice, and such recent inquiry as I have been able to make, no other instance (under Sec. 129, Jud. Code) of application to a Judge of the Appellate Court to stay an appealed order of this nature, is known to me.”

The judicial temper of the mind of this judge, who set a precedent heretofore unheard of in our laws, is exemplified in this sentence, also quoted from his decision:

“It is at least arguable whether any constitutional government can be judicially compelled to assist in the dissemination and distribution of something which proclaims itself ‘revolutionary,’ which exists not to reform but to destroy the rule of any party, clique or faction that could give even lip service to the Constitution of the United States.”

This sounds more to us like editorial denunciation than judicial decision. It comes as a surprise, too, because our impression was that the constitution is no longer mentioned among gentlemen. We thought THE MASSES was about the only magazine left that did care to risk its reputation by supporting that revolutionary document.

Following this “stay of execution” we received a note from Mr. Burleson inviting us to come to Washington and show cause why our second-class mailing privilege should not be revoked because we have not mailed the magazine regularly. We went to Washington and “showed cause”—namely, that we have not mailed it regularly because the Post Office itself secured this stay of execution which privileged them to refuse to allow us to mail it, pending an appeal to a higher court, which shall determine whether they have to allow us to mail it or not.

This did not seem to Mr. Burleson a sufficient cause for acting with justice, or even with the courtesy of a gentleman in a controversy, and although he had studied the September issue and evidently decided that he could not lawfully exclude that from the mails, he has revoked our whole mailing privilege because the August issue, by order of the Court upon request of the Post Office, was temporarily excluded pending an appeal.

I commend these facts to the Buffalo Express for further comment.

## Unanimous

TEN thousand people who have tried living in the United States are unanimous, according to the report of the Russian Commission, in declaring that this is not the land of liberty. I quote from the New York Times:

“One of the great menaces with which the Russian Government had to contend with while the Root mission was in the country was the propaganda of thousands of Russians from the United States, who turned against the land of their adoption and abused America and every-thing American. Instead of telling the people of the advantages of living under a democracy, these Russians



from America began to harangue whoever would listen to them, misrepresenting conditions in this country and creating the impression among the simple Russian people that America was not the land of liberty that they had believed it to be.

"In the opinion of members of the mission the attitude of the returned Russians was not due originally to German influence, but to their inability to appreciate the advantages of living in the United States. As one member of the mission viewed it, these people had lived apart from the real life of America. They had congregated in their own communities and had not mingled with their American neighbors. They were indifferent to how the more prosperous and contented portion of the community lived. They had so confused the situation prior to the arrival of the Root mission that when the latter reached Vladivostock it found itself received politely but asked pointedly as to its objects in coming to Russia."

Now it is perfectly natural for us to be angry about this, and call these Russians liars, as of course they are. As the *Times* says, they knew nothing about the more prosperous and contented portion of our community and that is the portion in which we keep our liberty stored. We can never forgive these mendacious Russians, but ten thousand unanimous liars is an extraordinary number and we might at least admire their team-work.

## Our Congress

I SEE by the papers that Congress is going out on a Chau-tauqua tour this fall to explain to the people what the war is about. But who is going to explain to Congress what the war is about? I was down there last week, and I asked them, and they don't know. I asked James Hamilton Lewis, who says he represents the administration on the floor of the Senate about the war for democracy, and he said: "Why, we're not fighting for democracy. You can't impose democracy on a foreign country. We're fighting to avenge the death of our poor sailors on the sea!" And I asked another senator, equally well known in this connection, and he said we were fighting to overthrow the Bourbon conspiracy to subjugate the democracies of the world that was formulated in the secret treaty of Verona in 1822. He read me that treaty, and it certainly was a terrible thing. He keeps it under his blotter and introduces it in the Congressional Record every day or two. It is hard to stay mad when you have to go back a hundred years for something to get mad at. Another pro-war Senator—and one of the most prominent men in the Senate—told me that he thought the Senate would reconvene in November, "if there isn't a revolution before that." I laughed. I thought he was saying that for my special amusement. He said: "I mean it. I believe something is going to happen."

Those men in Washington are scared to death. On one side they are afraid of President Wilson because he knows so much history and law that they don't know how to answer him back; and on the other side they are afraid of the American people because they don't know so much history and law, but they know what they want. One of the Congressmen who voted for war exhibited a letter from his best friend back home in the vicinity of Kansas, and the letter said, "Bill, I would advise you, if you can find a good ex-

cuse, not to come home when Congress adjourns, because if you come back here somebody is liable to set fire to your shirt-tail." That is the state of affairs in the Congress of the United States. They are not saying publicly what they say privately. They have got themselves tied up in a war that it requires a historian to understand, and they don't understand it themselves, and they have just one clear motive left, and that is the fear that if they stand up for the true interests of the people, somebody who owns a newspaper will accuse them of being unpatriotic.

There is one man in the Senate of the United States who is not afraid, and who never was afraid to speak for the true interests of his own people in the presence of anybody, and that is Robert La Follette. Robert La Follette has introduced in the Senate a resolution reasserting the fact that the power to begin war, and to end war, and to establish the terms of peace resides in the representatives of the people, and declaring that the United States favors peace with Germany upon the terms that Russia has proposed. The resolution is there. All that Congress needs is a red-hot intimation that it is the will of the people that this resolution be passed.

## The Main Question

PERHAPS by the time this magazine issues we shall have a clear statement from the commander-in-chief of the peace terms, as to whether we are fighting for the possession by England of the German colonies in Africa. I am informed by an authority of international fame, who has just come from England, that this is now the central determination of the British ruling classes. And they have started a propaganda in favor of having the English government, acting as a corporation, not only control the sovereignty, but *own the land* of the black colonies they have captured, and this propaganda is being privately conducted under a new and glorious slogan of democracy: "Let the Nigger Pay the War Debt!"

A NATION in which 2% of the people own 60% of the wealth, and 10% of the people own 90% of the wealth, *can not* wage war for democracy. That nation has established within its own borders an industrial feudalism. Its fighters for democracy and real liberty have their work to do at home.

## Sonnet

THE angle of the morning, garbed in gold,  
 Rose splendidly above the fiery skies  
 And shook his hair, coloured in paradise,  
 Where through the early mists our planet rolled:  
 Above the morning clouds his trumpet rang.  
 And I, made weary by a sick surmise  
 Of Love which must remain till Death untold,  
 Looked off, looked up, and wondered why I sang.  
 Heart, Heart, you sang that morning; do you hear?  
 You sang in ecstasy beneath the noon,  
 While the tall tides washed against the pier. . . .  
 The light was fading now; the night came soon,  
 And as our songs died down, and up rose fear,  
 The sea rose too, and drenched the hollow moon.  
 Edwin Justus Mayer.

## Playing It Safe

THESE items are guaranteed to be harmless. They will not bring the blush of shame to the cheek of the Post Office Department, which is the mother and father and maiden aunt of us all.

PRESIDENT WILSON recently had an interesting letter from Pope Benedict of Rome, Italy. He is quite well.

BETHMANN HOLWEG has resigned his position as Chancellor of the German Empire and will take up the study of art in Munich.

ELIHU ROOT has returned home after a brief but pleasant visit in Russia. He found the weather there fully as hot as it was at home.

MAJOR GENERAL PERSHING, who is spending the summer in France, expects to remain well into the cool weather. He is a military man by profession.

HERBERT C. HOOVER, who lately returned from Belgium and other foreign places, has accepted a position with the Federal Government at Washington, D. C.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT (T. R.) recently delivered an instructive address at Pittsburgh, Pa. The Colonel has taken to wearing a Palm Beach suit.

GENERAL HARRISON GREY OTIS died at Los Angeles at the age of eighty. His intimates always declared that he did not think well of labor unions.

A MOVEMENT has been set on foot to pass a constitutional amendment for national prohibition. Some of the boys act like they thought they had better get all they can while there is time.

A REGRETTABLE trolley collision took place not long ago in Connecticut. It had all the usual features, including a deceased motorman to bear the blame.

THE well know parties, Republican and Democratic, are uniting their forces in Dayton, Ohio, to prevent the election of a Socialist ticket. Safety first is the Daytonian motto.

TAMMANY HALL has chosen a judge for its candidate for Mayor of New York, though here of late no judge generally gets elected when he runs for anything.

SOME people have thought of going to Stockholm (Sweden) this fall to have a talk about the—whatever is going on over there in Europe.

THIS is getting on dangerous grounds and it might be a good place to stop.

HOWARD BRUBAKER.

## Rain

RAIN, rain, murmuring endless complaints  
In mournful whisperings which never cease,  
You bring my tired brain a certain peace  
Like Latin prayers to absent-minded saints:

And whether silently to earth you fall,  
Or dashed and driven in tempestuous flight,  
Like souls before God's wrath, the thirsty night,  
The soft and fecund earth shall drink you all.  
Marjorie Allen Seiffert.



## The New France

American social worker explaining to a "devastated" peasant in France that after the war it will no longer be considered moral for her and her ten children to sleep in the same room.

LOUISE BRYANT.



## Correspondence

DEAR MR. EASTMAN:

I am always glad to see *THE MASSES*; but you must be careful not to put in things merely because they are heterodox which you would not put in if they were orthodox. If a man sends you a poem to the effect that Jesus Christ was a bastard, you should not put that poem in: you should tell that man to go home and read the gospels and *think*. He can get quite a funny set of verses out of the true and obvious explanation of a document which declares that Jesus was the son of the Holy Ghost and then traces his descent through Joseph to King David. If the gospels were about President Wilson you would have been more critical. A few more slips like that, combined with your advertisement columns, will get your circulation into unsavory channels, and finally land you with your head in the lion's mouth. If you want to preserve real freedom, you cannot be too fastidious. Forgive this criticism; but the last few numbers that reached me were not up to your own mark: You were admitting vulgar and ignorant stuff because it was blasphemous, and coarse and carnal work because it was scandalous. Now if you set America saying "See what comes of not being hypocritical and not being prudish," you will give a new lease of life to hypocrisy and prudery instead of shaming them. The paper began so well that its falling off—which I hope was only a temporary aberration—seemed to me all the pities in the world. But I had no excuse for sermonizing you until this letter of yours of the 28th June reached me.

I await the promised numbers full of hope.

Ever,

G. BERNARD SHAW.

DEAR MR. SHAW:

It was good of you to take the trouble to sermonize us. When I read the first page of your letter I imagined my correspondent as a very liberal Unitarian prelate who enjoyed shocking with his intelligence the good ladies of a New England congregation, and was a little jealous of our liberty to shock him. This is the way I usually explain the people who like *THE MASSES*, but tell us we publish things merely in order to scandalize people. We never do. We are perfectly naïve in our sophistication. We live in a world of the kind we believe in, and publish what we find excellent to our own taste and moral judgment with a really pastoral unconcern about the opinionated public.

I know there has never been anything vulgar or coarse in *THE MASSES*, to our reading, because we are not any of us vulgar or coarse. I don't say the same thing about your word "carnal," because on that point I have always wanted to sermonize you. I admire your writings more than any others of my time, but there is too much unmitigated brains in them. You ought to try to be a little more carnal. A brain like yours is almost as terrible, the way it burns up everything, as a mediaeval soul.

Nevertheless, when I turned the page and saw your name signed to this familiar opinion about *THE MASSES*, I received my shock. I can't explain you the way I can Unitarian ministers, and I have no doubt your letter will make me more circumspect about the *excellence* of what goes in *THE MASSES* that might shock people.

Sincerely,

MAX EASTMAN.

## Prussianism

**T**HE Philadelphia *Public Ledger* on August 10 ran a letter from C. B. Evans, of Chicago, to which we call the attention of the Attorney General. This letter, run in the business section as regular news material, intimates optimistically that the government has killed labor agitators secretly and advocates killing all those who, through the channels of labor agitation, hinder the course of the administration. The I. W. W. is the particular body to which the propagandist letter refers.

Propaganda such as this, if made by the editors of *THE MASSES*, would result in the joyful indictment of the editors of this publication. Thus (*italics ours*): "It seems to be pretty near time when the United States Government should adopt a wide-open method of dealing with all who in one degree and another are contravening the purpose of this country to make a determined and victorious fight for democracy. The detective force and the army cannot deal summarily with every man who has an overflow of froth from his mouth. Commonly a little admonition does the business with that sort of a fellow. But there are men who are performing actual deeds of hostility to the country which has given them their living.

