

NEW MASSES

AUGUST
25^c

In This Issue

**THE TRUE STORY OF
A WOMAN'S LIFE**
ANONYMOUS

WHY THE PALACE WAS BURNED
ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS

CENSOR: FOOL OR KNAVE
UPTON SINCLAIR

THE DAKOTA PLAYBOY
HOWARD BRUBAKER

THIS COCK-EYED WORLD
CAPITALIANA

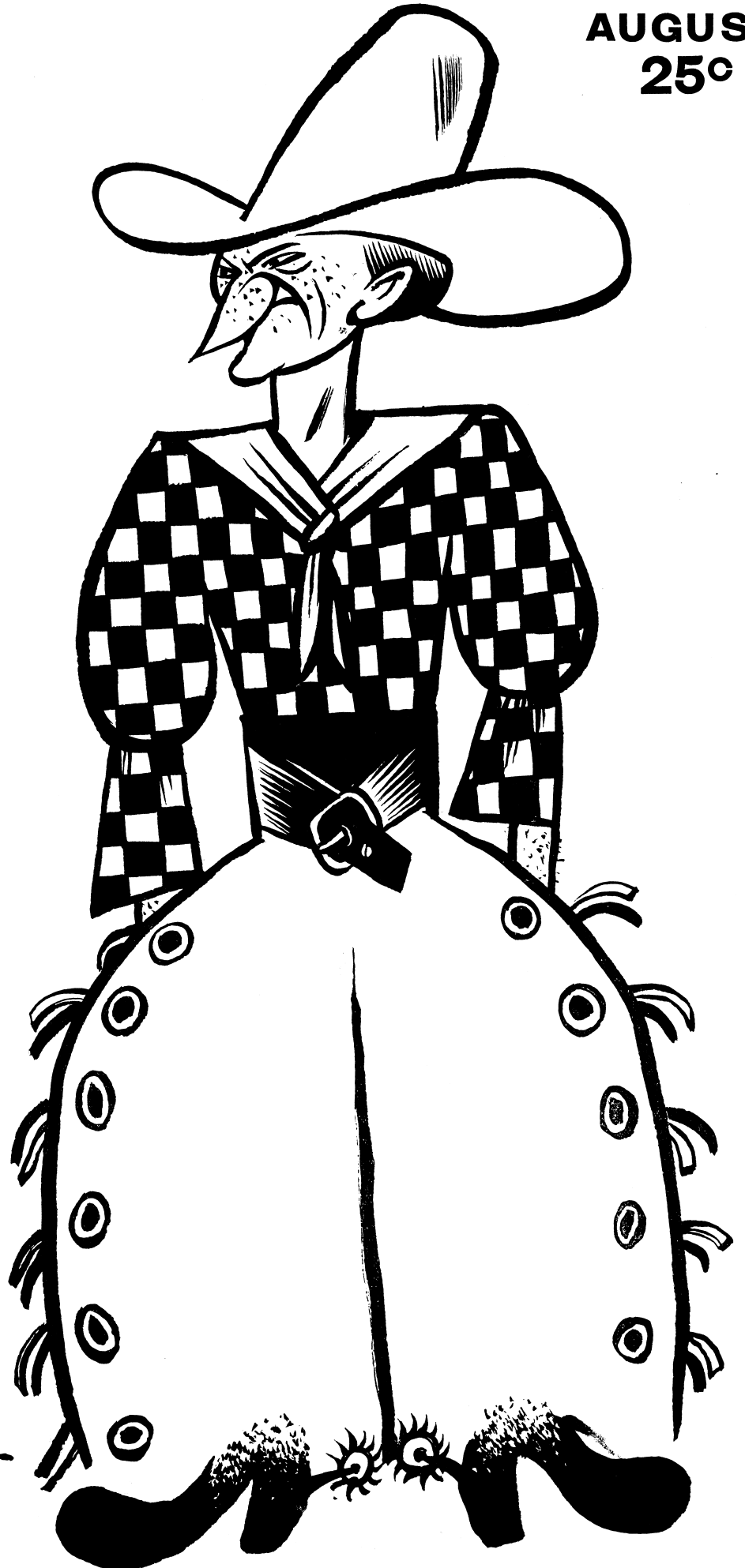
*Articles, Poems and
Book Reviews by*

JAMES FUCHS
JOSEPH FREEMAN
FOWLER HILL
CHARLES RECHT
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JOHN DOS PASSOS
MICHAEL GOLD
ROBERT DUNN
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Cartoons by*

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WILLIAM GROPPER
DIEGO RIVERA
ADOLPH DEHN
JAN MATULKA
ART YOUNG
WILLIAM SIEGEL
LOUIS LOZOWICK
OTTO SOGLOW

Gropper-



DEAR NEW MASSES:

This afternoon Stella and I purchased a much thumbed and very dirty copy from the stand across from the Examiner Building. We spent all evening reading it. The thought of all the Howard Street bums who must have done bootleg reading in that copy without the two bits to buy it, convinces me that the NEW MASSES "belongs."

San Francisco, Calif.

M. O.

DEAR NEW MASSES:

There are several of my friends who avariciously read my copy, but none can afford to subscribe regularly. If your staff can bring your future issues of the magazine up to the standard of the last issue, maybe I can find some subscribers.

Lawrence, Kansas

P. P.

SOMETHING TOO INTIMATE

FATHER used to tell the story of the suit of flannel underwear that was communal property in the peasant village in the "old country" where he was born. Whenever anybody in that town went on a journey, he borrowed those undies from the schoolmaster's wife. Let nobody accuse us of defeatism if we decry such primitive communism. The society of the future which we envisage, and will do battle for, must yield a few little personal belongings such as underwear and toothbrushes into the category of private property as too intimate to be shared even with the dearest comrade.

NOW, PLEASE

READ the above two letters, recently received, which betray a communal spirit among our readers that almost transcends the bounds of decent privacy.

YOU WOULDN'T SHARE YOUR MOUTHWASH — WHY SHARE YOUR BRAINWASH ?

IT'S as clear as fresh laundered pajamas that you must induce your bosom intimates to subscribe, even if you have to do it for them. To make this quite painless our business department offers

FREE

with every new subscription a copy of
Heavenly Discourse
by Charles Erskine Scott Wood
Illustrated by Art Young and
Hugo Gellert
326 pages. Cloth.

THE Amusing Voltairian dialogues, which first attracted world-wide attention when they were printed in the old MASSES, now first collected in book form, and published by the NEW MASSES, in cooperation with the Vanguard Press. (See next page.)

"OWN
YOUR
OWN"



Subscription and book to separate addresses, if you wish.

Free Speech

Suppression of civil rights, especially the increasing curtailment of free speech in America, is becoming so much more and more a matter of unchallenged routine on the part of the authorities, that the NEW MASSES feels the time has come to make a protest.

The ban on Upton Sinclair's *Oil!* in Boston, the indictment of David Gordon and the *Daily Worker* editors, the censorship of Lindbergh's doings and utterances on board the U. S. S. Memphis, the recent suppression of the "Art" magazines and the police ban on certain plays in New York, are only outstanding illustrations of the growing audacity of those who have assumed to control what the American people shall see and read and think.

The NEW MASSES believes that there should be no limitation of free speech in any manner or form, and that the attempted censorship of the stage, radio, movies, magazines, books and art by the so-called patriots and moralists is not only illegal under the constitution, but decidedly inimicable to advancement of knowledge and of human freedom.

The NEW MASSES invites artists, writers, publishers, etc., to write us their stand on this important question.

Dollars Dwindle

The first enthusiasm of the Dollar Drive seems to have spent itself. We counted on a contribution of at least one dollar from every subscriber to carry us through the summer. Some of you people have hung back. Perhaps you thought we could get along without you. We can't. We need you to fulfill the quota. If you want to do your share to keep the NEW MASSES going, send that dollar bill now.

Wear Your Old Clothes

What is the correct proletarian attitude towards fun? This question will be decided at the NEW MASSES Artists' and Writers Midsummer Night Frolic, scheduled for Tuesday evening August 9th. The program includes a round trip bus ride to Luna Park, Coney Island, starting from our office on Union Square and a combination ticket to the best attractions in the park. The Scrambler, the Love Nest, Trip to the Moon, Mysterious House, The Dragons Gorge, the Witching Wave and the Black Pit are some of the thrillers. All these—and dancing on the wonderful Luna Park dance floor, included in the one big ticket for \$2.00. Accommodations limited to 300. Make your reservations now. See ad on page 27.



Drawing by Xavier Guerrero

NEW MASSES

VOLUME 3 AUGUST, 1927 NUMBER 4

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Subscribers are notified that no change of address can be effected in less than a month. Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped and addressed return envelope.

Our First Book

"*Heavenly Discourse* was among the bright meteors that flamed through the pages of the old *MASSES* of which I had the honor to be an editor and the NEW MASSES could do nothing more appropriate, by way of showing its continuity with the old one, than to put *Heavenly Discourse* into a book for younger readers to delight in . . ." says Floyd Dell in the foreword to Charles Erskine Scott Wood's book which has been published by the NEW MASSES in cooperation with the Vanguard Press. This book marks our first venture into book publishing. So that every reader of the NEW MASSES may obtain a copy, and thus share our pride and delight in our first published opus, we are offering a copy free with every new subscription. (See page 2).

New Masses Bound

Paul Johnston, of Woodstock, N. Y., a young artist and book-binder, who undertook the job of making up our bound volumes of the NEW MASSES, has just delivered the first sets, and they are mighty handsome. Covered in flaming red boards, with black leather back, hand-sown, in fact done by hand throughout in the best craft style, the books are beautiful examples of book binding.

Volume I comprises the first six numbers May to October, 1926. Those were the issues printed in the larger size and in color. Volume II contains the November to April, 1926-7, numbers, in the present size and format. Each volume sold singly or together at \$2.50 per volume.

Put one of these books on your library table (where the old family bible used to lie) and watch the respect with which your conservative friends will look at its contents. And you yourself going back over these first numbers will be surprised that the excitement of the drawings and stories was not exhausted in the first perusal. There is something permanently alive in these pages.

Book Bargains

The NEW MASSES Book Service has already more than justified itself in the first month of its activities. Out-of-town readers particularly have been quick to avail themselves of the opportunity of securing books which their local bookstores do not handle. This month we have added to the list of books as special bargain prices. *Any book in print at shortest notice and at publisher's price, post-paid!* Whenever you see a review of a book you want to own, send us your check, and you will get the book by return mail.

THE MARCH ON VIENNA

Marking the first crack in the "temporary stabilization" of a Dawes planned capitalist regime in Europe, bands of workers marched upon Vienna from the Industrial suburbs to demonstrate against an act of judicial injustice. When the police lost their heads, and charged the crowd, the workers drove the police off the streets and created a "Workers' Defense" constabulary of their own. As one of these put it: "We burned the Palace of Justice to teach the police not to interfere with our right of peaceable demonstration."



Drawing by William Gropper

ONE IS NOT MADE OF WOOD

THE TRUE STORY OF A LIFE

TODAY, living in a foreign country and counting among my friends and acquaintances many of the most interesting personalities of Europe, I look back to nearly thirty years ago when I was a child worker in one of the Rockefeller coal mining towns of southern Colorado. My father was an unskilled worker and as such migratory; my mother a washwoman. After school hours I earned my food by washing dishes or baby diapers in strange homes; or I stripped tobacco leaves for the embryo cigar factory in the town. My elder sister worked in the laundry during the day and for pleasure sought the public dance hall in the evening. My young aunt who lived with us was also a laundry girl and made money on the side from men "friends." Her wages from the laundry she gave to my mother to help keep five of us growing children in school; the money she earned by selling her body to men, she used to support herself.

We all lived in a one-room tent, on unused ground between the railroad tracks and the treacherous river just on the outskirts of the town. We could not afford to pay \$12 a month for rent, and then my father's work necessitated frequent moving. We often moved out to mining camps, then back again to town, and we always pitched our tent in the same place. That place stands in my mind as "home." There were some eight of us who slept in that one-room tent; when men relatives came west on their way to Nevada or Idaho to "make their fortune," there were more in the tent. We five children slept in one bed—three at the head, two at the foot, while we were little. Later we divided up, two sleeping on a pallet on the floor, and three in the bed. My aunt and elder sister slept in one bed, my father and mother in another. The three beds occupied three corners of the tent, and the fourth corner was occupied by the only luxuries we had—a sewing machine and a rocking chair. After years of saving plug tobacco coupons, my mother added a green clock to the luxuries. I remember that I always arose sleepy and tired in the morning. I was sixteen before I ever saw a bath tub or a tooth brush, had slept between sheets or inside a night gown.

I knew all there was to be known about sex. From my earliest childhood I had seen my father and mother in the most intimate embrace, and I had always been deeply disturbed. When I

was eleven my drunken father threw my aunt out of our "home" because he had caught her in the arms of a man out by the side of our tent. It was a silly thing to do—he knew all the time how she earned her money. I was present when he described the scene.

"Yer a w——, a low-down w——," he concluded.

"An' who made me one if I am?" she asked. "You! You spend all yer money in the saloon, an' come home every Saturday night dead broke. Who do you think's goin' to support my sister an' the kids? You know who's done it—I have. An' you know how, too! You're mad now because I told you yesterday you could kick my sister around an' give her a kid a year, you could make her mind because she's not as big as you are—but that you can't boss me around. I make my own board an' keep an' you can't boss me!"

"You git out an' never darken my door agin'!" my father yelled at her in rage. And he forced her to pack her tin trunk and leave in the middle of the night. My mother's face was white and drawn and she hardly spoke for a month.

Then my elder sister, a girl of fifteen married, and the next year died in child-birth.

Nor was the face of life hidden from me in other ways. I noticed that what my aunt had said was right. Not only my father, but no man "could boss her around." Once I heard a man reproach her for not keeping an appointment with him, and the manner in which she sent him walking, cannot be expressed in print. I admired her, and her life seemed far more desirable and honorable than that of my mother or other married women about us. I saw that when women married, they had to promise to obey their husbands; most of them had to stop work, in imitation of the upper classes. After a time the inevitable family quarrels began, ending in a fight in which the women always got the worst of it. I listened to these fights over the back fences, and once an impression was left on my mind that never left me:

"Give me back the clothes I bought you!" the husband bawled.

"Aw, damn it, kid, you know I love you!" the wife wept.

I crept back into our tent, shamed and humiliated. Never would my aunt have so begged for any man!

About me were the most primitive, brutal conditions and standards. That another world even

existed was unknown to me for years. Eventually I came to know that something else did exist. My mother was responsible for this. She was a woman who spoke so seldom that I do not even remember her voice. Thin, fine-faced, a worn-out young woman, she died at the age of thirty-eight from chronic under-nourishment—a white-haired woman whose hands were knotted, big-veined and almost black from washing clothes. When she called for, or delivered, washing at rich or comfortable homes, or when she went there to clean for them for a day, she saw that the children there went to the grammar school, then to the little high school; and that they could play the piano. When she spoke to me it was always about school. To give her children an "edjication" and one day to buy me a "pianner" was the goal of her life. She worked like a dog, her frail body bent over a wash-tub far into the night, and she naively believed that those who work the hardest make the most money! I learned from her that the little high school on the hill was the goal of all endeavor. Once the two of us stood on the banks of the river, near the rubbish dumps of the town, and gazed at the top of the building through the trees on the hill beyond; at another time when helping her deliver washing, we walked past the building and I looked at it fearfully.

I was saved from religious prejudices in my childhood, and the church was never mentioned in our home. The only way I learned the word God was through cursing. The high school on the hill was the only religion I had.

Another source of my knowledge of another world came through books. I read ceaselessly, fairy tales until I was eleven, and then everything my teacher mentioned. Instead of helping my mother as I should have done, I read. Far into the night I heard her in the little frame kitchen attached to our tent as the iron went thump-thump-thump on the ironing board; she was ironing away her young life that her children might get an "edjication."

The third source of my knowledge of another world came through my school teacher. She had many white blouses and she changed them often. She wore a gold ring on her white, clean hand. I feared and respected her beyond words. Each month she assigned the best pupil to the seat of honor in her class—and as long as she was my teacher I held the seat.

I still remember the silence that fell over the school-room when all the other children had failed to answer a question, and the teacher turned to me, the final test. I would stand up, a barefoot, ugly child in a faded gingham dress, my thin hair braided in two pig-tails and tied with a piece of twine. With my arms held stiffly to my sides I answered the question. "Teacher's pet!" the other well-dressed children jeered on the playgrounds, "she's a dirty tough from over beyond th' tracks."

Through my mother and my teacher, and aided by the books I read, I developed a secret but fierce intellectual ambition. Because I was ugly and poor, this ambition burned all the brighter—a compensation for love and beauty. And added to this was my hatred of being a girl. I hated the beating of women, the arrival of one child a year that riveted women into slavery; the dependence of women upon men for bread. I saw that wives had to obey and submit, but that girls who earned their own living had autonomy over their own bodies and souls. This hatred of being a girl has been one of the chief driving forces in my life, and throughout my childhood it received enough nourishment to make it grow to enormous proportions. Time without number, as an example, I saw my mother's will broken by my father. One of the most vivid and bitter memories centers about one such incident: It was when women had just won the franchise in Colorado. That year my father became a paid agent of one of the political bosses of the town. He bought votes for a dollar each, receiving a percentage for each voter he brought to the polls. He took it for granted that my mother's vote was his also. They quarreled for days before election, but she refused to even tell him how she was going to vote. For the first time in her life she had a symbol of independence in her hands. On election day she quietly walked past my threatening father and went to the polls; she returned, and still refused to tell him how she had voted.

My father left home and was gone the entire winter. We nearly starved and froze to death that winter, for my aunt who had secretly helped my mother since she had been driven out, had disappeared. My mother washed and ironed from the earliest dawn to midnight. I stopped school in late winter and went to work in the cigar factory all day long. And on



STILL LIFE

From a Lithograph by Lauretta Sondag

Paw: I see here where it says the immorality is done mostly by furriners.

my way home I became a thief—entering grocery stores and filling my pockets when the clerk's back was turned. My father drove up to our kitchen door once during the winter and asked my mother if she intended to tell him how she voted. She refused, and he drove away, cursing violently. But in the early spring she broke down and lay in bed with rheumatism in the back and neuralgia in the head. She surrendered and my father returned home a victorious man. But my mother never voted again in her life—she had no use for empty symbols.

I recall with bitterness this lone fight of my mother for the independence of woman. She washed clothing for the women who spoke so eloquently of the power of the franchise. But when she went to their homes, a thin silent washer-woman, she had to enter and leave by the back-door. When she cleaned for them, she had to eat the inadequate food they gave her on a plate in the kitchen. One can't have a wash-woman in the dining-room! Yet all the time she was fighting a battle that not one of those upper-class women would have had the courage, the idealism, or the strength to fight. It

is easy enough to go to prison and be a heroine. It is not easy to be a wash and scrub woman and support five children from your miserable earnings—all for the sake of a principle. And then have the women who talked of a free womanhood bargain with you about your prices. I heard them bargain with her—didn't she think thirty cents a dozen too much for washing and ironing, considering that they had put in some small pieces that week!

It was but natural and logical that I determined never to marry, never to love, never to have children. Just before my mother died—I was sixteen then—I stood over her frail, worn-out body. "Promise me you'll go on an' git an edjication," she said to me. I promised. When her eyes finally closed, I laid my head to her thin breast and listened for the heartbeats that never came again. But I shed no tears. We buried her in a pine coffin and at the head of her grave stuck up a board with her name, date of birth and death, written on it—and still I did not weep. But in my heart was a hard, inarticulate hatred and resentment.

I left home after that because

my father tried to beat me. With savagery I fought him and felt the terrible spiritual shock that came when I struck him—my own father. Then I deserted my brothers and sister, and through many years wandered and worked in poverty—a vagabond. I have known the emptiness that comes when hunger is so great that it is no longer painful. I worked as waitress, as dish-washer, as everything; and eventually I learned stenography and, together with this ability and with my ability to wait tables at the same time, worked my way through first one school year and then another. I always thought I could become a teacher in time to take my brothers and sister. But time is swifter than human hope. By the time I had become a teacher and had started earning, my brothers were nearly men, and one of them had been killed while digging a sewer as a day laborer. I rescued my sister, and she is today a teacher in California. My only living brother fought in the "war for democracy." He enlisted because he could find no job, and was hungry. Patriotism, like God, is only for the rich.

After my sister had finished her

studies and became a teacher, I went to New York, to work during the day and attend night school in the university. I was, of course, a revolutionary Socialist. Only a fool could be anything else after having lived my life. In my own personal development, I became a writer; not a first-class writer, no; but a social writer. From the depths of poverty and subjection myself, I always instinctively identified myself with the poor and the enslaved. The fact that I was a woman, and hated it, also intensified this tendency. I championed the cause of my own class, the workers; also of women as a sex; the Negro as a race; and I eventually ended in the revolutionary movement for the freedom of India. This was not only because it was a movement for freedom, but also because it was a movement just about as distant from American life and thought as any movement can be. To forget my own unhappy life, I fled into this movement of a distant, foreign people. I have never regretted it. As the years passed it gave me scope for all my ideas and beliefs, and it gave me intellectual companionship and personal friendship of a



STILL LIFE

From a Lithograph by Laretta Sondag

Paw: I see here where it says the immorality is done mostly by furriners.



