

The

NOVEMBER, 1916

15 CENTS

masses



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GELLERT

Drawn by Hugo Gellert.

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Max Eastman

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Floyd Dell

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Arthur Young	John Reed
K. R. Chamberlain	Louis Untermeyer
Cornelia Barns	Howard Brubaker
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BUSINESS MANAGER
Merrill Rogers

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Entered as second-class matter, December 27, 1910, at the postoffice of New York City, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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With reference to Blake, Emerson, Walt Whitman and Tolstoi

By MR. FRANK HARRIS

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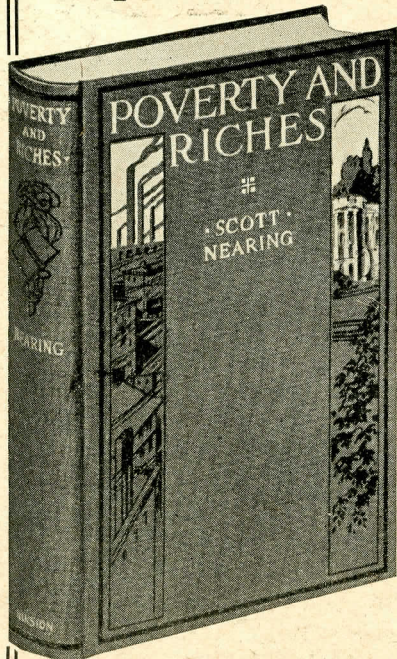
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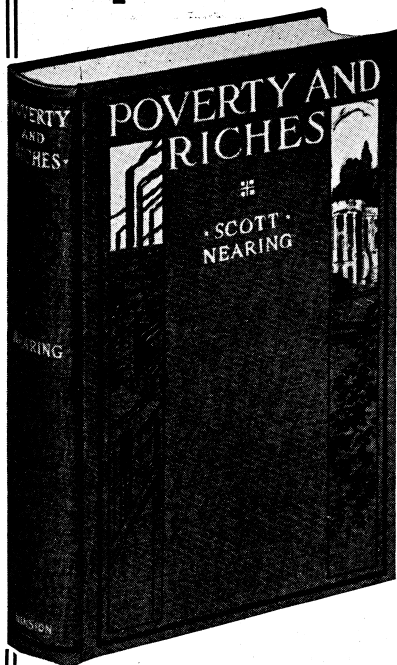
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Drawn by K. R. Chamberlain.

Hope Springs Eternal



Drawn by K. R. Chamberlain.

Hope Springs Eternal

The MASSES

And THE NEW REVIEW

Vol. IX. No. 1.

NOVEMBER, 1916

Issue No. 65

Railroads and Revolution

Helen Marot

THE railroad trainmen did not do any of the things that revolutionists would like them to do. They did not strike. They did not turn to the million or more trackmen, car men, and laborers working on the roads but ineligible at present in the Brotherhoods, and consolidate the interests of all in an aggressive organization.

The scarcity of labor gave them an opportunity to do that. From the point of view of working class politics the very perfection and strength of their organization made the move obligatory. Their position would have been impregnable (troops could not have been mobilized) and the basis for working class solidarity might have been started.

They did not do it because their point of view is—I was of course going to say—middle class. What it really is, however, is American—specifically New England. It is characterized by a simplicity of confidence that *your own* uprightness will pay. There is idealism in the Brotherhoods which might have emanated from Brook Farm. Mr. Garretson personifies this spirit and radiates it in his organization.

For over thirty years, true to their traditions, Mr. Garretson and his fellow officers have tried to gain advances in wage conditions for their members without seriously interfering with the business of the country or impairing the status of the railroads in the financial world. That is why Mr. Garretson's cheeks were wet as he stood by the table in the rooms of the Interstate Commerce Commission and refused the appeal of President Wilson and Senator Newlands to recall the strike order. "When the President of the United States asked me to postpone the strike I had found my Gethsemane; on the one side I faced the condemnation of every one of those powers that go so far to shape public opinion. Anarchist, rebel, no term is too evil for me. Do I feel it?"

He did—and that is the point. He had always expected that when the managers recognized that the trainmen were adamant on some point, they would submit. He expected they would, because he knew that they knew that the Brotherhoods would not push them to the breaking point, and that their demands were not disproportionate to the gains of the railroad corporations.

Of course if Bill Haywood had been in Mr. Garretson's place he would have thrilled with the thought of the managers at the mercy of the men, and he would have had no mercy for them. But then Haywood represents "the worst element" in society.

"On the other side," Mr. Garretson continued, "I faced the trusting loyalty of the men who expect me to lead them where they want to go. To do what the

President asks, what you ask, would be treachery. It means that across the fair record of thirty years would be written the word 'traitor.' Can I face that?"

The Railroad Brotherhoods knew the industrial situation. They knew, as Mr. Hill of the Great North-Western stated, that his road was doing thirteen times more business this last year than it had done five years ago. It was Mr. Hill's position that, as there was that business to be had, all surplus income must be reserved for the capitalization it required. Mr. Hill did not have to remind the trainmen, and he did not of course, that when business is slack wages cannot be increased either. "What sort of prosperity is it," Mr. Garretson asked the Commission, "that piles up great fortunes for the few and leaves the pockets of the masses empty? If that be prosperity, then prosperity is a damnable thing."

There seems to be an inference that that is not what prosperity is, that it is not damnable; that with it come concessions to organized or unorganized workers. But Mr. Garretson is a keen man. He knows that prosperity is damnable, and he is working to make it something else. I am wondering, however, how Mr. Garretson really estimates the settlement of this year's controversy over the demands of his organization, how he values the concession given by Congress.

The Brotherhoods' demonstration of power in successfully forcing from the country what the directors of the roads refused, must have thrilled into consciousness many thousands of unorganized workingmen and heartened the organized. Another point gained through the legislation voted by Congress is the extension of wage regulation and wage increases, not only to the

men or the class of men who are eligible to membership in the Brotherhood, but to all railroad workers. The universality of the act of Congress accomplishes what the union had been unable or unwilling to pay for, that is, an equalizing of economic gains among all the workers in the railroad industry. This fact eliminates many difficulties in the way of "one big union" in the railroad industry; it transfers from profits to wages (and to wages of the less skilled railroad workers) many hundreds of thousands of dollars which the original demands of the Brotherhoods for their own men never contemplated.

But it is now, by virtue of the act of Congress, the function of the United States government to fix wage conditions as it is its prerogative to fix rates. For the time, and I believe permanently, unless the Supreme Court declares the action of Congress unconstitutional, the fixing of the wage condition of trainmen is shifted from collective bargaining to politics and legislation. The trainmen are in almost the same relation to the government, so far as a strike for wages or hours is concerned, that they would be under government ownership. A strike could not, perhaps, with the same plausibility, be called mutiny, but the enactment of the eight-hour law by Congress is an assumption of responsibility of the Federal Government; it leaves the workers bound by obligations which the country will expect them to live up to. Corporations of financiers may in secrecy or even openly force concessions from Congress without paying for it, but an organization of workingmen cannot in the light of day.

The railroad directors say that they are going to test the constitutionality of the act of Congress that gave the men eight hours. The President of the Atchison and Topeka has already announced that they would not observe the law, and they knew they would be upheld by the Supreme Court. They probably know their Supreme Court. I wonder if they remember that the seeds of rebellion have flourished in the hearts of just such gentle and righteous people as Mr. Garretson and his Brotherhoods represent?

The Brotherhoods did not want a settlement through legislation. In collective bargaining their course is direct and known; in the labyrinths of national politics it is unknown. But rather than involve the country in a strike, they accepted it. They do not believe in legislative regulation of wages as a method, but they do believe in their country. If the Supreme Court reverses the decision of Congress—the country sells out the trainmen. When that happens, we may—I do not say we will—but we may have to face the wrath of good men. I hope they will reward us for its postponement.

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE present issue was published under extreme difficulties. Our paper contracts have expired and the kind of paper we are using now costs more than we can pay. So we are making plans for the use of a different kind of paper, which may involve a change in the shape of the magazine. This month we have printed as many pages as we had paper left to print on. But we have tried to make this, in spite of its smaller bulk, one of our best issues. You can judge for yourself whether we have succeeded. And for the future, whatever shape we may appear in, we promise you the most interesting magazine in America.

The Campaign—An Operetta by Seymour Barnard

TIME: Autumn of 1916.

PLACE: A Doubtful State.

President Wilson and ex-Justice Hughes are discovered searching the ground carefully, creeping along on hands and knees.

WILSON AND HUGHES
Eminent nominees,
Voters confronting,
On our uncommon knees
Issues are hunting:

Now to the right of us,
Now to the left,
Witness the plight of us,
Wholly bereft:

Sadly we undertake,
Sadly contrive,
Factions to keep awake,
Parties alive:

Eminent nominees,
Groaning and grunting,
On our uncommon knees
Issues are hunting.

HUGHES

(To himself. Wilson listens unobserved.)
Beyond the ken of common men,
Where thought is all judicial,
There came for me a call to be
A more mundane official;
And instantly I came to see
What heretofore I couldn't,
That those intent on government
Were doing what they shouldn't.

WILSON

(Smiling confidently.)
Watch and wait,
Watch and wait,
Wariest, willingest candidate;—
Who would champion,
Who would choose,

Hypercritical,
Carping Hughes?

(A sudden chill is felt. Shadowy shapes appear at right. A procession of political ghosts enters.—George Washington, Roosevelt, Bryan, and others well known to historians. Taft and Root are seen among the pre-Revolutionary group.)
(The ghosts carry the Issues of past campaigns.)
(Bryan opens his mouth to speak. Roosevelt gets the start of him, while Washington waits respectfully.)

ROOSEVELT

(Vociferously.)

In early youth I learned this truth;—
That people love to hear
Of vigor, vim,—in short, of him
Who is devoid of fear:

So, by and by, imagined I
A mighty man, and more—
A man of pith, a man of myth,
And called him Theodore:

I imitate his sturdy gait,
His collar and his tie;
And shout it out till none may doubt—
"This Superman is I!"

WASHINGTON

(Shuddering, to Wilson and Hughes.)

You may dispense with presidents
With little loss to-day,
For, though long dead, the things I said
Still guide the U. S. A.

The undulating ship of state,
On which I did my turn,
Has at its bow the rudder now,
The lookout at the stern:

The little brat republic that
I did my best to save,
Is sitting by sarcophagi,
Or list'ning at a grave.

WILSON AND HUGHES

(Whispering together.)

One well may dread to move ahead;
We'll linger till the last:
There may be no to-morrow and

We're certain of the past:
For us the ancient counselor,
For us the tried and true;—
O, some have won a second term,
Avoiding what is new.

BRYAN

(Indicating the ghosts.)

From off the strand of spirit land,
Where life is all vacations,
And one may bide till satisfied
A-writing resignations,—

Among the hosts of genial ghosts,
A limited selection,
May quit the Styx for politics,
Along about election:

We bear tirades of past decades,
To get the crowd's attention;
And Issues vexed which once perplexed,
To keep alive dissension.

(The ghosts spread their Issues on the ground.)

TAFT

To take your choice you may proceed:
Here are the Philippines unfreed!

BRYAN

Here is my famed "Free Silver" schism.

ROOSEVELT

(At the top of his lungs, drowning out Washington.)
Here is the true Americanism!

(Wilson and Hughes make for Roosevelt. A scuffle ensues. They emerge, each with a fragment of Roosevelt's Issue.)

WILSON AND HUGHES

(Jubilantly.)

O, Politics, O, Politics,
Some deem you but to be
The art to teach, the part to preach,
Till others think as we:
But, let us state, a candidate
To get the vote to-day,
Must test the mind of humankind,
And learn to think as they.

(They march off.)

CURTAIN.

ACCESSORIES BEFORE THE FACT

Mary Heaton Vorse

THE country of the Mesaba Range—where are the richest mines of iron ore in all the world and where Steel is again fighting organized labor—is a country of great, gory pits with men and teams crawling, small as flies, at the bottom of chutes so vast that they seem to be the result of some cataclysm of nature and not the work of the hand of man: towns, and the pits which are the mines surrounding them. There are other sorts of mines, holes in the earth, a series of tunnels, vast, mysterious, ending in blackness, tunnels shored up each foot of the way with heavy timbers: water drips from the walls, the place is full of small, disquieting noises. Now and then the darkness is pierced by the wavering light of a lamp on a miner's coat.

All about the mine are vast stock piles of ore, and everywhere one sees cars, train after train of little red cars loaded with red ore, trains so interminable that they cease to seem real, seem like some interminably repeated stencil.

Long red roads join one range town to another, along whose length lounge gunmen—large, brutal and given to strong drink. On the same roads at night the darkness is forever broken by the gunmen's fires by the roadside or by the flash of an electric light on the passing cars. There are gunmen of all kinds from the property gunmen the mine owners show visitors and the respectable company guards, to plug-uglies reeling drunk down the street of a sordid, forsaken camp. But wherever you turn, now silhouetted against the skyline, now crouching by the roadside—*there*, watchful and on the lookout for trouble.

At first you smile at them, many of them are such caricatures: later you do not feel like smiling when you have seen the bruises on the bodies of women caused by their hands and clubs, or after you have heard the excited women in the little bleak villages tell in broken English stories of fights for water, of arrests and abuse.