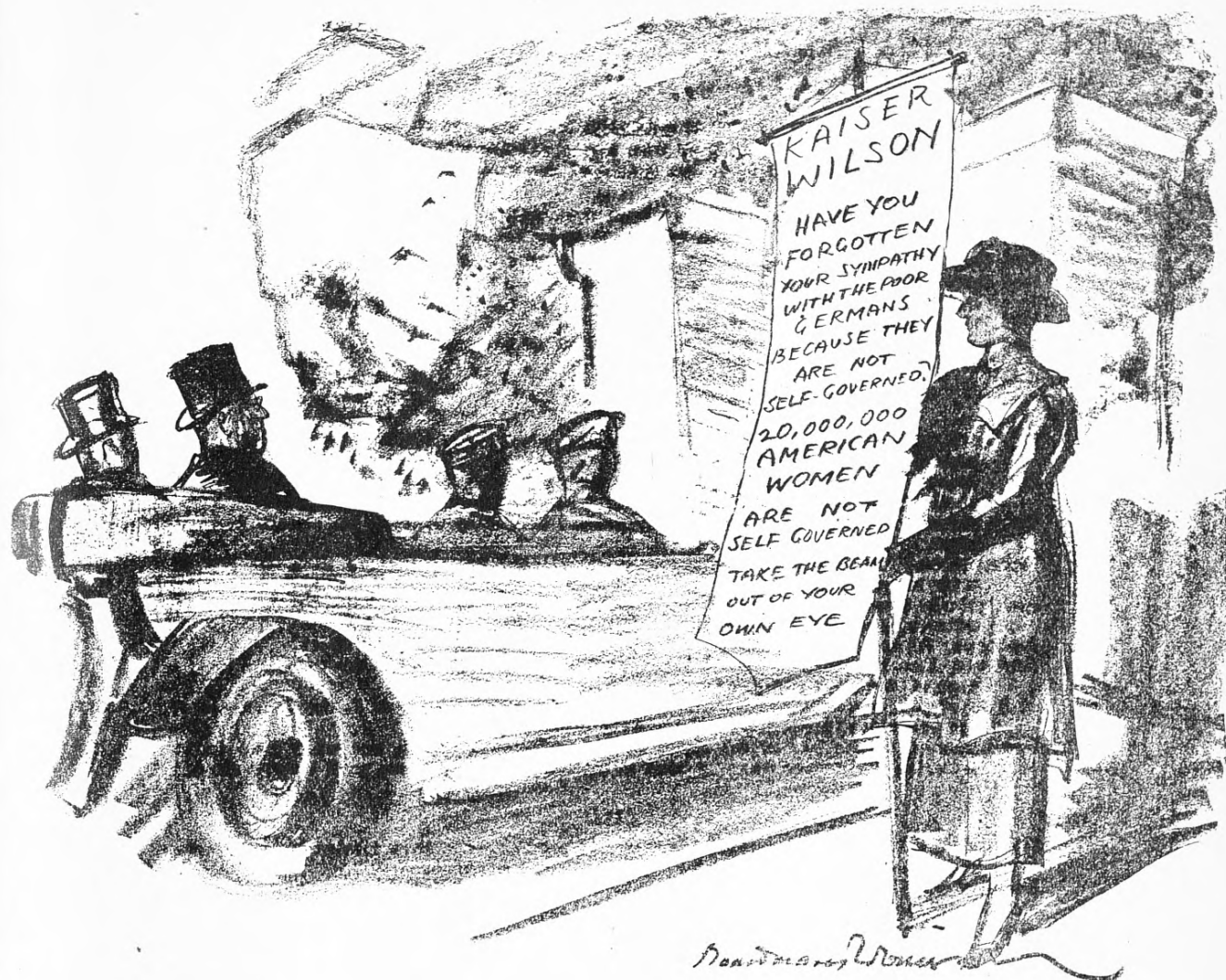
"For an act of real hostility to the Government in time of war *the bullet is the remedy*. That remedy has been used in certain instances, but *few people know of the summary action that has been taken*, and as a consequence the effect on the public mind is almost nil. *Such events are not published in the newspapers* and it is only in private conversation that they are passed along. . . . The penalty for all treason is death."

S. R.

## Oh, Little Moonlit Hill

**W**E two shall wander up a moonlit hill,  
 You and I,  
 And lamps of town grow dim and golden, warm,  
 And sounds of city traffic, muffled, low,  
 Shall thrum a crooning song, and in our hearts  
 A love-song, too.  
 And we shall lie where scents of grass are sweet,  
 You and I,  
 And where the night-sky creeps upon our souls  
 And smothers us with passion-tinted hands  
 And bends us close—oh, little moonlit hill,  
 And you and I.

Charles Divine.



This is one of the banners for which the suffragists were jailed.—[Ed.]

Boadman Robinson.

## A New Kind of Art Gallery

ART YOUNG said once that it was one of his dreams to have a picture gallery as long as from here to Newark where one could meander the whole day through, eating peanuts by the way. Since the government has no intention of building such a gallery, the next best idea seems to be this one of Nina Bull's.

Five years ago, Nina Bull went into Alfred Stieglitz's studio and saw for the first time, the pictures of Cezanne, Picasso, Matisse and many other modern artists. They refreshed her and stimulated her perceptions.

Stieglitz wanted to add to the art-consciousness of the

world, so he gave his time and energy and his money to this gallery. No attention was given to sales. The gallery was there for people to come into, and refresh themselves.

Nina Bull wanted to show these pictures to others, so she had them sent to her home in Buffalo, and hung them in her house, and people came to see them. This experience suggested to her what a pleasant thing it would be to have pictures in one's house for a while, and then to send them on to other houses, and to others and others.

That is what she is going to do. Pictures may now be rented for small sums, for long or short periods of time, and then returned and exchanged for others—or they may be bought and kept forever. Nina Bull's gallery will be opened this season at 291 Fifth Ave.



# When The Cock Crows

Arturo Giovannitti

To the Memory of Frank Little,  
Hanged at Midnight.

## I.

SIX MEN drove up to his house at midnight, and woke the poor woman who kept it,  
And asked her: "Where is the man who spoke against war and insulted the army?"  
And the old woman took fear of the men and the hour, and showed them the room  
where he slept,  
And when they made sure it was he whom they wanted, they dragged him out of his  
bed with blows, tho' he was willing to walk,  
And they fastened his hands on his back, and they drove him across the black night,  
And there was no moon and no stars and not any visible thing, and even the faces of  
the men were eaten with the leprosy of the dark, for they were masked with  
black shame,  
And nothing showed in the gloom save the glow of his eyes and the flame of his soul  
that scorched the face of Death.

## II.

NO ONE gave witness of what they did to him, after they took him away, until a dog  
barked at his corpse,  
But I know, for I have seen masked men with the rope, and the eyeless things that  
howl against the sun, and I have ridden beside the hangman at midnight.  
They kicked him, they cursed him, they pushed him, they spat on his cheeks and his  
brow,  
They stabbed his ears with foul oaths, they smeared his clean face with the pus of  
their ulcerous words,  
And nobody saw or heard them. But I call you to witness John Brown, I call you to  
witness, you Molly Macguires,  
And you, Albert Parsons, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, August Spies,  
And you, Leo Frank, kinsman of Jesus, and you, Joe Hill, twice my germane in the  
rage of the song and the fray,  
And all of you, sun-dark brothers, and all of you harriers of torpid faiths, hasteners of  
the great day, propitiators of the holy deed,  
I call you all to the bar of the dawn to give witness if this is not what they do in  
America when they wake up men at midnight to hang them until they're dead.

## III.

UNDER a railroad trestle, under the heart-rib of Progress, they circled his neck with  
the noose, but never a word he spoke.  
Never a word he uttered, and they grew weak from his silence,  
For the terror of death is strongest upon the men with the rope,  
When he who must hang breathes neither a prayer nor a curse,  
Nor speaks any word, nor looks around, nor does anything save to chew his bit of  
tobacco and yawn with unsated sleep.  
They grew afraid of the hidden moon and the stars, they grew afraid of the wind that  
held its breath, and of the living things that never stirred in their sleep,  
And they gurgled a bargain to him from under their masks.  
I know what they promised to him, for I have heard thrice the bargains that hounds  
yelp to the trapped lion:  
They asked him to promise that he would turn back from his road, that he would eat  
carrion as they, that he would lap the leash for the sake of the offals, as they—  
and thus he would save his life.  
But not one lone word he answered—he only chewed his bit of tobacco in silent con-  
tempt.

## IV.

NOW BLACK as their faces became whatever had been white inside of the six men,  
even to their mothers' milk,  
And they inflicted on him the final shame, and ordered that he should kiss the flag.  
They always make bounden men kiss the flag in America, where men never kiss men,  
not even when they march forth to die.  
But tho' to him all flags are holy that men fight for and death hallows,  
He did not kiss it—I swear it by the one that shall wrap my body.  
He did not kiss it, and they trampled upon him in their frenzy that had no retreat save  
the rope,  
And to him who was ready to die for a light he would never see shine, they said:  
"You are a coward."

To him who would not barter a meaningless word for his life, they said: "You are a traitor,"  
 And they drew the noose round his neck, and they pulled him up to the trestle, and they watched him until he was dead,  
 Six masked men whose faces were eaten with the cancer of the dark,  
 One for each steeple of thy temple, O Labor.

## V.

NOW HE IS dead, but now that he is dead is the door of your dungeon faster, O money changers and scribes, and priests and masters of slaves?  
 Are men now readier to die for you without asking the wherefore of the slaughter?  
 Shall now the pent-up spirit no longer connive with the sun against your midnight?  
 And are we now all reconciled to your rule, and are you safer and we humbler, and is the night eternal and the day forever blotted out of the skies,  
 And all blind yesterdays risen, and all tomorrows entombed,  
 Because of six faceless men and ten feet of rope and one corpse dangling unseen in the blackness under a railroad trestle?  
 No, I say, no. It swings like a terrible pendulum that shall soon ring out a mad tocsin and call the red cock to the crowing.  
 No, I say, no, for someone will bear witness of this to the dawn,  
 Someone will stand straight and fearless tomorrow between the armed hosts of your slaves, and shout to them the challenge of that silence you could not break.

## VI.

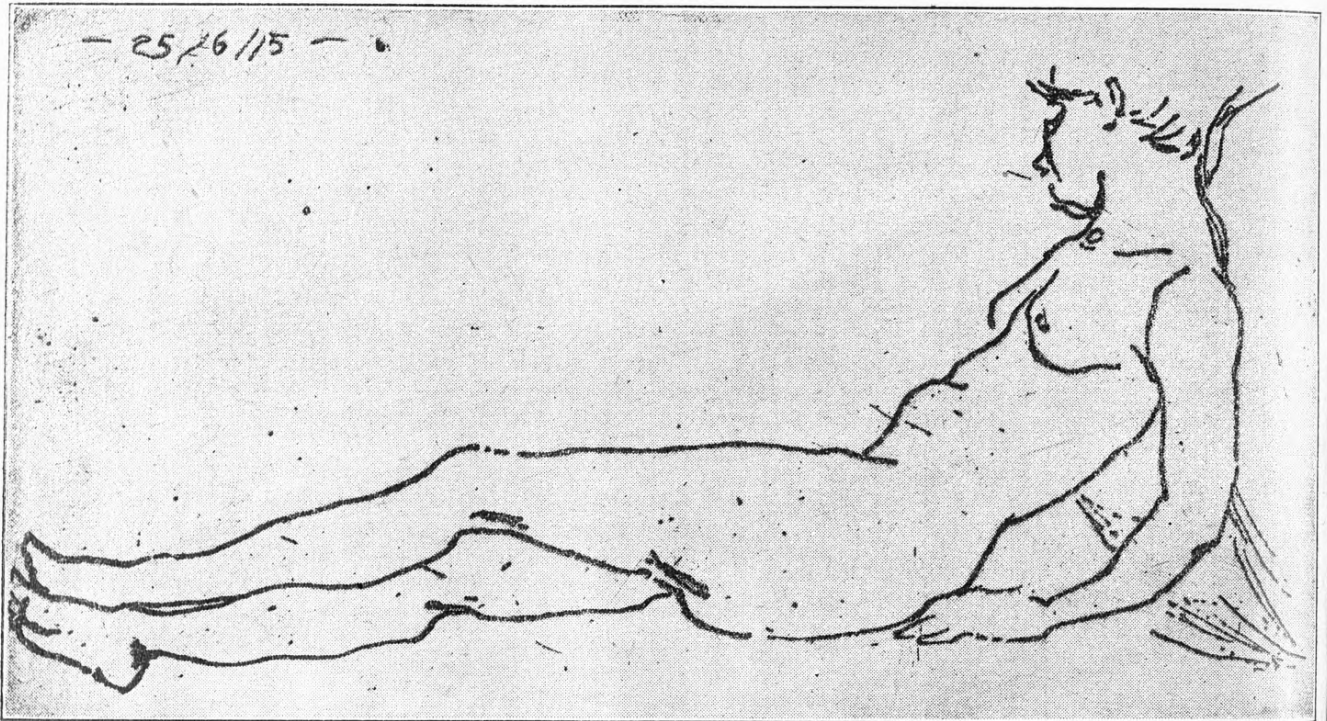
"BROTHERS—he will shout to them—are you then, the Godborn, reduced to a mute of dogs  
 That you will rush to the hunt of your kin at the blowing of a horn?  
 Brothers, have then the centuries that created new suns in the heavens, gouged out the eyes of your soul,  
 That you should wallow in your blood like swine,  
 That you should squirm like rats in a carrion,  
 That you, who astonished the eagles, should beat blindly about the night of murder like bats?  
 Are you, Brothers, who were meant to scale the stars, to crouch forever before a footstool,  
 And listen forever to one word of shame and subjection,  
 And leave the plough in the furrow, the trowel on the wall, the hammer on the anvil, and the heart of the race on the knees of screaming women, and the future of the race in the hands of babbling children,  
 And yoke on your shoulders the halter of hatred and fury,  
 And dash head-down against the bastions of folly,  
 Because a colored cloth waves in the air, because a drum beats in the street,  
 Because six men have promised you a piece of ribbon on your coat, a carved tablet on a wall and your name in a list bordered with black?  
 Shall you, then, be forever the stewards of death, when life waits for you like a bride?  
 Ah no, Brothers, not for this did our mothers shriek with pain and delight when we tore their flanks with our first cry;  
 Not for this were we given command of the beasts,  
 Not with blood but with sweat were we bidden to achieve our salvation.  
 Behold! I announce now to you a great tidings of joy,  
 For if your hands that are gathered in sheaves for the sickle of war unite as a bouquet of flowers between the warm breasts of peace,  
 Freedom will come without any blows save the hammers on the chains of your wrists, and the picks on the walls of your jails!  
 Arise, and against every hand jeweled with the rubies of murder,  
 Against every mouth that sneers at the tears of mercy,  
 Against every foul smell of the earth,  
 Against every head that a footstool raises over your head,  
 Against every word that was written before this was said,  
 Against every happiness that never knew sorrow,  
 And every glory that never knew love and sweat,  
 Against silence and death, and fear  
 Arise with a mighty roar!  
 Arise and declare your war;  
 For the wind of the dawn is blowing,  
 For the eyes of the East are glowing,  
 For the lark is up and the cock is crowing,  
 And the day of judgment is here!"