STILL LIFE

From a Lithograph by Laretta Sondag

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high and rare order. It was, and is, beautiful in its majesty, extent and significance and for many years it has formed the very center of my thought and devotion. I have identified myself so completely with it that I have almost ceased to be American.

Then there was my own personal life—how was it lived? Many will know who is writing this article now, and it is not easy to speak of one's sex life before a puritanical American audience. But I shall.

The hunger for love, for tenderness and affection, was one of the deepest and most tyrannical urges within me. And I was lonely. The absence of love in my childhood was responsible for this unsatisfied hunger in maturer years. I regarded sex and marriage as the enemies of woman. But there seemed no way to get love and companionship except through sex. At the age of nineteen I had married—an injustice to my husband. Soon after I left him and he divorced me for desertion. He was a man who disproved all my theories about the domineering nature of man, but our marriage meant to me little else except repeated pregnancies and abortions—for I was determined never to bring a child to life to suffer as I had suffered.

The years passed—and one is not made of wood. In order to satisfy the need of love and sex within my own being, and still to keep my freedom, I did not live with one man—but with a number, leaving one relationship to enter upon a long period of rigid asceticism, then breaking down and entering another. I needed some human being to share all things with me, to be a part of me and my life, but this need fought with my fear of men as the subjects of woman, with my hatred of the marriage institution, and with my typically American attitude toward sex as an unpardonably indecent thing. I was always unhappy—with or without a man companion, for this conflict never left me in peace. It was not that I lived with many men—it was that I succumbed to sex at all. Intellectually speaking, I knew that my life was my own to live as I wished; emotionally, I felt a rotter of the worst sort.

At last I ran away from it all—and sought refuge in Europe in new atmospheres, new work, new friends. The need of love, however, is not a geographical problem. And I met a man I really loved, a man who seemed to embody all my own beliefs about woman, social and political affairs. Within less than a month we plunged into our common life together. It was perhaps to be expected that our marriage should

fail for I brought a heritage of guilt about sex. As the difficulties of marriage grew, as my husband began to question and then subtly to torture me about my former sex life, my conflicts became worse and worse. My theories of freedom told me to leave him, to live up to my beliefs; but my love for him held me prisoner. I saw that I was going the way of all women—enslaved by love. The result was a serious illness leading up to the very borderland of insanity, and it took three years of Freudian psychoanalytic treatment to cure me.

Today—I teach, write, and still work in the Indian revolutionary movement—and I live alone; at least for the time being. Certainly

I shall not live so always. However, I still regard marriage as an antiquated institution that does not meet the needs of modern life. It is unjust to both men and women. Then, because of my own personal experience, it seems to me that the struggle of modern man to adjust himself to changing sex ethics as represented in the modern woman, is more difficult than is the struggle of woman to free herself—and that is difficult enough. I wonder how many modern women, with the roots of their emotional life in American puritanism, have really in their own hearts freed themselves. For men it is still more difficult—it is easier to fight for freedom as do women, than it is to surrender

ancient prejudices and beliefs, comfortable privileges, and vanity, as men have to do. The modern man is a more difficult problem than the modern woman. I know many marriages between intellectual men and women in Europe and nearly all of them have gone to the ground because the man could not accept the woman's former sex life. In most cases it was the man alone who caused the trouble, for many European women are free from the poisonous attitude that I myself had.

I can say that America's poisonous attitude toward sex, combined with the male Neanderthalic idea that a woman who has led a sex life is "second hand goods" have cost me the best years of my life. The intellectual darkness and poverty of American working class life as I knew it, ate up my youth and the joy that should go with youth. Of course there are many who will think I should have thought through my problems intellectually. Well, I was an active, and not a very contemplative nature—one cannot have everything. Had I been of a contemplative nature, I would never have fought my way through three generations of culture in one. Then again, the many-sided struggle to which I was subjected in these thirty years, was too fierce. Added to the purely material struggle, was the spiritual unclarity and conflicts—the inheritance from my childhood and youth. Then certain memories do not leave me: my father, for instance; he was a remarkable man in many ways, and had he been from the upper classes, might have been a writer. But as it was he could hardly read, and added to this ignorance was poverty, a crowd of children, a bitter wife whom he really loved in his own way—it was but natural that he drank himself into unconsciousness. Also, the short, miserable life of my mother and what was really her murder by the present social system, have cast a shadow over my entire life. The death of other members of my family before they had even tasted anything worth while in life, have burdened me heavily. I know that there are those who say that these things are exceptional—not the rule. That is not true—those who suffer as did my family, are inarticulate—not all Americans are advertising agents. There is a class that does not even know how to read and they have never dreamed of the existence of those intellectual circles to whom books, ideas, and intellectual striving mean so much. My father is still alive—I am as strange to him as if I had dropped from Mars—I have gone so far from my class that I doubt if I can even be of help to it.



This Mural Decoration by Diego Rivera for the Agricultural School in Chapingo, Mexico, depicts a bourgeois Mexican family sitting down to a meal of the only thing they know how to produce—Gold Dollars. In the rear are the armed workers rich with the products of their own toil. The poor little rich boy is crying because he wants a nice juicy pear like his proletarian boy friend's.



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Drawing by Boardman Robinson

THE NIGHT WATCHMAN'S DAUGHTER

*"Your mother never used no lipstick."
"Yeah, wasn't it fierce the way them dames went around
exposin' their features."*



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THE NIGHT WATCHMAN'S DAUGHTER

*"Your mother never used no lipstick."
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BULGARIAN LITERATURE OR, THE PERFECT CRITICAL METHOD

By JOSEPH FREEMAN

Introduction

I AM totally ignorant of Bulgarian literature; I cannot read a word of the language; I haven't the faintest notion of what its alphabet looks like; I have never heard or read the name of a single Bulgarian man of letters. My entire knowledge of that country consists of the fact that it lies somewhere in the Balkans.

Nevertheless I undertake to write a book about Bulgarian literature. The reader may ask himself how one can have the nerve to write about a subject about which one knows nothing? Very simple. This book is an illustration of the perfect method in literary criticism. All great turns in the history of thought have been based on a new method. There have been the Socratic method, Descartes' *Discours de la Methode*, Bacon's inductive logic, and the dialectical method of Hegel. Each has contributed to revolutionizing thought; but none of them has had the peculiar advantages of the method which this book illustrates.

I have so far been unable to find a fitting name for this method. It may be, in fact it has been, called the sociologic method. But that is an unfortunate name; it leads people to confuse it with the Marxist method of analysis, particularly with the application of the Marxian method to literature by such men as Plechanov, Bogdanov, Trotzky, Mehring, etc.

This is not the case. Our method is far superior to the Marxian method, though for tactical reasons I often try, not without success, to palm it off as the Marxian method. While the dialectic requires concrete information and analytical thought, our method can dispense with knowledge and reflection. Thus it is one of the greatest labor-saving devices ever invented by man. Once the method is mastered it can be applied indiscriminately to any field of thought, to the literature of any language or dialect. It is not like Bacon's or Hegel's methods, but more like the amazing mechanical contrivances turned out by American genius, such as the vacuum cleaner or the patent medicine that cures all ailments. Indeed, it would not be too much to compare it with the Perpetual Motion Machine.

The country which produced Henry Ford and Lydia Pinkham also produced two world-shatter-

ing literary theories. One is H. L. Mencken's. Art, according to this theory, is the by-product of disease. Every genius, from Diogenes to Dickens, from Bracciolini to Beethoven, from Numa Pompilius to Nietzsche suffered either from tuberculosis or syphilis. Genius is the pearl secreted by the oyster of distemper.

The Baltimore sage who discovered this natural law has profoundly influenced American literature. Among those who are indebted to him for ideas and style are Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, Langston Hughes, Carl Van Vechten, Aristotle, Claude McKay, St. Francis of Assisi, Tolstoy, Ghandi, Roger Baldwin, Michael Gold, Napoleon Bonaparte, Marie Corelli, Lindbergh, and Will Rogers. (Part of our new method is to quote as many names as possible. This creates the impression of infinite erudition; and in these days of "outlines" and "ask me another," the appearance of learning is more important than learning itself. Our

method guarantees this appearance without the slightest effort on the part of him who employs it).

Mencken, however, is the lesser of the two men who have made America forever illustrious in the history of thought. The greater of the two is none other than the inventor of our method. Need his name be mentioned? Can anyone have failed to notice it in the pages of this journal, of the *Daily Worker*, the *New Leader*, the *Communist*, the *Industrial Pioneer*, the *Advance*, the *Nation*, *Current History*, the *Haldeman Julius* publications, the book section of the *Herald Tribune*, and dozens of other dailies, weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies? To advertise that name would indeed be carrying coals to Newcastle. Let others gild the lily or paint the rose; I have but to utter in the softest whisper the phrase "economic interpretation of literature," and there will at once leap to every well-informed mind the name of Vincent Chatterton, who is the very embodiment of the

newer spirit in critical thought.

It is from him that I have adopted the method used here. I might as well confess that an inferiority complex of the most inferior and complicated kind has until recently interfered with my desire to write. A sense of ignorance and inadequacy inhibited me. But since the new method has been discovered, a sense of freedom and creativeness has filled my otherwise shy and gloomy nature. In perfecting that method Chatterton has done more for humanity in general and for me in particular than Marx, Lenin, Freud, Einstein and Mencken combined. He has made all men intellectually equal. Critical writing is now open not only to those who study and think, but to anyone who has spare time, pen and ink and a normal amount of *khutzpa*.

CHAPTER I

Before proceeding to discuss Bulgarian literature, a few profound and original generalizations must be uttered. Many philosophers and critics have had theories on art and literature. I need only name such men as Aristotle, Plato, Goethe, Boileau, Belinsky, Plachanov, Marinetti, Croce, Santayana, Brick, Spingarn, Woodberry, George Brandes and Eli Siegel.

But they were all wrong. The truth of the matter is that the poet's aim is no free and spontaneous thing winging itself into the empyrean without the trammels of reality. After all, the very imagination of the poet is determined by the realities that confront him. Poets do not write of seraphim and cherubim now as they did in previous centuries when these tracteries of religious fancy were accepted as part of religious reality. Nor do they concern themselves, except in historical romances, with the intrigues and tribulations of court, though the vestiges of royalty still cling to the edge of conservative society. They deal with a different world, with different materials, with different forms, and express a different attitude. Art depends upon economic conditions; it is related to social life.

No one has said this before Vincent Chatterton. It is an absolutely brand new discovery. It is true that Marx (whose favorite authors were Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Goethe and Balzac), said something a little like it; but he had one unfortunate habit. When he discussed Shakespeare he talk-



SUBWAY

Drawing by Alan Dunn

The Man: Hey git over. Yer stoppin' de breeze.
The Girl: Huh! What I got on won't stop no breeze.



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ed not only about the poet's social notions, but also about his observations of human nature, the characters he created, his glorious language, and so on. Whereas the only correct way to discuss Shakespeare is not to discuss Shakespeare at all, but write an elaborate political and economic history of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

CHAPTER II

And now a few words about Bulgarian literature. Bulgaria is a kingdom of southeastern Europe. It is situated in the northeast of the Balkan peninsula and borders on the Black Sea. Agriculture, the main source of wealth to the country, is still in an extremely primitive condition. Why is it that Bulgarian civilization today is no longer what it was in the age of Pericles? To answer that question would involve an analysis of the law of the development of civilizations. I have already made an exhaustive analysis of this kind in my celebrated debate with a certain novelist on *Monogamy vs. Lechery*. Here I would only like to add that Bulgaria is a constitutional monarchy, a fact of the utmost importance for a study of Bulgarian lyric poetry. It will also help us to understand the modern novels of the country if we do not lose sight for a moment of the fact that the Bulgars, a Turanian race akin to the Tartars, Huns, Avars, Petchenegs, and Finns, made their appearance on the banks of the Pruth in the latter part of the seventh century.

What is most essential for an understanding of Bulgarian literature? I must prepare the reader for a great shock. None knows better than I how the world resists new and original ideas; and although this idea is not my own, having been discovered by the heroic and solitary efforts of Vincent Chatterton, I impart it with all the diffidence and caution of a disciple of an esoteric cult. For I doubt whether many people have caught Chatterton's idea. I do not go so far as to claim that I am the only one who has understood him, as Michelet is said to have been the only one who understood Hegel; but I daresay there are not a dozen men in this country who have grasped this profound and unprecedented concept in its full implications.

In short, it is this: Bulgarian literature reflects Bulgarian life, and Bulgarian life can be explained only in terms of the class struggle.

CHAPTER III

The ancient Bulgarian literature, originating in the works of SS. Cyril and Methodius and their disciples, consisted for the most

part of theological works translated from the Greek. From the conversion of Boris down to the Turkish conquest the religious character predominates, and the influence of Byzantine literature is supreme. All authorities agree on this: C. J. Jirecek, Leon Lamouche, F. Kanitz, A. G. Drander, A. Tuma, F. Miklosich, L. A. H. Dozon, Lydia Shyshmanov, Pipin and Spasovich, Vazov and

Velichkov, not to mention P. Slaveikov.

Do not imagine that I am inventing these names. I am copying them—as I have copied all the sentences about Bulgaria—straight from the fourth volume of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (11th edition, pp. 771-86).

And here is one of the very greatest advantages of the new method. Chatterton himself cop-

ies without quotation marks or credit whole passages from Upton Sinclair, Floyd Dell, and others; I copy from the only book at hand. If I shall be as successful as he in establishing a reputation for learning on every possible subject under the sun, I shall have little to complain of.

I should like to close with a few well chosen words about the most distinguished Bulgarian man of letters, Ivan Vazoff, whose name I note on page 786 of the *Encyclopedia*. His epic and lyric poems and his prose works form the best specimens of the modern Bulgarian language. His novel *Pod Igoto* (*Under the Yoke*) has been translated into several European languages.

How I wish that Celeste were here now! Not that I long to see her beautiful eyes (though, of course, I do), but I should like to send her to the library to look up *Pod Igoto*, so that I could quote a page or two. But just now she is busy looking up quotations for my forthcoming book on *Sex, Marriage, Government, Literature, and the Street Car System in Albania*. I shall have to rely on the *Encyclopedia* once more.

However, with the new method at my finger tips I know all there is to know about Ivan Vazoff, though I have never read a line of his works. Here is my frank opinion about his novels and poems: He was born in 1850.

Turning back to p. 781 I observe that between 1864 and 1876 there were a number of insurrectionary movements which were crushed in blood. It is safe to assume that these movements were due to the class struggle. Details are superfluous. Everyone knows that Bulgaria struggled for national independence. The peasants and workers of no country, except Soviet Russia, write poems and novels. Hence, what could be clearer? Ivan Vazoff was the voice of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie, perhaps the voice of Pan-Slavism. The treaties of San Stefano and Berlin (1878) throw more light on Vazoff's poems than all the literary criticism in the world. I must have Celeste look up these treaties, and in my forthcoming book on the *Life and Works of Ivan Vazoff*, I shall quote them in full.

Meantime, I trust I have not merely made the nature and basis of Bulgarian literature clear, but what is even more important, that I have succeeded in imparting a great critical method to younger and more vigorous spirits, who will carry it into other fields than sex and literature.

But they had better hurry, otherwise Vincent Chatterton will leave no topic untouched.

THE DAKOTA PLAYBOY

Nine o'clock of a July morning in the summer White House. His Excellency is observed mopping his sturdy New England face.

- C. C.—How hot is it today?
 Secretary—A hundred and six in the shade.
 C. C.—I'll stay in it.
 Sec.—You can't, sir. You have to go fishing.
 C. C. (*testily*)—Whoever invented my passion for fishing?
 Sec.—You had to love something, you know, besides sap buckets and Papa Stearns. The great American people expect you to go fishing. There's a truckload of trout flies in the morning mail and a bucket of night crawlers.
 C. C.—I'll use a worm. It's already dug and we must set an example of economy.
 Sec.—That's your third worm, sir.
 C. C.—Second elective worm. The first one had been used.
 What kind of reel do we take?
 Sec.—Newsreel. The cameras are waiting.
 C. C.—Is the fish there?
 Sec.—Yes, sir. He has been poked by the White House Pokesman.
 C. C. (*wearily*)—All right, let's get it over with.
Ten o'clock. The Chief Executive is still mopping his face.
 C. C.—Why did I ever fall in love with South Dakota?
 Sec.—Because it is the first state to hold Presidential primaries. There is a delegation of colored men here to pledge you the vote of Alabama. Shall I give them a watermelon?
 C. C.—Half a watermelon.
 Sec.—There is a man here who demands farm relief.
 C. C.—Buy a quarter's worth of spinach.
 Sec.—Eighteen reporters want to know how much you weigh today. You're reducing, you know.
 C. C.—It sounds dumb.
 Sec.—Yes, sir. Senator Butler thought it up. The Indians are here again. You must go out and shake hands with them.
 C. C. (*wearily*)—What for?
 Sec.—For the rotogravure sections. It's supposed to be human interest. I'm afraid you'll have to wear the ten-gallon hat.
Eleven o'clock. The Great White Father is mopping the same old face. Enter General Wood in wheeled chair.
 C. C.—How's everying in the Philippines?
 Leonard—The Filipinos are happy, prosperous and contented.
 C. C.—Why don't you tell them instead of me?
 Leonard—I did. That's how I got so bunged up.
 C. C.—You must stay to lunch. We're going to have night crawlers.
Twelve o'clock. The same only hotter.
 Sec.—The market man has delivered the fish.
 C. C.—Are the photographers ready?
 Sec.—Twenty-seven photographers and thirty-two special correspondents.
 C. C.—All right. Give me the rubber boots. But I won't do it again today. It's too hot.
 Sec.—No, sir. You don't have to do anything this afternoon but dress up and play cowboy.
 C. C.—Oh, Lord!

Howard Brubaker

WHY THE PALACE WAS BURNED

By ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS

*But Kochoobey was rich and proud
Not in his long-maned horses,
Nor the gold tribute of the Crimean
Hordes
Nor in his fertile farms,
But in his beautiful daughter.*

Thus Pushkin's famous poem *Pol-tava* begins, recounting the glories of the famous Kochoobeys. My guide pointed out the great oak under which the old Mazeppa made love to that "beautiful daughter," Maria. That is about all that remains intact of the great estate that lies on the edge of Dikanka Village. The rest is ruins.

A long tumbling brick wall; this was once the deer park. A stagnant pond out of which statues thrust up broken arms and legs; this was the lake once dotted white with swans. The butt of a palm tree crowning a cinder-heap; this was the orangery. A line of fire-gutted buildings; these were the stables of the long-maned racing horses. Some ring bolts in a pile of bricks; these chained the hunting pack whose cries one time wakened the countryside.

Beyond this desolation, past great green spaces stood the glistening white portico of the palace, columns and walls so clean and straight it seemed the palace was intact. But it was only a white shell enclosing a burnt brick and tangled debris. After the fire came the spoilers, sacking it to the last bolt and window frame. Then came the treasure hunters. Last of all the vandals.

"Before and after the fire." Thus local history is reckoned from that unforgettable night in the winter of 1919, when a red tongue of fire leaped out of the dark, climbed about the tops of the trees, grew into a pillar of flame, fountaining into the sky, mahogany, paintings, rugs and tapestries. Two nights and a day it frightened and fascinated the countryside for fifty miles round. A magnificent conflagration—the funeral pyre of feudalism.

One of the peasants told me how it happened: "A band of partisans rode out of the forest one day and camped on the grounds. At night we saw them suddenly saddle and gallop away. An hour later the palace was flaming."

"Yes, that's the way it started," affirmed a second, "the partisans set it afire."

Thus I heard the story from a score of peasants and so I would have recorded it had not the palace overseer one time in talking about the library remarked: "That's probably where the fire began. Some boys

playing there may have knocked a lighted candle into the papers."

Both versions I related to a Poltava cattle-dealer. "Neither boys nor partisans," said he, "It was the peasants themselves who fired the palace. They laid straw in the cellar and waited their opportunity. The partisans out of the forest gave it to them. As they rode away the peasants touched it off. So they escape responsibility, always saying, 'The partisans did it!'" This I take to be the true version.

At any rate one thing is very clear. I never heard one peasant regret that the palace was gone. But

struments. Tell him to come back and we'll make him chief commissar of our Balalaika Club."

For the brother, a magnificent drinker, there was admiration. He drank himself fat and bankrupt, then took to wife Stolypin's niece with a 7,000,000 ruble dowry.