They lurk at the back of strike meetings, audiences

of serious Finns with their blonde and powerful wives, of Croats, of Italians, of Austrians, of Greeks, all that population that the steel companies brought on the range from Europe to break the strike of 1907 when they blacklisted three strikers and sent them forth to find homes for themselves in the wilderness.

I have in my ears the voice of one of these strikers as he shouted "Scabs" at some miners, and a poignant memory of their shamed and beaten look. All the intensity of the struggle was in that word. It summed up that new morality which decrees that scabbing is for a worker what desertion is for a soldier.

These are some of the pictures I have of the Mesaba Range, but I have also the picture of the other part of the story in Duluth, where a fat, kind-hearted sheriff's wife sat rocking on a porch outside a jail.

"I don't know what to do with her," she lamented. "I want her to let me take the baby out for air. But she's afraid—she thinks I'll kidnap it. You can't make her understand. She just cries and cries something

awful! She don't understand what it's all about. Sometimes I think it's lucky she don't understand, for the girls in the jail—you know the kind—talk awful."

It happens that Mrs. Masonovitch is in jail accused of murder. Just why she's there it's hard for anyone to understand. It's not much wonder she cries and cries, and that she won't even trust that kind, comfortable Irish body, the sheriff's wife. In the other part of the jail is her husband and their three boarders, all held for the murder of Deputy Myron.

There, too, are Carlo Tresca, Joe Schmidt, Sam Scarlett and two other organizers who were all conveniently gathered in as accessories before the act.

This is what happened to Mrs. Masonovitch in the interests of law and order on the Mesaba Range: the miners on the range went out on strike in June and early in June a striker was shot and killed by a deputy. No arrests were made for that.

Philip Masonovitch and his three boarders were striking miners. He lived in a bleak little frame house near the county road about a mile from Biwabik. It is an isolated place with woods behind and a mine not far off. On the afternoon of June 3rd the woman sat, with the baby in her arms, the other children played around, the men sat playing cards. Into this peaceful household walked Deputy Myron and three other Deputies. They didn't knock; they just came in and told Masonovitch he was "wanted." Just why they came is obscure. Some say there was no warrant, that it was manufactured afterwards. Some say that Masonovitch had trespassed on company land to get water instead of going a mile and a half to town; for one of the

ugly features of this strike has been forbidding the strikers the use of wells on the company land. Almost every mine has its little cluster of houses around it, sometimes on company land, sometimes not, but the well is more often than not on company land. There is a third report as to why Masonovitch was wanted and that was that he had a "blind pig."

He started to get his shoes from an inner room when a Deputy named Dillon, an ex-bouncer of a disorderly house, hit him on the head with a club. The woman with the baby still in her arms, now arose, and another deputy clubbed her. This caused trouble. A big Austrian, one of the boarders, knocked down the deputy and the brawl was on.

Myron drew his gun; the boarders grappled with him. The deputy who had been knocked down fired his gun. According to his own testimony the bullet that killed Myron came from a distance and as though fired by someone on the floor—but none of the strikers had guns.

This wasn't the end, although the State of Minnesota wasn't interested in anything that happened after the death of Myron.

During the struggle the other two deputies vanished, and a passing driver of a pop wagon heard the shots and came running toward the house. He was shot and killed by a deputy who must have thought him some other striker come to help.

There were no arrests made for his death.

It was an ordinary clash of strikers and deputies, for this was during the period of wholesale arrests. Many another striker has had his home entered and has

been told to come along, but its tragic ending played into the hands of the mining companies.

The charge of murder as Accessory before the Fact is an old acquaintance of anyone who has followed the labor disturbances of the past years. With this convenient law it can always be alleged that a death was the result of incendiary talk on the organizer's part.

That's why Carlo Tresca and the others are in jail. The wife of one of the imprisoned men wheels the baby up and down before the jail all day. Joe Schmidt's wife is in Pennsylvania expecting her second baby.

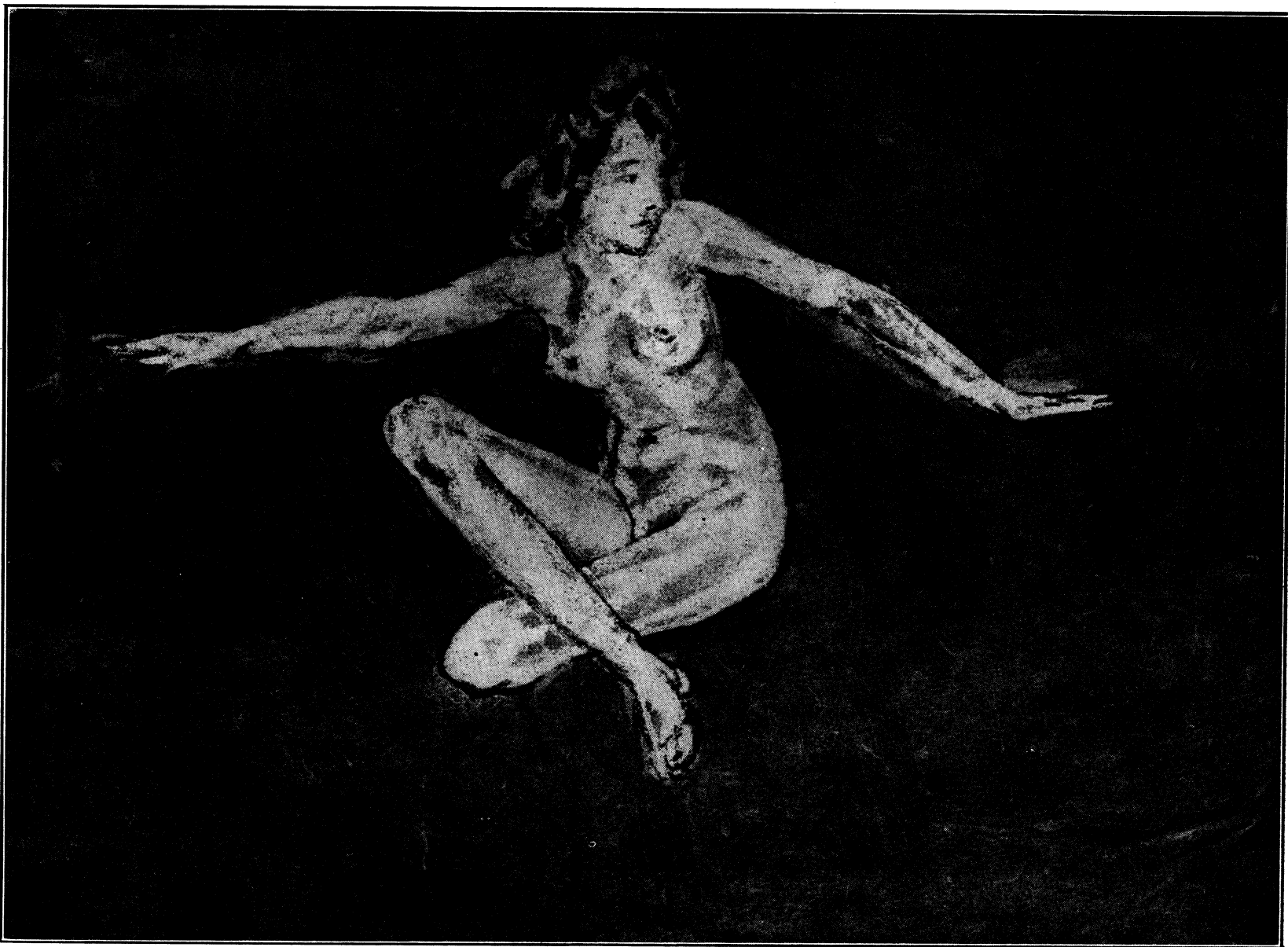
Eleven people in jail for the chance killing of Deputy Myron, and no arrests for the shooting of the striker or the driver of the pop wagon.

There's nothing new in the situation. It's hard to write about it, for the strike has gone its appointed way. It's the same case as that of Ettore and Giovanni: we've seen a similar state of things in Colorado and in California.

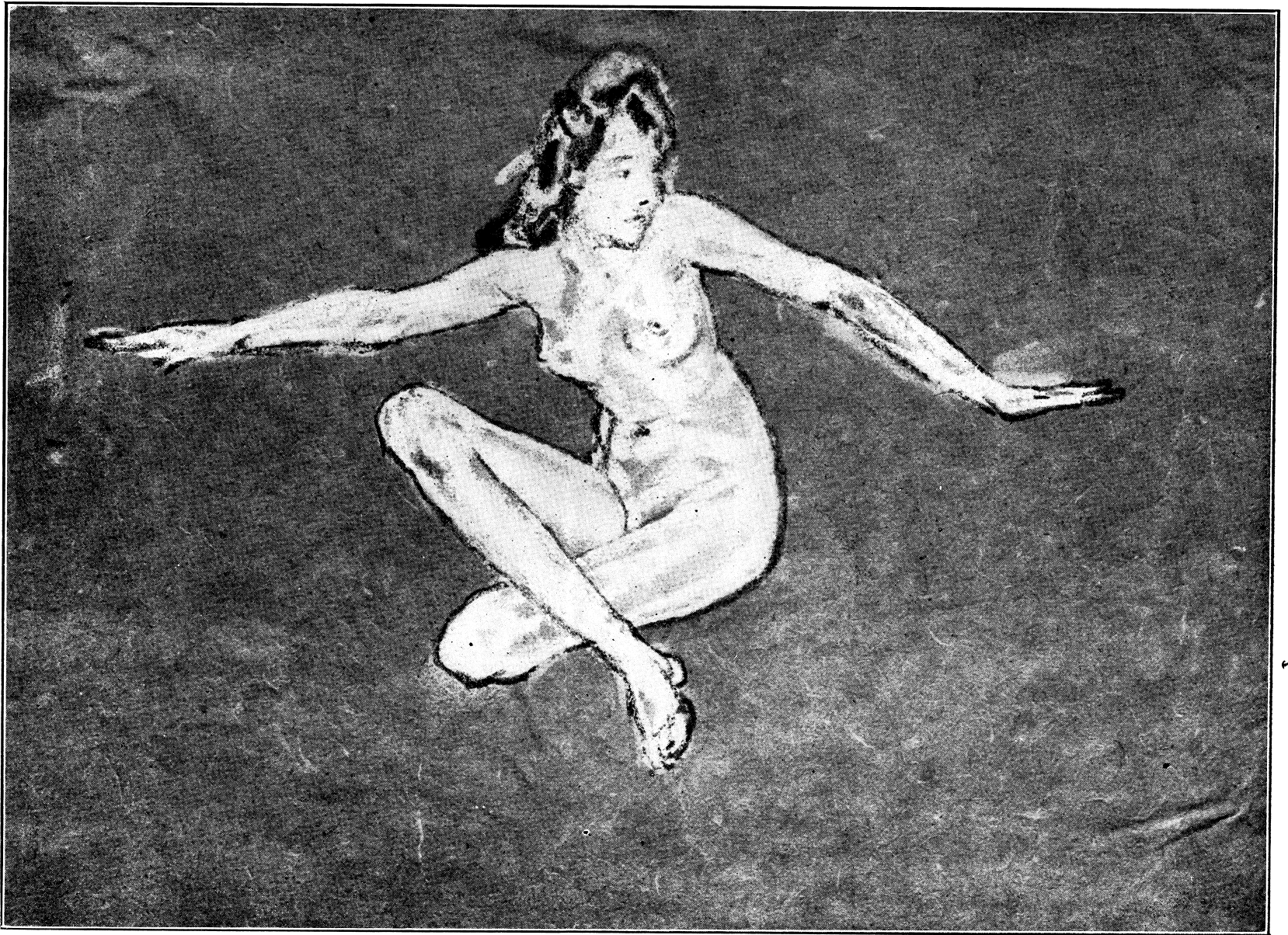
This case may be in some ways more flagrant, for the range is sixty miles long and the organizers were rounded up on all parts of it. Nor will the men get off easily. Any more than any of the strikers have gotten off easily for small charges. They have a judge up on the range whom the miners call "Old Ninety-days." When there is trouble between gunmen and strikers the strikers get ninety days and the gunmen go free, even for murder. That's another familiar strike feature—the gunmen.

The strike technique is something like this.