## VII.

THUS shall he speak to the great parliament of the dawn, the witness of this murderous midnight,  
 And even if none listens to him, I shall be there and acclaim,  
 And even if they tear him to shreds, I shall be there to confess him before your guns and your gallows, O Monsters!



And even tho' you smite me with your bludgeon upon my head,  
 And curse me and call me foul names, and spit on my face and on my bare hands,  
 I swear that when the cock crows I shall not deny him.  
 And even if the power of your lie be so strong that my own mother curse me as a  
 traitor with her hands clutched over her old breasts,  
 And my daughters with the almighty names; turn their faces from me and call me  
 coward,  
 And the One whose love for me is a battleflag in the storm, scream for the shame of  
 me and adjure my name,  
 I swear that when the cock crows I shall not deny him.  
 And if you chain me and drag me before the Beast that guards the seals of your power,  
 and the caitiff that conspires against the daylight demand my death,  
 And your hangman throw a black cowl over my head and tie a noose around my neck,  
 And the black ghoul that pastures on the graves of the saints dig its snout into my  
 soul and howl the terrors of the everlasting beyond in my ears,  
 Even then, when the cock crows, I swear I shall not deny him.  
 And if you spring the trap under my feet and hurl me into the gloom, and in the  
 revelation of that instant eternal a voice shriek madly to me  
 That the rope is forever unbreakable,  
 That the dawn is never to blaze,  
 That the night is forever invincible,  
 Even then, even then, I shall not deny him.



John Storrs

### TREES—By Dorothea Gay

#### NEW GROWTH

Did you not see the trees,  
 The little, eager trees,  
 Lifting impetuous branches to the caress  
 Of an unheeding wind?  
 . . . . .  
 You might have stopped to speak as you passed by.

#### HORSE CHESTNUT

Still it is Spring  
 But now the great horse chestnut  
 Unrolls its sudden leaves  
 And in the sweet May dusk  
 Lifts gleaming candles  
 At the waiting shrine of Summer.

## John Storrs

**A**MONG the most important sculptors in France to-day is John Storrs, a young American formerly of Chicago. Storrs is little known in this country, but very much appreciated in France. Rodin was the first to notice his genius and bring it before the public. He has never been a pupil of Rodin's, and, although his early work seems to be more or less influenced by Rodin his late pieces are entirely original and almost revolutionary in spirit. His theory about sculpture is that it is very closely allied to architecture and he believes that sculptors should build their statues with that ever in mind. And he is never satisfied with fragments.

It seemed quite wonderful to see him so lost in his art with all the madness of the great war roaring about him. He works very hard from early morning to late afternoon six days in the week. His great desire is to do a magnificent symbolic figure for a statue of Walt Whitman for America. I only hope that America will appreciate the honor he intends to do her for America is very poor in works of this kind and in sons of his standard.

I found that he reads THE MASSES eagerly every month, and that he feels very near to the young writers who contribute to

it. When I came away he gave me a number of etchings for THE MASSES. Some appear this month and others will appear from time to time.

It is hard to adequately describe Storrs except to say that I have never met a man whose genius is more apparent and who is so unspoiled by recognition and so humble about art. Sometimes he writes poetry. I remember one called "Yours and Mine." I think it expresses him very well:

The earth . . . the sky . . . the sea,  
 And all the forests,  
 And all the cities,  
 And all the peoples  
 That cover the earth.  
 And all the ships  
 That cover the seas.  
 All, all,  
 Either in or out,  
 Through and across,  
 Above and beyond  
 Either the body or the soul . . .  
 All . . . . . belongs to him.  
 Becomes a part of him . . . . .  
 Who looks . . . . . who loves . . . . .

LOUISE BRYANT.

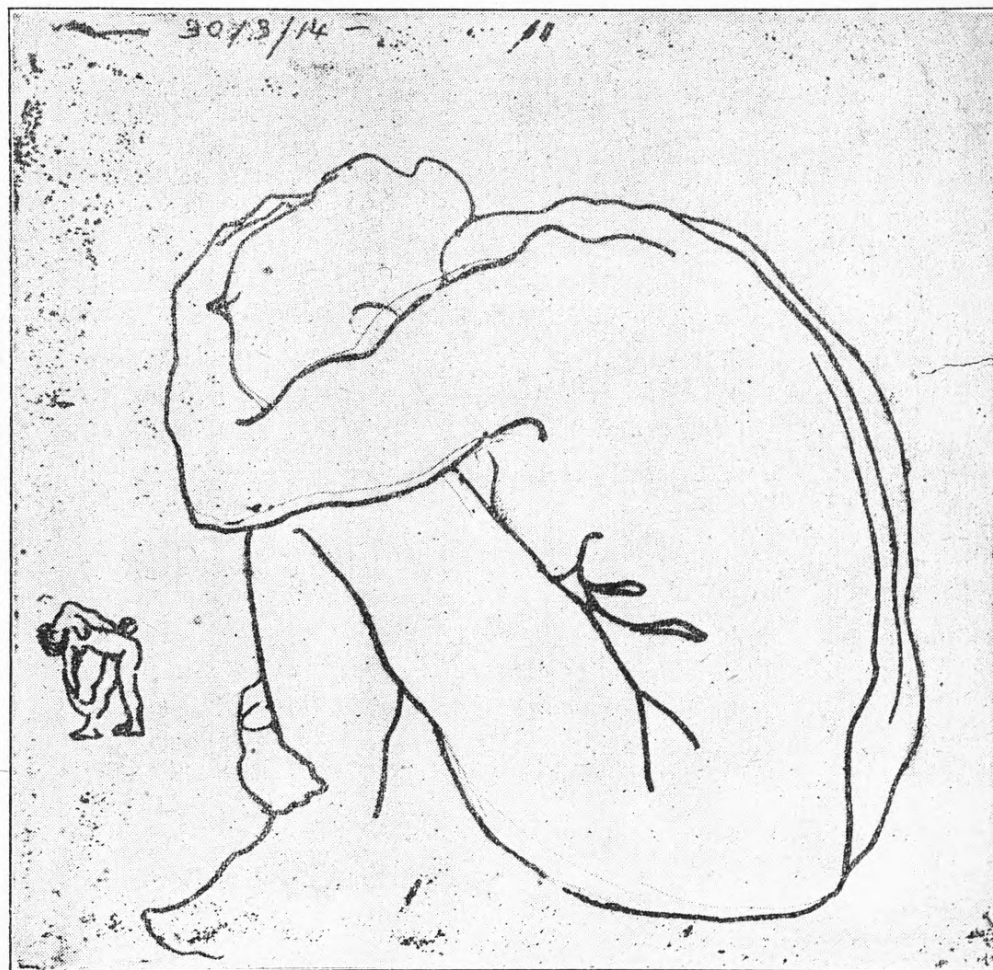
## LEE CRYSTAL

(My negro cellmate for a night at  
 Harrison st. Station, Chicago.)

**B**RONZE young leopard  
 Of radium lighted  
 Blackest opal eyes,  
 Animalism in its completion,  
 Delicate fibre and bone  
 Knit to be wounded  
 By all emotions.  
 Do they think cruelly  
 That you'll be tamed at all?  
 And (if at all)  
 By these police obscenities?  
 You who were born to strike  
 If struck at.

Bronze young leopard  
 Of radium lighted  
 Blackest opal eyes;  
 Of night hair dipped in  
 Nature's richest, livest pitch vat:  
 Patriot,  
 (If love of liberty is that)  
 A few like you  
 Would make a nation  
 If allowed to know.

J. Blanding Sloan.



John Storrs





Cornelia Barns

## PSYCHO-ANALYSTS

"I dreamt you were drafted!"

"Wish—dream—or nightmare?"

# Kisses

Walter Vogdes

QUITE unnecessarily, it seemed, the boy grew up. Try as he would, that was something he could not ward off. Before he knew it he was seventeen, wore long trousers and had a job. Then he realized that he was part of the world, that he must work and that he must never again be happy.

The job consisted of selling candy in the city streets. Each day, shortly after noon, he came forth from a basement to the world's eyes, clad in a stiff, starchy white suit, a white cap and brown leggings. His candy he carried in a large, gleaming, nickel-plated pan, suspended from his shoulders by a white cloth strap. The strap went over one shoulder and under the other and the pan rested against his stomach, high enough to permit him to walk easily, even when it was loaded with twenty pounds of candy.

He wore white gloves and chopped the candy from a large lump with a small, polished nickel-plated hatchet. He carried two kinds—vanilla and chocolate.

The boy's boss, who made the candy, also sold it in the streets. He was a big man with red cheeks and wore a similar uniform. He could sell twenty dollars' worth in a day. The boy could sell only five dollars' worth.

Most days the boy started out in high spirits. But if something occurred early in the day to crush his spirits it often happened that he did not recover for hours.

Each afternoon before the matinee the boy would go to one theatre and the boss to another. They would stand on the crowded sidewalks before the main entrances. At the evening performances they would return. Each intermission found them in front of the theatres. Between times they "worked the street crowds." After the boy carried a pan of candy for an hour, the strap would burn his shoulder. But that didn't matter much.

When he had sold all the candy in his pan the boy would go to the basement and load up again. He did this several times during the course of the day's work. He and the boss generally stopped work about midnight, when the after-theatre crowds had dispersed.

The basement, a bleak, damp place, was under a picture postcard store. In one corner was a pyramid of buckets marked "Chocolate" and "Vanilla." To reach the room you walked up a narrow alley next to the store, entered a dirty back yard and went down slippery, frozen steps. From the yard you looked through a window into the store. It was holiday time and the place was generally crowded. It looked warm and cheerful inside.

Several pretty girls waited on the customers. One was pale-faced, dark-haired and slender. Once, as the boy passed through the yard, this girl smiled at him. Now, sometimes the women to whom he sold candy in the streets smiled. But this was different. The smiles in the street were impersonal, this one was all his own.

Safe in the basement, he slipped the strap from his shoulders, put the pan on a table, and stared at the floor. His thoughts formed a wreath around the memory of the girl's smile.

He had never known girls. They were an extraordinary lot, he knew that. He had heard men speak of their beauty and of adventures with them. At school he had known boys who deliberately walked along the streets with them.

She had smiled at him. That was enough to send his mind off in lilted dreams. Her eyes were brown and he read wondrous thought into their depths.

After that he looked for her. Often he saw her darting among the counters, slipping post cards into envelopes and carrying change to patrons. He would watch her from outside the window. He thought his steadfast gaze would bring her eyes to him. But she moved lightly, unconscious of his presence, and did not once look up.

One night she saw him. She smiled and looked quickly around the store. It was rather late; customers were few. She gave him a meaning look and opened the door that led to the back yard. In a moment she stood on the steps a few feet away.

It was a cold, silver night and she was in white. Without a word he slipped the strap of the pan from his shoulders and stepped toward her.

He had been standing in the glare shed through the windows and he stopped, blinking his eyes and trying to accustom them to the darkness. She waited, without speaking.

He could see her quite plainly now. She lifted her head with a proud little move. The blood was thumping against his brain as he reached out and instinctively caught her hands. They were cool and live and yielding. She was still smiling and her head—

"Well?" she said, in a calm, low voice.

His mind was filled with the fragments of dreams—dreams in which he had played the hero. Hardly knowing what he was doing, he took her in his arms.

"Oh, you mustn't!"

He heard the door slam and he was alone.

He threw up his head. In the black sky a star quivered and seemed to spin. It became a circle. It was coming toward him. It grew larger and larger and—he reached suddenly for a railing that ran about the basement steps.

He heard the boss coming along the alley and, seizing his pan, he darted down into the basement. Then he turned, like one pursued.

The boss entered and looked at him keenly.

"I have just kissed a girl!" The vibrations in the air made the boy think he had shouted, but really he had not said a word.

"How did you make out?" the boss inquired quietly.

"Oh, pretty good." The boy passed his hand slowly across his brow.

"Crowds are loosening up to-night," said the boss.

\* \* \* \* \*

After that the boy kissed her every night. Her name was Marie. She had a way of putting him off. She would turn her face away, first one way and then the other, to avoid his pursuing face. He would let her do that several



times. Then he would move his shoulder around as a barrier, put his arm about her neck and draw her head slowly over until she was held against him and could not move. With his free hand he would tilt back her chin. Her lips were velvet and her eyelashes grazed his cheek.

Twice he kissed her in the morning. But that was rather worse than nothing.

A new girl came to join the working staff in the postcard store. She was blonde and plump and had blue eyes. The boy thought her pretty. She also smiled.

One day he missed Marie. Evening came and she was still absent. As he stood at the window, wondering what

had become of her, the new girl saw him. Quite boldly he beckoned. She opened the door and joined him.

"What is it?"

"Where is Marie?"

"Fired."

He looked at her, startled. "Oh!" he said.

"Did you like her?"

"Why, yes." He reached out and caught the new girl's hands. "Don't," she said. "You mustn't."

"Oh, but I must," he answered confidently, and moved closer. His arm went around her. She turned her head first one way and then the other. He drew her face against his shoulder. Her lips were like velvet and her eyelashes grazed his cheek.

## BALLADE FOR THE FOURTH YEAR OF WAR

I, THE France of the Marseillaise,  
I, I would have none of the German thrall.  
Flaming, I fought at the Marne's red ways,  
Made of my breast a brazen wall,  
Bulwarked the Meuse lest Verdun fall,  
Proudly massing a million blades.  
Now I cry to you, rebels all:  
"Tear up stones for the barricades!"

I, the France, of the brave, bright torch,  
I have been raped and have drunk of gall.  
Ruthless, the alien cannons scorch  
Forest and orchard, hovel, hall.  
Soldiers of kings and tyrants crawl,  
Serving their masters, down my glades.  
Freemen, answer with bomb and ball.  
Tear up stones for the barricades!