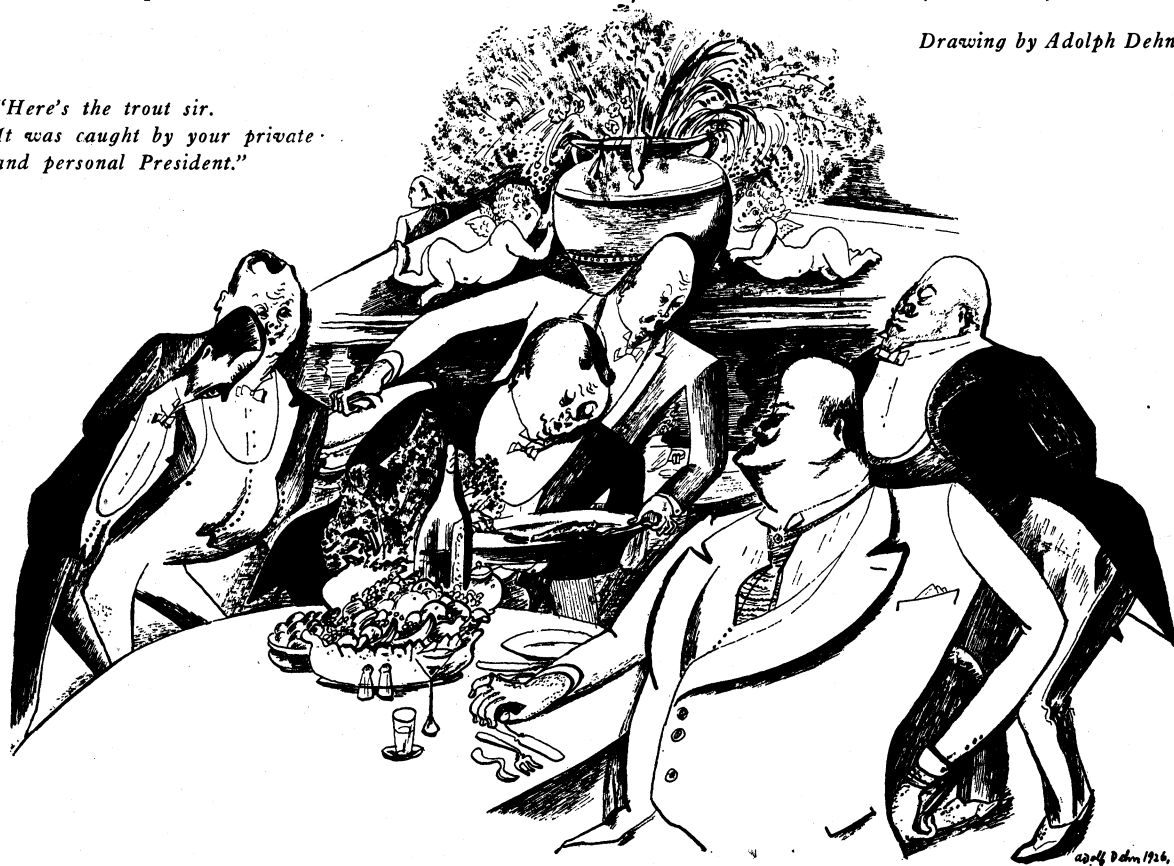
It was on the Princess that the anger of the peasants converged. Evidence of this I found on a marble pillar in the big pasture. Out of a camp-fire some shepherd had drawn a lop-eared, three-breasted lady with a long spear-pointed tail. Below in strong Ukrainian "All Princesses! To hell with them!" Maybe this rustic

her bitch," said our peasant guide pointing to the lake below. "Looloo's Island we had to call it. A whole island for a dog. And to us she grudged a crust of bread, a log of fire-wood, or even to put foot on her estate."

"She-devil! Maybe now she would like a stick of fire wood herself. She'd have to ask for it. So Princess, you would like to walk through the estate?" His voice and manner were now in droll imitation of her. "Sorry *tovarisch* Princess, you'll have to go back and get permission from the Soviet."

The war, it seemed, softened or

*"Here's the trout sir.
It was caught by your private
and personal President."*



POOR LITTLE TROUT

why were they glad? And to what extent was it the sense of gratified revenge against the Kochoobeys?

Against the prince himself I could not find particular ill-will. He was hard-working, tramped around in worn-out shoes, greeted everybody affably, refused a Court Minister's portfolio, saying "I can't be always kissing ladies' hands." Quite a democrat. He was easy on his peasants, renting out his land for seven rubles a *dessyatina* when it was 12 elsewhere, in slack season keeping their horses busy hauling at four kopecks a *pod*.

For the son there was warm feeling. "Maybe you'll meet him in London or Paris," said a young peasant to me. "He was a good fellow and a wizard with the stringed in-

strument had once been lashed off the place by the Princess' tongue. Or he had not lifted his cap to her. Homage to caste and rank she demanded at all costs. Let the mujik be rolling drunk; let him beat his wife; but let him be deferential. Then all was forgiven. But damned forever was the wretch who once mistook her for the veterinary's wife.

Terrorist and termagant, but a great lover of animals—a skilled horsewoman, a devotee to dogs, her affection particularly concentrated on a little white pet terrier, Looloo. The dog had her own cook, wardrobe, and servant. When Looloo died the grief-stricken Princess had an island made in the lake, set with shrubs and flowers.

"There's where the bitch buried

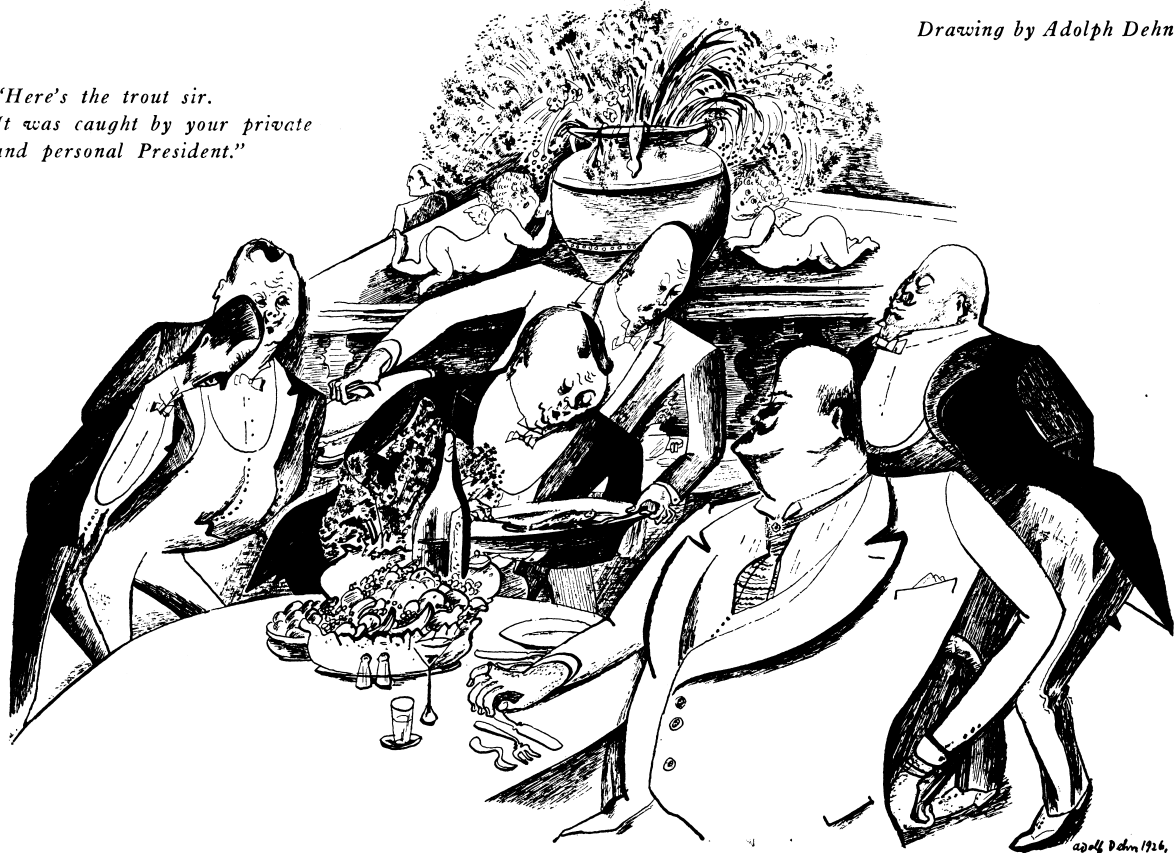
scared her and she took to giving presents to the conscripts. "When I was enlisted," said young Cheiben, "she called me to the palace and gave me a ten ruble gold piece. 'Brave boy,' she said, 'go fight for your fatherland and freedom!'"

"And sure enough," continued Cheiben, "I got a certain amount of both. I'm going to curse the Soviet today about the taxes—that's freedom. As for fatherland, I've got 15 *dessyatines* of the Kochoobey estate."

Cheiben was vengeful, but ironically, pleasantly so. Bitter shrilled the vengeance in an old soldier describing the raid on the mausoleum of Sergius Victorovitch Kochoobey: "First we smashed the stone coffin, then the oak and the zinc."

Drawing by Adolph Dehn

*"Here's the trout sir.
It was caught by your private
and personal President."*



POOR LITTLE TROUT



Drawing by Art Young

*"Just one question Mrs. Ginzberger. What does your husband do for a living?"
"In the winter clucks and suits. In the summer he's a Turk in Coney Island."*

"Maybe it was the gold cross around his neck, the jewels and money you were after?" I suggested.

"No!" said the old man scornfully. "I was after the old devil himself. He stole the land from my fathers. God curse his soul!" He screamed with hate-contorted face making a deep slashing stab with his crutch. "I put a knife through his chest."

Vengeance against even the dead. Not blind, indiscriminate however, but directed against those who had injured them. The bones of Leo Victorovitch lie undisturbed; he gave the forest to the village. Sergius Victorovitch took the forest back; it was his tomb that was desecrated. It was into his ribs that this old soldier savagely thrust his knife.

Revenge played its part in the pal-

ace burning. But to my mind a small part. The fact remains that for two years after the outbreak of the revolution the palace was untouched. It was as if the peasants said to it: "Remember in the old days you have been a source of insult and injury to us. But for these sins of the past we will not punish you. We put you on good behavior." Unfortunately the palace did not mend its ways. Indeed it became worse. With the return of the Whites, one time, came the former superintendent imposing a levy of 160,000 rubles on the peasants. To their remonstrations he replied: "Be thankful it is so little. Some day on your knees, at the gates, you will be begging a little bran to stop the gnawing in your bellies."

Yes, such was the nature of the palace, now humiliating them, now

threatening hunger and death. Here is the letter of a runaway landlord of Tula to his peasants:

"Brother Mujiks: Go on as you have begun. Divide all the furnishings of my manor-house. Take my cattle and the hay to feed them with. One thing I ask of you! Don't chop down my lime trees. These I will need to hang you on when I return. . . ."

"When I return! Damn him!" Let there be nothing to return to. They hewed the lime-trees down.

So it was in Yurievskaya. When the landlord Kovalevsky fled, the peasants settled old scores with the manager and divided up the furnishings and live stock. Then came the Skoropadsky Government (the Whites) and an officer appearing be-

fore the Peasant Committee announced:

"Sheep, cows, beds, books, carpets—back to Sir Kovalevsky. He who has eaten the sheep, get into the skin and crawl back on all fours himself!" He led his finger twice around the face of his watch. "Twenty-four hours—the time limit! If one sack of corn, one spoon, one hen is missing . . . this!" The officer drew his finger across his throat. "And this!" He struck a match, meaning the village would be fired.

Dawn next day and over the long road leading to the estate stood great dust clouds, beaten up by the wheat and hay laden wagons, by the hoofs of the bleating, neighing, grunting, bellowing beasts, while through the tangle stumbled women with mirrors, old men with bird cages, boys with wagon-wheels, plows and vases. Everything and everybody, for the way was long, the time was short and the big guns were trained upon the village.

Forward they pressed to the gates from which two lines of soldiers stretched to the manor house. Down this lane of bayonets, the peasants passed, each to lay his loot at the feet of Kovalevsky.

"It was like the great Judgment Day," said a peasant. "Each of us bringing his own sins, piling them on the heap. When the Whites left a second time we touched nothing. We burned the palace down."

"Why didn't you take the things again? There was no one to stop you."

"Take them again," he soliloquized. "Maybe give them back, again. Go through hell again? No, we couldn't do that!"

In flames and smoke that blotted out the scene of their humiliation, their degradations of the past. More than that, by this act they were blotting out the humiliations that might be, the degradations of the future. Wiping them out forever.

So it was with the palace of the Kochoobeys standing above the village. Menacing, arbitrary, pregnant with evil. As Leo, the good Koch-oobey, gave way to Sergius the bad, so the kindly prince might give way to the unbridled Princess, the Princess to someone worse. Then what new affronts, insults and injuries? The ruins of the palace were the assurance that these things should not be. In this guarantee of the future, more than in the sweet sense of gratified revenge for the past, lies the general peasant satisfaction over its destruction.

* * *

Another sketch by Mr. Williams: "America Comes to Dikan-ka" will appear in the September NEW MASSES. It will describe the attitude of the Russian peasant to the Revolutionary regime.



Drawing by Art Young

*"Just one question Mrs. Ginzberger. What does your husband do for a living?"
"In the winter clucks and suits. In the summer he's a Turk in Coney Island."*

CAPITALIANA

Ideal qualifications for President of a Menckenized United States, as set down in an editorial of the redoubtable *Mercury*:

They are all what, for lack of a better word, is called gentlemen.

* * *

That a good boy gets the candy, is again proven in this from the *People's Tribune* of Hankow, China:

According to reports in the local Chinese press, the diplomatic authorities have authorised the payment of \$3,000,000 by the Shanghai Maritime Customs to Chiang Kai-shih.

Sometime ago the Consular Body here declared that if the "Nationalist Government" at Nanking desired to make use of the Customs receipts, it must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Powers its sincerity with regard to its professed foreign policy. The drastic measures adopted by Chiang against the labourers and pickets at Shanghai are now considered by the foreign authorities as sufficient proof of his

earnest desire to be friendly with the Powers.

Hazardous duties of a social secretary as revealed in the *New York World*:

Miss Marguerite Amaut, secretary to Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, now in Paris in connection with her divorce proceeding, was assessed \$7,084 for additional duties and penalties on two trunks of Mrs. Vanderbilt's gowns, frocks and wearing apparel brought in by Miss Amaut Tuesday on the Olympic.

* * *

Enlightened method of handling labor unrest described in the short staccato style of *Time*:

In the great Endicott-Johnson shoe factories near Binghamton, N. Y., many an employe of late has glowered over his work, has grumbled in locker rooms. About a fourth of the employes felt that they were not getting sufficient bonus. Too little of the company's profits were going to the workers. The other three-fourths, contented, mocked at the grumblers.

Irrked, irate, President George F. Johnson last week gave the disaffected employes a thoroughgoing reprimand: "The profit sharing is not necessarily a permanent plan. . . . To those that are dissatisfied with the results of last year's business I recommend a prompt resignation. . . . I wish such would quit. I am sincere in this wish. . . ." The vigor as much as the common sense of the words gave the grumblers a change of heart. Practically all went back to their work cheerfully.

This accomplished, Mr. Johnson turned about and, over his shoulder as it were, like a fond father done scolding obstreperous sons, announced that he was giving his employes a golf course where, *for trivial fees*, [italics ours] they could disport themselves after working hours. Said he: "If golf is good for the tired businessman it is good for the tired factory worker, and there is no reason why the factory worker should not have his share of the good things of life."

* * *

How the poor working goil gets by on a low salary is written between the lines of this despatch to the *World*:

CHICAGO—Seventy-five women, said to represent clubs, business and literary interests, have made an appeal to the City Council to frame an ordinance that will compel women to wear underclothing when trying on dresses in shops. It is said some gowns are tried on fifty times before they are sold.

Some "tryers-on," the Aldermen were told, wear no undies.

* * *

Pious wish of a liberal writer in the *New Republic* is our PRIZE PRESS PEARL for this month:

The confidence of the United States and Great Britain in each other's good faith is an indispensable bulwark of the peace of the world.

* * *

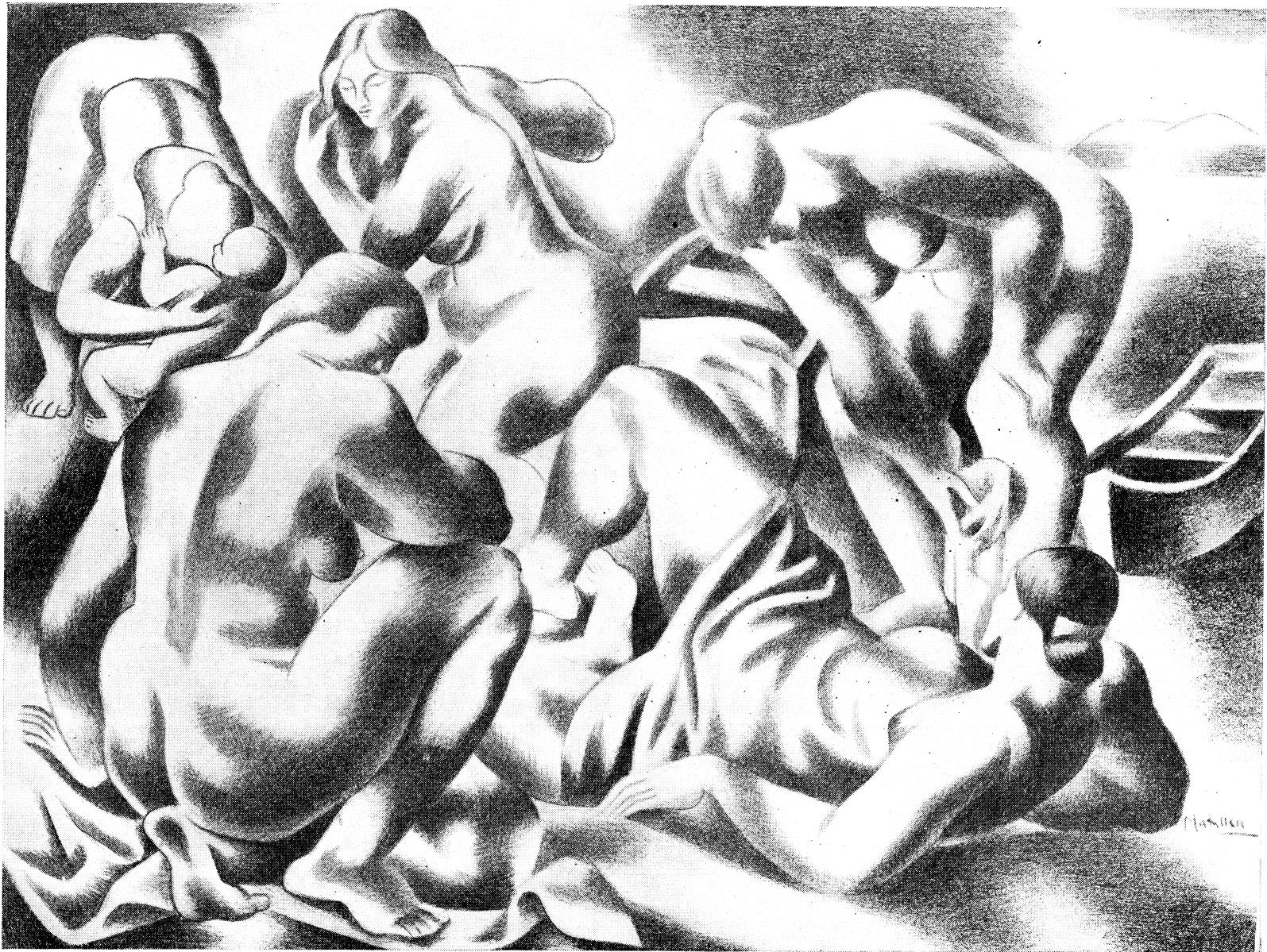
The correct bourgeois attitude toward sex is incorporated in this item clipped from the *Milwaukee Leader*:

NORTHAMPTON, England—Complaints by jealous wives that the silk clad legs of choir girls were distracting men's attention from the service have caused the vestry of the local nonconformist church to have a curtain draped around the lower part of the choir benches.



THE BATHERS

From a Lithograph by Jan Matulka



THE BATHERS

From a Lithograph by Jan Matulka



THE BATHERS

From a Lithograph by Jan Matulka

FREE SPEECH



Drawing by William Gropper

FREE SPEECH



Gropper

Drawing by William Gropper

MARAUDING IN MAY

Child of Manhattan, somewhere young buttercups
Show varnish new and wet,
Somewhere in subsoils earthworms wriggle,
And sweeter than the jazzband's clarinet
Sings the rising lark.

Seeking for a single blade of grass
A butterfly moves looping through the block,
Through a patched-up cloud the sunlight spills
On a showcase with an Easter frock;
And again it's dark.

The breath of thaw comes as through megaphones—
Pert violets and clover sprouts
Out of the keys of your typing-machine
Up on the switchboard squats and flouts
A funny old bird.

From the Cathedral St. Patrick grows hymnful
On a parade of silk-hatted Jews,
From cornices sex-avid microbes dangle.
Let's embark on an ambulant cruise
Among this herd.
The wall-calendar shouts in heavy letters MAY—
Gas-stations to paint; there are kisses on the way.