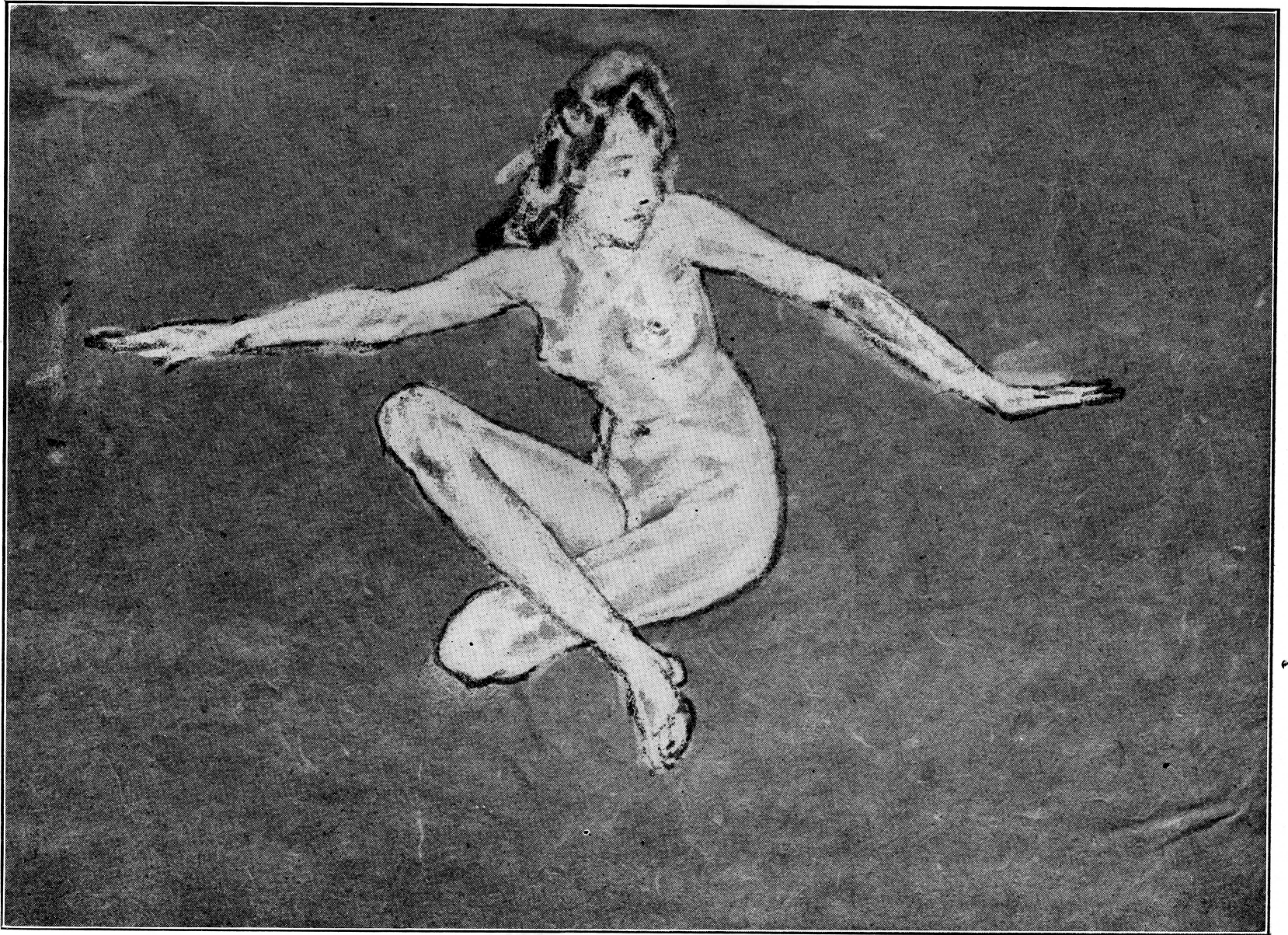
A strike is called. At this the mine-owners cry "outside agitators." Next (*continued on page 22*)



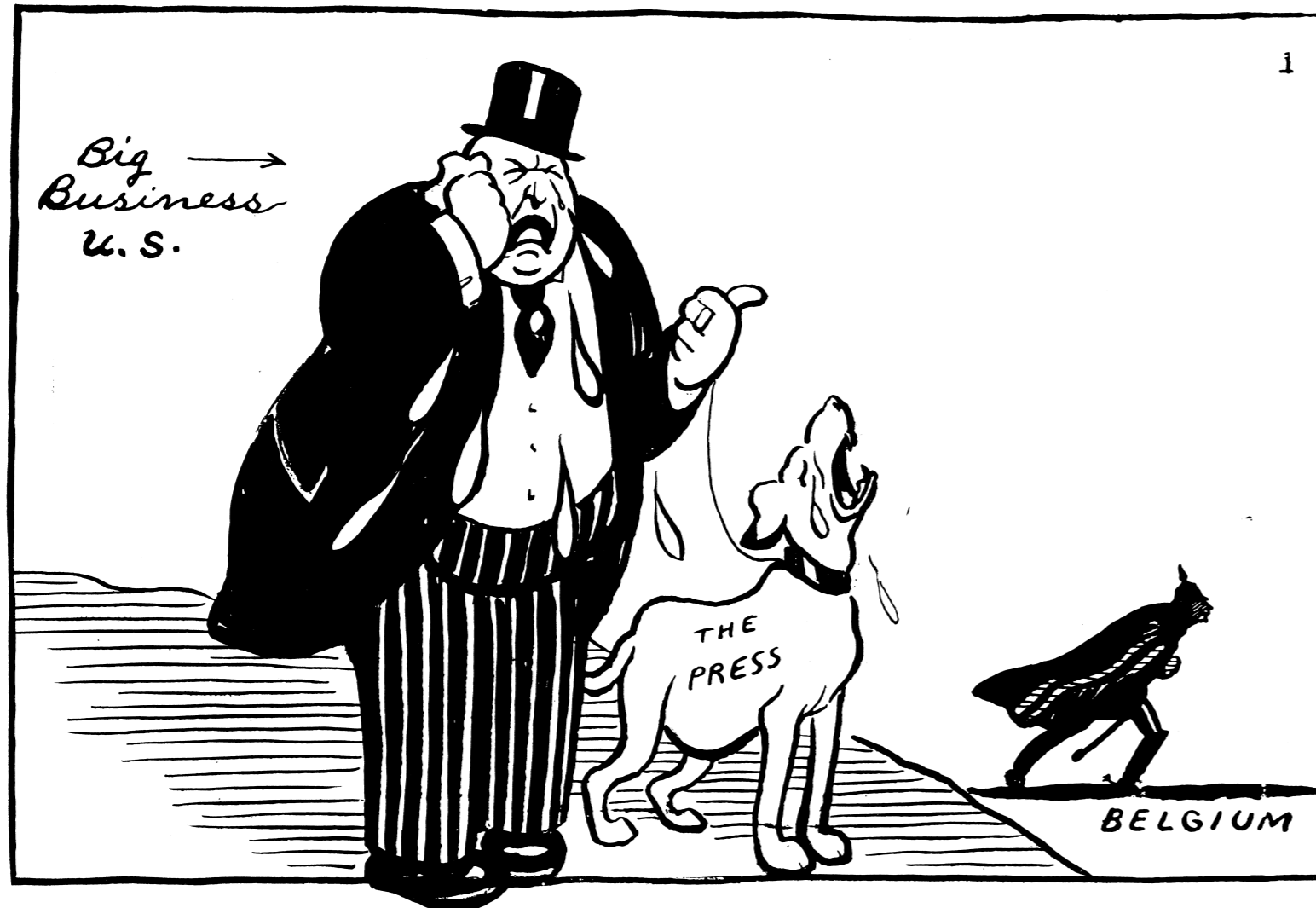
Decoration by Arthur B. Davies.



Decoration by Arthur B. Davies.



Decoration by Arthur B. Davies.



Two years ago he pretended to feel so sorry for Belgium



—Now he not only expects to walk over Mexico, but steal it.



Two years ago he pretended to be horrified by Prussian militarism—



NOW!

AN HEROIC PACIFIST

John Reed

IN my travels along the various fronts of the fighting armies in Europe, I was struck by the astonishing fact that military heroism is the cheapest of all virtues. For example, there are, let us say, some three millions of men—or more—at present in the German trenches, perhaps the same number in the French trenches, more in the Russian trenches, a million or so in the English trenches, and countless others in the active armies of Rumania, Serbia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Turkey, etc.—all equally brave. Perhaps the most astonishing ancient fact which has been brought home to us afresh in this War is, that the physical courage of men in battle is the rule, not the exception. And in all history, it has never required half as much bravery to yield to the ugly emotionalism of the mob—keyed up to kill and be killed—as to stand for truth and justice against “patriotism” and blood-lust.

If anything is needed to convince the neutral observer that the claims of the belligerents to be Defenders of Freedom, Democracy, Civilization, Culture, etc., are equally insincere, it can be found in the way the various Peoples have treated those men who dared to champion these things. In Germany, Russia, France, Austria, England, the journals which dared to tell the truth about the Causes of the War, the “patriotic” exploitation of workers by the rich, military and governmental crimes and corruption—who dared to criticize the brutalities and falsehoods of their own Governments—were ruthlessly suppressed; and the men who had the courage to make themselves heard in these matters, if inconspicuous, were ruthlessly done away with; if prominent, were imprisoned, threatened, banished, or declared enemies of the State. To mention a few, there were Kostylev of Russia, condemned to death and refugee in Switzerland; Liebknecht of Germany, imprisoned; Romain Rolland of France, threatened and ostracized. But these are citizens of countries ruled by military bureaucracies.

In England also—England, the Champion of Liberty and Democracy, the Home of Free Speech, the Defender of Small Nations—the same thing obtains. Francis Neilson, a member of Parliament who resigned when the War began and came to America, wrote a book called “How Diplomats Make War,” which exposes, verse and chapter, the unscrupulous course of English diplomacy; and the London *Times* called him “an enemy of England.” Norman Angell is now a virtual prisoner in London, forbidden to leave. And Bertrand Russell, Rector in Logic and Principles of Mathematics at Trinity College, Cambridge, probably the first mathematician in Europe, and England’s most stimulating philosopher, was sentenced to prison, fined, dismissed from his high position in the faculty of Trinity College, and finally refused a passport to America, so that, incidentally, he cannot keep his contract to lecture at Harvard this autumn.

In England “Conscientious Objectors” are nominally excused from active military service. But like so many “guarantees of human rights” in both England and America, this prevision is largely a bluff. If the Tribunal is satisfied that a man has real “conscientious objections” to the War, he is drafted into the Medical Corps, the munitions-factories, or some such non-combatant corps; but, as Bertrand Russell pointed out, this “is an insult to Conscientious Objectors.” Though not actually killing with their own hands, these men make possible the killing by others. . . . But as a matter of fact, the Tribunal often decides that “conscientious ob-

jections” are not valid; and the Objector has to either fight or submit to the most terrible punishment. In many cases men have been kept in solitary confinement, in irons, for weeks,—fed on bread and water, and even tortured.

The No-Conscription Fellowship is a body of from fifteen to twenty thousand Englishmen who have “conscientious objections” against military service. Over 1,828 of them have already been arrested and handed over to the military authorities, and the arrests continue at the rate of 150 a week—for simply refusing to serve in the armies of England. It has never tried to prevent men from enlisting, nor enlisted men from serving; it has not tried to create new Conscientious Objectors; its purpose is to defend the principle of Liberty of Conscience.

Bertrand Russell’s crime consisted in writing a leaflet for the Fellowship exposing the treatment meted out to a young teacher, E. Everett, who refused to obey an order given by the military, and was given two years’ imprisonment at hard labor. The pamphlet said:

“Everett is now suffering this savage punishment solely for refusal to go against his conscience. He is fighting the old fight for liberty and against religious persecution, in the same spirit in which martyrs suffered in the past. Will you join the persecutors? Or will you stand for those who are defending conscience at the cost of obloquy and pain of mind and body?”

Distributors of this leaflet were arrested and punished. Then Bertrand Russell boldly declared himself the author of the leaflet, and invited arrest. Defending himself before the Lord Mayor, in June, on the charge that “the pamphlet was liable to prejudice recruiting,” he said:

“There was a time when we boasted that England was a free country. That time is past. Freedom now has few friends among us, and these few can only proclaim their love of freedom at the risk of being declared criminals. . . .

“The resistance of the Conscientious Objectors is not manufactured by those who champion their right to resist. I can well believe that injury to discipline results from their resistance; but the responsibility for this injury rests not on those who merely tell the civilian world what is happening, but on those who, against the express desire of Parliament, have forced these men into the Army. The way to prevent injury to discipline is to restore these men to civil life, not to conceal what they are doing from all except the soldiers.

“We wish it to be known that men who are profoundly convinced of the immorality of fighting are suffering persecution. We wish this known, not so much on their account, since to suffer in a noble cause is a privilege and a happiness, but for the sake of the nation, because liberty has been hitherto the most precious of our national possessions.”

His conviction under the Defense of the Realm Act was followed by the action of the Council of Trinity College. Tremendous protest followed, even from Trinity students, members of the Trinity faculty, and well-known Englishmen of all opinions. Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson, for example, could write this:

“ . . . The disgrace is that of the College and also of the University. Mr. Russell’s offence was political, and it consisted in an endeavor to vindicate those rights of conscience and of the person which hitherto have been dear to Englishmen. Mr. Russell wrote a leaflet describing the treatment that had been meted out to a Conscientious Objector, who had been subjected, as so many have, to rigors contrary to the intention of the Military Service Act of Parliament, and to the public pledges of Ministers. . . .”

Mr. Russell would probably be called “coward” by Colonel Roosevelt and the other militarists; but to my mind it took more sheer courage to do the thing he and the Conscientious Objectors did, than to fight in the trenches. . . .

But Bertrand Russell has done even a braver thing—he has published a book* called “Justice in Wartime,”

* “Justice in Wartime.” \$1. The Open Court Publishing Co.; Chicago and London.

which is by far the finest expression of opinion written by anyone in a belligerent country during the War. Romain Rolland’s “Above the Battle” is disappointing to the reader who is searching for an absolutely fair discussion of the War from an ethical and really international standpoint. “Justice in Wartime” is not a cold, logical setting-forth of principles; it is written by an Englishman who loves England and all its great traditions, who hates the German “Superstate” and all its developments—but who loves truth and humanity and hates lies and brutality more, and is not blinded by patriotism. To him the crimes of England, France, and Russia, are as terrible as the crimes of Germany and Austria; the excellencies of the Central Powers are just as much excellencies as those of the Entente; and their responsibility for the War is about equal.