I, the France of the rebel hope,  
I am defeated, after all.  
Grimly, the shattered legions grope,  
Striving to pierce the battle's pall.  
You who would free a world in thrall,  
Rally about your palisades!  
Rally before I falter, fall!  
Tear up stones for the barricades!

### ENVOI

Comrades, rise at the bugle call,  
Workers and dreamers, men and maids!  
Crimson flags to the wind for Gaul!  
Tear up stones for the barricades!

Walter Adolphe Roberts.

## MNEMONIAN WIND

THE wind in the Metropolitan tower  
Has a stark note of tragedy unappeased,  
And a loneliness that eats into the heart.  
It is not a city wind.  
It is the wind that blows in old farmhouses  
Where women have worked as slaves and have gone mad.  
I have heard it shriek so down the chimney  
In the close parlor at country funerals.  
A wind of ghosts and regrets.

Elizabeth Carter.

## I. W. W.

SONS of the sansculottes,  
Savage, erect, disdainful,  
Proud of their pariah estate,  
They return to the civilization that has cast them out,  
Hate for hate and blow for blow.  
Society denied them all life's sweet, soft, comfortable things,  
And so society raised up unto itself its destroyers.

Reckless of the jails, of the policemen's clubs, of the lynch-  
ing parties made up of frightened good citizens,  
Cheerfully accepting the anathema of all reputable people  
and lovers of law and order,  
They laugh aloud and sing out of their little red book  
Blasphemous ribaldries against all the gods and all the mas-  
ters.

(Beware, gods and masters, of rebels who laugh and sing!)  
Onward to the conquest of earth these outlaws press,  
Pausing by the corpses of their martyrs only long enough  
To utter, grim-lipped, "We remember!"

Donald M. Crocker.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT—

LAST June, at the Speculator mine in Butte, Montana, two hundred miners were burned to death because of the criminal negligence of the mine owners? For the last three months, 15,000 men at the mines in Butte have been on strike. They demand safe conditions and higher wages. They have no share in the profits of the Anaconda Mines which were \$39,087,187 in 1916. The American Federation of Labor has persisted in ignoring the existence of the strike because the miners got out of the listless union three years ago and united among themselves to better their condition. Because the American Federation of Labor officials have misrepresented the facts to the newspapers, the people do not know that fifteen thousand men are on strike. They do not know that thirty thousand women and children are going hungry in Butte, Montana; that two thousand gunmen and the state militia are stationed there; that there are machine guns and searchlights placed at all strategic points in the city.

The Chicago Federation of Labor is the first organization to fight for these men. They are asking organized labor throughout the United States to send their contributions to Tom Shannon, 318 North Wyoming Street, Butte, Montana.

## An Eight-Hour Day For Soldiers

IN reading books on the war and on life in the trenches I have been impressed more than any other thing by the unending number of hours that the men in the ranks have to work at fighting. Twenty-four-hour, forty-eight-hour and seventy-two-hour tasks are apparently common on both of the opposing sides. Book after book relates in detail how the men go on duty in the dead hours of the night, occupy two or three hours in getting themselves settled in their new places, attack an enemy trench at dawn, capture it at nine o'clock, spend the rest of the day repelling counter attacks, use the twilight for digging themselves in, and then when darkness comes they must busy themselves erecting new entanglements and responding to false alarms. After three days of this, when they begin to feel the need of rest, they are kept awake by the noise of bursting shells, the glare of star bombs, and the quarrels between the inmates of adjoining dugouts. These conditions cannot but result in a feeling of lassitude, a lowering of vitality, and a consequent loss of efficiency. This state of affairs, if continued, can only end in mutual exhaustion, with its inevitable consequence of a premature and undesirable peace.

It is to be regretted that war should lag behind other industries in adopting modern standards in the regulation of output and hours of toil. Even the matter of welfare work, now universally recommended by far-sighted employers, has been almost neglected by modern armies, though a start has been made in the direction of conveniently-located hospitals, moving picture shows, etc. The benefits to be derived from profit-sharing, too, have been altogether overlooked, though it seems common sense would indicate that a small slice of the territory he has helped to conquer and been shot through the bowels for, if awarded to a soldier, would inculcate in him a feeling of loyalty and gratitude.

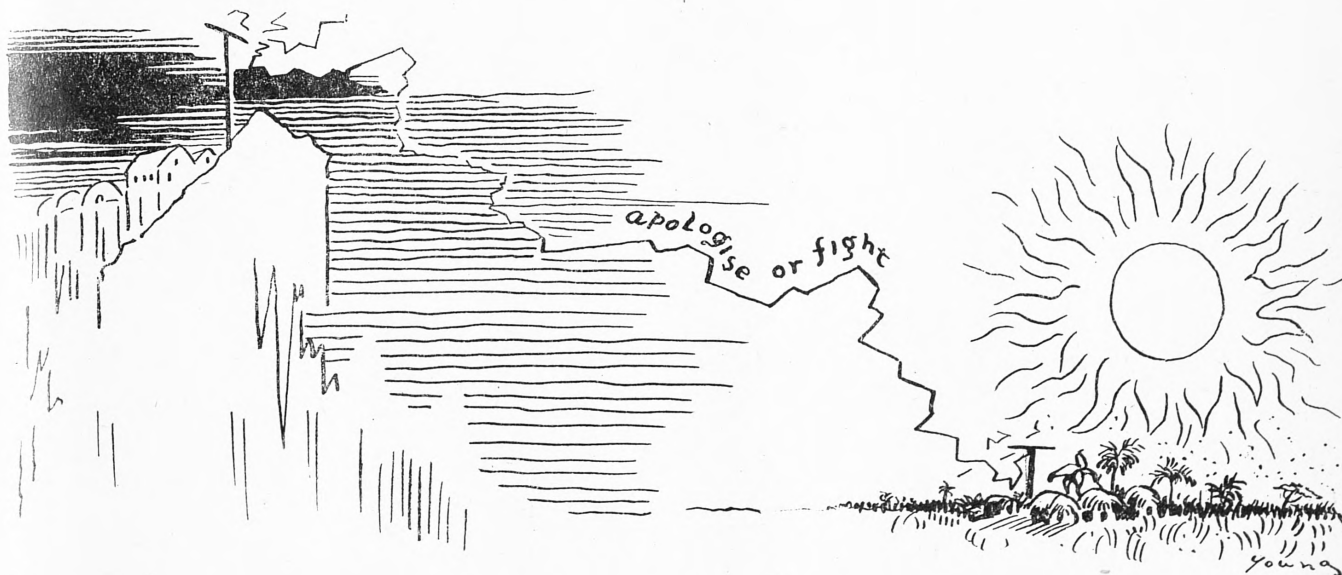
The greed of some successful nations in keeping all their earnings to themselves, while permitting their armed employes nothing, has done as much as anything else to place the military industry under suspicion.

However, it is not yet too late to inaugurate certain much-needed reforms, and as a start I would suggest an adjustment in the hours of military work. The deplorable results of overstrain in munition factories, due to unnecessarily long hours and too close application, have recently been made the subject of a report by a British commission. If a twelve-hour day in a comparatively comfortable factory is found to be detrimental to the human organism, it is easily seen that a 24-hour-day in a damp and confining trench must be doubly baneful. In addition, no less high an authority than President Wilson a few months ago pointed out that the eight-hour day now "has the sanction of society."

It would seem the part of wisdom, therefore, if the conflict is to be maintained at its present level through the coming years, to urge that soldiers be kept at their guns and other war machines not more than eight hours in any 24, that they be allowed an hour off for lunch, and time and a half for overtime.

The work of hostility might begin, let us say, at 6 a. m. and be prosecuted continuously until noon. At that hour it is desirable that all operations, including bombardments, deportations, and the sending of glowing dispatches to the home newspapers, cease simultaneously, except, of course, in the case of surgeons in the act of cutting off a limb, who should be permitted to conclude their tasks. Killing may then be resumed promptly at 1 o'clock and stopped again at 3 p. m. The remainder of the day then be devoted without fear of interruption to billiards, writing letters, criticizing commanders, jeering at prisoners, or any other recreation suitable to the needs of faithful workmen.

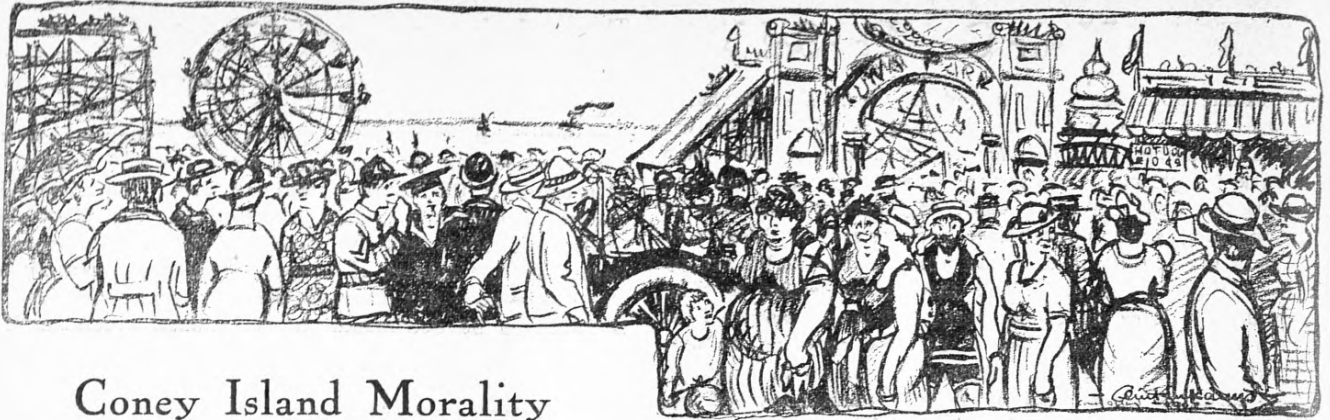
PHILLIPS RUSSELL.



Arthur Young

Iceland Declares War on Africa





## Coney Island Morality

By Charles W. Wood

I AM still convinced that there is such a thing as Coney Island. It is hard to believe, for one who has ever been there, but it's a fact. Usually, when an intelligent man comes back from Coney Island, he knows it isn't so. He concludes that it was something he ate which didn't digest. But it wasn't. I've got my notes to prove it, and I've compared them with Glintenkamp's pictures. They tally exactly.

Coney Island is America's great museum of morality. Its principal industry consists of obeying the ordinances—

Morality, let me explain, is the science of making oneself uncomfortable. It is the art of avoiding happiness. It is usually practiced in church; but practicing morality in church is too much like trying to keep cool in a barrel of icewater. It is only when you try to practice morality at a beach resort that its real nature becomes apparent.

New York City now has a population of six and a half millions. They were all at Coney when Glintenkamp and I arrived. This was at 11 a. m. one hot Sunday in August. By 2 p. m. New Jersey had mobilized. Connecticut and a few other states sifted in during the afternoon.

About half of the crowd were in the water. The other half spent the day in line waiting for a chance to rent a bathing suit.

A bathing suit, let me also explain, is a device to keep people from bathing. It lets the water into the skin, but it doesn't let the dirt out. It promotes cleanliness, nevertheless, for after you have spent the day in one, you go somewhere and take a bath.

There are different kinds of bathing suits. They range from the "one-piece" suit, which makes a partial bath possible, to the much-pieced suit, which makes an impartial bath impossible. One-piece suits do not utterly spoil one's looks; therefore, they are not allowed at Coney. Coney morality demands that everybody shall not only be uncomfortable, but look uncomfortable as well.

A woman's deportment at Coney is rated according to the number of duds she wears. Shirt, corsets, waist, hat, shoes, stockings and long, wide, heavy skirts rate her 100 per cent. moral. This follows naturally from my definition of morality. In the ocean, she naturally wants to swim, but these things keep her from it. Also, she wants to feel clean, but these things keep her feeling dirty. Also again, if she has a very beautiful figure, these things make her

look as if she hadn't. For this triple morality, she ought to be given 300 per cent.

There is a regulation that compels everybody, male and female, to conceal the fact that he or she has legs while walking along the public streets. This is to protect the moral residents of this highly moral resort. Those who live permanently on the island feel that they have some rights; and the right to be protected from the knowledge of legs very naturally heads the list. What might happen, for instance, if some Coney Island youth, peeking innocently out of his bath-room window, should discover that the lady he is rubbering at has legs? Of course, the fact that she is walking might suggest this other fact to an inquiring mind, but a perfectly moral mind will not inquire.

I wonder if there is anything on earth quite as ridiculous as that ordinance. The bath-houses can not accommodate half the people who want to use the beach; and even if they could, they are wretched accommodations at best. A much more sensible way is to leave your clothes in your own room, if you can get one nearby, and walk to the beach in your bathing suit. Thousands of people regularly do this. Under this utterly stupid ordinance, however, they are compelled to wear something over their already ridiculously ample suits. The result is the most absurd exhibition of American morality I have ever seen.

Here, for instance, come a bevy of pretty girls. They have perfectly fitting bathing-suits, and even though they might look much more beautiful without any suits at all, they look altogether beautiful as they are. Their suits are entirely proper for the beach. The ensemble is good enough to reproduce on the cover of any conventional home magazine. No one, not even an American Puritan, would be offended by their appearance, if they were at the beach, which is a few hundred yards away. But they are not at the beach. They are just walking to it. And so they are stopped by a policeman and either brought into court, or ordered to cover up their wicked legs. I happen to be low-minded enough myself to be able to laugh at such a proceeding. If I could get the last taint of smut out of my own mind (imbedded there by my Puritanical education) I wouldn't see any humor in it whatsoever. I should think it merely disgusting.

Few people, however, are arrested. They are made ac-

quainted with the law and they comply with it. And this is the beautiful result.

Men usually pull on a pair of long pants over their bathing suits before they leave their rooms, then go to the beach and pull them off. It looks so much nicer, the theory is, to see a man pulling off his pants at the beach than to know that he took them off in the seclusion of his own room.