I

Sallie Pincusson, whose father was Reb Aaron ben Isaac
Cut and confirmed in the Synagogue of Vilna,
Sallie, the sophomore, bought a silk umbrella
Stitched by a geisha in a sweatshop in Japan.

Sallie, Reb's daughter, covered the frosted mazdas
Which gave her "stoodio" that mysterious look.
Took Beowulf, an apple and Chaucer,
Bit, and thought of the legs of ye Squire;
Through the window fell riveting and thumping
From where Lefkowitz was building a palace for garments;
Sunset broke over a thousand washlines;
Over the radio came the afternoon ration
Of an Irishman yodelling *Maria Ave*;
Piping came also of late evening editions,
Epics and lyrics of love pacts and quarrels.
There was the murder by a dark corset salesman
Of a Methodist who weighed two hundred pounds.
Sallie Pincusson lit a cigarette,
She will learn soon, she will learn yet
That well of English undefiled:
That Chaucerian slang.

II

There's a credo for a soul in the subway:
Tragedy germinates in each silken blossom,
Love is an assignment for tabloid news writers,
The dance is rhythm for engine and rivet,
May sky of shade of blue Copenhagen
Is like a swell picture out of the movies.
Life is a spasm, wide-eyed and breathing,
Death a stark blackness preceding birth,
Plasm will wrinkle, wither and shrivel,
Rouge is a crayon, the earth is a carbon,
Hemispheres end when you gets promoted,
Shakespeare's the guy who wrote Julius Caesar,
Vulcan a gas range, Jason a battery,
And in the evening we read the comics.

III

Child of Manhattan, there are a thousand gin parties tonight,
Let's go a-Maying . . .

Out of the purified factory smoke
A wreath shall I make you,

Stud it with electric buds;
Softly I'll take you
Through the grim forest of skyscrapers tall—
To where looms the Temple of the First National Bank.
Silence, stone and lewd electric arks;
Million dead-eyed windows peer;
Weighted, the street-bellies bulge.
You can't commit fornication here—
The place is not decent.
The scene is a setting for the policeman's yawn:
A siren rants a sullen air,
Brings memories of spice and Lent,
And lilacs blow out of your hair.
Is the brand recent?
You must always use one that comes from Paris.

IV

"*Es war im Mai*," when McPherson and I,
He with freckles scheming at immortality,
Thinking red hair does not show in marble.
"*Im wunderschoenem Monat Mai*"
On Second Avenue, following the hips
Of a Hungarian Jewess, hurdling desires,
Reminiscid of soft coal odor which makes one dream on
travel,
Of the desecration from the rear of a Ford taxicab
Puffing outside the moon-lit Coliseum,
And thus we passed the shop of one Xenophone,
Xenophone, the florist, scion of the ancients,
Who slammed the windows full of sweet peas, roses, violets
and such,
Xenophone of Crete, who played ponies at Belmont Park.

(In Belmont Park the grass is green,
It's greener when you're seventeen,
It's dotted full of shining spots
Of susans and forget-me-nots,
And land agents there plot in plots
To cut it into city lots
With just a sign with which to mark
That grass once grew in Belmont Park.)

And McPherson spoke of superpower and stored energy
And though the birds did sing, ting-a-ling-a-ling,
We to cafe, filled with gutterals, smoke and tea
Where, under the electric sign of title regal,
We heard one Isidore Levy
Argue the Talmud with old Mr. Segal.
While on the tablecloth McPherson's pencil cavorted in volts.
And I sang the prowess of McPherson,
McPherson physicist, man,
Who harnessed the wild electron,
And jammed it into a can,
And thus man had become its master
Till it yielded the non-solar heat
And Manhattan could dance much faster
Upon its million feet.
Ach, still greater disaster
Said Mr. Levy, who was metaphysical.

Hark, a milk-wagon, hark . . .
Child of Manhattan, how we have drifted!

Among these bodies whom motors lifted,
Lowered and shifted, jumbled and sifted,
Upsteps, downsteps, they drag and hurry . . .
While Sallie reads her Canterbury
And Xenophone bets at Belmont Park.

Soon, somewhere, in some lonely lake
The moon will be bathing her anaemic face—
And why shouldn't it?

Charles Recht

CENSOR: FOOL OR KNAVE

By UPTON SINCLAIR

AS I WRITE this article, a Communist boy has been sentenced to a term of from six months to three years for ridiculing the Statue of Liberty in a very bad poem; and a man has just served two days in New York for not taking off his hat to the *Star-Spangled Banner* on Lindbergh Day. Therefore, don't think this story of mine is funny. The habit of censorship is spreading, and people are being accustomed to the idea that the State may regulate what they read and think. The people who made and are enforcing this Boston law mean to spread it to New York; they have no idea of continuing the present system, under which, as I said to the Kiwanis luncheon crowd, "we authors are using America as our sales territory, and Boston as our advertising department."

This outburst of publicity is an accident in Boston, due to the fact that God took the Rev. J. Frank Chase unto his bosom, and has delayed to point out a substitute. Chase was the head of the Watch and Ward Society, and so long as he did the job it was done quietly and according to Boston taste. Chase read the books which the pious book-snoopers reported to him as bad. If he thought they were bad, he passed the word to Mr. Fuller, head of the book-sellers' committee, and the latter notified all the book stores in the county, which at once took the books off the shelves. Nobody knew anything about it, and Boston morals were safe. While I was in Boston, the Watch and Warders got a new secretary, the Rev. Somebody Bodwell, and he is going to do the same job in the same smooth way, and no more books will be advertised like *Oil!* Mr. Bodwell says that Shakespeare and the Bible should be expurgated for general use, and that he is going to do it.

The Boston law is peculiar, in that it provides against the sale or distribution of any book "containing . . ." The judge who issued the warrant for the book clerk who sold *Oil!* stood at the entrance of the Boston City Club, being introduced to me, and he said out loud, "No, I didn't read the whole of your book. The passages that were marked for me certainly didn't fill me with any desire to read further." (A Boston lawyer told me: "This judge has a bad ear, a glass eye, and a silver plate in his head, so he can neither hear, nor see, nor understand what is going on in court.") A lawyer who overheard the judge's remark was much excited and said to me,

"I'll be a witness to that!" I said, "What good will it do?" He replied, "If the members of the Boston bar were to know that your book was condemned without being read, it would make a terrific impression."

So then I had to teach Boston law to this Boston lawyer. Under the law, the judge is not required to read the whole book—the Supreme Court of Massachusetts has said so. A clerk in the police department reads until he finds a scene of passion, or a plain reference to birth control. He marks it, and his superiors read it, and if they think it's bad they take it to the judge, and he reads it, and if he thinks it bad he issues a warrant, and so it goes to the very top of the legal ladder, the Supreme Court, which doesn't read anything else, and decrees that nobody else has to. Here is the charge of the presiding judge in what is known as the "governing case," because the Supreme Court decided that his charge was all right. You will find it in any law library in Vol. 200 of the Mass. reports, p. 351:

"You are not trying any book except this, and only such parts of this as the government complains of; and it makes no difference whether you think there are other books in circulation worse than this or not; you are only trying this one. It makes no difference what the object in writing this book was, or what its whole tone is, if these pages that are complained of, the language that is set out in the bill of particulars, is in your mind obscene, impure, indecent, and manifestly tending to the corruption of youth, then you must find a verdict of guilty."

You see the test is the effect upon youth—and what it means in practice is Boston youth, whose Roman Catholic or Fundamentalist Evangelical parents have kept them in ignorance of the facts of life, and taught them that reproduction of the human species is an operation *ipso facto* and *per se* obscene. All youths of course want to know about these facts, and since they can't find out otherwise, they read obscene books in hope of finding out, and of course they have unholy thrills and are easily corrupted.

J. Frank Chase had a standard of obscenity, which he explained to Mr. Fuller of the book sellers' committee. Said Mr. Chase. "It's all right for a novelist to say that John went to bed with Mary and Mary had a baby; but the moment he begins to describe any action of John calculated to awaken

Mary's feelings, then the book is obscene, and I ban it." That is the basis on which they ran the censorship, and are going to run it from now on; and yet Superintendent Crowley of the Boston police department said to me, "We have no censorship in Boston."

I must tell you a little about "Mike" Crowley, because he also laid down the law to me. To begin with, he told my lawyer that *Oil!* is the worst of the lot, and that if I sold a copy in Boston, he would personally prosecute, and ask the judge to give me a year on Deer Island. So I went to headquarters and interviewed the superintendent and sold him a copy of *Oil!*—or rather I sold it to a clerk, at a bargain price of one dollar, with the superintendent and a lieutenant as witnesses. They had just brought in a bootlegger, and pretty soon they brought in another, and I remembered the historic figure who was crucified between two thieves.

Picture me down in that steel barred basement conversing with a large, round-faced gentleman, very polite, and obviously ill at ease among literary problems.

He said: "I don't understand why you people put things like this into books. It's only of late years you've been doing it."

"My dear Mr. Crowley," I exclaimed, "how much of standard English literature have you read? Consider Shakespeare!"

Said he: "You don't find these bedroom scenes in Shakespeare."

I asked: "Have you read *Pericles*?"

"Oh," said he, "of course you can put it over on me in an argument about books. But what I mean is, when you begin to describe how they stimulate the erogenous zones—" He didn't use those Freudian terms, of course; he used some Anglo-Saxon words which I had never heard before, my acquaintance with obscenity being extremely limited.

"Surely," I pleaded, "you didn't find anything like that in *my* book!"

"There's some awful stuff in your book, Mr. Sinclair. I remember—ain't that the book in which the girl says she can have a lover, because her mother has a lover, and she knows it?"

"Yes," I admitted, "that is in my book."

"Well, now, do you think that's the right kind of thing to put into a book?"

Said I: "It happens to be a true story; I knew of the case."

"Well, that might be, but such things oughtn't to be told in novels, where young girls will read them. That would destroy the reverence that young girls ought to feel for their mothers. Things like that ought to be

hushed up and not printed in books and spread around."

So there we had to part, of course; since I am in the business of putting the realities of present day America into books, and spreading them around, with the help of all the Boston police advertising I can get.

One of the judges who had to do with my book said to me: "Mr. Sinclair, we're getting a little tired of having authors use our courts to advertise their books."

This made me hot, and since he wasn't on the bench, I gave it to him straight. "Look here, who started this advertising of *Oil!*? You have advertised it as obscene, and I assure you I'm going to advertise it as *not* obscene!"

When I first arrived, Judge Sullivan advised me to sell the book and get arrested, and take the place of the book clerk. But a week later Judge Creed had seen a great light, and there was no arresting for me in Boston. They gave me *carte blanche* to break the law—in the police department or anywhere else!

Just now I am preparing a special edition of my novel, to be sold in the pious city of the bean and the cod. "The Fig Leaf Edition" it is called and it will be advertised as "guaranteed 100 per cent pure by the Boston police department." You see they only object to nine pages out of 527, and so I have had those pages blacked out with a large figleaf, and the other 518 pages are going to be sold by sandwich-men on Tremont Street, under the auspices of the Socialist party of Boston. Before this magazine goes to press, I'll add a postscript telling what happens.

P. S.: Here it is. I went on the street at eleven o'clock in the morning, with two large cardboard fig leaves hanging from my shoulders, proclaiming what I had for sale, and two copies in each hand. A policeman stood at the corner as I started out, and he turned and walked the other way. So did all the other cops I met that day. The climax came at four in the afternoon, when three newspaper photographers found a trade union girl willing to be known as a purchaser of *Oil!* and staged the transaction under the tall traffic tower at the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets, with "the handsomest cop in Boston" looking down upon the scene. The books sold like hot-cakes. My day's labor proved two facts—first, that the police department doesn't want me, and second, that the people of Boston do want my novel.

* * *

Prometheus is the foremost saint and martyr in the philosophic calendar.

Karl Marx



Sheriff: *What is the cotton prospect this season?*
Planter: *Don't speak of it! It threatens to be excellent.*

Drawing by Otto Soglow



Sheriff: *What is the cotton prospect this season?*
Planter: *Don't speak of it! It threatens to be excellent.*

Drawing by Otto Soglow

SLOT MACHINE

By FOWLER HILL

THE Father of His Country, with ruffle-covered buttocks and bulging chest, looms cock-wise toward the Stock Exchange. In Trinity Church a blowzy rector drones his Safety Day message a dozen feet from the hallowed pew rumped by Washington in 1776. The benediction oozes upward from his abdomen and erupts through his Episcopal collar. It descends upon the shoulders of scrubwomen on their knees in the basement.

The whistle of the policeman at Wall Street is a lollypop. He shunts it between big lips, white gloves insulating feel of metal. Big cheeks fluff out like an inflated bag. Traffic advances. For Christ's sake, watch your step.

Step—beat, beat.

Step—beat, beat.

Automatons in blue—stiff riders—herald the marchers. Horsie keep your tail down on Safety Day.

The Mayor, joined by worshippers from Trinity, and heading the paraders, arrives in front of the Treasury Building. His tall shiny hat and funereal tones blend. He is digging out old bones and flinging them at the people.

The sun from its zenith shines on the Treasury Building, Trinity, and on the Mayor. The police allow it to shine.

The sun does not shine on Allen Street. Over Allen Street orange monsters cavort on stilts. They leap by the second stories of tenements. They block the sun by day and shake sleepers in hard beds at night.

Ten minutes to Tompkins Square, emporium and ghetto of the lower East Side. Maelstrom of pushcarts. The inspector collects his graft. Long bearded hucksters shout their wares—mushrooms, halvah, St. John sticks, gaudy silk underwear . . .

"Hot clams!" drowsily.

"Um-brellas to mend!"

"You dirty little bastard, I'll beat hell out of you!"

"Come on. Get 'em hot!"

Pool in Tompkins Park. Young bathers wade and splash. Polish children play. A baby nozzles the soft dug of its mother; the breasts, elliptical, weep milk from blue nipples.

"Six deaths from typhoid in that pool, Mrs. Wishnevsky."

The soft hooning of boats in the East River. The river is a garbage man. He traffics pine-apples and grapefruit rinds to Long Beach.

"Spray Flit under the baseboards and wash the springs in kerosene."

"John D. Rockefeller owns the world, but he's got indigestion."

In Tompkins Square South men and women gather to march.

The elevated is going to be torn down. The people are waiting for the day when adze and cold chisel will bite away the metal leafage overhead, when the last dark iron tree will be uprooted. *Then rents will rise.*

Scrubby signs in the public markets:

BIG MASS DEMONSTRATION! MEET AT TOMPKINS SQUARE SATURDAY AFTERNOON TO PROTEST HIGH RENTS. ALLEN STREET WANTS A HOUSING COMMISSION. WHEN THE "L" COMES DOWN—WHAT THEN?

Workers pour from Allen Street—a string of dark beads, breaking and spilling on the pavement. The red sun blinds them as they emerge dizzy with freedom on the bright street.

A lean horse hitched to a peddler's wagon with creaking wheels ambles into the park. A woman with red bobbed hair mounts the wagon. She talks to the Allen Street people. The sun splinters through waves of hair curled over her ears.

"Philip Tralasso over there on Allen Street," she says, "used to pay thirty dollars for a three room flat. The wall paper in the rooms was crummy. Bedbugs. They walked all over Philip and Concetta, his wife, at night.

"That wasn't so bad. Phillip and Concetta were used to them. They stood for them, just as we stand for the Mayor and his gang of grafters at City Hall."

Guffaws.

"No, the bedbugs, rotten as they were, crawling inside the ticking and behind the wall paper to hide, were not so bad. But the rats! They ran all over the place. Great big fellows. One of them jumped into the crib of Philip's baby, and bit off its finger.

"What happened then? Philip told the landlord that he'd have to get rid of the rats, or he'd get no more rent.

"The landlord promised. Time went on, but he didn't keep his word. Philip kept his. He refused to pay his rent, but the next thing he knew he, Concetta and the baby were booted out on the street.

"Mrs. Wishnevsky right here on Tompkins Square had the same conditions to face. Instead of trying to fight the landlord all by herself, Mrs. Wishnevsky organized the tenants in her house. They all refused to pay rent. Oh, how quick the repairs!"

"Now listen," she says, "Allen Street is going to have daylight. But you know as well as I do what that

means. Rents will go up, up, up! You people who have been asking for a little sunshine all these years will be clubbed back into dark holes somewhere else."

A squat bystander, pox-scarred and angry, flings his hand above the heads of the listeners. He belches invectives. The glowers of the crowd freeze him into silence.

A dumpy pale fellow, a ridiculous derby rimmed to his eyebrows, rises on shaky toes. In rehearsed falsetto tones, his face the pigment of chalk, he pipes:

"Drive to City Hall. Tell the Mayor!"

The woman extends pale deprecatory hands.

"Wait," she cautions, "Remember what I told you about the organized tenants. You've got to organize too. We wrote the Mayor for an interview with our committee at City Hall. We have asked him for a permit to parade. The Mayor didn't answer our letter.

"But the police inspector has. He says we can't march to City Hall. What do you say, fellow workers, shall we march anyhow?"

The hubbub of voices in melee of affirmation. Niagara of mob responsiveness. The surge of legs and torsos. The wobbly wheels of the wagon turn. The skinny horse strains on the shafts for a start.

"Hold up there!"

The patrol wagon pulls up at the curb. Eight bluecoats with short sticks in hand bound from the wagon. Fast movie of eight shiny candies popping from a slot machine.

A Negro sinks to his knees, bowing his head to the impact of a round polished stick. Whack! Whack!

"Sweet Jesus, boss, I didn't do nothing!"

Whack!

"Oh Christ, don't hit me like that. I'll be good!"

"You're damn right you will, you black bastard."

Whack!

"Move along there! Break it up!"

Eight policemen flailing little sticks, a thud punctuating each downstroke. A dozen plainclothes men doing the same thing with blackjacks. The dark beads are irreparably broken. They roll into the gutter and collide—then surge around the peddler's wagon. The captain in white gloves elbows his way through the crowd. Dust does not touch his impeccable uniform. His gold bars sparkle sadistically.

He seizes the bit jammed hard against the molars of the lanky nag. The bridle jerks and the knees of the old horse wobble. A poster tacked to the tailboard teeters and clatters to the street. "On To City Hall!"

The captain releases the bridle, scowling. The frightened animal

moves backward, its eyes rolling in blood-shot sockets, like glass marbles. The horse forces the crowd to surge—away from City Hall.

"Now then," says the captain, "there ain't gonna be no parade, see? That's orders. Today's Safety Day, get me? And that means none of you damned Bolsheviks in City Hall. I oughta lock you all up! You'll get enough sunlight standing right here, but you ain't gonna get it by parading downtown!"

Sweaty little men stand around the wagon. They grin sheepishly. Others mutter and curse. An old woman, her arms tightly clasped, rocks sideward on squeaking shoes. Her voice cracks as she screams in rage:

"Your mother's a dirty whore. Nothing but a whore, that's all she is, you bastard!"

The captain says nothing. He walks through the crowd and enters the patrol wagon. The sun beats down. One speaker after another mounts the cart.

"Capitalism . . . the capitalistic press . . . I tell you the day will come when the damn bourgeoisie . . . strike breaking police . . . hired thugs of the employers . . . the day will . . ."

The cart remains at the curb. So does the patrol wagon. The sun blisters. Blue-violet globules. Dizziness.

"Get that woman a glass of water!"

"Jesus Christ, what happened to her?"

The ambulance arrives, clanging crazily. The city records another case of heat prostration. The sun is hotter. The workers walk in small groups back to Allen Street. The black beads are knotted. Hooning of steamboats on the river. . .

A patrolman walks out of a fruit store carrying a large bundle. He enters the Black Maria. Inside, eight policemen facing each other four abreast on the two long seats, eat bananas. No words are exchanged. The yellow peel skins over the white fruit. The Captain jams the stump of his banana into his mouth. His cheeks swell while the wet peels press against his face, then drop into his hand.

"The damn Bolsheviks," he says, tossing the skins onto the street.

No man contends against liberty—though he may contend against the liberty of the others. Every sort of liberty has therefore existed twice—once as a privilege and again as a universal right.

Religion is the illusory happiness of the people—that's why its elimination is a pre-requisite of the achievement of their actual happiness.

Karl Marx

THE FRANC IS SAVED!

By HYPERION LE BRESKO

BAD TIMES, unemployment, the shutting down of factories—these forces, having spent themselves in other countries, have come at last to France. With characteristic promptness, the government has issued official figures proving that the total of unemployed is about 90,000; but according to the workingmen's own newspapers and official bureaus the total number of unemployed in France today is between three and four hundred thousand. Even that doesn't begin to tell the real story.

Industries that are slowing up in France today are those which depend on foreign countries either as a source of raw materials or as a market for their finished products. The largest industry in the whole of France, the textile industry, is at a practical standstill. But that doesn't show in the government statistics!

Of the two million men and women engaged in the textile trade, three quarters are in partial or total unemployment. The average employment of these workers is a half of each week.