In the splendid article which opens the book, “An Appeal to the Intellectuals of Europe,” he virtually describes his own attitude in the following words:

“I cannot but think that the men of learning, by allowing partiality to color their thoughts and words, have missed the opportunity of performing a service to mankind for which their training should have especially fitted them. The truth, whatever it may be, is the same in England, France and Germany, in Russia and Austria. . . . They might have used their reputation and their freedom from political entanglements to mitigate the abhorrence with which the nations have come to regard each other, to help toward mutual understanding, to make the peace, when it comes, not a mere cessation due to weariness, but a fraternal reconciliation, springing from realization that the strife has been a folly of blindness.”

We have seen so much of this “fury of professors”! Think of the mutual recriminations exchanged between the German and French scholars; think of Professor Eduard Meyer; think of the Oxford Historical Pamphlets; think, for example, of the apologist for the British Foreign Office, Sir Gilbert Murray! And it applies as well to the novelists—O the rot written and spoken by Hauptmann, Anatole France, H. G. Wells!—and above all, to the Socialists, the International revolutionists—Gustave Hervé, Peter Kropotkin, etc.—can you see them, talking, writing evil rubbish?

I wish to call particular attention to the chapter entitled “War and Non-Resistance.” As far as I know, Mr. Russell is the only person of any prominence to advocate non-resistance as a practical national policy which makes for peace, and to work it out in terms of actual events. True, he is not so foolish as to believe that the world would at present begin to practise non-resistance; but he thinks a generation of education would train any nation to make the experiment—and the interesting thing is, that he thinks it would not be necessary to wait until all the world agreed. In the meantime, his ideas are not far removed from those of our League to Enforce Peace.

It is what the man Bertrand Russell is, as revealed in his acts in England no less than in his words in “Justice in Wartime,” that gives one heart in these dark and darker days. And for those who have lost faith in England, he shines out as an example of the great international family of heroes who have not been afraid to face a nation wrongly in arms, and speak the truth as they see it.

Caught With the Goods

THOSE worried looking men are the railway presidents wondering how they can conceal that billion dollar surplus. It is not easy to make a twenty per cent. road look like a bread line.

DURING the New York street car strike, service in the subway and elevated was above normal. Suggesting to strap-hangers the interesting idea that it might be above normal all the time.

THE low rumbling we hear in the south is the boys on the border wishing they had not raised themselves to be soldiers.

THE barrel straighteners have gone on strike at Bridgeport. Those who expect to have their barrels straightened this winter will have to pay well for this pleasure.

CARL LIEBKNECHT, on appeal, had his sentence increased to four years' penal servitude. But at least he had the honor and the pleasure of being expelled from the German army.

HOW, somebody asks, can a conference in New London, Connecticut, settle the affairs of far off Mexico. It can't, of course. The only way to settle the Mexican problem is to get a gun and chase somebody around in the cactus for a while.

THE ex-heads of the New Haven railroad are now being sued for \$160,000,000 and the public is getting its face ready for a hearty laugh. Charles S. Mellen as the Pirate King has a strong hold upon the affections of the amusement loving people.

HENRY CABOT LODGE went to a country fair recently in a cart drawn by eleven yoke of oxen. Symbolizing in a subtle, cultured way, the relationship of Henry Cabot to the people of Massachusetts for twenty-two years.

THOSE anti-suffragists who are going around upon the Hughes campaign train might take this opportunity to tell the women to stay at home and keep out of politics.

WHATEVER the result of the election may be, it is clear that Hughes has the record for uninspiring campaigns formerly held by Alton B. Parker against fierce competition by Taft. Judges all.

IF you want to know how Hughes feels about the Germans read Roosevelt's Maine speech. If you don't want to know, read Hughes's.

IF W. W. had stood firm for the divine principle of arbitration and let the railroad strike come on, what would candidate Hughes have said then? Nobody is entitled to more than four guesses.

WHAT has become of the old-fashioned cartoonist who pictured the Republican party as the friend of the working man?

AND Prosperity, too; that was born and brought up in the G. O. P. and now look what kind of a life it is leading.

HENRY FORD believes that law, not dynamite, should settle international questions; therefore the *Chicago Tribune* calls him an anarchist. When they



Drawn by Maurice Becker.

AFTER THE STRIKE

"Nu, ve're beck on vests again. It's over, and vat did ve get out of it?"
"Vell, anyhoe, ve got a rest."

make a word mean as much as that, they ought, as in "Alice in Wonderland," to pay it extra.

FORD is suing the *Tribune* for \$1,000.00 libel and all he will have to do is to convince twelve plain men that he needs the money.

DANIELS predicts the end of all warfare and rushes work on the new navy. Probably for museum purposes.

ANYHOW we can't call it Remainia any more.

HOWARD BRUBAKER.

Local History

JOHN LYONS, our efficient and genial business manager, has left us for other fields of enterprise not so wearing upon the nerves. The office staff, having gratefully in memory certain dark days when there would have been no pay-checks if it hadn't been for John's talents as a financier, gave him a farewell dinner the other night, having first borrowed the where-withal from John. Arturo Giovannitti made fourteen speeches, and a pleasant time was had by all.

Sumner vs. Forel

YOU may have heard that John S. Sumner, the successor of Anthony Comstock, paid a visit to our office recently, confiscated all the September numbers of THE MASSES on hand, and arrested our circulation manager, Merrill Rogers. The reason was that we had advertised and sold "The Sexual Question," by August Forel—a book recognized as one of the great authoritative works on the subject of sex. The case will be fought to a finish in the courts. In the meantime it is interesting to have a personal statement from John S. Sumner, made to one of our editors, explaining his animus against the Forel book. He says: "It advocates sodomy"! Our readers have our word for it that it does, of course, nothing of the sort. If our recommendations had any weight with the authorities, we should suggest that some our prominent vice-experts be detained for observation in Bellevue; their minds really do not seem to us to be normal. For the time being, however, they dictate what you shall buy and read.



Drawn by Maurice Becker.

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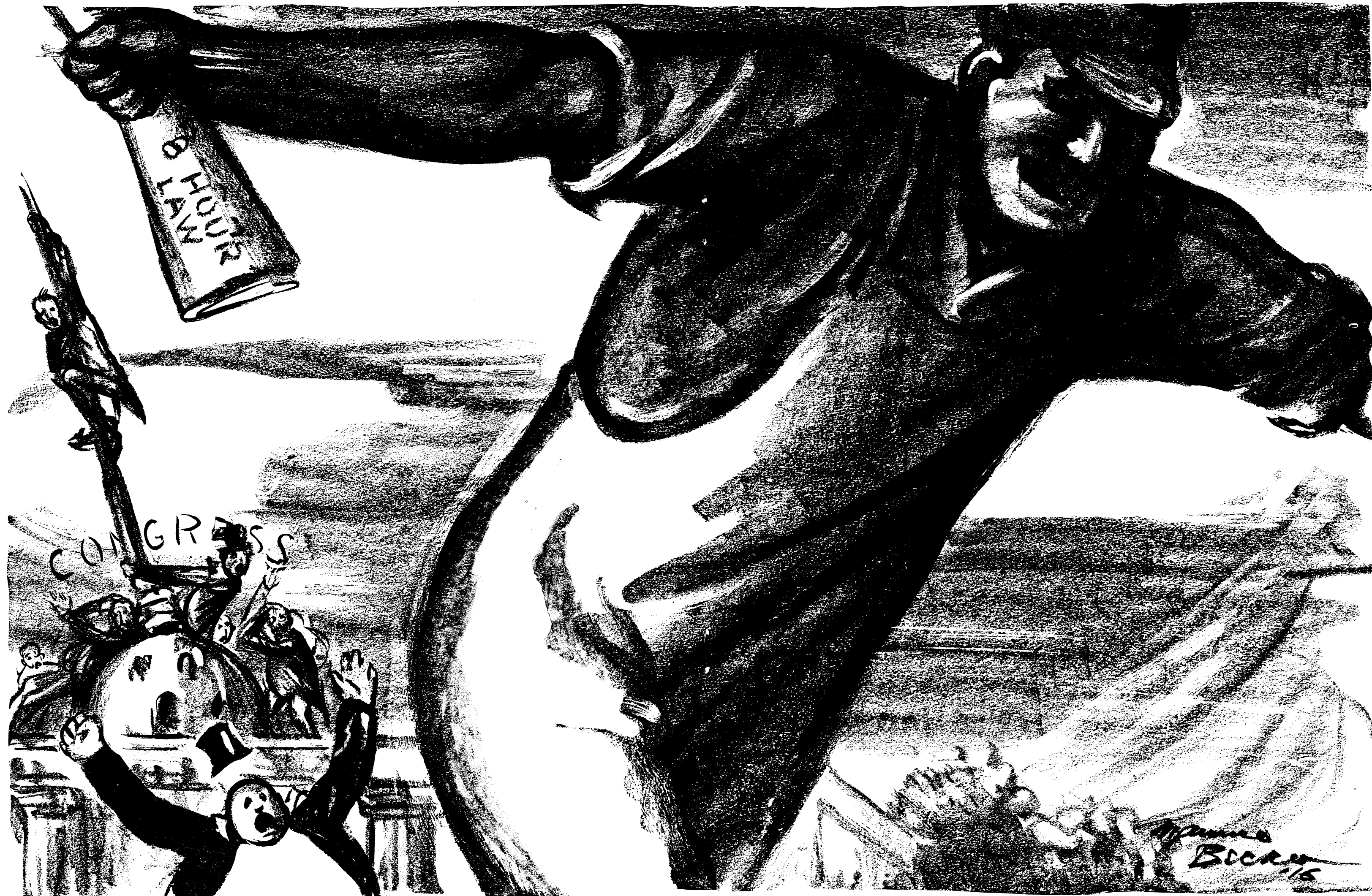
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Drawn by Maurice Becker.

POWER



Maurice
Becker
'15

“ENGAGEMENTS”

Elsie Clews Parsons

“WHY don't we just go off and get married?” is a question sometimes asked by an impatient lover. And the answer expected by us, if not by him, is: “How could we? What would they think of us? It would be so inconsiderate.” The girl knows that “they” will feel cheated by the lack of an engagement, and that the less kindly among them will not only grumble about not having been “told,” but will remark upon the indecent haste of some people to get married.

People do not like to be “taken by surprise” and betrothal ceremonial—betrothal gifts, visits, festivity, betrothal taboo—offers the desired opportunity for adjustment to the novel situation. The opportunity is rather for outsiders than for the betrothed themselves. For them it is comparatively seldom a time (as we describe it) for getting acquainted. In many communities they are forbidden each other's company and even the sight of each other is taboo. When a little girl is betrothed in New Britain she pays a visit of four days to the village of her boy *fiancé*; but at the time of her visit he is packed off to another village. She does not learn his name, nor he hers. In the practice of infant betrothal in Albania it was customary for the girl, once the engagement was announced, not to speak to the boy and his kindred and even to keep out of their sight.

In other instances the pair may have been familiar enough too before their betrothal, but once engaged they have to avoid each other. From the day of his engagement a Benui of the Red Sea has to keep away from his *fiancée* and, let us note, from her mother. Were the girl to meet him unexpectedly, she would lower her face and any friends with her would so surround her as to hide her from his sight. And yet before this the youth may have been quite free with her; he may even have chosen her himself. An Abyssinian maiden once betrothed may have nothing to do with her *fiancé*. She may have played with him before her betrothal, but should she catch sight of him on his visits to her father, she would cover her face and run off screaming. After an Ostiak has settled about the bride-price, he must not see his *fiancée*, and if he visits her parents, he must walk into their house backwards and never look them in the face.

In these cases it may be that the avoidance taboo has been prompted by a sense of embarrassment in the couple themselves, caused by the idea of the change in their relationship. This explanation is far more probable than that usually advanced by ethnologists, the theory that the taboo is due to the apprehension of over-familiarity, of an untimely anticipation of conjugal rights. On his hypothesis, why in the cases I have cited at least, why should the taboo extend to the kindred of the betrothed? The taboo may often include mere acquaintances too. No, betrothal taboo is not so much a safeguard, however you take it, for the betrothed themselves, as it is a safeguard for outsiders, for family and friends. The sight of the engaged couple together causes discomfiture. Is not any slip into love-making in the open apt to be apprehended? “Letters appear in the newspapers every summer,” writes the author of “How to Be Happy Though Married,” “letters complaining of want of reserve in love-makers at fashionable seaside resorts. The writers of the letters were made shy and uncomfortable when they passed the lovers.”

Even separate, lovers may be disquieting. And so it is a

common enough practice to forbid their presence on given occasions, better still, to force them or at least the girl, the more pliable of the two, into seclusion. An Abyssinian *fiancée* is kept indoors the three or four months of her engagement;¹ a Tavetan is kept away from the sight of other men² while her engagement lasts, perhaps for years. Among us it has been considered bad form for an engaged girl to go into general society for the few days prior to her wedding.

But even for girls seclusion is not always feasible. The alternative to it is a thoroughgoing advertisement of the engagement. In New Guinea as soon as a Koita girl is betrothed the pattern of her taboo is extended. The Loango *fiancée* was painted red; the Korean wears a red jacket, notices even more conspicuous than the engagement cards sent out in Germany or than our own engagement ring.

Outside of modern circles a man may also advertise his engagement. In one of the Bedouin tribes he wears in his turban a twig given him by his prospective father-in-law.