Sometimes they wear bathrobes instead, sometimes old overcoats and ulsters, sometimes they just wrap quilts and blankets about them, or do themselves up in burlap, or their wives' old skirts. Anything to cover their legs—and as they have to hang the outfit on the timbers of the breakwater or leave it on the sand, it is of course inadvisable to wear anything of value.

In the case of women, it is worse yet. At least, I think so. I am one of those who consider beautiful women more beautiful than men, and making them ugly a worse offense. Towels, rugs, shawls, table-cloths, anything that's worn out and weather beaten, and that one won't miss if it gets stolen, is called into play, to hide the shape the good Lord gave them when he committed the infinite sin of giving them any shape at all.

I have said all along that the purpose of this insane performance is to keep Coney Islanders from the knowledge of human legs. That is hardly accurate. There is a subtler purpose, although few of the moralists have ever analyzed the thing enough to discover what it is. Let me explain.

Coney Island has a million "amusements," each of them the only one of its kind on earth, and the greatest educational feature ever presented. It may be a horned child, or an exact reproduction of the battle of Verdun. Whatever it is, it isn't, but it takes your money and that's what this part of Coney Island is for. But at the one old stand, every Coney Islander gets his money's worth. That is Steeplechase Park.

Steeplechase Park is called the funny place. Everything to give you the giggles—human pool-tables, human roulette wheels, every sort of mechanical contrivance imaginable designed to dump successive batches of men and women into the same hole and stir them around until you can't tell them apart. But the central attraction is "Comedy Lane." And the central attraction of "Comedy Lane" is a spot where a current of wind is suddenly turned on beneath the skirts of each woman who passes. As Glintenkamp and I watched that performance, we came to understand the real purpose of the Coney Island ordinances.

The "Lane" was on a stage, entered from the rear. The entrants were unaware that they were to appear on a stage, before an audience of several hundred men; the attraction was listed on their combination tickets, and they just naturally took it in. As they passed across the stage, however, the big surprise was sprung. Twenty or thirty of them every minute, each having her skirts blown skyward by that sudden mighty wind.

At every extra gust a yell of delight arose from the audience. It was only a half-second's exhibition, but their eyes were riveted. One young lady in particular caused yelps of joy. Her exterior dress was neat, her silk stockings were trim and whole, but beyond that her mending had been terribly neglected.

Now I understood the full purport of those Coney Island ordinances. It was not to keep all legs concealed, but to keep their revealment as a savory joke.

I'm serious. I believe this is the end and aim of our concealment of the human body. I believe this is why we make ourselves wear unsanitary bathing suits in the water, and all sorts of textile monstrosities on land. It preserves the sacred smut in our thoughts of sex. It keeps our minds dirty as well as our bodies. We Coney Islanders, we New Yorkers, we sticklers for prurient morality everywhere, we will not be deprived of our filth.

A gentleman who bitterly criticized me a while ago for using an "improper" expression in *The Masses*, told me the smuttiest story I ever heard. I'll bet every alderman who voted for this absurd ordinance tells smutty stories. The two things go together. Shame and filth. Excessive propriety and lasciviousness. Punctilious insistence on long skirts and a sexual relish for glimpses in the wind.

In the name of cleanliness, why should people wear clothes at the seashore in summer? If every rag fell off from everyone at Coney, would anybody be any worse? Some would look ugly, I admit, but they do anyway. Others would look far more beautiful than they do. But that is not the point. The point is that they could get clean, body and mind. They'd quit snooping around to see a woman's leg—any kind of a leg.

I don't want to make anybody go naked. There are uses for clothes. They are fine for a sudden frost and they are nice ornaments at times. When clothes are taken to spontaneously, no one can have any objection. But covering up because of a slavish devotion to tradition has no excuse in utility or art. Clothing oneself by municipal ordinance is the worst form of clothing we have yet arrived at. It can have no other result than the promotion of obscenity.

One of the things that impressed me most at Coney was the number of mothers teaching the elements of obscenity to their little children. Babies of three or four years were being hidden while they were dressed. Every effort was made to inculcate in their infant minds some sense of shame.

All along the line, we keep up the education. Boys must never see girls undressed and girls must never see boys. Men must never see women and women must never see men. Of course, we all understand that we can't enforce this rule absolutely; but we can manage to fix things so that the breaking of the rule will cause a shock. It's a coarse shock, an obscene thrill, something that turns beautiful nature into the lowest of comedy; but the perverts demand it and the rest of us are helpless.

They may claim that it is a natural and normal instinct for men and women to conceal their bodies. When it comes to swimming, that's debatable, but I'm willing to be convinced. Let them take off the ordinances and I'll bet the multitudes take off their clothes. Let them try it for ten short years, even, and I'll abide by the result. If there isn't a distinct general tendency toward nudity by that time, I'll admit that I am wrong.

Coney Island, with all its shortcomings, is the seashore, and the multitude was happy. Nature is still superior to the city administration. The administration is doing what it can to take the joy out of the ocean, but it can't move the ocean away. It makes the people pay an awful penalty for going, and makes them bundle up when they arrive, but that is the administration's limit. The charm of the sea still held sway. The thousands who had to wait hot hours for the use of a bathhouse forgot the agony when they were



once on the beach. Aged and infants, toilworn men and women, boys and girls, all drank in the glories of sun and breeze and wave. Nowhere is joy so innocent, nowhere is there such a sloughing off of the conventions which make life miserable, as there is at the beach. The old become children. Men and women who haven't been introduced sometimes talk to each other, and find each other worth knowing. They swim together, play together and—it must be heartbreaking to our moralists—they lie in the sand and sun together. Sometimes, actually, they love.

It beats all what love can do. The most beautiful sight I saw at Coney is a picture that Glintenkamp won't draw. He can't.

It was a boy and a girl. He loved her. She loved him. Both loved the sun and the sand and the sea. They didn't want to swim. They didn't want to do anything. They just wanted to be—to live, to love and to be loved. So they wrapped themselves in their impulses and lay down. If there had been a dozen people around, they couldn't have done it. They couldn't have had the necessary seclusion. But there were a million, and they hid in the crowd.. She was 18 or 19, altogether beautiful. Her bare legs were a glorious tan—slender and shapely as any Venus which was ever painted. Her face was not afraid of the blazing sun; it was well tanned, too, but with a color that showed a perfect circulation. She lay on her back, her eyes were closed and I couldn't see what color they were. She was a Jewish girl, I believe, with those wonderful red lips so often seen among her race and so seldom seen in any other.

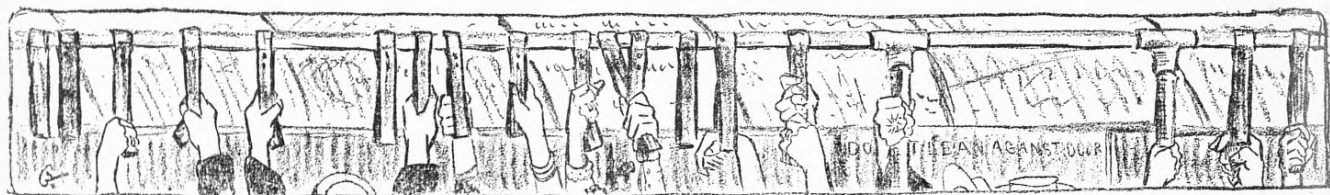
The boy lay close to her, his face against her cheek, his eyes also closed. One arm lay lovingly across her waist, his heart beating close to hers. Her breast was heaving gently, not with tumultuous passion, but with quiet ecstasy.

They looked at no one, not even at each other. He was a handsome young chap, and if I ever saw an expression of pure, proud love, it was in his face. I don't suppose they were thinking of anything; if they had been thinking, they would have been conscious of the crowd. I think they were just being, just living, and glorying in the consciousness of life.

And the crowd passed by in subway formation, but never yelled. It scarcely looked, and the glances that it gave were those of sympathetic appreciation. People were uniformly careful not to step on the pair, although with a hundred people stepping over them every minute, one might expect a percentage of interruptions.. The crowd was reverent, decent, clean in its attitude. There was no policeman present, and the crowd didn't care. If there had been a policeman present, it would have been his duty to dump a cargo of official smut over the whole performance by ordering them to break away, or packing them off to police headquarters.

On a former trip to Coney Island I saw another pair making love in a different way. I am quite sure they were Anglo-Saxons. They had a blanket, a little six by four thing, and they made love under that. That was more respectable. The crowd couldn't see them; even their heads were under the blanket. All the crowd could see was the continuous ripple, probably caused by the muscular action required to keep under the blanket. But that crowd was not reverent. It formed a ring round the lovers. It became a mob. Everybody held his breath and tried to stretch his head above the head in front so that he wouldn't miss anything.

I wish to commend this study in psychology to our moral city fathers. Also to the moral residents of Coney Island and its Board of Trade, who are scandalized by the presence of a man or woman with legs in the public streets.



### SISTER OF MINE—By Roy Harrison Danforth

OUR ceiling is the sidewalk of the street.  
So we get light enough to see the stitches, it's made of glass;  
Not common glass you see the sky through,  
But frosted over so the men down here,  
(They're that kind of men)  
Can't look up along the stockings of the women that pass.  
Clattery-bang! Bangety-clatter! The shoes crash all day long on the glass.  
Sometimes it stabs hot into your heart and hurts so you sob;  
Sometimes it just makes you mad—mad clean through like when somebody you hate hits you in the face.  
Over my head a hole is broken in the glass.  
I can see an awning up above, and beside the hole this morning I saw something else.  
I could not make it out at first.  
Then I sort of guessed it was a flower.

It must have dropped from some woman's waist:  
That's the only way flowers come to this part of town.  
It lay there quite still on the glass till someone kicked it,  
Then another and another, but the wind blew it back to the very edge of the hole:  
Another boot kicked it in.  
God, I was glad to see it, where it fell, right in my lap.  
I closed my hand over it for a moment, the poor battered, decrepit thing.  
(Yet a tiny bit fragrant still.)  
When nobody was looking I slipped it into my bosom to keep it warm.  
It's a sister of mine, that rose.  
Me they kicked around like that for a time, back and forth, back and forth;  
Finally, they kicked me down a hole, too, and here I am—  
With the rose.

# BOOKS THAT ARE INTERESTING

A MONTHLY REVIEW CONDUCTED BY FLOYD DELL

## The Book of the Month

The *Autobiography of a Super-tramp*. By W. H. Davies.  
[Knopf.] \$1.50.

THIS quiet, modest book is the dignified confession of the underworld career of one who is now a great poet. It is all true, as true as the friendly recital of his adventures by a sunburned I. W. W. just in from a long spell on the road. It is true and terrible, as terrible as those filing cards in a Charity Organization Society office on each of which is written a little tragedy of modern civilization. Davies does not stoop to a single effect in the revealing of his life struggle; he tells his story casually, with the stoic forgiveness of pain and humiliation which is one of the lessons of the open road. And yet, though we do not hear a murmur of protest from his lips, the quiet story of his wanderings moves us, and our hearts glow with indignation as we read how this gentle man of dreams was despised of society.

Davies was born in the rear of his father's brawling English pub, and lived till he was twenty the conventional, morbidly physical life of the proletariat. He had the instinct for lovely-sounding words and phrases which mark the born poet, but he did not know the worth of his own potentialities, nor could he guess how beautiful would be the flowers to grow out of the troubled seeds stirring in the darkness of his soul. He was merely a shy and humble boy moved by some secret restlessness, and he could not put his head in the yoke and enter a life of toil. There was an instinct deep and unutterable, rebellious and more potent than respectability and reason, and he could not but heed it. So he came away to America, with not a practical thought in his head, and with not more than a few dollars in his pocket. Here he wandered from city to city, begging, starving, stealing, sweating occasionally in the fields or at any day labor that came to hand, riding the bumpers and enduring incredible hardships. He suffered all the ordinary happenings which befall the real tramp, but which are somehow never met in the pretty legends of Vachel Lindsay or David Grayson and other well-fed romantics. He spent months in jail for the proletarian crime of vagrancy, he was beaten up frequently, as is every tramp, he got drunk in all the big and small cities, he visited whore-houses, he even had his leg cut off by a freight train while attempting to steal a ride.

Wandering, wandering, wandering, starving for long intervals, then gorging to suffocation like a savage; sleeping in jails, box-cars, lousy lodging houses, fields, parks, wharves; the victim of every skinflint farmer and exploiting corporation, the legitimate prey, with never a closed season, of every mean-hearted policeman or constable; thrown in with brutalized companions whose whole souls were generally wrapped up in the endless business of getting a bed and supper for the night; this was the life Davies led from his 20th to his 30th year. He was never at rest, though he soon tired of this meaningless flitting from place to place, with never a moment for sweet meditation or dreaming. I think there is nothing more pathetic than his statement that the

one thought that tortured him most through these years of wandering was the wish for a little room with a cosy fire, where he could have books and leisure to be creating. It was the ideal that came back again and again amidst the storms and stresses of the road, but he never could realize this longing and need of his most intimate heart. He was poor. There was only one alternative to the life of the tramp for Davies: a place in a sweatshop in the slums of London, where he would soon perish from the world of imagination and become a drudge. So he chose to continue in the life of the road, desperate though it was, and he saved his dreams.

Davies would have never been heard of, perhaps, if he had not finally been able to leave the road, however, to realize his quiet room. Soon after he lost his leg he returned to London and lived on the \$2 a week income that a relative had left him, and this soon brought him to fame. He quietly wrote his beautiful, perfect lyrics for about five years, living in a disreputable lodging house while he did this, then one time he decided to publish his poems in a book. A publisher told him it would cost £25 to have this done, and poor Davies, with his wooden leg and all, bought a stock of shoelaces and collar buttons and went out peddling to make up the sum. He was then about thirty-two years old, and he wandered far and near for about three months, then gave up the hopeless attempt because his stock was ruined by a rain, and because he was despairing of ever selling enough shoelaces in his lifetime to be able to put aside as much as £25.