There can never be figures, either in the bland Government reports or in the bristling pages of the Opposition — even including those of the radicals — for countless others who are thrown entirely out of work. These are the women who did work at home in rather irregular fashion. This home work has completely stopped, depriving the wives of Lyons silkworkers for instance of their chance to add a few francs to the family income. Even if the head of the family is fortunate enough to retain his job, working half-time, the loss of this extra income is disastrous.

The huge metal industries, which profited immensely from the ore and coal acquisitions of the war, are also slowing up. The biggest automobile and machinery plants like Citroen, Renault and Peugeot are going full blast, but thousands of lesser factories are at a standstill or working half-time. Many of the smaller automobile and metal factories have gone bankrupt. It is interesting to note that while the smaller companies are crowded out of business, the larger car companies are building additional plants, working 24 hours a day in three shifts and using full page space in the Paris dailies calling for skilled workers. André Citroen, the Jewish Ford of Europe, has opened plants in Germany and England, and his name, blazoned every night on the Eiffel Tower in electric lights visible

twenty miles away, advertises the triumph of standardization — the magic wand that has touched the French automobile industry and created the phenomenon of feverish activity in a time of general depression.

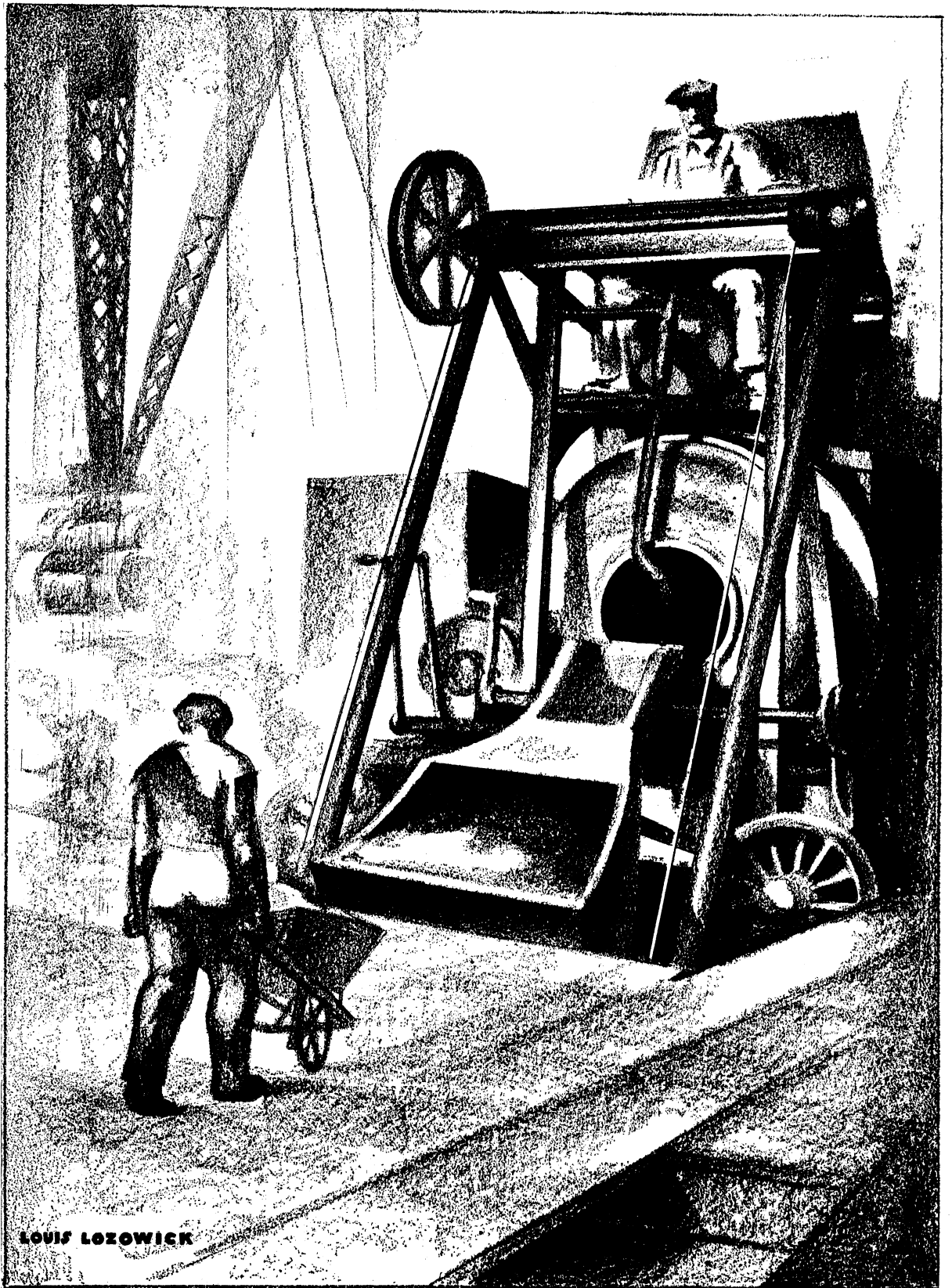
The leather industry, employing about 400,000 workers, one of the most important industries of France, is feeling the pinch. Prac-

tically all leatherworkers are employed only half-time or are out of work entirely. Take the town of Fougères. Four-fifths of its population of more than twenty thousand are normally engaged in the manufacture of shoes. The town is like a dead city. There is a terrible hush everywhere, the stillness of starvation. Those working in the plants return at noon. In the afternoon the city is ominously quiet. The children in the street do not smile, the women do not laugh. Bread is something

very rare in that French city, and even the babies wear a premature solemn expression.

France today is full of Fougères!

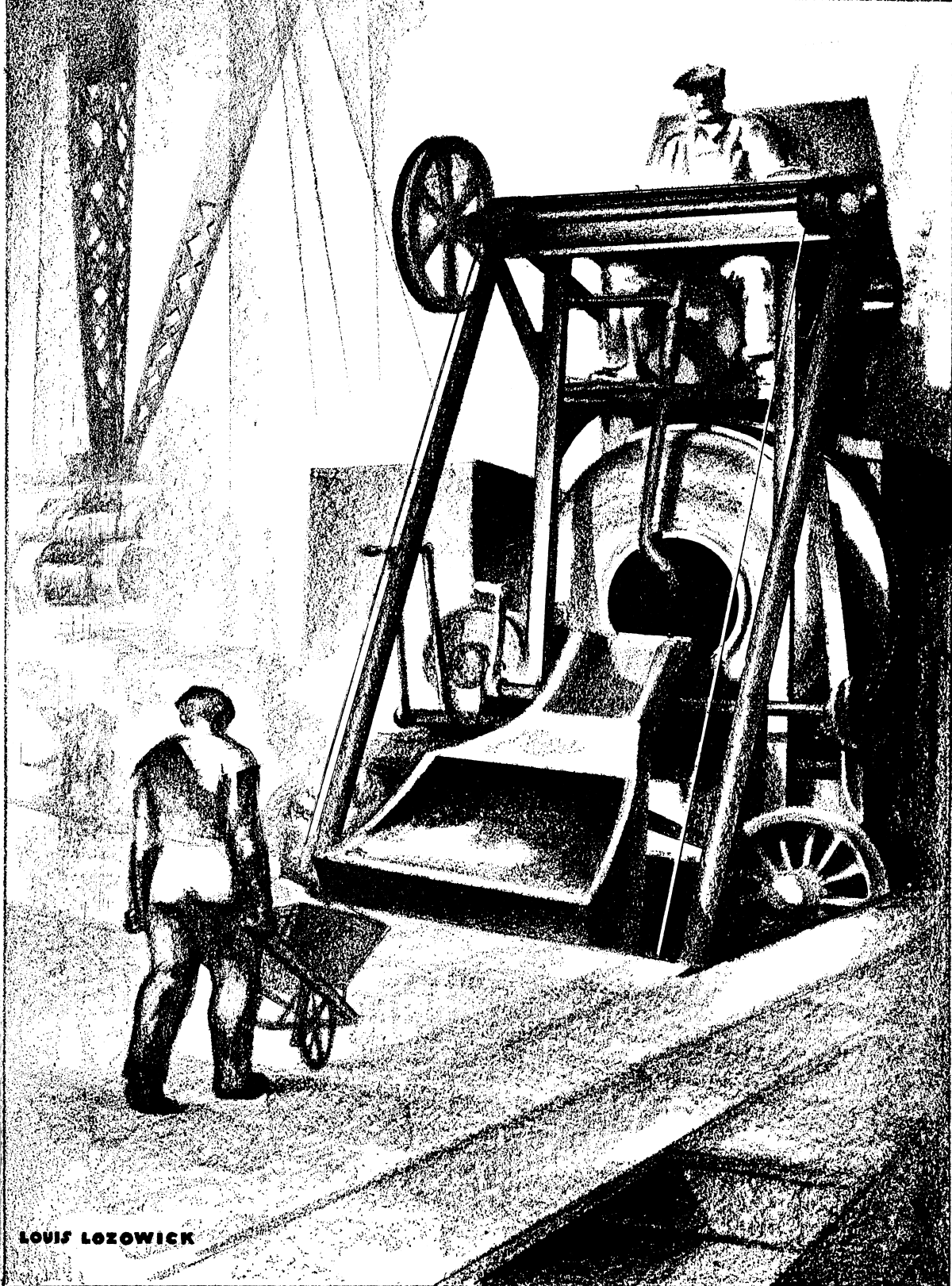
Another important industry, that of woodworking and furniture-making, in which about one hundred thousand workers are employed, has been badly hit. Wood, which comes from the British colonies, is expensive. Though the franc has been more or less stabilized, an industry that has to buy British pounds to keep going is in a sad fix.



LOUIS LOZOWICK

CONCRETE MIXER

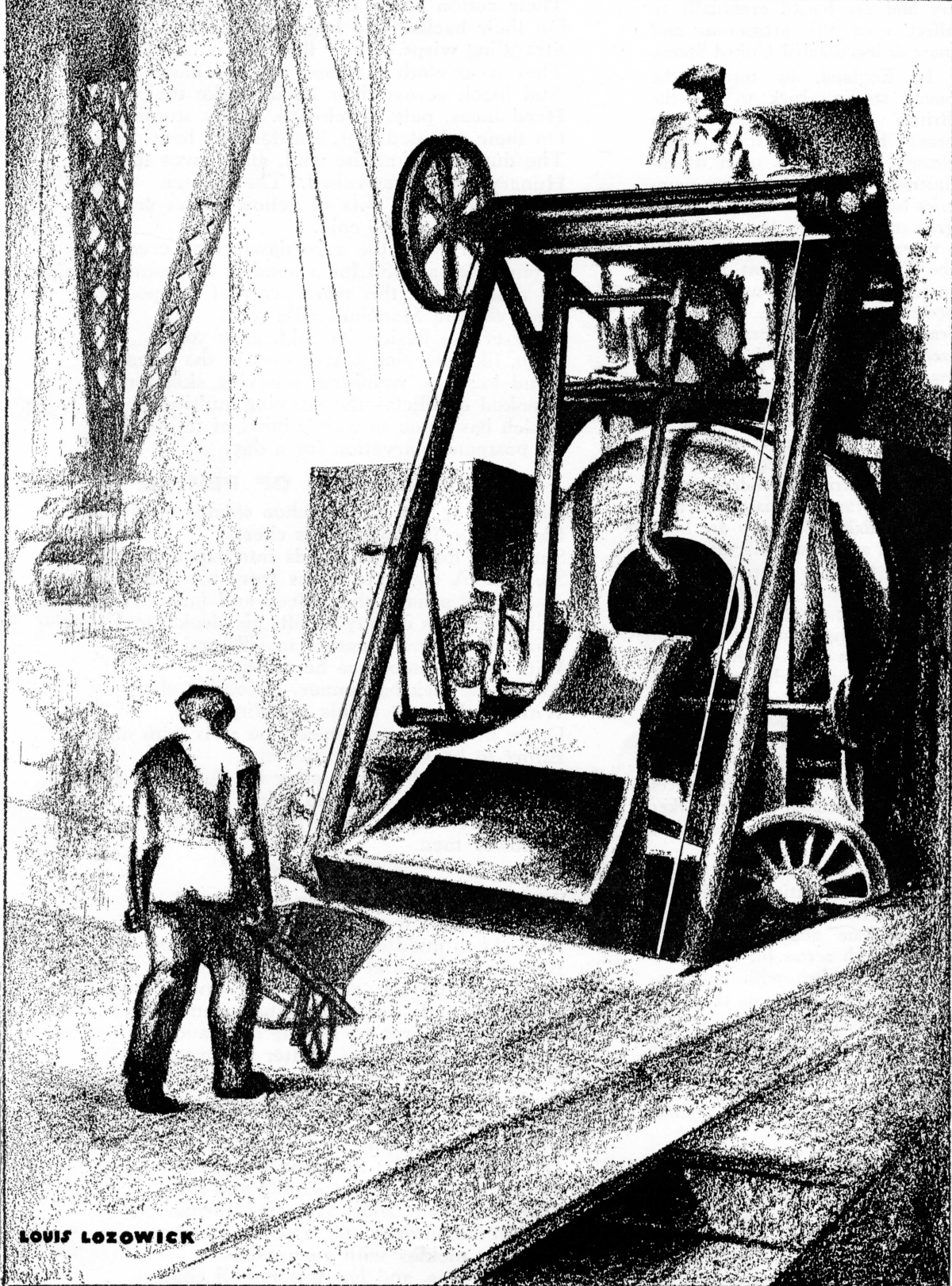
Drawing by Louis Lozowick



LOUIS LOZOWICK

CONCRETE MIXER

Drawing by Louis Lozowick



LOUIS LOZOWICK

CONCRETE MIXER

Drawing by Louis Lozowick

In the glassware industry in all its branches, from window-panes to fine and fancy glassware, many factories are completely out of business.

The chemical industry, which is naturally in intimate relationship with all the other industries, is at a practical standstill, and will not be able to move at a faster pace till the basic industries on which it depends speed up.

The underlying causes of the present French industrial crisis are the same as those which have devastated all of European industry and are bound eventually to affect even the prosperous and more or less isolated United States.

In England, by forcing the pound sterling back to par the British government inflicted a heavy blow upon its working classes, put shackles upon its industries. Other European countries have in a greater or less degree suffered from the same governmental ideal, but until recently the French government hesitated to try the dangerous makeshift of boosting the currency. Now, the franc has been "temporarily stabilized"—which is good for the bankers, but hits small business and labor in the solar plexus. With the franc at about twenty-five to the dollar orders are cancelled and the export trade begins to flop. Other industries, dependent on the import of raw materials, find that their "stabilized" francs are hard to obtain and credit difficult to get even on the best security.

The economic interrelationship of all Europe, and, in fact, of the whole capitalistic world is brought out by such a crisis. And the economic weapon, hurled at a rival country, often becomes a boom-crang and strikes back home.

This lesson in economics, however, is a painful one for the man out of work to learn. Its nuances are not appreciated by the worker who sees his children starve before his eyes.

Even the French, accustomed as they are to starvation, are firm in their conviction that "something must be done" about the situation. The English across the water settled the problem with doles, so the French decided to do the same.

Technically, every person totally or partially out of work is entitled to a dole till he gets back his full-time job. On paper, the system is marvelous. In application—"dun't esk!"

The matter is treated as one of local option. Communes of *over five thousand* population can give the dole to their unemployed. The amount paid differs in different communities. About sixty francs (roughly \$2.40) a week is a very high estimate. The communes donate forty per cent of the funds,

with the aid of the departments in which they are situated, and the government gives the other sixty per cent. The nigger in the woodpile is that out of 37,000 communes only 605 have a population of over 5,000!

Out of *ninety* departments

thirteen render aid to the unemployed within their borders!

In a weak and half-hearted way work on public projects has been started in different communities by the road and bridge building department of the government. The pay is from two francs (eight

cents) to two and a half francs (ten cents) an hour. But these public works are so few as to be negligible as a form of relief.

Incidentally some of these official "public works" have been turned to the benefit of private property owners, who have thus had the pleasure of seeing their roads and docks built, fields cleared, etc., by the entire populace, at a cost much lower than it would normally be.

The Government continues to minimize the figures in spite of the evident facts. The validity of its figures can be judged from what happened in the crisis of March, 1921. At the time, the Government announced that the number of unemployed was 111,525. Five years later, in the official Government census for 1921, taken in the same month of March, the number of unemployed was set down as 550,000!

The Communist leaders and *L'Humanité*, their official organ, consider that the peak of unemployment that began Nov. 15th, is reaching its apogee. But—when they say the peak has reached its highest point they do not mean unemployment has stopped—nothing as optimistic as that! They mean that the number of new unemployed each week is declining to as little as a thousand. *In that they see light!*

But while conditions point to the breaking of the actual full-time unemployment crisis, the partial unemployment situation gets graver every day. And, what is worse than its immediate effects, the workingman is getting used to working half-time.

He is getting used to starving on the instalment plan.

The only palliatives offered consist of long and elaborate speeches and debates in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate and grave articles in the newspapers. A semi-official body, the National Economic Council, continues to pass verbose resolutions that solve the unemployment problem in a new manner every other week.

Meanwhile the Government continues serenely and busily to plan for the next war, and has passed laws calling for national cooperation when it occurs.

The newspapers are full of glowing accounts of the American Legion coming to Paris in a few months; of Aviation exploits showing the brilliance of the French army; and of the National Defense Bill which provides for a participation in the next war by the whole population—including the fleas on Fido's back.

In the meantime, a very healthy bitterness is sinking deeper and deeper into the hearts of French workingmen.

POEMS OUT OF CHINA

BOWLS OF MILLET

I meet them on parade day after day—
The mangy heads of dirty, little waifs,
Pinched faces smeared with grime; wrapped in
Their cotton coats, they trudge with babies
On their backs. Old hags, bald-headed, plod—
Straggling wisps of hair fly at their cheeks;
They wear cloth ear-flaps, and the bands of red
And black across their heads make their
Hard faces, pale, witch-like. They stumble
On their crippled feet, and lean on bent old sticks.
The dust whips at the wall, and leaves their
Hungry faces grey-caked. They clutch
Their black iron pots of yellow millet gruel
And mumble at the cold.
All winter, with the zero dawn, they creep
From miles around for a handful of steamed grain.
By nine o'clock this worn army of the poor
Lines the old Manchu's villa wall.
They cringe beside its cold, gray stone,
Lean, like starving scarecrows in the wind—
Blind beggars, wrinkled, tottering skeletons,
Crooked derelicts—the starving multitude
Which has come to wait a bowl of millet—
To postpone starvation for a day.

A GENTLEMAN OF PEKING

Dong! Dong! A padded shoe stamps on the bell.
He tugs the fur robe to his chest,
Snugs his long-nailed hands into capacious
Sleeves. A cigarette sticks from his puffy mouth,
And trails a haze about deep and fatty eyes.
With pompous dignity he fills his sleek, black robe—
Complacent and separate in silk and fur.
With sleepy indolence he rides
Above the ricksha runner,—sweating slave
Without the pale of his gentility.
Down broad, smooth streets he rolls with inflated
Effort to be seen a gentleman;
And through the noisy alley he clangs his gong,
And curses in his languid pride
At beggars, cartmen, and the dirty mob
Of lower men.

TURNIPS

White turnips piled beside the littered
Shack, where twenty beasts of burden come
At night to huddle on the cold clay floor
For sleep. Here at the morning and the evening
Meal, they crouch, about a tiny smouldering fire
Of weeds and sticks, from the mean winds;
And talk of carts, of sawing logs, and
Dragging heavy things. After hot water,
Without tea, they may have corn meal cakes
And turnips, or cheap cabbage leaves.
Then one small bowl from a long stemmed
Pipe—a dozen puffs, and sleep.
Day after day the turnip pile
Beside the door grows small; and then
The hard white roots are put in brine,
And in the bitter winter time the luxury
Of salty pickles with corn cakes,
Green leaves, and hot water, will cheer
The dark, fireless hut of twenty working men.

Robert Merrill Bartlett

VERY FUNNY, MAJOR!

To Major William S. Brooks,
American Aviator,
Nicaraguan Military Air Service.

Dear Major:

We greet you Major as a peerless, robust 100 per cent American practical humorist. You were uproariously clever in your contribution sent from Nicaragua on April 16th, but undoubtedly "for reasons conducive to public welfare" not published in the *New York Times* until May 29th, too late for us to acclaim you in the last issue of the *NEW MASSES*. That article just "got" us, Major. For sheer heights of audacity your humor is unparalleled.

We were especially impressed with one of your opening wheezes:

"... we came at last to the clearing in which the intelligence officers of our army had declared the Liberal headquarters were situated. We let our bombs go from a safe height, and one fell almost upon the house. A cloud of dust arose and settled. The

clearing returned to its former state of annoying desolateness. Apparently General Moncado had not been home."

How perfectly hilarious! Great joke, wasn't it, Major?

What? The Liberals don't see the humor of the situation? You say "The Liberals have resented our intervention in this war." How absurd of them, Major! This must be "red" influence. The Bolsheviki are always so deucedly serious. The United States will be obliged to counteract this pernicious irresponsiveness to such pleasantries and civilize the Nicaraguans after Wall Street buys the 1928 election.