Alternative too to the separation of the betrothed is their more or less compulsory association. To others their conduct must be circumspect, to each other conspicuously devoted. Bracketing them together enables their public to keep out of their way, to ignore them, or at any rate to consider their relation only ceremonially, just as after marriage it will be considered.

Still an engagement can never be as satisfactory to the outsider as a marriage; there is generally too great an element of suspense about it, and suspense is troublesome. Nor is it without practical inconvenience. Hence, except where the betrothed are mutually taboo, and for a very definite period, tranquilizing conditions almost eliminating suspense, people are apt to say they do not approve of long engagements. And the mother of an engaged girl is quite likely to say to her, according to one authority on marriage, “You'll want to see your young man every day, and if I don't go with you to places people will talk. Then there must be as many rooms reserved for you as for Royalty, and if your father smells cigars, he won't like it and other young men will become shy of the house, and your sisters will be bored, and, my dear, if you are going to be married, marry soon, and have done with it.” In the Islands of Torres Straits the fact that a suitor would keep parents from sleeping at night and would greatly hinder work in the garden by day was given as one of the reasons for female infanticide.

In a spirit somewhat the same as that of the Papuan or English parent outsiders too will say, sometimes rather querulously, “If they are not engaged they ought to be,” or, “Why don't they make up their minds and get married?” To most of us it is more satisfactory to have people engaged than merely in love, more satisfactory to have them married than merely engaged. It is even more inconsiderate of lovers not to settle down than not to tell us they intend to, inconsiderate, we mean of course, of ourselves. That lovers should consider themselves is quite an unaccustomed thought.

¹ In parts of the country it is believed that if she venture out she will be bitten by a snake.

² I am not overlooking the theory that betrothal seclusion is a practical precautionary measure against trespassers. But in other ways too, I venture to suggest, the girl may be a source of disquiet.

BOOKS THAT ARE INTERESTING

A MONTHLY REVIEW CONDUCTED BY FLOYD DELL

"Youth"

'*YOUTH*'—a splendid name for Miles Malleeson's play (published by Henderson's in England, and on sale at THE MASSES BOOK SHOP)—for it is precisely this swift and singing quality that runs through these three acts. It is a comedy and, as all good comedies should be, a serious one. And it is thus doubly accurate—for, old men and comic weeklies to the contrary, nothing is so serious as youth. Back of all the surface flippancies and skylarking and irresponsibility is a restless intensity, a searching curiosity that probes and questions with all the fervor of the wisest and most middle-aged analyst. Miles Malleeson's hero, or let us call him the leading young man, is such a questioner. He is more than curious about Life—he wants, what one rarely finds, the answers. And he moves through the double plot, a poignant and persuasive figure.

The double drama is, in itself, an arresting piece of writing. For it is not only a play within a play, but a play about a play—and a radical, fiery sex-drama, at that! It is hard to say which is the more engrossing—the story of Douglas Hetherly's gradual success as a person or the story of his initial failure as a dramatist. The former *motif* is developed against the latter, which acts as a background; the entire action taking place in a provincial Repertory Theatre during the rehearsals and production of young Douglas Hetherly's first play. The following scraps of dialog during the rehearsal may give a suggestion of the difficulties that the embryonic Shaw has to contend with:

Cecil (an actor). I love you . . . and you love me . . . you've just said so. But how can we know that you and I are going to love one another, and one another only, for a lifetime? All the promises that the Law and the Church demand—that my life is to be complete without any other love. . . . I'm only trying to go for truth. There's only one thing I'm certain of: that this love between us now is good. . . . My dear, can't we begin together with just that? You know even if we were married we couldn't afford a little one.

Gunn (the producer). I want that last line cut.

Douglas. Cut? Why?

Gunn. There's no need for it, Hetherly. It'll offend people . . . it's not important for your plot.

Douglas. But Mr. Gunn . . . surely! . . . The whole scene's a discussion whether it's always, absolutely, wrong for two people to be together without being married . . . children are one of the things supposed to make a necessity. My two people realize frankly they want love for its own sake. . . . I mean that their complete intimacy is going to increase two personalities, not the population. I should have thought it was the most important consideration.

May. It may be important in life, ol' boy; I know it is. (*There is meaning in that.*) But it's unpleasant in a play. I've been at this game more years than you've been born, and you can take it from me *all* this bit's unpleasant.

Douglas. And the Revue opposite packs the house twice nightly!

May. Ah! now ol' boy, you're talkin' nonsense . . . that's a damn'd attractive show.

Douglas. Of course it is. A beauty chorus, Eastern dances and a West End night club; . . . and a play called "*The Next Morning*" about some poor lonely devil who found it *so* attractive that he got himself into a mess, would be immoral. . . . Blaze out the attractiveness and hush up the mess!

There is a slight interruption due to a few irreverent stage hands, and the actor, Cecil (who is a grown-up edition of Douglas) proceeds in the part:

Cecil. (Having scratched out the line, reading on.) "Think of the thousands and thousands of girls who are just living their lives away in their parents' homes waiting for a man of their own; of the hundreds of thousands to whom one can never come; of the hundreds of thousands who are just for any man. Modern morality and the result of it . . . one extreme breeding the other. . . . I've told you I loathe prostitution, the *befouling* of sex—it's such a waste. But the so-called purity of today, life without the full knowledge of love, the *denial* of sex, I loathe that for the same reason—it's such waste!"

Gunn. Wo! It won't do, Hetherly. It won't do, it won't do, it won't do. You mustn't say things like that.

Douglas. But why! Tell me why?

Gunn. Well, just to begin with—"prostitution"—that word's got to come out. . . . (To May) Don't you agree with me?

May (enormously good-humored. Bowler well on the back of his head. My dear boy, you've got to consider your audience. They like Revues, and they won't stand this at any price, and that's all about it. . . . I'm not thin-skinned. I'm a man of the world, but you may take it from me, they won't swallow talky pieces . . . an' I *don't* like your talk. Too much "sex" about it. Puts your play straight to bed, ol' boy—down the sink in a week.

Gunn. (Quite kindly.) I know what you're driving at, Hetherly. You're trying to be "modern," and write about realities. You'll get told you've got a nasty mind for your trouble.

Douglas. I'm asking a simple question. If temperamentally and economically one daren't get married, what ought one to do? . . . After all, it's a pretty vital question; it deserves to be looked at from every point of view.

I'd much sooner not have any of it cut. . . . I've put my father in absolutely denying the right of any love outside marriage, and the other extreme one musn't talk about—I think both hopelessly wrong; cause and effect largely—and I'm between the two asking—at any rate for a good many of my generation who feel and think—both pretty hard.

Why cut *any* of it, Mr. Gunn? Surely the very mention of sex doesn't shock people! . . . Of course if it reminds them of unclean things—stuffy little back bedrooms—well, doesn't that show where we've got to? Sex—the driving force of the world: bigger than the night sky, cleaner than the sea; and I've got a nasty mind if I talk about it!

Gunn tells Hetherly quite plainly that the directors have decided that unless large parts of the play are cut it will not be produced, and rather than have no production at all, the poor, perplexed author consents to all the cuts. "I want the play done," he says, "what you leave of it." And it runs through just fourteen performances. "It's dropped money," says the stupid and kindly May, "but they can afford that. This thing we got on for next week . . . "The Slit Skirt"—huge success in the West End—you should look on, Mr. Hetherly—fine thing. Fine—they'll get their money back."

I do not intend to divulge any further details of the plot, nor any further illustrations of the way in which Mr. Malleeson begins by laughing at his "hero" and ends by laughing with him. And there are several other surprises in store for the reader; notably— . . . But I see no reason why I should take either the bread or the words out of Mr. Malleeson's mouth. Meanwhile I suggest a careful study of the third act; and I suggest particularly the study of it under thick branches with sunlight on them, with a light wind half-turning the pages, a box of your favorite cigarettes at your elbow and your favorite feminine voice reading you the speech of Nina that begins:

"Don't you remember after tea at the little black and white inn—standing together in that great brown field—with the earth smelling so good . . . and we were still, and listened to the hum of millions of little lives—things moving in the grass—animals in the

fields, the cloud-shadows that seemed to caress everything as they passed across, every little leaf in the trees trembling with its own notes in the great love-song . . . and then the myriad other worlds began to show through as the sky deepened, and in the colossal stillness of the night I seemed to be gathered up with you, into the very soul of all things. . . . I felt so wonderfully that I was a part of it . . . that I *was* it. Two little beings realizing a little about love and so being swept up into the great spirit of everything—that is love. . . . Douglas, when you have felt like that . . . when you know that love is everywhere and *is* everything, and that you're a part of it and it's part of you . . . that our bodies and their passions—the things they hush up—and *our* souls and their yearnings are different expressions of the same great thing, just as that brown field and the things in it and the skies above it are, you feel so certain, so *safe!* There's no fear, no anxiety, no rushing about life after love, terrified you won't find it. . . . I can only tell you how I feel, but from now on I can go forward—confident; all the things that happen to me, all the people I meet, everything will take its place in my life and be good in its place."

In brief, this charming and courageous play gives us not only the humor and the pathos of Sex, but its poetry. Which is very much the same as saying that it reveals most of the things that prompt the alternate tragedy and triumph of Life.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

The Will To Believe

The Future of Democracy, by H. M. Hyndman. \$1 net. [Charles Scribner's Sons.]

MR. HYNDMAN believes that democracy has a future: a fairly immediate future; he believes that it will be achieved as one of the results of the present war. But it is difficult to discover from this book any grounds for his belief except his determination that it must be so. That is an excellent reason for any belief, and few of us have a better one for ours. And as Mr. Hyndman remarks, apropos of something else: "In all the affairs of life, when decision has been made and entered upon, it is essential to pull down the shutters on one side of the intellect. Discussion is at an end: determination takes up the tale." Mr. Hyndman is in this happy frame of mind. He has, like many other Socialists, decided that this war must and shall subserve the interests of democracy. He has pulled down the shutters of the intellect against doubt, suspicion, cynicism and all the moods that paralyze the will. He is now engaged in working to make the war bring about democracy.

Envyng him, as we well may, for his possession of this state of mind, let us see how it is maintained, by what subsidiary beliefs. It is obvious that if one is to believe in the democratizing effects of this war, one must have a satisfactory conception of its origin. The theory that it is the inevitable result of economic forces is rejected at the outset: for the victory of one set of capitalists over another, to say nothing of the endless vista of further struggles, leaves little room for democracy as a result. It is necessary to have a simple explanation of how it came about, which will (Mr. Hyndman being an Englishman) make a victory of the entente allies a progressive fact. This explanation is found in the theory that the war was caused by the military caste of Germany in its effort to (a) secure domination of the German state, and (b) put an end to the menace of the German social-democracy. "This, consequently, is not a carefully prepared war of capitalist aggression against rival capitalists. It is the final

effort of Prussian militarism to retain its predominance at home by conquest and annexation abroad. The Junkers were losing ground war might enable them to recover what they had lost and a great deal more. Therefore, foreign war was deliberately engineered in order to save the domestic situation."

It is necessary, as a corollary, to believe that no other European nation has a military caste, or at least to believe that what may seem the military castes of other countries are altogether different from the real German institution; a corollary which is so easy for Mr. Hyndman that he disposes of it in a footnote.

As to race-hatred, it is only necessary, in this scheme of thought, to concede its reality while believing that it may be overcome when it is "frankly recognized and sympathetically dealt with." Just what constitutes sympathetic dealing with race-hatred, Mr. Hyndman does not explain in detail. But frank recognition explicitly includes the maintenance of armies and navies for self-defense. And this brings us to the core of Mr. Hyndman's system the establishment of a citizen soldiery.

For Mr. Hyndman, who believes that it is essential to the interests of civilization that England and her allies should win this war, objects to the unpreparedness of the English people. And at the same time he objects, as a Socialist and a decent citizen, to any conscription plan which would put the male population of the state in barracks for years at a time, deprive them of their civil liberties, and create an officer caste. He is therefore in favor of "a democratic national citizen army, in which all grown-up males should be at one and the same time both soldiers and citizens, in which offenders against civil or military discipline should be dealt with by the civil courts, in which, also, the officers who had proved their qualifications should be elected by ballot of the men over whom they should command." In order to believe in such a Citizen Army, it is only necessary to believe that it could not be used by militarists and capitalists for their own purposes; and that, if it could not be used by them, they would nevertheless allow it to be created.

But "the first necessity for the creation of a powerful democratic citizen army is the provision of educated democrats and physically capable citizens." That is to say, it is necessary for England to take care, as never before, of the education and health of her people—in both of which respects she can learn from Germany. But to adopt such a policy would be to give up her ancient one of *laissez faire*, and to go at least into State Collectivism. And, indeed, the war has forced all the nations engaged into some kind of State Collectivism already. "This Collectivism in Great Britain is ill-considered and ineffective, because our rulers themselves had no previous conception of the form the transition organization must take. Their hand-to-mouth methods, which barely sufficed in quiet times, were precisely those least adapted to deal effectively and safely with a period of turmoil. Nevertheless, the inchoate State Socialism which has come upon us, unconsciously and unintentionally, is an inevitable step towards organized Social-Democracy. *The assertion of the rights of the whole community to control the actions of individuals and to limit freedom in many directions, in order to ensure efficiency, and with efficiency success, is not a mere passing attempt to bring order out of chaos. There is no going back on these great social experiments.* What has been forced upon the nation, as a temporary expedient in a time of stress and strain, will be carried to a complete fruition, so soon as the people comprehend what has been done, and how they themselves have the power to turn the new jobbing bureaucratic domination to their own advantage."