He came back to London and tried to enlist other agencies in his fight to have the modest little volume published. He wrote letters to wealthy people and they referred these to the Charity Organization Society for investigation. Davies was asked to call by the Society, and he did so, for he wanted help badly. "There was the usual long wait in a side room," Davies writes, "a wait which is not occasioned by any great stress of business, I believe, but so as to bring one's heart down to the freezing point of abject misery, and to extinguish one by one his many hopes. But after this cruel waiting, I received an interview. There is not sufficient venom in my disposition to allow me to describe this meeting in words fit and bitter for its needs." Davies did not please the charity officials; he was a strong man who might better be employed at sorting rags or sweeping offices than writing poetry; he was not one of the worthy poor, so that they felt it their duty to warn their rich clients against helping Davies in his attempt to raise enough subscriptions for the publication of his book. But Davies finally won out despite these pious vultures, and his book was published and acclaimed, and he became feted and beloved, and tribes of book fanciers spoke of him and praised him, and even praised him for having been so romantically poor and for having starved for so many years.

And that is nearly all; Davies has "arrived," and now he will always have his little room and cosy fire and books, and no more tramping. The poor and dreamy son of an English saloon keeper is now the subject of learned essays by college dons, and Bernard Shaw writes the preface to his



autobiography, and he lives in quiet ease. But I think of all the young men and women who are still in poverty, young men and women who are poets but have not yet found a voice, and upon whom the machine still squats, like the monster of a nightmare, ever and ever. What is to become of them; will they never be free? Must they still despair in the slums, or lead the feverish, external life of the road, or throw the anger of their thwarted dreaming into merely social movements, like syndicalism and socialism and the rest?

The intellectual proletariat is a new and tragic problem in the world. Formerly social protest was a physical reaction, the despair of pinched bellies and weary hands. But now with the infiltration of education there has risen a class of sensitive, beauty-loving, thoughtful young people, to whom drudgery is an Inquisition, to whom monotonous day labor is a slow and burning death. The liberal economists leave these unfortunates out of their readjustments, and assume that the lowest strata will always stand patiently under the weight of the dirty work of the world. But here are these young ones, and here they are growing in numbers with the spread of education, and here are their great ones who occasionally flame across the sky of literature: Davies, Jack London, Masfield, Maxim Gorky, Morris Rosenfeld, Frank Wedekind, Martin Nexo and the thousand others. What is to be done? They cannot wait till the millenium, these poets who are so beset by poverty that they cannot even speak. They wish to feel and live now, to blossom with poetry and grow under the light of heaven in their own generation. They do not wish to be President, or a foreman, or a successful salesman or clerk, or otherwise rise out of the lowest caste through lifetimes of sordid striving. They wish to do a little useful hard work every day, then be free for careers of ecstasy and innocence and meditation. That is the modest, lovely wish of their hearts. But what can be done? No one heeds them, and even the Revolution is many years away.

Davies was in the depths of despair and depression again and again. It is sad to think that if it were not for the income of \$2 a week he might have still been a poor, old one-legged shoelace peddler in the slums of London. It is sadder to know that there are thousands everywhere who are still caught in the inextricable web of poverty, and whose mystic spirits shall never come forth to the surface to be revealed to us in beautiful poems or colors.

Davies does not give enough of his inner life and strivings in his book; but we can guess at the moments in which he felt the whole, bitter weight of this society pressing on his spirit. He never grew into much of a Socialist; he was too much of the pure poet, yet reading his strong and simple picture of the incredible life of the poor, we become reconfirmed in our faith that the world must be set free, and society made friendly to the life of the tenderest and most innocent temperaments.

IRWIN GRANICH.

## Thousand and One Nights

Limehouse Nights, by Thomas Burke. [Robert M. McBride and Co.] \$1.50 net.

NIGHT, with its slinking figures along the low-lit Causeway, night on the furtive West India Dock Road, night on all the dreamy lanterned streets of Limehouse! Limehouse

Nights—and Thomas Burke has illuminated them with a weird purple splendor. The fleeting Limehouse people gleam for us for a while and are gone.

There is the story of Marigold with "her crown of thunderous hair, shot with an elfish sheen, which burned the heart out of any man creature who spotted her. . . . The very lines of her limbs were an ecstasy, and she had an odd wide laugh—and knew how to use it."

Marigold was the girl who, when she was in trouble went to four of her gentlemen friends, telling them that they were about to become fathers. They took from their dingy earnings, every one, and Marigold afterward married the man her child most resembled—and lived happily ever after.

There is the story of Beryl and the Croucher with a golden tumult of new emotions lashing within him who held all England at bay in protection of his senile father who had "croaked a guy." He died but he died a glorious death with Beryl's curls against his face and a gun in his hand and the house going up in smoke with a whole regiment of Britishers surrounding the place.

The glowing story of the book is of Gina, who became the idol of the cheap variety halls on the night she saved a fear-struck mob in the burning theatre by her dance.

This is how Thomas Burke tells it:

"The fiddles tossed the idea to her in a tempest of bows, the brass and wood-wind blared it in a tornado, the drum insisted on it, and like a breaker, it seemed to rise up to her. Before her opened a cavern of purple, stung with sharp lamps in the distant dusk. It swayed and growled and seemed to open a horrid mouth. But between Gina and it, she thanked her Heavenly Father, was the music, a little pool of dream, flinging its spray upon her. The stage seemed drenched in it, and seizing the tactful moment, she raced down to the footlights and flung herself into it, caressing and caressed by it, shaking as it were, little showers of sound from her delighted limbs."

In this bit of description you get the whole spirit of Gina. She dies, too, and the tragedy of it grips your heart. But they all bloom and die quickly,—these night flowers of girls. They spring up, splash the night with color, and are extinguished, leaving Limehouse yet more black and intense.

There is horror in the book, but it's a rich horror, "with a feeling for color and sting, strong in the vivid adjective." There is wild tingle and thrill in your veins to read of the outcroppings of love and violence in that sordidly romantic district.

Ching put a deadly snake in Battling Burrough's bed; Gracie Goodnight flung kerosene into the flames which surrounded Kang Foo Ah; the Greazer with a cruelty unspeakable, forced his child to kill her mother, who had chucked him for another; Pansy Greers stuck a poisoned needle into the man who ruined her.

Yes, Limehouse stories reek with horror and vivid joy. And throughout there is the flickering deadly lights and the sad *supp-supping* of the waves at the docks.

It is a haunting, poignant book, with a glad lilt to it!

DOROTHY DAY.

## A Horrible Example

*These Times*, by Louis Untermeyer. \$1.25 net. [Henry Holt & Co.]

THIS volume, sent originally for review, has been lying around my desk for a couple of months and causing me no little concern. For I find it difficult to appraise it properly. I have taken the book up a dozen times, read most of the poems and put it down with the proverbial mingled emotions. It is, I may as well state at the outset, a pernicious and poisonous volume. And yet there is something about it that I like. It may be the strange choice of subjects, or the sheer physical exuberance of the author, or the neat punctuation that appeals to me; I am not sure. There is, I cannot deny it, a certain personal quality, a familiar flavor that intrigues me; an occasional note that, somehow, touches an echoing chord in my coarse and commercial nature. There are moments when I am actually charmed by the ease and fluency of the man's writing. But this unaccountable weakness shall not affect my critical attitude toward what, I repeat, is a most subversive and damnable piece of work. To particularize:

I turn to page 68 and under the promising caption of "Portrait of an American," I note that the first four lines run:

"He slobbers over sentimental plays  
And sniffles over sentimental songs.  
He tells you often how he sadly longs  
For the ideals of the dear, old days."

This, aside from all considerations of how the classic sonnet has been debased into a string of vulgar colloquialisms, is not only a bad poem, it is a malicious libel. It is the sort of thing one might expect from a person who had been influenced by the reading of such anarchist-making publications as "Mother Earth" and the Congressional Record. The American, as recent events so eloquently prove, is anything but a sentimental person and, instead of longing for "the ideals of the dear, old days," he is imbued with a revolutionary ardor, a lust for democracy so generous and progressive that he is ready to ram it down the throat of anyone that doesn't happen to possess it; more than that, he is even willing to sacrifice what little he has of it in order to force it on some one else. Mr. Untermeyer's verses take no account of these practical and sacrificial passions. But I pass to other and even more condemnable exhibits.

On page 113 I find what is supposed to be a child's poem, "concerning God," that begins:

"Well, God does nothing all day long  
But He sits and sits in His chair."

Such a cool and casual interpretation of the deity could not, I am sure, have originated in the mind of a child. So I am forced to the unpleasant conclusion that Mr. Untermeyer himself planned this irreligious conceit. My conviction is strengthened by a study of the author's other poems that reveal, all too plainly, a lamentable lack of reverence and no decent fear of things that should be kept respectably sacred. True, his intimacy with God is not quite so patronizing and brash as it was in "Challenge," but it still stands

in need of the services of a proofreader and a few clergymen. But if he trifles less with the Eternal, he handles words with matters that are less infinite but even more powerful. For instance, I find on page 77 the following portrait of a Supreme Court judge:

"How well this figure represents the Law—  
This pose of neuter justice, sterile cant;  
This Roman Emperor with the iron jaw,  
Wrapped in the black silk of a maiden-aunt."

To pat God on the shoulder is bad enough, but to insult so venerable a lawgiver as Judge —! . . . I cannot contemplate the consequences without a shudder.

Similarly reprehensible are the author's views on such grave topics as life, prison reform, selling jewelry, the hereafter and piano-playing. The talk of the queer couple in "Cell Mates" and the absurd feminism of "Eve Speaks" is only one shade less grotesque than Mr. Untermeyer's own impertinences in "On the Palisades" or his over-athletic "Swimmers" with its concluding flippancy:

"Life, an adventure perilous and gay;  
And Death, a long and vivid holiday."

But still more serious than these defects is the author's penchant for the lewd and libidinous. I find the word "body" fourteen times in the first hundred pages, "barbaric" seventeen times, "love" (without reference to anything legal or spiritual) twenty-one times, and the words "passion" and "passionate," thirty-two times! In fact, in one poem entitled, innocently enough, "To A Weeping Willow," I find— But nothing can be gained by enlarging this shameful catalog.

Altogether, I do not hesitate to pronounce this one of the most noxious and notorious books of the season. In spite of a few readable lines and a half-dozen whimsicalities which may please the unwary, I strongly advise against the purchase of "These Times." It is incomprehensible that so reputable a firm as Messrs. Henry Holt & Co. should have printed the affair. It is by turns violent, valueless and vicious. And yet, in spite of everything there is something about this volume that I like. Something that makes me turn to it again and again. I cannot explain it.

LOUIS UNTERMAYER.

## Preachings Unpractised

*The Offender and His Relation to Law and Society.* By Burdette G. Lewis. [Harper & Brothers.] \$2.00.

MR. LEWIS is Commissioner of Correction in the City of New York, and he never lets you forget it for a minute. From the very first chapter of the book, at which point he casually examines "old ideas" and "radical ideas" and discards them both for "common sense ideas," through to the "official" appendices at the back, his attitude is that of a man "in power." He demands respect and acceptance of what he says, not because of his experience but by virtue of his official position. He patronizes Mr. Osborne as a well-meaning Jeffersonian Democrat and speaks slightly of the other reformers.

He thinks of reformers in very much the same way in which the average employer thinks of labor agitators. "They



may be perfectly sincere, and all that, but they are an infernal nuisance. Why don't they let me run my business as I see fit?" Why don't they? An investigation of the business will explain that.

With regard to Mr. Lewis, investigation of his business is the only sure road to criticism. Having assumed the official tone in his book, his case must stand or fall by his record as Commissioner of Correction. He cannot throw aside Mr. Osborne as a visionary, without expecting us to look for concrete achievements on his part. He has no right to deprecate reformers with the statement that "We are on the right road now, and we are making real progress," unless he is willing to have the statement verified. If he wants to talk about his official position he must be prepared to have us talk about it, too.

When he isn't attacking the reformers or discoursing on the "hard facts of prison experience," Mr. Lewis says one of two valuable things. For instance, he is opposed to the present homogeneous grouping of prisoners. To the readers of his book one of his pet hobbies appears to be the segregation of prisoners into groups—according to age, physical and mental condition and number of previous convictions—so as to protect the youngster and the first offender. Now any one who has ever been to prison knows that it is one of the greatest of crime-producing agencies and that the careless friendships of prison life are largely responsible. Mr. Lewis knows this, too, and he dwells on it continually in his book, but in his capacity of Commissioner of Correction he seems to have forgotten it. During his entire term of office he has not made the slightest attempt to introduce a system of group segregation in the institutions under his care. He has not even interfered with the indiscriminate selecting of cell-mates.

In the Tombs, known officially as the City Prison, all sorts of prisoners are thrown together. There is no effort at classification whatever. When I was sentenced to a term in the Tombs because of pacifist activity, I was lodged in the dormitory for convicted men, between the eighth cell tier and the roof. My bed was between that of a stick-up man a sixth tier, and that of a young fellow whose wife had sent him to jail for non-support. The young fellow told me that he had never committed a crime in his life, but that he was not sure of his ability to resist temptation after his release from the Tombs. "Why, even my language ain't the same," he explained to me. "I can't talk two words any more without swearing. What t'ye expect, hanging around with a bunch of bums and stick-up men. I learnt things I never knew before. I tell you jail never reformed nobody."

Prisoners committed to the Tombs are not even given a physical examination, despite the fact that in his book Commissioner Lewis says that it is impossible to determine the necessary treatment for an individual until his physical condition is diagnosed. No one in authority seems to care whether the prisoners are reformed or not—or whether they are physically fit or not. A consumptive may be set to cleaning cuspidors—as one of them was during my incarceration. An imbecile may be subjected to the jeers of other prisoners. It is all well and good for Mr. Lewis to talk of "hospitals where the unregenerate, physically and mentally, can be reclaimed," but the inmates of his prisons know no such hospitals. When a convicted man enters the

Tombs his fingerprints are taken and he is given a bed and a job. Then, unless he becomes unruly or seriously ill, no more attention is paid to him until the day of his release.