That was another good joke of yours, Major, when you threw some bombs at travelers whom you did not recognize. You must have burst your sides laughing at their behavior which you describe so wittily when you write:

"And by the way they ran we couldn't learn anything. They sprinted as rapidly as any Liberals

we ever saw. But they may have been good conservative farmers." Wouldn't it have been a scream if there had been women and children among them? The Arms Conference of the League of Nations should put this incident in its joke book for precedent.

And your striking description of the results of your waggish bombing of Moncado Hill:

"They (the bombs) wrecked everything in sight and that afternoon our men took Palo Alto, finding nothing but some dead Liberals in the town." Gee, Major, you ought to be proud.

Our hearts went out to you when you described the distressing conditions of which you were the victim during Easter week:

"There is a party here every night and they are the only things that keep us going. All that one can do here is to have a party. Usually they start at one house in the late afternoon, continue at another at night, and end with a motor ride to a road-house on the mountains in the early morning."

The way of a Major is certainly hard. And we actually wept when you reported that the cost of en-

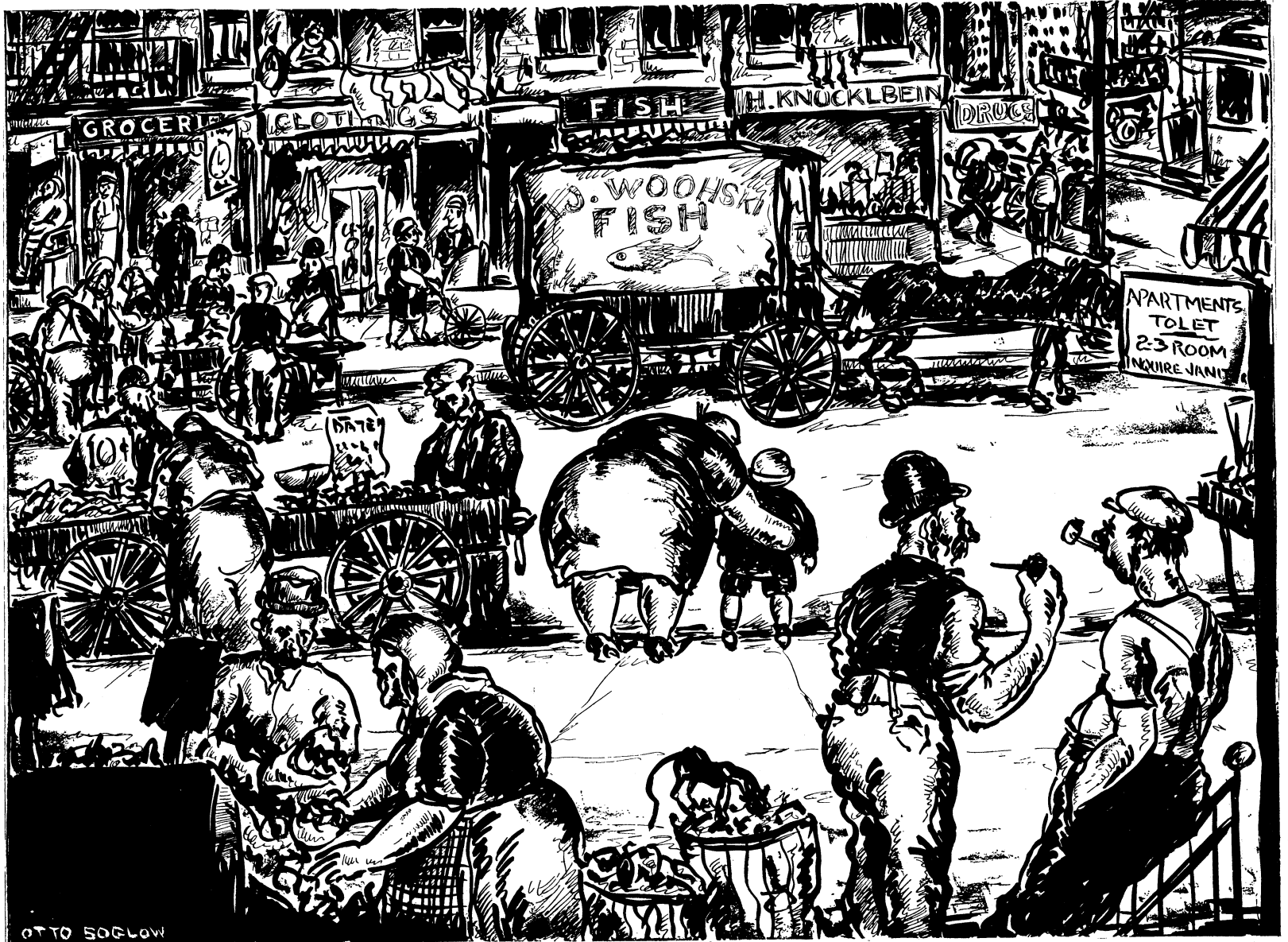
tertaining had gone up since the Marines came and that liquor now costs nearly as much as in New Orleans. Since Stimson has declared that all is peaceful, and the Marines seem to be there to stay, why don't you come to New York? Matty Woll needs a humorist like you in his attack on the "reds" in the needle trades—and liquor is cheap here.

We said that you were peerless didn't we, Major? But you are a strong competitor in your Commander-in-chief Coolidge. Listen to this wise-crack delivered in his speech before the United Press in New York:

"We are not making war on Nicaragua any more than a policeman on the street is making war on passers-by. We are there to protect our citizens and their property from being destroyed by war and to lend every encouragement we can to the restoration of peace."

But we yield you the palm, Major. You are so much more realistic.

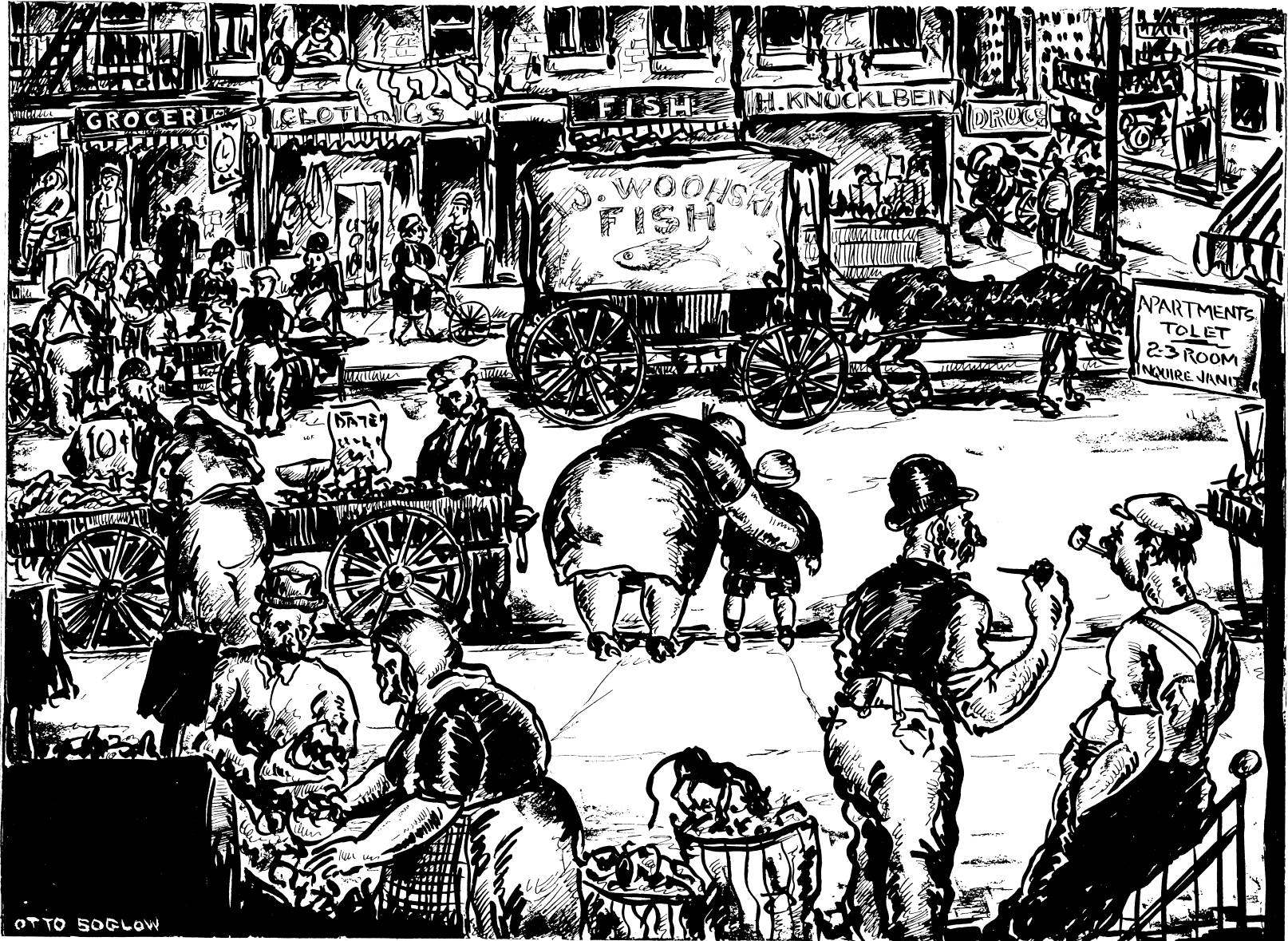
Yours for bigger and better atrocities in the defence of imperialism,
B. J. Stern



THAT REMINDS ME

"Sure! I can remember when beer used to flow like water."

Drawing by Otto Soglow

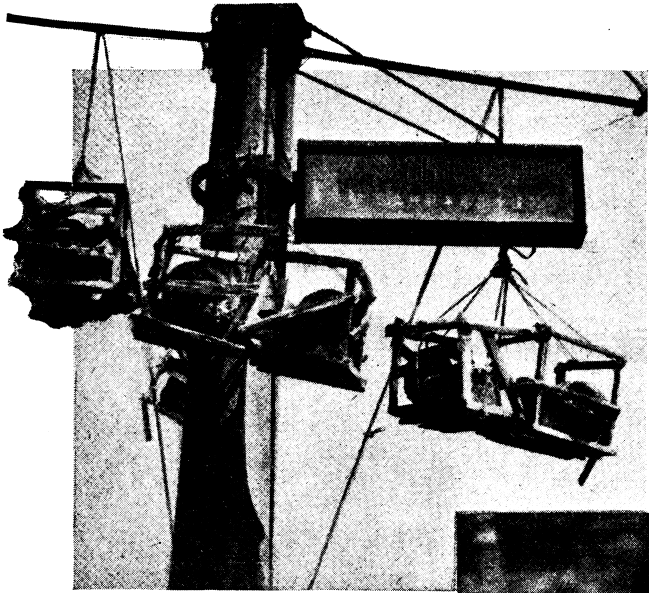


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"IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY"



White mercenaries with captured Revolutionary agitator in Peking. Note the black robed executioner at extreme left, and his assistant at extreme right.

SIGNPOST IN PEKING

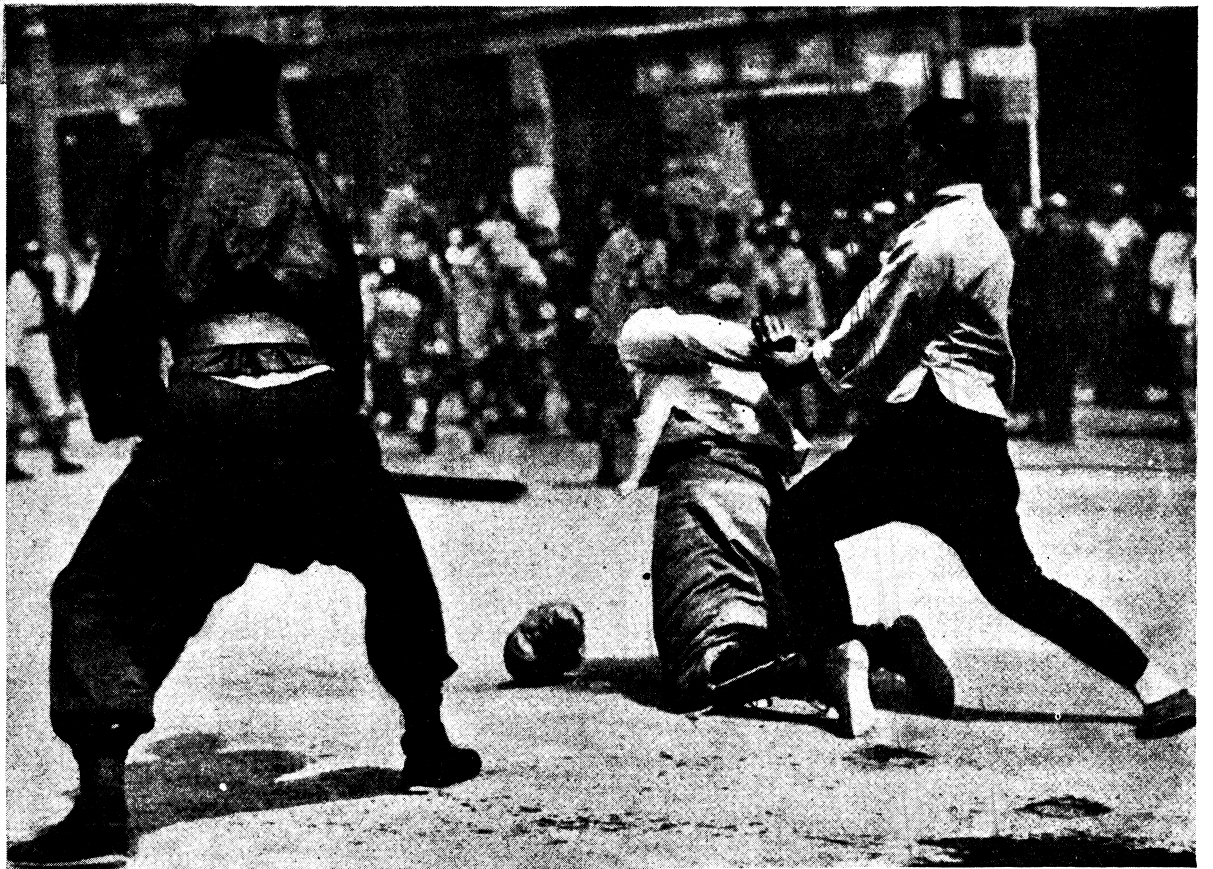
These five heads were thinking and fighting for the liberation of their people until they were removed by Chang Tso Lin's executioner.

* * *

The bourgeois press of the whole civilized world has been horrified by the execution of 20 spies in Russia, who were caught red handed betraying the first workers' republic to its enemies. "In the name of humanity," editorial writers in Berlin, London and New York screech simultaneously, "this cruel slaughter must be stopped. The civilized world must unite to blot out a regime which cannot survive except by mass murder!" It is very interesting to note that the liberals join this horrified chorus. They would prefer to deal more gently with the enemies of human freedom.

But when it comes to the daily executions of radical workers by the war lords in China, subsidized by the great "civilized" powers, the correspondent of the New York Times can scarce restrain his glee. At its fairest the world wide bourgeois press reports such goings on with a cynical and bored tone. These people are after all only unknown students and peasants and workers! And editorial blasts "in the name of humanity" are conspicuously lacking.

No cartoon in the NEW MASSES could bring home as sharply as these photographs reproduced from *Der Rote Stern* (Berlin) the exactitude of horror which is sanctioned indirectly by every person who is not actively opposed to the capitalist state.



HORRORS GROWN STALE

The execution takes place in the open street. Only a few of the curious gather to witness this horrible drama, which is enacted daily under the eyes and sanction of the great "civilized" powers. The executioner's sword was manufactured in Sheffield, England. British trade must be revived at all costs!

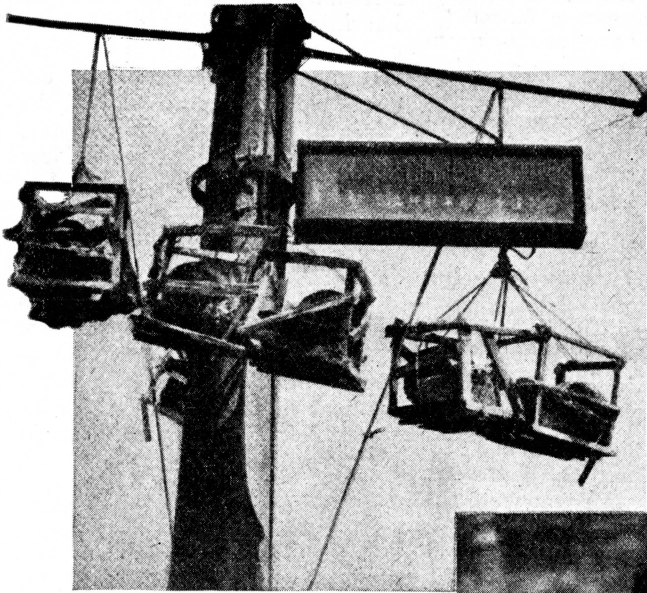


The shackles are removed from the beheaded victims. They will be used again on the next lot of suspects by Chang's henchmen.



Chang Tso Lin's execution squad betrays stolid indifference as the heads are gathered in baskets to be gibbeted.

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White mercenaries with captured Revolutionary agitator in Peking. Note the black robed executioner at extreme left, and his assistant at extreme right.

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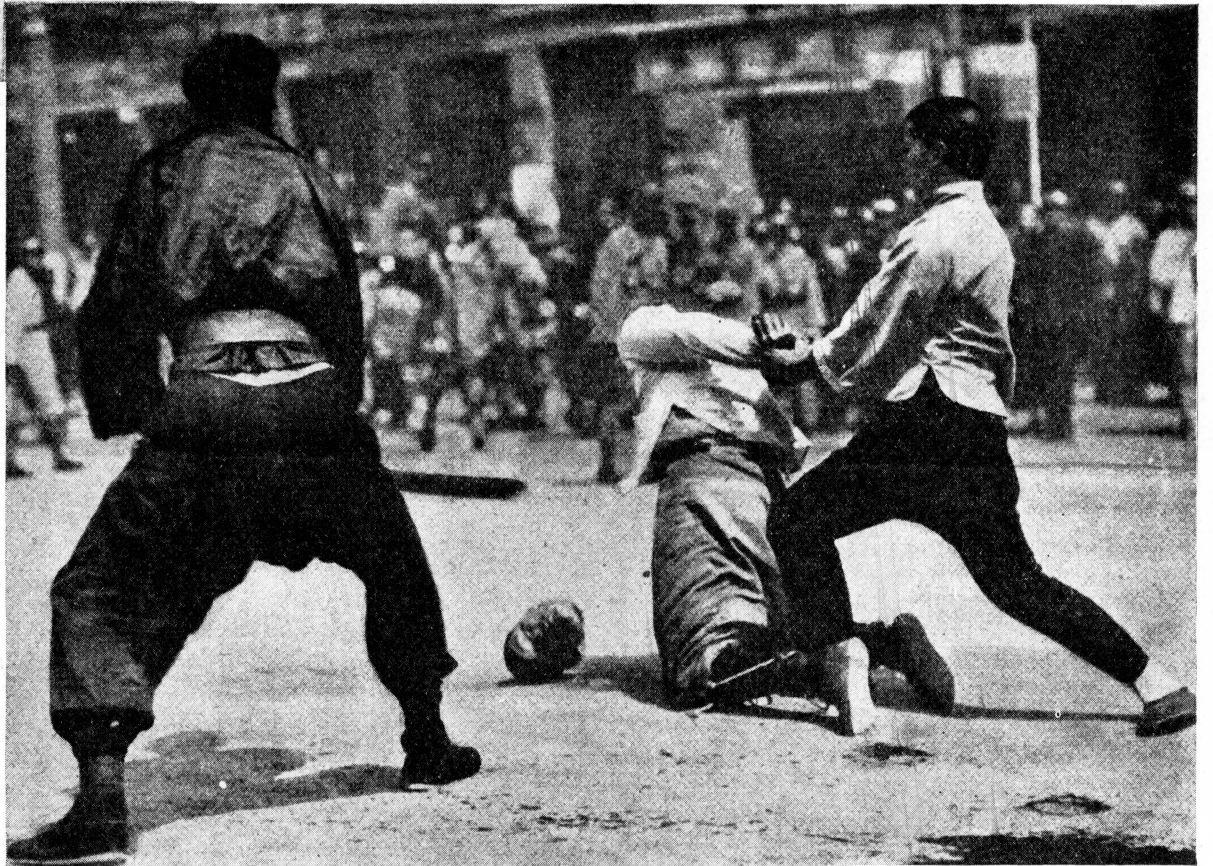
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THIS COCK-EYED WORLD

IN Allegheny Valley, Pa., iron fences are being built by the coal companies throughout the district in order to protect scabs hired to break the bituminous strike. Evictions, shutting off of the water supply and electricity, tearing off of roofs in order to compel the miners to quit their homes are a few instances of the bitterness with which the coal companies are carrying on their attack.