There is no going back? Not if Mr. Hyndman and the other British Socialists who are of his mind can

push the nation forward. Their willingness to accept war as a premise is a measure of their sincerity, at least.

"The mass of our people when the war began," says Mr. Hyndman, "were ignorant, unorganized, undisciplined, physically untrained, apathetic and indifferent. Their children were growing up like themselves. Great numbers of ill-paid wage earners were living under such deplorable social conditions that they were, and are, quite unfit to supply soldiers for the army, or thoroughly efficient men and women for industry." [What a pity, one is moved to exclaim, that this beneficent war did not come along sooner! For—] "the exigencies of war have done much in a year to make the physically capable more vigorous, in body and in mind, and to teach them the advantage of disciplined coöperation. It is not a lesson they are likely to forget. But it will take at least a generation to replace the etiolated millions of our populace by sound men and women." [Put down to profit and loss.] "War, I say, is teaching us much. . . ."

It is written that he that hath as much faith as a grain of mustard-seed can move mountains. So perhaps Mr. Hyndman and the other pro-war Socialists of Great Britain will succeed in getting a—something—out of this war. Who knows?

F. D.

Jesus and George Moore

The Brook Kerith: a Syrian Story, by George Moore. \$1.50 net. [The Macmillan Co.]

ONCE upon a time a lady gave a Bible to Mr. George Moore; and, what may seem stranger still, Mr. Moore read it. He found, to his surprise, that it was an interesting book. He did not so much care for the Old Testament, and least of all for the thundering of the Prophets; in a phrase full of self-revelation he deplored in them the lack of "piano passages." But he was vastly interested in Jesus; and being of that essentially religious turn of mind which is nowadays called irreverent, he proceeded to re-fashion the story of Jesus in his own mind.

It may be noted parenthetically that a religion is alive only so long as it tempts people to tell it again, a little differently, a little more truly, or a little more to one's taste or fancy. The fact that the four gospels contradict each other, that each evangelist presents a different Jesus, is a proof that Christianity was very much alive when they were written. And from the miracle-plays of the middle ages, those jocund and farcical comedies of the market-place in which God and the Devil and Jesus and all the saints appear as heroes and villains and comic characters at the pleasure of their authors,—from such evidence the historian can deduce that Christianity was at that time zooning along. In the present moribund state of Christianity, when its stories are too sacred: *i. e.*, dead, to be tampered with, Mr. George Moore appears, much to our surprise, as one of the few remaining Christians—that is to say, a man to whom the Christian story means so much that he must tell it again in his own way, with his own additions and improvements, in something of the spirit of those naïve litterateurs, the evangelists.

For this thought occurred to Mr. Moore: suppose Jesus did not die on the cross, but was healed in the house of Joseph of Arimathea, who took his body from the cross, and suppose that in after years, when Jesus had returned to be a shepherd among the Esenes, Paul had visited their monastery: what would Jesus think of Paul—and what would Paul think of Jesus?

Mr. Moore thought he knew; and he told the story

of that meeting many times at dinner tables, until a few years ago it began to come back to him accredited to someone else! So he hastily sat down and wrote it out in the form of a scenario, with a few scenes presented at full length, and this was published. But being dissatisfied with that, he wrote the present version, in which the whole story is told at great length from the point of view mainly of Joseph of Arimathea.

At great length; yes, at devastating length; with too much about Joseph of Arimathea and too little about Jesus. It is in fact only halfway through that the book commences to be really interesting; though the boyhood of Joseph of Arimathea is described with much charm in the early chapters.

At last we get to Mr. Moore's Jesus; and without withholding my admiration for Mr. Moore's sincerity and honesty, I confess to finding his Jesus a little dull. The Jesus of Mark is far more interesting to me. And I think I know why: Mr. Moore, with his fondness for "piano" effects, has created a dulcet Jesus with not enough blood in him.

That is a matter of taste. But Mr. Moore's preference seems to me to reveal itself as a fatal artistic weakness in the latter part of the book. Conceive the situation: a man who had believed himself to be the Son of God, born to bring the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, suffers crucifixion, is saved from death, and creeps away to a monastery to live the rest of his life as a keeper of sheep. The horrors of crucifixion have not been without their effect; the courage, the audacity, the belief, is gone. He wonders why he should ever have set himself up for the Son of God, why he should ever have thought he could bring the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He repents the vanity, the folly, the rash idealism of his youth. So much is credible. It is credible that a prophet—or a labor leader or a revolutionist—who has had a flash of splendor should be broken and tamed by life, and should be sorry he was ever such a fool as to believe anything. But—

If you will believe it, Mr. Moore agrees with his hero that he has been a fool: he actually prefers the broken and tamed man, and he accepts the utterances of failure as the true wisdom.

Mr. Moore has something-lacking in him. He does not understand heroism. It may be true that heroism ends in disillusion, just as life ends in death. But to view the magnificent audacities, the tremendous enterprises of idealism, from the plain of disillusion is to fail to understand what it is all about.

No, Mr. Moore has not written the Fifth Gospel. And it is not because he does not believe in Jesus as a God. It is simply because he does not appreciate Jesus as a man. It is not because he does not put his trust in Heaven. It is rather because he does not put his trust in Earth. For it is not necessary, in order to get the full values of this story, to believe in the Resurrection: but it is necessary to believe in Life. And Mr. Moore, poor devil, doesn't.

FLOYD DELL.

A New English Novelist

Casuals of the Sea, by William McFee. \$1.50 net.

[Doubleday, Page & Co.]

FICTION is accustomed to deal with people who are either the masters or the victims of life. But ordinary people do not fall into either category—which is one reason why most fiction, even of the best, is false. Few of us, except in romantic day dreams, are masters of our fate; but most of us do, now and then, buck up and refuse to let circumstances imprison us in their accustomed way. We are none of us without our little triumphs. But it takes an unusual novelist

to make a first-rate story, without exaggeration or sentimental heroizing—or, what is still less to the point, pity—out of these lives.

Mr. McFee, however, is such a writer; and he has made one of the most interesting books I have read in years out of the lives of two ordinary people, without finding it necessary to invest them with any false glamour. They are a brother and a sister, who, like many brothers and sisters, are not in the least alike. The girl has that curious kind of hardness which, when it is native and ingrained, deals successfully with circumstances that would overwhelm people of weaker fiber. She doesn't struggle with circumstances; she only finds her way, sure-footed, among them. A factory girl, she is put in the way of a better job as a private-secretary-and-maid-of-all-work to a lady journalist, at whose house she meets an enterprising entrepreneur of a new electrical device. He likes her; and without hesitation she becomes his mistress. But with her this is not the first step of failure; it is the first step of success. Some years later, after a career in which she has gained experience, education and the power of self-expression, she marries a sea-captain and settles down quietly in a London suburb, respected by everyone, including the reader.

Her brother is a softer type, more easily exploited, more easily fooled. But his sensitiveness saves him from becoming a complete victim of the web of circumstances in which he is caught. He leaves the shop in which he is going to be shut up the rest of his life, and the girl who is going to marry and manage him, and runs away to sea.—It is not as a mere literary phrase that Mr. McFee has put the sea into the title of his book. For the sea does to him symbolize life—the sea which is never conquered utterly, but with which one can live on terms of self-respect and even affection. One can love the sea, knowing that it would as soon kill you as not. And one can live with life on the same terms. The boy learns that on board ship, and returns to effect his little triumph in the marrying of the girl that he really fancies—a barmaid, with whom he sets up a public house of his own, and lives in quiet contentment until he dies of a cold.

There is revealed in the telling of this story a quality of mind which is so new in literature that there are no terms as yet invented by which to describe it. It is at the farthest remove from the sentimentalism of the Victorian period; but it is just as English—an English coolness, a complete imperturbableness in the face of life. It is true that this *sang froid* is usually maintained only by refusing to see what is before one's eyes. But when it is combined with curiosity and candor, the result is fascinating in the extreme. Certainly this book is one of the events of the literary year. F. D.

A New American Novelist

Windy McPherson's Son, by Sherwood Anderson
\$1.40 net. [John Lane Co.]

I CAN remember vividly how one day in Chicago I picked up the typewritten manuscript of an unpublished novel in the home of a friend. "Who did it?" I asked.

"A man named Sherwood Anderson," said my friend.

I took it up idly, a little cynically. Another novel, I thought, to be added to the pile of those I would have to read and review—just one more like all the rest. I began to turn the pages—and then before I knew, I was reading . . . with a curious and growing excitement.

It wasn't like all the rest. It was, in fact, almost too good to be true. I said to myself, "This is impossible!" and read on, waiting to be disillusioned.

For this Sherwood Anderson was writing like—I had no other phrase to express it—like a great novelist. I felt myself in the presence of a powerful mind, with a magnificent grip on reality, pouring itself out in a flood of scenes—a mind vivid, profound, apparently inexhaustible in its energy. A mind full of beautiful, intense and perilous emotion.

Then and there I finished the book, and, curiously shaken, went out to look for its author. I found him—a tall, keen, robust, laughing man, black-haired and blazing-black-eyed, in his late thirties—an advertising writer by profession. He had never sold a story in his life; but he had been writing novels for the last three or four years, and he had a trunkful of them. Upon my modest demand, he turned over the key of the trunk to me, and I proceeded to read some of the most extraordinary and, as I still think, some of the best novels ever written about American life.

This is one of them; and if I fail to write about it in the calmly analytical manner befitting a book-review, it is because the glow of that incredible discovery still lights up its pages for me. It is not every day that one stumbles upon a great novelist. Nevertheless, I will try to refrain from mere praise, and tell what the book is about.

It is about America. More specifically, it begins in the village of Caxton, Iowa, inhabited by people like Valmore and Freedom Smith and John Telfer, talkers and fighters, braggarts and dandies, drunkards and philosophers and failures too real ever to have got into American fiction before. Among these boisterous, jocund, turbulent and disturbing influences the boy Sam McPherson grows up, a seeker after he does not know what, listening curiously to the wisdom that is uttered by the town philosophers and the town lunatics—listening and wondering and adventuring. He has in him, fluttering timorously, the soul of a dreamer; but he smothers it, for a reason which appears to him good.

The reason is his father, a veteran of the Civil War, useless now and idle, a boastful old relic—"Windy McPherson." It is in short because his father is an incompetent idealist, who allows his wife to take in washing to support the family while he brags in the streets about the glories of his soldier days, that Sam in hurt boyish pride smothers his own idealism. Ashamed and angry, he cries, "You may laugh at that fool Windy, but you shall never laugh at Sam McPherson." And he becomes the man of the family, hard-headed, practical, cold, and a little cruel, even as a boy. He is going to be successful.

He is successful. Halfway through the book we find the son of "Windy" McPherson rising rapidly in an arms-manufacturing company in Chicago. "I cannot see myself believing in the rot most business men talk," he writes to his sweetheart. "They are full of sentiment and ideals which are not true. Having a thing to sell, they always say it is the best, although it may be third-rate. I do not object to that. What I do object to is the way they have of nursing a hope within themselves that the third-rate thing is a first-rate thing, until the hope becomes a belief. . . . I would lie about goods to sell them, but I would not lie to myself. I will not stultify my own mind. If a man crosses swords with me in a business deal and I come out of the affair with the money, it is no sign that I am the greater rascal, rather it is a sign that I am the keener man."

His philosophy is put to the test when at the height of his career it becomes necessary for him to turn against his father-in-law, through whose assistance he has achieved control of the company. He acts sensibly, and votes to throw the useless old man out. The old

man does not act so sensibly; he broods over it and shoots himself.

That, naturally, does not improve Sam's relations with the old man's daughter, his wife. But the marriage was already moribund, without that. Sam had believed in his marriage—deeply; yet somehow it failed to be all that he wished. Here certainly his philosophy failed him. He could not master happiness. He is, in fact, though he does not as yet realize it, a failure in life. But he grinds ahead.

Only one does not quite lose sight, in the hard and successful business man, of the wondering, puzzled, listening boy of Caxton, trying to get at the meaning of life. He still tries to be the man he had determined to be—the man he thought it best to be. When the news of his father-in-law's suicide comes to him, his comment is: "The old fool." A just comment, according to his philosophy. . . . But that same day he realizes that life has become meaningless to him. Whereupon he walks out of his office and disappears from the world.

It was either that or—worse. When one's philosophy of life has broken down, one must find a new one or go insane. So, severing without a word every tie that binds him to the world, he walks out of Chicago, down a country road, seeking the truth—his truth.

Things happen to him: such things as might happen to a millionaire—or anybody else—who did such a rash thing as to go in search of the truth. Once, curiously enough, he tries to find it in the Socialist Party: but he and the Party, I regret to say, do not hit it off. . . .

What he finds, after what adventures, I will leave you to discover. After all, the story is not the most important thing. Nor, to me, is the important thing the emotional power and the rich humor of the book, nor its intimate truth to American life, nor the passion and splendor of its literary quality. The thing which captures me and will not let me go is the profound sincerity, the note of serious, baffled, tragic questioning which I hear above its laughter and tears. It is, all through, an asking of the question which American literature has hardly as yet begun to ask: "What for?"