In one chapter of "The Offender," Commissioner Lewis says that no convict ought to be sent back to society until he has been cured of any diseases from which he may suffer. Men who have "done a bit" in the Tombs, where contagious diseases are contracted instead of cured, will laugh at this. And those who have been in the Workhouse or the Penitentiary will laugh, too.

Mr. Lewis's suggestions for prison management are worth trying, so much worth trying that we wonder why he has not experimented with them himself. It is only as a social philosopher that he seems absurd. Burdette G. Lewis as a student of crime prevention comes very near being intelligent, but that only makes his stupidity more exasperating. For instance, take his chapter on "Fundamental Social Forces." It begins: "Society is not doing its full duty unless it is attacking the fundamental causes of criminality and giving attention to those individual and social forces which are directly or indirectly responsible for the development of the offender." Elsewhere in his book, Commissioner Lewis has established that there is a definite ratio between unemployment figures and crime. Also, he has pointed out that virtually 50% of the men behind the bars are there because the world has not given them an opportunity to earn a decent living. He says: "They are the broken and twisted men of the sweat-shop, the dark-room, the mine and the mill. They are the battered remnant of men who have been unable to withstand the onslaught of physical and mental disability coupled with poverty, ignorance and superstition." And so when Mr. Lewis tells us that he is going to show how to prevent crime by dealing with "fundamental social forces," we expect that these facts will be taken into consideration. But are they taken into consideration? Not so far as I have been able to discover. The Commissioner has suggestions for improving the church, the home and the school and he has interesting things to say about sanitation and hygiene. But the factory and the mine are left out of it. They, it turns out, are not fundamental social forces. They have nothing to do with crime prevention.

Although it will not do much to revolutionize the social conditions responsible for crime, Mr. Lewis's book does contain some valuable ideas about prison administration. It is to be hoped that New York's next Commissioner of Correction will make use of them. Mr. Lewis has never found time for that.

CHARLES FRANCIS PHILLIPS.

## KEEPING COOL

**U**NDER the shadowing trees they lie;  
The Sun's hot eye  
Peeps through the chinks of the latticed leaves  
As he goes by.

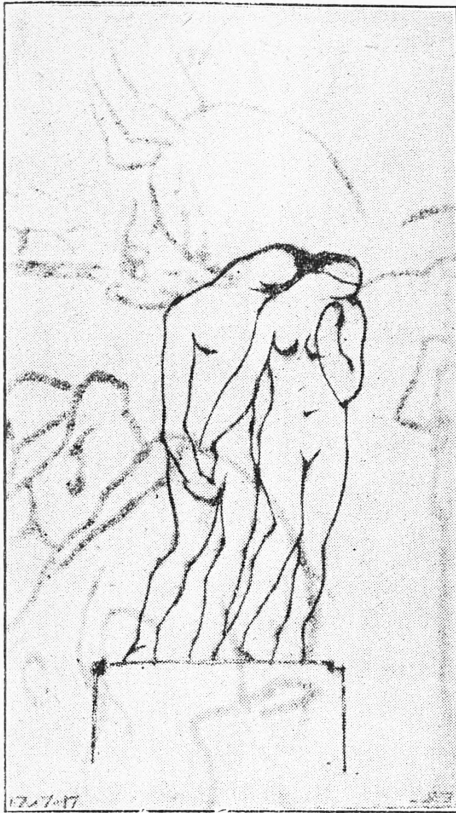
Mother is cool and ruffly and white  
In heat's despite.  
Baby's in his cherub suit, his wings  
Tucked out of sight—  
Young Adam, naked and unwise,  
So soon to lose his paradise!

Louise Ayres Garnett.

THE SCULLION

OH, for the wealth of the young Finnish girl  
 As she stands swaying,  
 Lithe as the timothy grass,  
 Her perfect, snug breasts  
 Like pink-tipped rosebuds  
 Showing through her lawn frock!  
 Oh, for the strong-limbed, full-limbed beauty of her  
 As she keeps her bloated fingers  
 In the big hands of her lover  
 And cackles her old-world music to him!  
 Oh, for the smell of her young hair,  
 Yellow and lush and matted like fronds of wheat,  
 And the animal fragrance of her developed body  
 As he seeks to enshrine her in his arms!  
 Oh, for the healthy folds of flesh  
 And the clean, soft creasing of flesh,  
 And the light dimpling,  
 As she writhes coyly from him  
 On her strong, bare feet!  
 Oh, for the large-faced, peasant moon  
 That spills the light upon them!  
 Oh, for the smooth, fresh skin beneath her eyes,  
 And the breathed dew of her lips,  
 And the blow of her breath like new-cut fields,  
 And the electric feel of her tight cheeks,  
 And the sweet dew of her muscular body,  
 And the pulse of her strong feet,  
 And her firm toes sinking in the soft grass and the clovers!  
 Oh, for the plangent veins of her,  
 And the choking passion of her,  
 And the filling surge of blood-wells beneath her heart!  
 Oh, for the animal charm,  
 The animal majesty of her!

Morton Carrel



John Storrs

ONCE IN A BLUE, BLUE MOON

THE South Wind sighed, and bluebirds cried,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.  
 And fairies were lost, and woe betide  
 The man who ventured to take their side!  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.

And streams ran up instead of down,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.  
 And the travelers who came to town  
 Turned red and yellow, green and brown,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.

At black midnight the sun came up,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.  
 And a violet looked like a buttercup,  
 And hogs had tea to talk and sup,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.

And palaces flew into air,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.  
 And a young girl sat with a woman's stare,  
 And there was here and here was there,  
 Once in a blue, blue moon.

Paul Repts.

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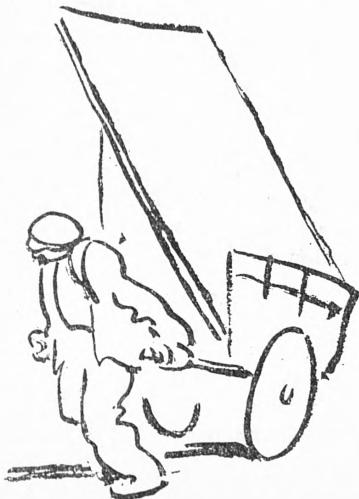
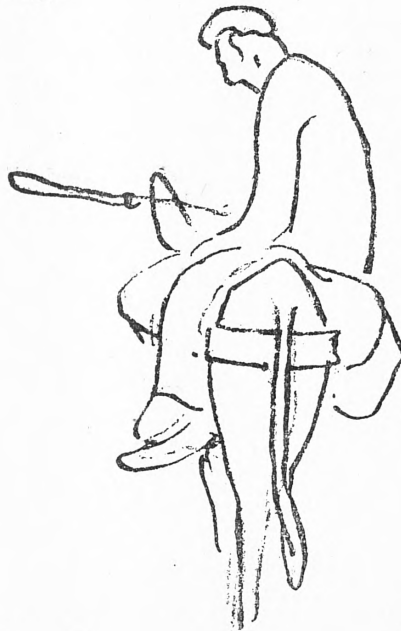
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Frueh

Alfred Frueh.

## A Step Toward Democracy

IT seems to be pretty well conceded in all the allied countries that if Germany democratizes her government, peace will have to be made practically on the *status quo ante*. This modification of the original eat-'em-alive terms of the Allies is undoubtedly mainly due to the influence of the United States, as expressed by Woodrow Wilson before we went to war—and afterward. It is not so much Russia's fault, as the Russians have expressly stated their indifference to the form of government obtaining in Germany.

The United States alone insisted that the German people go and turn themselves into a democracy before they come around talking peace. Now what exactly does this mean? What is understood by the term: "democratic government"? Do we mean that the Kaiser shall abdicate? No, there has been no such pronouncement from Dr. Wilson—though you might expect it after the Huerta affair. By "democratic government" we have specifically explained that we mean a full and equal franchise, and a ministry responsible to the Reichstag. Isn't that so?

How strange that our newspapers should blandly demand these things, day after day, from Prussia—while in the United States we make no pretense to a "democratic government" in that sense. True, we have a full and equal franchise—with the trifling exception of half the population, which happens to be feminine; but as for a ministry responsible to Congress, we never thought of having such a thing.

Let's get down off our high revolutionary horse for a minute and look at these matters the way the ordinary liberal-minded business man would look at them, say a fellow like J. G. Phelps Stokes, or Dr. Frank Crane. Would any of them say that this government of ours was really responsive to the will of the people, as long as the Cabinet is responsible only to the President who appointed them, and the President, for four years, is responsible only to God? In what other country, except Japan and Germany, is one man clothed with such power? In England, France, and almost every European state, the person with the power is the one most easily vulnerable for its abuse. This is true even in war-time—as is shown by the rise and fall of ministries. Of course, it will be pointed out that our American despot is only elected for four years. But you must admit that four years is long enough in which to throw a nation into war—one year even is plenty—and change the destiny of one hundred millions of people.

It is about time to demand for America a few of these reforms which everybody is thinking up for the German people. I should say that we would do very well with a President who had a little less actual power or a little more responsibility, and Cabinet officers who had to stand up in Congress and answer questions, the way they do in England and France. The Cabinet officers would then have to find out something about the currents which agitate the country; and our Congressmen would have to speak only when they had something to say.

Then it would not be necessary for the Administration to send young intellectuals about the country to find out the temper of the people regarding war and conscription. The country would make itself felt, and the Secretary of War would have to read up a little on his history.

Now don't imagine that I think this will accomplish the social revolution. I propose it simply because I think we ought to catch up with democracy in Europe—if it's not too late—before we begin to talk about the other little reforms.

JOHN REED.

## It Costs

AFTER a terrific thunderstorm in the night it was a gay blue morning. I walked down the road to visit my neighbor's enchanted orchard. She was out on the porch, and I stopped for a word or two. "Did you hear that thunder?" she asked. "Wasn't it awful? It woke up Sunny Jim and he began to cry. I never saw him frightened by a thunderstorm like that before. He asked me if the Germans were coming. . . . Such ideas they do get!" At that moment Sunny Jim turned the corner of the farmhouse. It was Saturday, no school, so I invited him to go on with me to the orchard. There was a nest there we were both watching. . . .

We kept silence for a minute or two as one can so agreeably with a little child. "Do you like 'The Star Spangled Banner?'" asked Sunny Jim. "Not very much, as music; and the words not at all." "My teacher wouldn't like you if you didn't like it." "How do you know?" "'Cause yesterday she asked us all if we liked it. We all said we did, 'cep' Marjorie. So she sent her home. She said she didn't want anybody 'round what didn't like the 'Star Spangled Banner.' She said if a soldier said he didn't like it he'd be sent out of the army. . . ." We reached the orchard and Jim climbed up to report if there were one more egg in the nest.

The birds had hatched out and flown and the apples were almost ripe before I saw Jim and his mother again—the next day I left for the Southwest. The day of my return as I walked by the red brick farmhouse Jim ran out. His arm was in a sling of a bandana handkerchief. "Why, Jim! what have you been doing to yourself?" Before he could answer his mother appeared to monopolize the story. "It's a very bad break. They say it'll always be stiff. You see Jim was climbing up a ladder by the side of the house. He was carrying our big flag in one hand, I guess he meant to tie it to the lightning rod. Anyhow he must have tripped over it and he fell from the top of the ladder. My, but I was scared. It hurt him awful. I could tell that by the way he kept twisting his body. We couldn't get anyone for the longest time. Dr. O—— has gone with the Red Cross to France. So we finally got Dr. S—— from M——, but he's old and it just seemed to me he fumbled a lot. Anyhow he set it over twice. He said it was broken in two places, by the elbow, and Jim wont ever be able to bend his arm just right. If we'd had Dr. O. it'd been better, I'm sure. What do they want to go to France for, I'd like to know? There's plenty needs 'em at home."

Dear little blue-eyed, dimple-faced Sunny Jim, adventurous Sunny Jim, victim of fear, confusion, pain and deformity. It costs to make a patriot.

ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS.



# The Great Undertaking

T. B. Eastland

AT first he was to me only a name—a name printed in black letters, on either side of the yellow yard-rules with which I played as a child, and whose profusion in our home never excited my curiosity. The letters, on the side which also bore the scale, were heavy and black, and rewarded my painstaking childish study by spelling out: "C. C. Drake, Furniture and Upholstery," but on the reverse side, there being more room, the letters were heavier and blacker, and formed the words: "C. C. Drake, Undertaking & Embalming."

These yard-rules were my favorite playthings. From them I made swords and spears, and with them, as the season changed, fashioned the frames of kites. I never at this time knew their proper function, and when the seamstress on one of her periodical visits, failed to find one in the sewing room and I was asked by my Mother to bring a yard-rule, I did not understand what was required; nor did I understand her amusement when I finally comprehended, produced and gave a name to, the object of her search. But the name stuck, and when the seamstress came again, I was immediately called upon to bring "one of Mr. Drake's embalming sticks."

Had I been asked, at this time, who Mr. Drake was, I should probably have replied that he was the man who made embalming sticks, for I recall an early disappointment, when I first saw the same name, above a perfectly matter of fact furniture store.

My next memory of Mr. Drake, although also impersonal, is a pleasant one, and has probably been retained because of its association with Christmas. It must have been about my ninth Christmas, that a heavy and bulky package, lying under the tree, was opened and proved to be a woven wire doormat, in which my father's name, "Dr. Norris," was cunningly picked out in white marbles. To it was attached a card reading:—"A Merry Christmas, and a Prosperous New Year from C. C. Drake." The ensuing talk and deprecating laughter of my parents, made little impression, but I recall that during the following week, having noticed similar doormats before the homes of all the other doctors in the village, I formed the opinion that Mr. Drake must indeed be a great and generous soul.