In Mollenauer, Pa., where the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Company is operating a non-union mine, the company police have declared an embargo against all deliveries from Pittsburgh merchants. Miners are forced to buy at Castle Shannon, more than a mile away. Electric lights have been turned off. Eviction proceedings are being started to oust 6,000 union miners and their families from 1,200 company houses.

In Fitzhenry, Pa., a mining property of the Pittsburgh Coal Company, a shooting and club swinging affray, with an unknown number of deaths, took place. It followed a mutiny of the non-union miners employed as strikebreakers in which a demonstration was made against the low wages and unbearable conditions of scab labor.

About fifteen non-union miners took part in the revolt. All the shooting was done by the Coal and Iron police hired by the company. Every effort is made to hush up the details of what took place.

Seven miners escaped from the mine immediately after the affair and told union pickets who are constantly on duty that they would never work for the company again, that conditions are so bad that only those men known to be entirely loyal to the management are allowed to talk together.

PORNOGRAPHY

A PICTURE paper in New York was charged in the courts with publishing salacious matter. For many weeks it ran stories and photographs, real and manufactured, about "Peaches" Browning. It specializes in sensational events of a sexual nature. The courts, however, decided that this was a free country, and that no judge should tell people what to read. It was up to the paper's readers, to decide whether or not they liked to see photos of "Daddy" Browning playing poodle to Peaches.

At the same time the editors of the *Daily Worker*, a serious political paper, were arrested under the obscenity statute for publishing a brief poem making some uncomplimentary remarks about

At the non-union Crescent mines, a short time ago there was an explosion which demolished two bunkhouses. Statements of those who drove four wagons to the scene of disaster and picked up that many wagonloads of legs, arms, heads and other parts of the blasted non-unionists indicate that between forty and forty-five were killed.

The local paper recording the event said that "only two were killed."

In this case also, a deliberate attempt is made to keep secret the horror of a scab's life. Nobody but the wagon drivers was allowed on the scene until it was cleaned up.

Spadra, a mining camp in the bituminous fields of Arkansas, is undergoing the organized terrorism of armed scab herders imported from the slums and back country of West Virginia. They rush up and down the roads in high powered cars, waving their sawed off shot guns, cursing and vilifying the miners' pickets. They swagger through the camps, great pistols swinging at their hips, and continue the provocations. They commit indecent exposures before the miners' wives and children. They colonize prostitutes, imported by the coal company, amongst the shacks in which the miners' families have to live.

Miners fear to leave their houses to go on the picket line, for fear of attack on their families by the scabs and scab herders, and so the morning picket line is also breakfast time for all the decent elements in the community; young and old, men, women and children, gather around fires in the open and cook and eat their breakfast, while waiting for a chance to argue with the heavily armed scabs.

America as run by the bankers and industrial magnates. The 18-year-old author of the poem was sentenced to the reformatory, and later released on a certificate of reasonable doubt. One of the editors of the *Daily Worker* spent several weeks in the toms.

Now six member of the *Daily Worker* staff have been indicted under a federal statute in connection with the same poem.

The charges against the communist editors were instigated by anti-labor elements, including the Military Order of the World War. Captain G. A. Darte, who was active in calling the attention of the authorities to the "obscene" poem, also complained that the *Daily Worker* publishes "pamphlets and

cartoons attacking American business men, the American Federation of Labor, religious organizations and German trade unions."

This lets the cat out of the bag. Picture papers may freely continue to publish "cosmographs" and "revelations." The obscenity statute is to be applied strictly to revolutionary labor papers that dare tell

THE INSIDE DOPE

NEXT to a picture of "Peaches" Browning in tiara and pearls, captioned "elderly loves are best" and "Peaches will marry again when the Divine Passion Comes," the *Evening Graphic* of July 7 runs the startling information that "Reds" crippled the Nungesser and Coli airplane.

From some mysterious source which it refuses to divulge, the tabloid has learned that "Red extremists, imbued with the policy of the Internationale at Moscow to

the masses the truth about the world we live in.

Since the six members of the *Daily Worker* staff have been indicted under a federal statute, the paper faces the danger of having its mailing privileges taken away, unless it receives enough financial and moral support to combat the attacks of the professional patriots.

create a dissension between capitalist nations" plotted the destruction of the two French airmen in order to create bad feeling between the United States and France. Fortunately, observes the astute writer of the "revelation," Col. Lindbergh saved Franco-American amity.

The *Evening Graphic* was the picture paper exonerated on obscenity charges in the State which arrested the editors of the *Daily Worker*.

HOW TO BE HAPPY

GENERAL LEONARD WOOD, governor of the Philippines, is now in this country discussing his troubles with the President, and telling the newspapers that "they are a peaceful, prosperous and happy people throughout the Philippine Islands." He believes or says he believes "the people in the Philippines are the happiest people in the world."

This is unpatriotic. The happiest people in the world are in continental United States.

Last month the press reported that 400,000 Filipinos revolted under Flor Intrencherado, described as a madman with delusions of grandeur who had proclaimed himself emperor. Intrencherado's followers were overpowered, and the "mad emperor" confined in an asylum. Over 500 of his followers were arrested.

A week after this episode, the Philippine constabulary shot and killed Sultan Raya, an opponent of American imperialism. He was shot for the usual reason; he "resisted arrest."

Five days later Admiral Kittelle, American naval commander in the Philippines, published sensational charges that Soviet agents in the Philippines were plotting to blow up the American navy yard there. The Admiral never proved his charges but used them as a pretext for breaking up an organization of navy yard workers.

Shortly afterward 2,000 stevedores in Manila went on strike, Admiral Kittelle at once sent a force of strikebreakers. A subsequent press dispatch reported that "religious fanatics" were concen-

trating on Siargao and Dinagat islands. The constabulary is "alarmed" and is requesting reinforcements.

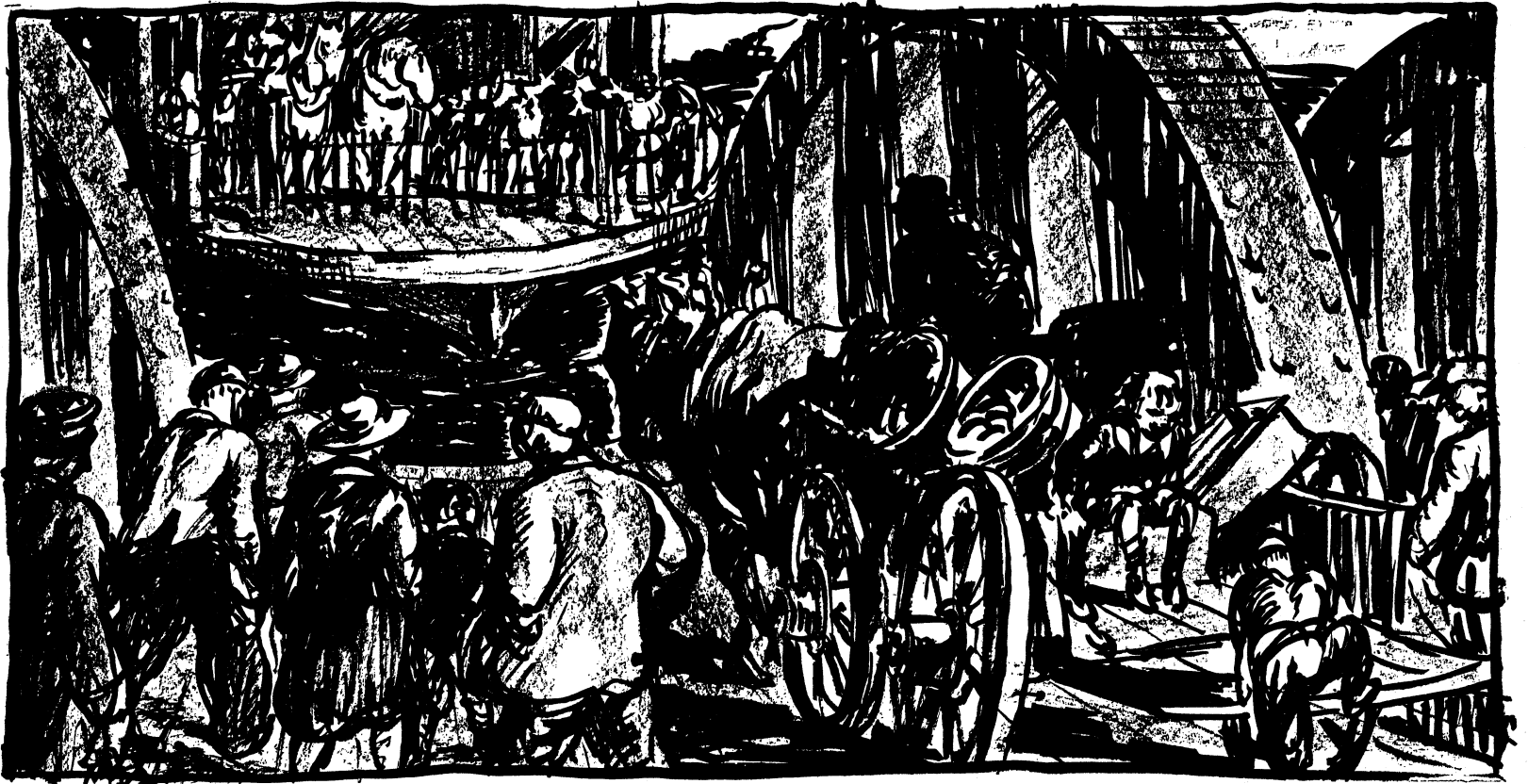
General Wood differs from Admiral Kittelle. He has stated that there is no sign of Red agitation in the islands.

He also differs from the facts. He announced that there is no labor trouble.

The Manila correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News* reports that the Philippine peasants are organizing to better their economic conditions. In the sugar provinces the peasants are demanding improvements in wages and hours. Natives are getting 50 cents for 14 hours' work in the cane fields. Strikes have been rigorously repressed. Many workers are escaping to Hawaii—where they will find similar troubles awaiting them. There are millions of acres of virgin soil which could be turned over to the landless peasants and agricultural laborers, but the government is doing nothing to relieve the situation.

There have been tenant troubles in the islands over charges of more than three dollars an acre levied by the government to liquidate the cost of new irrigation works. The landlords insisted that the peasants bear half the expenses. The tenants do not own the land improved by the irrigation works, and see no reason for sacrificing themselves on behalf of their rich exploiters.

According to General Wood, it would seem as if America's colonial subjects in the Pacific are rebelling out of pure happiness.



INCOMING FERRY

Drawing by Harry Steinberg

NON-STOP FIGHTS

COL. LINDBERGH, the son of an anti-war Congressman, inflamed men's imaginations by flying across the Atlantic alone. Practical politicians in Washington immediately put him to work in the interests of militarism. The young hero who symbolized creative activity began to make publicity speeches for more bombing planes that would "protect" American bankers' investment." Two other daring flyers have now crossed the Pacific in an army airplane. This gave Assistant Secretary of War Davis a chance to advertize some of America's war plans.

"By the close of 1932," he said, "this country—if the five year plan

is realized—will have an army air corps of 1,650 flying officers, 550 reserve officers on active duty and 15,000 enlisted men, with equipment of 480 pursuit, 95 attack, 185 bombardment, 59 transport, 412 observation, 72 amphibian and 479 training planes, and 110 aircraft of various types in war reserve."

The navy also has an air service. The people of this country, now lulled by temporary prosperity and official propaganda into pleasant dreaming, will wake up one fine day to find the world drenched in blood, and to discover once more that capitalism lives, breathes and has its being in exploitation, fraud, and violence.

THANK YOU, ADMIRAL!

AMONG those most grateful to the United States navy for murdering Chinese workers in Nanking, and in various other ways spreading the principles of Christianity and democracy in China, is the Standard Oil Company of New York. Here is a letter addressed to the commander of the American naval forces in Chinese waters, and published in the *United States Daily* of Washington, D. C.—

DEAR ADMIRAL WILLIAMS:

We wish to convey to you our sincere thanks and appreciation of the great assistance rendered to us by the units under your command.

Conditions in China have been most chaotic; in many cases it has been impossible to anticipate the future. During these periods of emergency your staff has, without exception, rendered our various branches invaluable assistance both during periods of evacuation and in protective measures.

The assistance rendered us by you has in innumerable instances, not only protected the lives of our staff, but saved us from greater financial loss.

The action taken by your forces during the Nanking incident, the evacuation of Changsha, Ichang and Chinking, the protective measures at all treaty ports, the convoy

of our vessels through disturbed districts and the courtesy of your wireless to points cut off from normal communication have placed the Company and our staff under deep obligation to you.

We would greatly appreciate your extending our thanks and appreciation to the several units un-

der your command for the full cooperation and the privileges extended to us, with unfailing courtesy, providing this request meets with your sanction.

Very respectfully yours,
Standard Oil Company
of New York,
Assistant General Manager.

THE WOLL WEEVIL AGAIN

Savage jail sentences are being imposed every day on the striking furriers in New York. They are arrested on the picket line and given heavy jail sentences, with additional terms of imprisonment for contempt of court when they express displeasure at the severity of the sentences. The strike was called because a group of manufacturers broke its agreement with the New York Joint Board and tried to force the workers to register with the new scab union which has been set up by the International Fur Workers' Union and

the American Federation of Labor. Their right of peaceful picketing is being denied them at the instigation of Matthew Woll, vice president of the A. F. of L. and acting president of the National Civic Federation—a red-baiting organization. Woll called upon the police in person, and published open letters urging trade unions to complain of the leniency of the police towards the strikers and asking that New York workers come out and picket against the picketers in the furriers' strike.

LET FREEDOM RING

FOUR workers in the steel town of Woodlawn, Pa., have been convicted of "sedition" under the state "anti-sedition" law. They were carrying on trade union agitation among coal and steel workers in their district. Any act which threatens the profits of bankers or industrialists is sedition, according to the courts controlled by bankers and industrialists. Nothing could be more logical. The police, after the best traditions of the Czarist Okhrana, raided the homes of the

four workers and found some communist literature. It turned out that the four workers were members of the Workers' (Communist) party. The prosecution disregarded technicalities and asked the jury to jail the men for their communist membership. The jury did. All four have been released on bail pending an appeal for retrial. This proves, no doubt, that President Coolidge is right, and that capitalist society in the United States is almost perfect.



INCOMING FERRY

Drawing by Harry Sternberg



INCOMING FERRY

Drawing by Harry Steinberg

SLAVE TRADE BOOMING

By SOLON R. BARBER

ONE reason why about three million of the oppressed farm population of the United States have left the scene of this oppression since 1920 and gone to the city to take their chances with a capitalist-controlled industrial system, is apparent in a study of farm life in the "old cotton belt" of the South, including Gwinnett County, Georgia, recently made by specialists of the agricultural department in Washington. In late years, small cotton farmers in this "old cotton belt" so called, have been forced to face competition with the newer cotton regions of western Texas and Oklahoma, where large-scale methods and up-to-the-minute machinery have cut down production costs to a figure the small cotton planters in the Piedmont region cannot begin to approach. Slow starvation is resulting. Records obtained from 288 poverty-stricken white farm families living in Gwinnett County — eloquent of standards of subsistence prevailing all through the old cotton belt—show an average net cash income of only \$424 per family in 1924. There has been no improvement since. Slavery is not dead there!

The study speaks for itself. These Gwinnett County families average five persons each and their cash income is insignificant. As is so often the case in the "farming business," their cash income is supplemented by food, fuel, and shelter from the farm, estimated by the big-hearted research workers to be worth \$396 per family, or \$79.20 per person per year. Out of their net cash income, these white farmers have to pay ordinary living expenses. Their actual outlay for family living averaged only \$291 a year, or \$58.20 per person. This left \$133 to apply on the family debts and to add to the proud accounts in the local savings banks—or to expend in ways advocated by the solicitous agents of agricultural reform, that is: adopt progressive methods of farming, buy up-to-date machinery, practice an approved system of diversified farming.

Although farms in the section are low in value, most of the farmers are tenants. It is said that they become tenants early in life when they are thrown on their own resources for support without any capital to start on. This necessity creates share-farmers, tenants. The wants of these poor whites, pathetically meager as they are, so generally equal or exceed their miserable incomes that farm ownership is an ideal practically impossible to achieve. But thanks to the unsel-

fish paternalism of the bankers and money lenders of the region, a farmer can obtain a shack, land, and even a bit of credit without capital, although, it is only fair to hint, not without signing various and sundry notes, mortgages, liens, and other nice papers so incidental to the operation of our beautiful scheme of capitalist exploitation. The farms of the region, for the most part very small, are in addition miserably equipped and not greatly fertile. In 1924 more than 40 per cent of them had only one work animal (outside of the farmer, his wife, and children), and only 14 per cent had more than two.

As our readers have perhaps already divined, the means by which these families live involve a rather delicate manipulation of the short and terrifying mathematics of the poor. Most of the farm mother and daughters make the clothes worn by the family; more than 90 per cent of the homes have sewing machines. But practically none of the homes have any other modern conveniences. Thirty-four per cent of the cropper families were living in 1924 in houses with only one thickness of lumber. For books, magazines, newspapers, amusement, education, religion and other adjuncts to Uplift, the aver-

age annual expenditure per family was \$24, or \$4.80 per person. Practically the only luxuries in general demand were tobacco and snuff and the expenditure for these took a liberal share of the net cash family income, \$15 a year.

It is estimated that perhaps 100,000 white tenant families, half a million people all told, living along the northern border of the old cotton belt east of the Mississippi River, are in no better fix than the Gwinnett County families whose prosperity and happiness we have been recounting. Small farms, having only a few acres planted to cotton and a somewhat larger area seeded to corn and other crops, are typical of the Piedmont region and, in fact, of most of the farm area of the old cotton states. In Gwinnett County, the average cotton acreage per farm is only seven. Cotton, of course, is practically the only cash crop in that section. The 288 farms covered in the department's survey, average 8 acres in cotton, 13 acres in corn, and 4 acres in other crops in the year of the survey. Average owner-farmers with tenants working for them had 48 acres in crops all told. Average renters, and owners without tenants, had an average of 26 acres in crops. Croppers were handling an average of 24 acres in crops. Farms so small as these are certainly not an overwhelmingly rosy proposition for obtaining even a subsistence farm wage.

Forty-seven per cent of the children of farmer-owner families who had left home, had gone into occupations other than farming. They had had enough of farming.

"Traditional conservatism and lack of contact with other communities are considered the principal obstacles to the economic advancement of these people," the department's report on the study announces. "Most of them have always lived near where they were reared and very few have traveled. Their conservative disposition is shown by the fact that few of them are taking advantage of the opportunities to supply nearby Atlanta with poultry, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables. They are also handicapped by the fact that farms in the county are small. On such farms the ownership and use of modern planters and cultivators (specialized farm implements) is not economical." These farmers are living "by accepting unusually low incomes and a notably restricted standard of living rather than by adopting improved methods of production."

But unfortunately it costs money to travel. It takes much money to buy hens, dairy cows, land, fruit trees, seed in order to be able "to supply nearby Atlanta with poultry, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables." "They are also handicapped by the fact that the farms in the county are very small" but how is it possible to buy larger farms when the average farmer is nothing but a tenant in the first place, forced by dire economic necessity to be a tenant, cropper or small farm owner, living on an income barely large enough to support life? Buy machinery! Improve the methods of cultivation! Diversify farm methods! Indeed! Where is the money coming from?

Perhaps the Administration will send a great, kindly official fixer with a heart of gold down there to do something about this matter of semi-starvation some time. Or appoint a commission or something. Perhaps Mr. Hoover or Mr. Mellon can arrange to extend credit to these 100,000 farmers; it has been done before. Loans could be arranged in such a way as to bind those farmers in still more abject slavery to the soil that refuses to yield them a living! But after all, in this "Golden Age" of the American industrial worker—with wages high, prices high, the favored few happy and prosperous—why worry about a mere half million half-starved farm people who are "accepting unusually low incomes and a notably restricted standard of living rather than . . . adopt . . . improved methods of production?"



Drawing by John Reehill

TABLOID

"Hey Tony, here's a greata gala for you. She gotta de shape."
"No gooda for me. Shape don't cooka no spaghetti."



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*"Hey Tony, here's a greata gala for you. She gotta de shape."
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"No gooda for me. Shape don't cooka no spaghetti."*

THE BISHOP BORES FROM WITHIN

By EGMONT ARENS

My Heresy, by Bishop William Montgomery Brown. John Day. \$2.00.

A LITTLE over a year ago a group of enthusiastic young people met at a dinner in New York with the idea of finding ways and means to publish a magazine to be called the NEW MASSES, which would "inherit the gay and gallant adventuresomeness of the old *Masses*," but which would (they vowed) not be a copy of the old *Masses*, for (according to its manifesto) it would be constantly seeking for "new forms, new themes, new artists, new laughs and indignations."