The old facile answers are unsatisfying; the facile new ones not less so. Perhaps there is no answer. But we must ask. And the writer who puts that question in intimate and vivid terms of the lives of men and women, completely, fearlessly, candidly, is such an interpreter of American life as we have need of.

For it is that spirit of profound and unresting questioning which has made Russian literature what it is. "Why? why? why?" echoes insistently through all their pages. . . . Turgenev and Tolstoi, Dostoevsky and Tchekhov, Artzibashev and Gorky. It echoes, too, in this book, like a great bell pealing its tremendous question to the unanswering sky, and awaking dangerous within one's self something that one has carefully laid to sleep . . . perhaps one's soul, who knows?
FLOYD DELL.

Explanation

CONSIDERING how many other interesting things we left out of this issue (because, as we explained on page five, we didn't have enough paper), we feel that we have been very generous of space to the book-review section. Nevertheless, we had to leave out a lot of reviews of books—among them "Joseph Fels: His Life and Work," by Mary Fels; "Towards a Lasting Settlement," by G. Lowes Dickinson and others, and "New Wars for Old," by John Haynes Holmes; all of which we take this opportunity to recommend to our readers. In the new form of the magazine which we are now contemplating we expect never to have to make these explanations. We are as disappointed as you are.

Why Is a Hippodrome?

Beginning a New Department

THE purpose of this new department in THE MASSES is to provide me with free tickets to New York theaters. I am not a dramatic critic. I'm a long way from being a dramatic critic. But then, the New York shows are a long way from being drama. New Yorkers don't want dramas: they want shows. "His Bridal Night with the Dolly Sisters" is just the thing New Yorkers want to see. They let such a piece of supreme dramatic art as "The Weavers" struggle along for a few weeks and go broke.

New York approved of "The Weavers," and New York doesn't like anything it approves of. But that's old stuff. I've just made a new discovery that's infinitely more important than that. It is this: New Yorkers are not attracted by things that interest them. Leave it to any veteran producer in town. Ask the manager of the "Big Show"—he knows, whether he will admit it or not.

I didn't go to the Big Show to see the Big Show. I went there to see Pavlova. It is a safe guess that more than half of the five thousand people who crowd into each performance have the same motive.

"Pavlova!" say all the signs. And unquestionably Pavlova draws the crowd. And when the crowd is sure that it has seen Pavlova, it responds with very courteous applause—and goes into raptures of enthusiasm over the Ice Ballet. Pavlova attracts them. The Ice Ballet merely interests and fascinates and satisfies.

I never understood New York until I studied this Big Show. Now I understand it perfectly.

In the first place, the Big Show opens with a fool song by a dreary dummy of Uncle Sam who avers over and over that we are not too proud to fight when we've got a good excuse, or words to that effect.

Does the audience like that? It doesn't get enthusiastic, so that you can notice it, and you might think it doesn't care. That is, if you didn't understand applied psychology the way Mr. Dillingham does. But did you ever watch a thoroughly eupeptic Methodist getting ready to wade into a fragrant hunk of roast beef? What does he do first? Sniff and lick his chops? By no means. He assumes a thoroughly bored expression, folds his pious digits under the table, points his closed lids toward the chandelier and mumbles a blessing.

Now, the audiences that travel to big shows hereabouts are not all Methodist. But they're near relations. They've got to have the blessing asked or else they won't bite. And the "patriotic" stunt is the only sort of blessing they know. Thanks be that patriotism in New York has got down to the mumbling stage.

The Hippodrome is exceedingly well policed. It's as safe as the Calvary Baptist Church. If anybody wanted to fight, excuse or no, he wouldn't have any more chance than Bouck White against a Bergoff and Waddell choir. And that is just the place for the average New Yorker to acclaim his fighting qualities. I haven't heard that the recruiting offices have had to work overtime because of the Big Show and I don't expect to. Personally I won't care after this whether mine host asks the blessing or not and I'll never make an issue out of georgecohan patriotism. It's the actual bill that counts. And the actual bill at the Big Show makes me warm up to New York.

I say that it amounts to something to see ten thousand people a day, throughout the year, so enthusiastic over such a purely beautiful spectacle as that Ice Ballet. It is too bad that they call it "ballet," as the word suggests the mechanics of tights and high heels and

all the ding-a-ling tom-foolery of sexless sex that goes to make up the average so-called "musical show." There are no automatic corpses in this ice ballet. Girls have to be alive to skate like that; and the exultant rhythm of their movements is no more to be compared to the cut and dried ballet than is the flying of Isidora Duncan's bare-limbed girls to be compared with the stilted toe-dancing of the Pavlova school.

I'm strong for the Big Show. And I'm longing to see the winters when the boys and girls of New York will have ice enough for all—and good skates enough, and the time and energy and enthusiasm to make skating a great communal art.

WHAT is the funniest thing in life? The most absurd joke that a New Yorker can conceive of? It's marriage.

Marriage, in the popular notion, is a bigger joke than hell. That is because it is more sacred. There was a time when hell was a big joke, too, but that was when people believed in hell and held it sacred, too. Nobody believes in hell today, but most people still hold marriage so sacred that it must not be mentioned except in fun. Only the ultra-radicals who oppose marriage take it seriously. The great public still laughs uproariously whenever it is mentioned.

If you want proof of these statements, take up any comic paper. Seventy-one and six-tenths per cent. of all the wheezes they contain must, by a standing editorial order, be about women jawing their husbands, husbands lying to their wives, bluffs at fidelity which everybody can see through, post-honeymoon disillusion, etc., etc.

If you want further proof, go to a funny show in New York. "Seven Chances," by Roi Cooper Megrue, playing at the George M. Cohan Theater, is an excellent example. It just suits conventional New York, because it lambastes their most sacred institution all over the map. There is a married man in the play who damns his luck eloquently while the audience screeches its delight. There is another married man who claims he is happy and the audience is politely silent. At one of his lines advocating marriage, one girl in the audience started to applaud, and everybody laughed at her. Whether it was part of the show, I couldn't tell; but if the management is wise, it will keep it up. It was one of the best hits of the play.

The theme of the play is the agony of a fifty dollar a week clerk who has to get married in twenty-four hours in order to inherit twelve million dollars. Megrue's lines are snappy, the company is fairly good and the play can't help succeeding. But suppose some playwright would say in all seriousness, either that marriage is a sensible institution, or that it isn't. If he said the first, he would never get a hearing. If he said the other, we would arise as one flesh and send him either to Matteawan or Blackwell's Island.

"IT'S great!" I heard one man say of the Playhouse production, "The Man Who Came Back." "It's exactly true to life," said another. "It's artificial," said a third.

They were right. This play is surely true to life, as it is lived. And life as it is lived is decidedly artificial.

Listen! Can you imagine the son of a Big Crook in Wall Street going to perdition in the usual way until the governor throws him overboard to save his soul? And then, can you imagine the son of the big crook becoming a little crook, disgracing his father's crooked name in every old dump from here to Shanghai? And then, can you imagine his "coming back"—honest farming and all that—not another drop of booze—self-reliant, proud, honest for the first time in his life?

And listen again! There's a girl. She's a cabaret-singer—straight. When he's shanghai'd to Shanghai,

she pursues. She goes the limit, apparently, hits the booze, then the pipe; and the wreck of her meets the wreck of him in a hop joint. But presently he discovers something. He discovers that she has done everything but—"that." In the depths, then, she becomes his inspiration and accounts for his "coming back."

Do you see the moral? Why, if she had done "that," she would have spilled the beans. She couldn't have inspired him then. Now, I imagine, away up in my occasional brains, that I would rather have a girl I loved do "that" than to smoke hop. But that's not life, and this play is true to life. Isn't life damned artificial?

CHARLES W. WOOD.

"Intolerance"

MR. GRIFFITH has a savage hatred of intolerance. No one who didn't have a genuine and deep emotion of anger at the way we misuse the gift of life, could have produced the film-play at Liberty Theater. Genuine emotion is always impressive; and "Intolerance" is to me particularly so. It seems to me the expression, unequal but always vivid, of a mind which loves life and beauty and joy, and is moved to rage and pity by the deliberate malice with which, in all ages, life and beauty and joy is destroyed.

Slow to start, the play develops the simplest sort of story, which is, in effect, that people were happy and loved life in ancient Babylon, in Samaria, in old France, as they are happy and love life today. Against a spectacular or familiar background, the four stories proceed, with some elaborate and supererogatory assistance from the captions. People live and laugh and drink and dance and love. And then—the vials of intolerance are poured forth, and there is a great earthquake and the sun becomes black as sackcloth and the moon red as blood and the stars fall to the earth and the heavens are rolled up like a scroll. Or, to speak in less Apocalyptic language, we see the fall of Babylon, the crucifixion of Jesus, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the almost-execution of a man condemned to death as a murderer. Toward the end the swift convergence of the four tragedies is nothing less than tremendous.

There is much of loveliness in the play, both of spectacle and of human nature; and I only wish the exigencies of concentrating four centuries into one evening had not compelled Mr. Griffith to be so brief with some of them. But the thing which makes "Intolerance" more than a gorgeous and exciting spectacle is the portrayal of the most violent and extreme and terrible emotions. It requires one who loves beauty and tenderness to exhibit the horror of death and the fear of death, without offense: Mr. Griffith does it with the splendor of a great sincerity.

There are parts of the play that, for all Mr. Griffith's earnestness, fail of their effect; but I will refrain from instructing Mr. Griffith in the art of motion-pictures, except for the mild suggestion that some of the captions are unduly self-righteous, others are unduly informative, and half of them at least could be dispensed with.

There is, perhaps, something ironic in the idea of the producer of that hate-breeding film-play, "The Birth of a Nation," telling us to be tolerant. But it is not more ironic than the spectacle which some of us haters of censorship furnished when we tried to stop its production—and left a trail of film-censorships in our wake which it will take twenty-five years to abolish! As a brilliant epigrammatist of an Oriental country once remarked, let him that is without sin cast the first stone.

F. D.

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APPEAL

DEAR God, send me Nietzsche—
Moustache and all,
Bad breath, stomach ache, narcotics,
And grouch:—he's been telling me
Stuff that sticks
In my memory.
That is, I've been reading
Those paragraph piles
He called books.
And I like his hierarchy,
Because, of course,
I'd belong on top—a marquis
Of the intellect.
I wish he'd come back for
A day or two to inspect
Things he hadn't seen when
He wrote, "A good war halloweth
Any cause!" Supermen
And Will to Power!—
I'd show him ten thousand
Bridges to the superman
Gone in an hour!
And "peace is a means to new wars!"
So said Nietzsche:—
Never having heard the roars
Of trinitotoluol; never having seen
A clerk, "sick and botched,"—
In-bred, siphilitic, stupid,—
Kill one thousand healthy ones—
By turning a crank!
The wisest of all,
And the stupidest,—
Nietzsche, defier of the abyss,
I tell you this:
What you said of Christ
Is true of Nietzsche! . . .
Had you lived till now,
YOU would have dared to disavow!
No doubt, Nietzsche,
As you toast in Hell,
Their favorite torment for you
Is to tell
How we Socialists, followers of the
Jew.
Hug "Thus Spake Zarathustra,"
To our hearts,
Laughing at those parts
In which you disown us.

N. H. Matson.

Vers Libertinism

A Challenge by Upton Sinclair

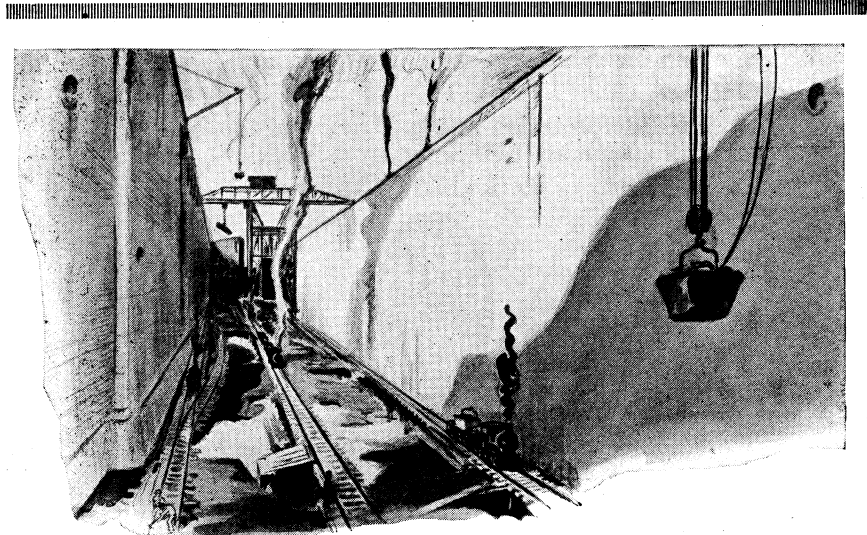
FOR some time I have been reading free verse, poly-rhythmics, etc., in THE MASSES. Sometimes I have understood it, sometimes I haven't. The thing which troubles me most about it is why you don't save space by running the lines straight along, for example:

"Mrs. Watson fidgeted and threw back the fine fox-skin from her neck, and spoke, 'Where are little Maudie and Ben this nice day? Playing?'"

I don't know just how many lines that this is going to take in your type, but I imagine about three. As you run it, you use five for it. If, as all your poly-rhythmical propagandists proclaim, the free verse which they write has a definite form, a definite reason for being, it surely requires no external system of line division to indicate it. Anybody can see from the poly-rhythms where the poly-lines ought to begin.