As time went on I graduated from home study, was allowed to go down town alone, and began to know the shop-keepers of the little town personally; among them Mr. Drake. He was more to me than the rest of the tradespeople. The aura of lavish generosity, with which I had surrounded him, illumined his whole personality. It brightened the unvarying black of his apparel, and caused an even and fascinating row of silver teeth, which the constant smile disclosed, to gleam dazzlingly. Furthermore, he was more cordial to me than were the other tradesmen, and treated me with an indulgence that he showed to none other of the boys. Several times I was permitted to

ride up town on his furniture wagon, but my cherished and unspoken wish, to ride upon that other box-like, black varnished and far more beautiful delivery wagon, which on rare occasions I saw near his store, remained ungratified, when, for reasons inscrutable to the juvenile mind, we moved bag and baggage to the city.

There followed years of school and college, with only two weeks every summer, in the village of my boyhood. During this period I saw Mr. Drake each year; each year a little gaunter, a little greyer, a little more gleaming as to his teeth. For some time he continued to call me "Bobbie," but one year it became "Mr. Norris," accompanied by much laughter and, to me, embarrassing reminiscences. Just when I ceased to regard him as a Superman, I do not know, but I think it must have been on the visit following the attainment of my LL.B., that "How do Drake," succeeded my former "How do you do Mr. Drake." It was several years later, however, before I ever scratched the surface of the man, and came to know what emotions and ambitions seethed behind the gleaming silver barrier.

I had been admitted to the bar, had put in some gruelling years in a big office, and my efforts had been rewarded with a junior partnership in the firm. I had come "Home," as I still thought of the little place, for a thorough rest, before starting in with my new responsibility. The day before my return to the city, some errand took me down-town, and some impulse prompted me to drop in on Mr. Drake.

I found him in the rear of the furniture store, near a small glass-walled room, which he called his office. He stood before a counter, wrapping up some long metallic object. As I approached he put it down, and, as he walked toward me, nodded sideways at it, and with a look of annoyance said:—

"D'fective."

"What is?" I asked.

"Casket handle," he replied. "Low grade stuff. D'fective. Lots of 'em are. Have to send 'em back for replacement."

I had no direct interest in casket handles, but his manner spoke of such righteous disapproval, that I displayed a polite interest. He carefully removed the wrappings, and held up for my inspection an article of some sort of white metal, on which were embossed crosses, crowns, sheaves of wheat, anchors and other emblems associated with dissolution.

"Low grade stuff," he said, "it ain't even tasty. The best stuff has been plainer, the last few years. You never see this sort of thing on a high class box any more. But this ain't a wealthy community, and it's about what my trade demands."

"What do you mean by high class?" I asked. "How much does a coffin cost?"

"Oh well," said Mr. Drake, "that all depends. You can get



John Barber

a box for fifty dollars, and then you can pay all the way up to twenty-five hundred. It's all a question of your taste and your bankroll."

"Good Lord, Drake," I said, "Do you mean to tell me that people spend twenty-five hundred dollars for a coffin?"

"Do they, well I guess they do. Why it's a well known fact among us undertakers, that this little old state, she buries better than any other in the Union,—or any country in the world, for that matter. Twenty-five hundred; well I guess yes."

Gone now was the look of querulous annoyance, I had at first observed. In his eyes I began to see a glint of dawning enthusiasm. That I had expressed an interest in his life's work, had pleased him.

Still, it seemed a staggering sum to pay for an article, whose hour of glory was so brief. The words, "Born to blush unseen" passed through my mind, and I asked him what such a noble coffin was like, and if he could show me one.

Mr. Drake smiled sadly.

"Our little old town don't run quite as high as that, not yet she don't," he said. "Once when I first come here, and didn't know quite as much as I do now, I ordered one for seven fifty; but I couldn't sell it. No Sir. By the time I realized that, styles had changed and old Crandall—it was before he formed the trust—wouldn't take her off my hands, so I was

stung all right—and seven fifty meant something in them days—still does for that matter. Well, she lay around the Parlors for a long while. I reduced the price a couple of times, but still I couldn't move her, so finally I shipped her out to the house, and now the wife uses her for shirtwaists, and other women's fixings. But I tell you, Mr. Norris, every time I look at that box, it's a lesson to me not to 'crowd the mourners,' so to speak." He laughed at his little pleasantry, and resumed:—"So you see I can't show you that twenty-five hundred dollar casket, but I can show you the catalogue."

There was no doubt about the enthusiasm now. He turned the leaves of the catalogue feverishly, and, finding the right place, bent the covers back and slapped his hand triumphantly on a highly glazed, mathematically and commercially exact half-tone of the Father and Mother of all coffins.

"There she is," said Mr. Drake. "Made by the Ezra Crandall casket corporation in the home plant. Solid bronze shell; not a stick of wood in her. Ab-so-lute-ly air-tight. Your choice of three types of top; hinged single, hinged double, or with sliding panel to view the subject. They don't make 'em any finer; note the plain but massive trimmings and the severe though handsome exterior. And *inside*," his voice sank with emphasis, "heavily tufted with white satin and highly perfumed." "Ain't she elegant?"



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## Orchids and Hollyhocks

### Explanation of a Failure

#### Many on the Verge of Greatness

ONE man has sent me a monthly publication called *THE MASSES*, and it is poorly printed, quarrelsome and often, but extremely clever. In the issue I have examined I find a genius as may be noted in many of its publications. These writers are known—at least, I never heard of them—but they are just on the edge of greatness. Most of them swear too much, as do cheap actors in cheap plays, and some of them are a little disposed to rant, but all of them are smart. In a few of "Susan Lenox," a man signifying initials says:

Phillips was so anxious to tell the world that his book is such a romantic lie."

Another book I have never heard of is recommended by J. R., and the review is probably better than the book.

Another reviewer says I ought to be tender with poets," J. R. writes, "because they are trying to do something."

Another reviewer says of a book: "I drop into the vernacular of THE MASSES, and without wishing to offend anyone else, I'd like to know in hell it is, for if anything is wrong with poets, it is that they are not trying to do anything."

Another reviewer says of a book: "I am not reviewing it; I'm advertising it."

Another unknown genius calls his contribution "Fatten the Calf," and is thus of Walt. Whitman:

Like a magnificent Titan he tore up stones, houses, rivers, whole cities, and hurled them at Olympus, leaping nakedly up and down the continents and chanting exultant songs of himself. It was with a more quiet confidence none the less new and terrible than that of Isadora Duncan that he tried to disturb mankind."

It is good writing, but that is all: the author's notion that Walt. Whitman leaped up trees, stones, houses, rivers, and states, is ludicrous; so is his statement that Isadora Duncan's art is disturbing the world. The world heard of Isadora Duncan briefly because his writings were forbidden the mails, for indecency, and the world knows little of Isadora Duncan except a vague rumor that she was in her bare feet.\*

Well, this writer believes Isadora will be generally accepted, and that she will publish her reminiscences in the *Atlantic Monthly*, with a foreword by Theodore Roosevelt. She might do that, but it will still be as unknown as she is now.

Of course the writers in *THE MASSES* are not revolutionary; that is expected of those who scribble. One of them suggests that the American army be re-commissioned to "get Wall street, dead or alive." Which is clever and amusing, but neither sensible nor profound. These writers for *THE MASSES* are not really Bohemians, and therefore do not represent the masses, who are dull and thrifty, and have a good deal of respect for the various proprieties.

(Concluded on page 42)

## "A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS"

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## Orchids and Hollyhock

(Concluded from page 41)

Probably most of them have written poetry, and some of them have painted pictures for which there is no market. A dozen original pictures are printed in the May issue, and the artists are half so clever as the writers represented, indeed, they are not clever at all. They have managed to find an idea in two or three of them, but there is no drawing in any of them.

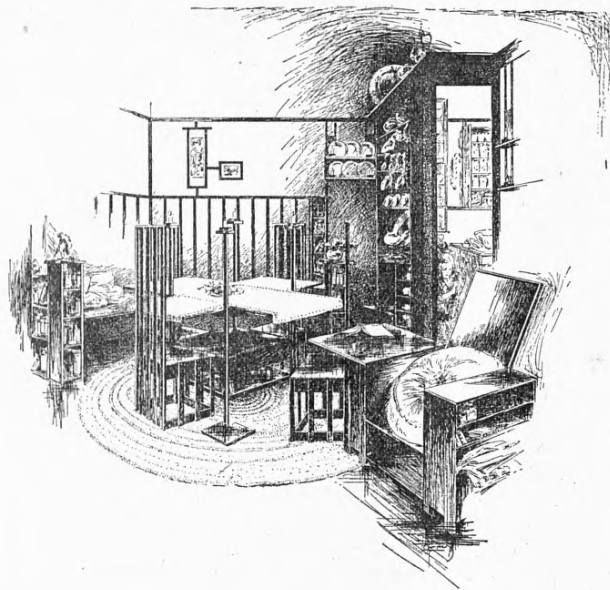
I find one contribution of real value by a lieutenant in the French army, tells exactly what a brutal, silly war is. It is a terribly realistic picture, no heroism, but cowards forced to slaughter by leaders hundreds of miles away. No patriotism; the news stories telling of brilliant dashes and cheers in battle are invented; an infantry charge means a lot of whining, scared wretches waiting in trenches for hours; then reaching a position where they are hammered by the shells of the enemy, and retreat later to where they were before, carrying their wounded. It is all so ghastly and foolish that one wonders why men submit to it. The privates in the infantry are the lads who know about shells and horrible sights.

I have often wondered that smart revolutionary writers do not use their talents to better use. Why do they write for the *Saturday Evening Post*, or some of the other publications willing to pay high prices for cleverness? These writers may say they do not obey the rules of the *Post*. Their failure to obey other respectable publications has resulted in their being quarrelsome and unsuccessful. They may say they are devoting their lives to a cause which is true in a way, but their work is unprofitable, disagreeable and ill-founded. The contention that little publications without circulation represent the masses, while the *Saturday Evening Post*, circulating more than two million copies weekly, does not stand intelligent investigation. Their contention that they think of their fellow men than do George Horace Lorimer, Churchill, William S. Bigelow, Booth Tarkington, Cobb, Sam Blythe, Rudyard Kipling, Will Irwin, C. E. Van Loan, and others might be mentioned, is not accepted by the world, and never will be. Some of the writers whose names appear in the MASSES actually are as clever as the *Saturday Evening Post* crowd, but they refuse to obey the rules, and their fortunes result. They say their failure in life is due to devotion to printing, but the claim is untrue, and they know it.—Ed Howe in *Ed Howe's Weekly* (Kansas).

Blades of Grass

(à la Walt)

○ GLORIOUS spring morning on the baseball grounds! Oh, the boards, and porous underwear and a lank Directoire cat emits sultry remarks at my advances: I proceed onward.



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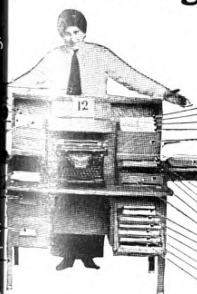
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"O noble Universe! I glory in you—" is my exultant cry; "I embrace you in all-pervading love—love—"

A violently homely female in Congress gaiters and spectacles glares around at me, and strikes the trail toward the cop at the Union Square corner.

My being surges with joy; I swing my stick in riotous exuberance of spring effervescence: (Temperament, or something; don't know just what I ought to do—but that's the way I feel).

O the Joy of Things! (Nothing special, only Things).

Oh toiling humanity—how I Yearn over you! Oh Monstrous System, that condemns virile men to labor at ledgers and ribbon-counters such weather as this!

A husky red cop suggests that I accelerate my steps up the Avenue.

"O Beloved Brother! O Police Force! Would that all Humanity might unite today in one glad Democracy and mutual Love! Have you never been thrilled by that thought, Brother—O my Brother?"

He says—but I cannot tell you what he says; You are too Young—too trusting. It is for hardened souls alone; he cannot Understand.

O Noon Whistle! I feel a passionate, pagan, surging Hunger; I spy a Lunch joint across the way.

O Chicken Sandwiches! Is there not a common, universal Craving for Chicken Sandwiches? I feel myself akin to all men—I put not my self above even the meanest of men; I enter; there are others waiting.

O Unutterable, Throbbing Sense of Unity! This is Too Much.

Yes, it is a Darn sight too much; thirty cents Apiece!

O High Cost of Everything! Oh Crafters! Oh, Food-Sharks!

I will have Ham instead.

The Ham is all out!

Oh, ———!\*

\* Expurgated—Ed.

LAURA SIMMONS.

### Enchant Our Eyes

THE god, to whom the wild vine clings,

Half-heard in piping minstrelsy  
Pieces from our new imaginings.

The sleeping girl Persephone,

Hidden in grass and growing things—  
Once seen of us,—ah where is she?

In the twilight enshadowed wings

That drifting shape of mystery  
Who through the pines his anthem sings;

Where have they fled? Ah—phantasy—  
Grey magic that the west-wind brings

Enchant our eyes again to see!

LYDIA GIBSON.

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## “SILVER LININGS”

This is the idea we want to get across this month:

The loss of our second class mailing privileges is, of course, playing havoc with our distribution. Undoubtedly, we shall sustain very material damage because of the Post Office's action.

At the same time, it *is* possible to get some good out of the situation.

We are throwing all our energies into the newsstand sales until we can get back into the mails.

It is essential that THE MASSES be placed on the stands of every town in the United States

Most of the small towns we can not reach except through the help of our readers.

If you personally will try to persuade your newsdealer to carry THE MASSES we shall have a country wide distribution that will make us impregnable.

If, furthermore, you personally will try each month to persuade some one friend to buy THE MASSES our circulation will double in almost no time.

Remember THE MASSES is *your* magazine and we are fighting desperately for the right to preserve that freedom of utterance which probably first attracted you.

Help us to win and help us to grow strong.

*See page 33 for directions.*

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