You will understand, of course, that I am trying to be sarcastic. I don't believe that there are any reasons for those poly-lines except to be poly-peculiar, and I hereby propose a test which all the merry-makers on THE MASSES ought to welcome with enthusiasm. Get your very best prize poly-rhythmical poet to write you what he considers his very best poly-rhythmical poem—the said poem to contain for a test not less than a thousand poly-rhythmical words—have it read by no one but your editorial staff, pledge them to absolute secrecy, and then print it without the poly-divisions, but as plain, straight prose, and publish my challenge to all the poly-readers of THE MASSES.

My challenge is that these readers shall take the poem, study its poly-rhythms, divine its poly-forms, and



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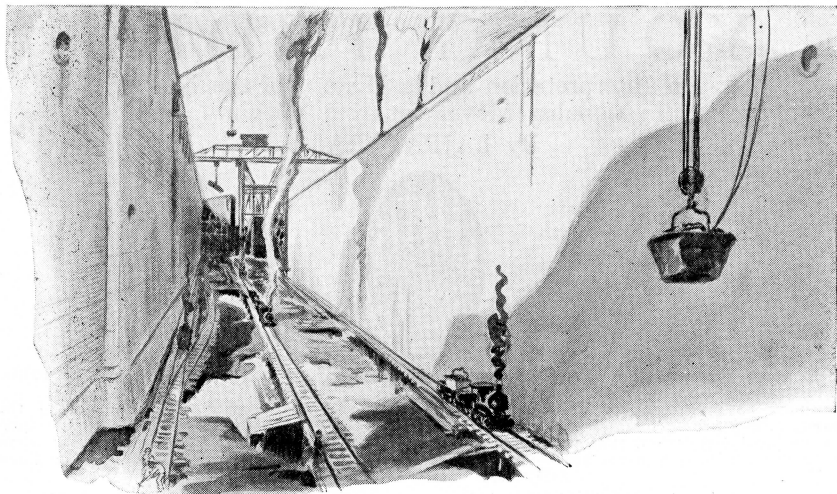
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proceed to indicate the proper divisions of its lines.

If any single person shall succeed in dividing that poem into lines exactly as the original poet divided it, I will agree to recant and never more be irritated by the poly-rhythmical poems of THE MASSES. And on the other hand, if no reader shall succeed in discovering the mystical poly-rhythms of the poem, THE MASSES will agree hereafter to print all such poems in plain, straight prose paragraphs, and save space for the book reviews of Floyd Dell and the editorial explanations of Max Eastman and the cartoon curses of Art Young, which I find the most interesting things now being published in any magazine in America.

Sincerely,
UPTON SINCLAIR.

P. S. To increase the fun, you might omit to say which of your various prose selections is a poly-rhythmical poem, and let your readers try to guess that. So we shall have them dividing up stories by John Reed and epigrams by Howard Brubaker into poly-rhythmical poems!
Coronado, Calif.

The Poor Food Law

I DO not suppose THE MASSES is intensely interested in the matter, but I regret to see the information hidden in such an obscure place as the Chemical Soc. Journal. Therefore I pass the information on to you, thinking that some day you might be able to use it. It concerns the poor food law.

When Teddy put across the Referee Board of *Scientific Experts* to keep Doc Wiley from interfering with the hayseed-strawberry-jam industry, and otherwise disturbing the vested interest in poisoned food, these learned savants made some experiments and promptly revoked a number of Wiley's inconvenient regulations. By tests, made chiefly on frogs, they showed that benzoate of soda was harmless and particularly saccharin—a nauseous sweetener invented, accidentally, by the chairman of the board. It was found that benzoate was but slightly toxic for frogs and therefore harmless to men. The same logic makes sewage a harmless beverage, but that's no matter. The board was most conscientious and allowed nothing to pass as poison until it had been "proven so by good witnesses." In true legal manner, Wiley's main contention, that preservatives allowed the manufacturer to use rotting materials, "did not come before the board."

And now—Cook and Elliott working on frogs and goldfish, find this biological test rather indefinite. If we take the toxicity of benzoate of soda as 1; then for frogs glucose shows a toxicity of 2 and cane sugar of 6. Saccharin is 5, vinegar 12 and caffeine 20 times as toxic as benzoate. (Postum ads should read: "Are you a frog? If so, coffee is bad for you.") For fish, sugar and alcohol are less than one-tenth as toxic as benzoate, and saccharin only thrice. (Are you a sucker? If so, saccharin is not good for you.) Cook and Elliott suggest mildly that maybe the method of inferring the toxicity of preservatives from their action on the lower animals may not be altogether reliable. Of course, it is known that while copperas is poisonous to man a hog (Sus) can eat it with impunity. Similarly, saltpeter while disconcerting, can be taken by men though it is poisonous to sheep. Whether this last proves that there were no sheep in the "preparedness camps," I do not know.

Incidentally, Jordan has recently analyzed cigarette papers and finds no poison in the papers, not even the time hallowed arsenic. "And what will poor Robin (I mean Lucy Page Gaston) do now?"

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since she seemed flustered at one point, the examiner scenting fraud looked up her paper at once. In the list of personal questions, as to whether you smoke, beat your wife, and so forth, is one heading: Sex. After this the poor girl had written "Never."

And now hoping that the poliomyelitis bug bites Sumner, Ward and divers other nefarious Gothamites, I remain,
Sincerely

E. S. S.

Washington, D. C.

Pater and Oscar Wilde

THE fine review of Mr. Frank Harris's "Confessions" of Oscar Wilde in your columns sent me to the book itself, and there amid a plethora of reminiscences, some of them highly remarkable from the imaginative standpoint, I found this jewel of anecdote. Wilde had been sentimentalizing to Mr. Harris about Pater, in perfect unconsciousness (I suppose) that he was supplying him with copy for the Confessions. Mr. Harris quotes Wilde as saying:

"I remember once talking to Pater when we were seated under some trees at Oxford, etc. . . . I really talked as if inspired, and when I paused, Pater—the stiff, quiet, silent Pater—suddenly slipped from his seat and knelt down by me and kissed my hand. He got up with a white and strained face. "I had to," he muttered, glancing about him fearfully; "I had to . . . once."

Now this anecdote means nothing in itself, aside from the fact that it is as cheap as dirt, and is obviously an impertinent invention. Mr. Harris himself admits that the incident has been "ripened" and set in a higher key of thought. His gift for this sort of ripening is well known, and so was Wilde's. One does not get the drift of the story, however, until he has read Mr. Harris's book and F. D.'s review of it. Unfortunately your critic has been pleased to take up and exploit the suggestion in the narrative, and refers all too lightly to a connection between pseudo-Greek (that is Pater's) ideals and inverted notions about sex.

It is well to be clear about these things. This is not the place to assert what Pater was, or what he stood and still stands for, or to vindicate his ideals. But to associate the latter with the perversion which forms the real subject of Mr. Harris's book is to confuse ideas and to think muddily. It is enough to look at the story in the light of probability and common sense. Pater was never effusive in his relations with the best of friends, and it is equally certain that he knew Wilde only slightly. He was always shy, stoical, reserved to the point of religious austerity—and Wilde was then a big, stoutish, unprepossessing fellow, "with something dirty about him," as Mr. Harris puts it. If anyone sincerely believes in the sublime rapprochement described by Mr. Harris, I can only say that he has his reasons. There is much that is offensive in Mr. Harris's "Confessions," but I should have thought that he would have refrained from slandering in such a connection the noble and defenseless dead.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT,
Kent School, Kent, Conn.

Note

STUART DAVIS asks us to say that he did not intend the publication of the picture which appeared on our back cover for September.

Note

THE frontispiece of our last issue, "The Masque of the Red Death," was engraved from a painting by Boardman Robinson illustrating Edgar Allan Poe's story of that name.

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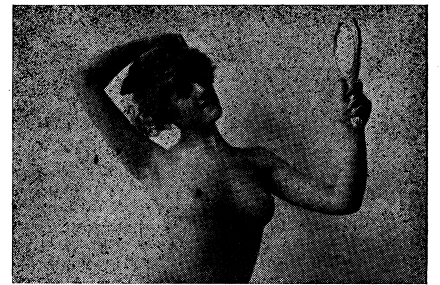
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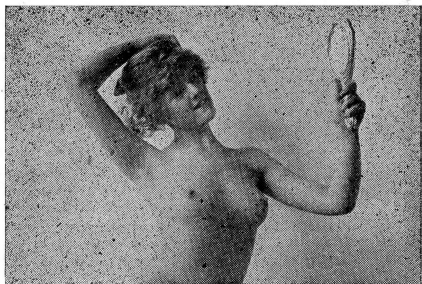
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(Continued from page 7.)

public opinion against the agitators is aroused by an obliging press. Then an army of gunmen, composed of crooks, and disorderly characters, is imported, and it's a pretty poor crowd that can't start something so that we presently find the strike leaders in jail charged with murder as accessories before the act.

This strike has progressed along its classic way. The mining officials cannot imagine what it's about; they even assert that their men are, for the most part, getting more than they are asking, and that it is only the inefficient part of the workers who are on strike.

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It's a queer, quiet, earnest strike marked with reserve on the attitude of the miners and the local officials of the mining company. It's not the fault of the local officials that the company has refused to talk with the strikers even when urged to by the Mayor and business men of the municipalities who are the strikers' friends. It isn't the Sheriff John D. Meinings' fault that the gunmen are on the range making trouble.

It's the fault of the United States Steel Corporation.

Steel is making its own relentless fight on organized labor. Because Carlo Tresca and three others were engaged on the range in organizing labor it will exact from them the highest penalty possible.

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Horrible Example

AS one who thoroughly believes in the mission of the Socialist press, I wish to protest at your inclusion of the *New Review* with *THE MASSES*. The *New Review* was performing valuable service; it was fearless, yet decent. Joined to *THE MASSES* it is lost in the welter of sex literature and illustrations that fill your columns. Like you, I believe the profit system to be vicious, but I do not see how the co-operative commonwealth is being furthered by the nastiness that you encourage.

Do not fall into the mistake of labeling as prudes all those who object to your methods. We are simply those who do not believe that the proper way to attract a man's attention is to pander to his passions. That is why we object to you and Hearst. An examination of your files is enough to turn the stomach of the healthiest.

As to your actual ideas, you are, I fear, merely sentimentalists in revolt. The poses that you assume may be indigenous to Greenwich Village, but they can only repel everyone who is seriously at work. You are furnishing conservatives with much excellent material, for you are a horrible example of "how not to do it."

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On the Other Hand

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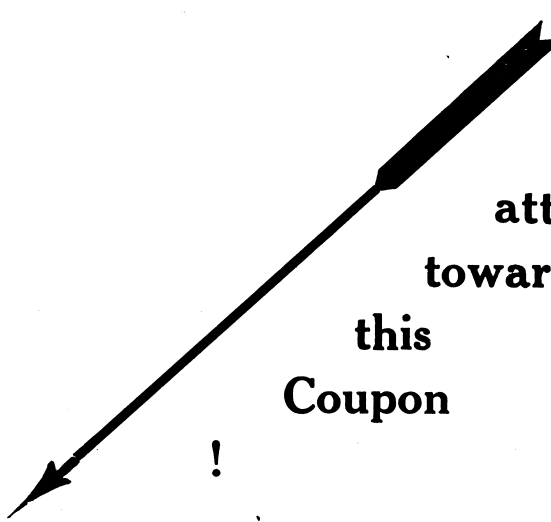
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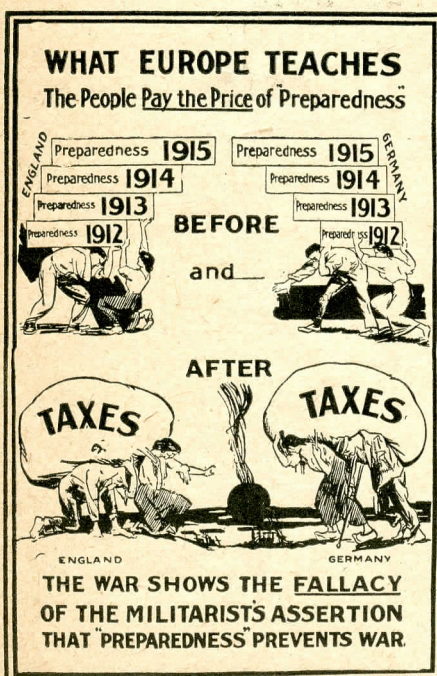
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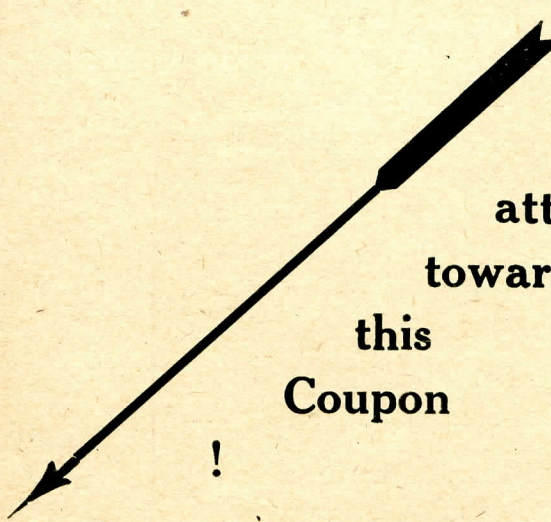
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