There was an old man sitting at one of the tables, who looked rather out of place in such a gathering. He had snow white hair, a rosy face, and he wore the smug frock coat and collar that showed he was some kind of a clergyman. It was Bishop William Montgomery Brown, the "heretic" Episcopalian, and some of the revolutionary spirits at that gathering looked askance at those clothes he wore, which in spite of the Bishop's benign countenance, brought the suggestion of funereal gloom and hypocrisy into that room where we were expecting a birth, not a death.

But when the Bishop stood up to speak the atmosphere changed magically. Instead of an old hypocrite, as we supposed he was by his garb, it turned out that he was the youngest and most revolutionary spirit in the room. He told us:

"You are all old enough to remember the old *Masses*. I am too young to remember it. The old *Masses* does not mean anything in my young life. When the old *Masses* was making its impression upon America, when it was inspiring you with its wit and wisdom, and with its appreciation of the new era into which the world was breaking, I was sitting complacently as a Bishop, utterly oblivious to all that was going on. . . . You people, as young as you seem, were heretics long before I was. Oh how I envy you! I greet you as my seniors. I greet you as my superiors. I feel like sitting at your feet and having you expound to me the Gospel according to the old *Masses*."

"But while I sit there please remember that I am young. I belong to the younger generation; and I will not permit any one to tell me that the revolutionary truth was revealed once and for all to Max Eastman and Art Young, or even to Karl Marx and

Daniel de Leon. I am willing to worship these men as saints, and I do not break with their glorious old traditions; but if you had told me that you were going to duplicate the *Masses*, and get out exactly the same sort of a magazine the *Masses* was, I should not have been interested.

"Instead you told me that you were going to be different. You announced your intention to interpret life as you find it in America now; not binding yourselves even to the inspired interpretations in the *Masses* of ten years ago. . . .

"The NEW MASSES may be crucified, as the old *Masses* was. It may be that some solemn assemblage of bishops or post office officials will attempt to depose you from the sacred ministry. But that will not make any difference. For you will live abundantly while you do live—as the old *Masses* did, as Jesus did, as John Reed did. . . .

And then he sketched the outlines of that amazing story which is given fully in *My Heresy*. And just as his speech at that first NEW MASSES dinner was an inspiration and a challenge to those of us who proposed getting out a magazine dedicated to the new age, so this book is an inspiration and a challenge for all who want to bury the past and help create the new order.

The book tells how the bishop existed for fifty-five years, orthodox in the beliefs of his church and his state, and quite dead to the world of ideas. And because he was dead though breathing, because he was *regular*, he went up in his world—he rose from farm hand to bishop. Until he was fifty-five he was just the pious old ignoramus that an Episcopalian bishop has to be. Then he got sick and prepared to die, and he appealed to his doctor for something to read. His doctor suggested Darwin.

Instead of dying at fifty-five he suddenly got so interested in life that he got well and strong again. He read Karl Marx. That opened even wider vistas to this old man who had spent his best days in the gloom of a cathedral. He was all afire with excitement about the "revelations" he found in these books. So he wrote a book called *Communism and Christianity* especially for the benefit of his fellow bishops whom he believed to be learned and honest men. He was sure that if the great truths of evolution and the materialistic interpretation of

history were pointed out to them they would all become practical workers for the beautiful society which Jesus had envisioned but hadn't given very explicit instructions for creating.

Bishop Brown was rather surprised when it gradually dawned on him that the other bishops were too comfortable in their fat, easy jobs to go with him on this new crusade of making the church over

Drawing by Art Young



The Atmosphere Changed

to fit into the age of science and social revaluations. He was quite hurt when he discovered that they chose at first to ignore him, and when newspaper publicity made that impossible, to oust him from the church. They asked him to resign. But he wouldn't, and his refusal to get out of the church, even when they tried and condemned him for heresy, makes one of the most hilarious comedies in

the history of religious thought. What a situation!—A communist bishop "boring from within" the Protestant Episcopal Church!

The bishops said Brown was a heretic, but the House of Bishops in congress could not agree on a definition of heresy. The bishops agreed that Brown was unorthodox, but many of the most intelligent among them were not exactly orthodox either; then where, asked Bishop Brown, does orthodoxy end and unorthodoxy begin? The bishops wouldn't say. So the trial became a rollicking farce because Bishop Brown was being tried for a crime that no one would name. And it began to dawn on the newspaper men who covered the trial that the Court of Bishops was being not quite honest and not quite brave, and that the Episcopal Church dared not face a statement of the beliefs which it expected its laity blindly to accept. In fact, Bishop Brown had the House of Bishops by the tail, and *My Heresy* is the exceedingly funny story of how he twisted it and tied it into a knot which hasn't been untied to this day.

Bishop Brown is over seventy-two years old now. But he is more active than he was at fifty-two. He recently finished a coast to coast tour, speaking before radical and labor audiences. Here in New York he has been one of the most fiery speakers in the struggle of the furriers' union for rank and file democracy. How this seventy-two-year-old youth must shame our tired radicals!

THE QUEEN IS DEAD

Juarez and Maximilian, by Franz Werfel. Translation by Ruth Langner. Published for the Theatre Guild by Simon and Schuster. \$1.25.

AND the Empress Carlotta is dead, poor woman, and that is the end of the stale old story of the last Mexican Empire. This play of Werfel's that the Theatre Guild chose as a suitable ornament for this new theatre, where the aim seems to be to put on plays picked not to distract the audience's attention from the period splendors of interior decoration, was very sensibly rejected by the New York public who knew nothing about "the ill-fated imperial pair" and cared less. It was successful in Vienna because it evoked a nursery legend. But in New York it is only the pampered few, victims of European childhoods or Belgian nursemaids, who could remember

the shiver they got as kids from the tales of the mad lady in black rolling on the carpet at the Pope's feet, of Maximilian, with whiskers out of drawings by du Maurier, standing up against a wall to be shot by the treacherous Mexicans, of Carlotta's burning a palace at Terveuren full of specimens of crude rubber and Kaffir corn and gris-gris brought back by Leopold from his slaveholdings in the Congo. The story is horribly stale and full of painful meaninglessness like a faded daguerrotype found in an attic. For Pete's sake let's have no more of this theatre that's nothing but an attempt to crawl back into grandmother's beaded bag.

John Dos Passos.

* * *

Philosophy — the spiritual arm of the proletariat—finds in the proletariat its secular arm.

Karl Marx

HIGH BROW VS. LOW BROW

Broadway. A Play, by Phillip Dunning and George Abbott. Doran. \$2.00.

White Wings. A Play, by Phillip Barry. Boni and Liveright. \$2.00.

Broadway: A hardboiled comedy in the New York patois, concerned with bootleggers, night-club hounds, hoofers, dicks, gunmen, and a pure chorus girl, who is more sinned against than sinning.

A slick and swift play built on the latest American models, every brass part shiny, every point clicking like a perfect machine.

The play has earned a million dollars. It is what the American city knows and wants. For better or worse, it is genuine and modern.

The American city is as hard, money-mad, dirty and tough as this play. This is the tabloid come to life before the proscenium arch. It is the news of the day—its only merit.

White Wings, however, is very literarious, delicate and like Barry. (The jacket proudly makes this claim.) It is all about a fantastic family of street-cleaners, who are opposed to autos and the machine age.

The lack of grammar and moral and esthetic yearning in *Broadway* would make a Shakespearian scholar retch in a bucket, but *White Wings* has the best manners in the world.

It is airy and gay, and reminds one of the tall, well-fed, perfect

youths in raccoon coats one used to see in the old days on Boston streets, Harvard aristocrats on a spree.

They were living on the big checks from home, and were airy and gay too, as if the whole world were a kind of football game.

Their pathetic attempts to be vulgar, their bookish persiflage and refined locutions and broad a's, even when protesting against the walloping of some lowbrow Irish barkeep; their humor, snobbish and childish, like that of lady-slummers, their total misconception of everything real in American life.

Every character in *White Wings* speaks as if he had received this Harvard literarious education. The author has taken the biggest theme in America and made it thin as a joke in a college humorous weekly. One demands more of a writer than good breeding, and that is all Mr. Barry seems to have. It is the kind of play those who enjoy *Broadway* think of as highbrow.

But it is not highbrow. It is merely collegiate. I prefer *Broadway* to this kind of thing, but not forever. For great playwrights will yet rise out of the mass-life of America, out from the workers, and they will have guts, brains and imagination. They will tell us what America is really like, and where it is going. Neither of these plays tells us much more than can be found in a tabloid or in the *Harvard Literary Monthly*.

Michael Gold

REVIEWERS REVIEWED

Oil! by Upton Sinclair. A. & C. Boni. \$2.50.

THE public, in its self-assertion against all men of more than average endowments, claims two prescriptive rights. It expects, in the first place, from every author of considerable merit, a certain degree of nuttiness. It requires him, in the give and take of daily life, to exhibit a distinct lack of commonsense, by way of propitiatory offering to the general resentment caused by his superiorities, whatever they may be. A respected public, furthermore, refuses to credit any man with more than one talent. These privileges of immemorial standing have both been treated slightly and despitefully by Upton Sinclair, with the result that the critics and the newspapers, for twenty years and longer, have turned to him an almost unbroken hostile front. The exasperating good sense of the man, his propagandistic ability, his practical way of expounding rudi-

ments to the unschooled masses are offensive to every rightly constituted mind when facing genius. Still more offensive, to be sure, to the Babbity (and there is nearly always one Babbitt more on earth than everyone thinks) is his monstrous pretension to be at one and the same time an acute analyst of Capitalist society and a poet—though, come to think of it, how one can be an encyclopedic analyst of Capitalist society without being a poet, is difficult to conceive.

Now if Sinclair were cranky and irascible, perhaps the public would forgive him for scoring in both capacities—but his incorrigibly sweet temper does not offer even that much of a sin-offering to a justly offended Philistia.

What a splendid opus *Oil!* must be to conquer under such handicaps, is patent. The book is the product of an almost flawless synthesis of the two chief ingredients of Sinclair's mentality—the analytic and the poetic. It is too late in the day to write a review of

this epic of the acquisitive society, but not too late to review, in a few words, the reviewers. Their unity front against Sinclair, in view of his latest achievement, is scattered to the winds. Most of them hail *Oil!* as an extraordinary panorama of our national patriciate. Even the stately *Nation*, constitutionally averse to Sinclair's propagandistic hollering, joins now the chorus of congratulation. A handful of ultra-conservative reviewers have written a minority opinion, denouncing the author's

coarseness and his disregard of truth as they see the truth. It seems that Sinclair (like Dickens) cannot delineate a gentleman. Also, that he isn't one himself. The chiefest of his denouncers is Van Wyck Brooks, who suffers from delusions of critical grandeur. But apart from a few accents of screechy discord, the general reception of this new proof of Sinclair's Balzac-like diligence and poetic insight has been an unusually cordial one. *Macte, puer, virtute tua!*

James Fuchs

SAVE THE EMPIRE!

The Public Mind: Its Disorders: Its Exploitation, by Norman Angell. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$3.00.

THIS book tells how George F. Babbitt operates his government—in his spare time, about 10 minutes a week; how professors and sky pilots whip up the furies of moralistic nationalism; how professional patriots bark at Reds, Pinks and Foreigners; how phobias and atrocities are exploited; how the tabloid press—and the *New York Times*—play on the lowest jingoistic impulses of the common man; and what a frightful mess life under the profit system can be in spite of the clear and heroically sane writings of Mr. Angell, the premier and veteran internationalist.

The so-called and phantom Public Mind is shown by Mr. Angell to be in a pretty terrible state of chaos. He presents examples of its madness as revealed in an election; during the War; and at the Peace. To correct the disorder the writer suggests "educating more consciously for Social Judgment, for the art, that is, of thinking about common facts correctly."

But Mr. Angell does not include in the category of correctness the Marxian analysis. Like other smart British liberals he holds his nose in the presence of what Mr. Keynes calls "the boorish proletariat." These gentlemen want—oh so desperately—to save the Empire, the American Empire as well as the British. They want the men of property—and alleged culture—to be sensible and not set their governments to fighting with other profit grasping governments. They should be intelligent, says Angell, and form a United States of capitalist Europe. They should realize international class solidarity against the workers and thus avoid—of course with a minimum of coercion—the revolutionary outbreaks that are bound to come if imperialists will not, please, be reasonable.

No matter how much one may disagree with Mr. Angell's liberalism one may gain by some of his

observations on education and pedagogical methods. He attacks all formulas, catch words, acquiescence, meaningless phrases, slogans, the desire for "certitude," taboos, conventions, traditions, propaganda, conformities, individual inertia, laziness and other sins of most of us. He attacks them however because he hopes to prick the Babbitts into thoughts about public questions. Which thoughts will, he contends, save our present industrial society and ward off successful revolt.

The book can be read with profit by all those who pretend to believe in democracy or profess to believe in any kind of dictatorship. But like other books by Angell (*Why Freedom Matters* was his best, and much more compact and less repetitive) it leaves one with the feeling that the world is insane, that possibly Mr. Angell and one or two other wholly dispassionate publicists are the only ones immune from the periodical stampedes. One needs to have seen workers' democracy in operation in the Soviet Union to read this book and escape a feeling of futility in spite of Mr. Angell's "constructive" remedies. Where the workers are their own economic masters they are subject to many of the same forces that exist in a capitalist society. But they have a real opportunity to control those forces and shape them intelligently toward a better and freer life.

Robert Dunn.

NEW MASSES
ARTISTS' and WRITERS'

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WE HAVE A KINDNESS —

By JAMES FUCHS

History of Socialist Thought, by Harry W. Laidler, Ph.D. Crowell. \$3.50.

UNION HILL is not exactly another Gaurisankar, but compared with the Hoboken flatlands it looks like an impressive elevation. Dr. Laidler's volume on the *History of Socialist Thought* couldn't for a moment sustain comparison with the best continental work on similar lines, but considered as a specimen of post-bellum Socialist scholarship, it may pass for a respectable performance, for, with all its many and serious faults, it bears creditable testimony to the author's tireless assiduity and his serious endeavor to master a difficult subject in all its intricate ramifications. The present reviewer is not inclined to be captious. Dr. Laidler is distinctly a superior type of a S. P. place-man—his diligence, if nothing else, would alone be sufficient to lift him above the level of the soft-berth lads. Macaulay, in the lead-off to one of his reviews proclaimed, with somewhat elephantine benevolence: "We have a kindness for Mr. Leigh Hunt." Well, we have a kindness for every honest person, working for the Socialist cause according to his best lights, but Dr. Laidler's volume happens to be the best of its kind in English and, at the same time, a rather poor performance—as will be briefly shown herein below. That creates a peculiar situation: the book is pretty sure, sooner or later, to go through a second edition. So it becomes incumbent upon an honest reviewer to point out the *remediable* defects for the benefit of the author—though the *History* has its irremediable faults as well.

I

Chiefest among the irremediable faults come under the heads of scope and treatment. In his striving after inclusiveness, the author has totally neglected to pay heed to the boundary-line between *Ur-Kommunismus* (meaning, the primitive Communisms of Antiquity and the Middle Ages) and Socialism. Under Socialism, the common usage of all modern languages understands either a society producing for use erected upon the ruins of a previous one based upon free industrial and commercial competition, or a movement leading to such a succession. It is plain then, that there can be no Socialism, either as a state of society or as a movement where there has been no unshackled competition, and consequently no Socialist thought. But to Dr. Laidler's superficial eclect-

icism any real or projected transformation of society upon radical lines is Socialism. As a consequence, his book turned lop-sided: he could neither ignore the long and intricate history of *Ur-Kommunismus*, within the terms of his too comprehensive definition, nor could he do justice to it in a volume of 700 pages, most of them, in the very nature of affairs, devoted to modern times. He compromises, by huddling together, within a narrow space, haphazard information about an arbitrarily selected list of pre-Capitalist specimens of this and that form of social protest (*Amos, De Civitate Dei, Plato's Republic, the Communist Heretics, etc.*)—and then proceeds with his subject proper, after wasting space and dulling the edge of the reader's attention by skating in wide circles upon the thin ice of half-understood historical situations.

II

This too inclusive scope makes automatically for wrong treatment. Dr. Laidler's book—partly because of his mismanagement of available space—is not a *garden* of Socialist or Communist thought—it is a *herbarium*, with the flowers dried, pressed and odorless, because detached from the economic and cultural soil they sprang from. To quote three instances out of at least half a hundred available without fault-finding search.

1. To judge from his initial pages, he seems to be completely ignorant of the fact, that the social protest of the Hebrew prophets was an agonized cry for an impossible Unity Front between the Bedouin tribes of Judea and Transjordan and the pampered, urbanized Northerners in the face of a terrible, ever-present Assyrian menace. If not ignorant himself of this breach between two stages of Hebrew civilization, Dr. Laidler leaves his readers in total ignorance thereof—though a reference to such common library assets as Kent, Hastings, or the pertinent passages of the *Encyclopedia Biblica* would have brought enlightenment to him and his readers.

2. Not the slightest effort is made to explain to the readers the political and economic backgrounds of such revolts as, for instance, that of Grachus Babeuf, (persistently misspelled Babeuf in Laidler's text, and not mentioned by his revolutionary surname at all, though the *choice* of the name is highly characteristic of the man and his times.) That Babeuf's entire ideology, like that of all class and group protagonists of the French Revolution, was Graeco-Roman, and that the Spartan aus-

terity of his Utopia was simply the reflex of conditions in an age when machine-production with its possibilities of comfort for the multitude was not as yet developed, did not occur to Dr. Laidler. In place of any such live and thought-provoking reference to a definite historical soil, he treats his readers to the following conclusion (p. 58): "While all of Babeuf's proposals cannot be dismissed as impracticable, the modern idealist will find his utopia on the whole cheerless and uninteresting." Uninteresting, yes, when plucked in this herbarium-fashion from its native soil—otherwise, the Spartan formulas of St. Just, Babeuf, and the Egaux are a fascinating chapter of one of the most colorful episodes of human history.

3. Not a word about the economic and political developments in early and mid-Victorian England that made the British variety of "Christian Socialism" a form of *Tory reaction* against Capitalist progress! Instead of a brief but luminous account of the *Why and Wherefore*, anecdotes about and tirades from Kingsley, Maurice, etc., with the one and only giant among the Tory Socialists, John Ruskin, left out of consideration! As mentioned before, these instances of the author's talent for making highly interesting topics look stale and uninteresting, *by the simple process of abstraction and detachment from backgrounds*, could be heaped *in infinitum*. To heap them, however, would be futile and counter to my regard for Dr. Laidler. Turning my back, after brief mention, upon the irremediable defects of the volume under review, I'll now advert to those which may well be done away with in a second edition.

III

Dr. Laidler's *History of Socialist Thought* is an American compilation, published by an American firm, primarily for the information of American readers. *Less than two pages of seven hundred are devoted to American developments from the founding of the Socialist Labor Party to our days!!* It is true that American contributions to modern Socialist thought have been relatively scanty—but, of course, they can't be summed up, however tersely, in two pages! There should be a reason for this obtrusively conspicuous omission, but the reason isn't mentioned in the preface, or elsewhere in the context. Conjecture is therefore in order:

Both the renegade seceders from the Socialist Party and the moral

survivors of 1917-1919 have voluminously contributed to Socialist literature and their contributions have not been *altogether* trashy either, though much of their output belongs to the garbage-heap of worthless prints. One of the worst turn coats among the Socialist Party dignitaries of 1917 wrote, in 1902, the greatest social satire since the days of Dean Swift, containing a minute and most remarkable prediction of social developments in the United States—a prediction since amply verified by the event. The author's moral decomposition is no excuse for not mentioning his opus magnum in a *History of Socialist thought*. The author of the *Novum Organon* and *De Augmentis Scientiarum* was a worse scamp than Mr. Ghent—yet any history of philosophy omitting to mention him, on that account, would make itself a laughing stock. Besides, if the mentally decayed and unidea'd *Mister Ghent* of 1927 is good enough to be acceptable as a contributor to the *Forward* and *The New Leader*, then, surely, the brilliant and well informed *Comrade Ghent* should be good enough to get some sort of a mention in a *History of Socialist Thought*. He does not—neither do the concise Simons or the prolix Walling, the interesting Charles Edward or the tedious John Spargo—though, truth to tell, Brother Laidler is unhandsome enough to use his book on Marx extensively; without mentioning the man and his activities—except in a shamefaced bibliographical note. Does Laidler consider the Socialist Party the *partie honteuse* of the international movement, whose intellectual luminaries must not be mentioned, except in a bibliographical whisper? Hardly. For a moment, I was inclined to the following conjecture. Ghent, Simons and two or three other celebrities of the pre-war days are not mentioned, lest the reader, after making inquiries, should join the chorus that pursued De Quincey's hero:

*Et interrogatum est ab omnibus:
Ubi est ille Toad-in-the-hole?
Et responsum est ab omnibus:
Non est inventus!*

But that surmise won't hold water, for Laidler does not only omit mention of the morally dead—he omits mention of the living as well. As for instance: not a word about James Oneal—the only historian of note who still adheres to the Socialist Party, and not a word either about Upton Sinclair, that indefatigable, marvellously gifted and persistent anatomist of American Capitalist society!!

Whatever Dr. Laidler's reasons

AUGUST, 1927

may be for these omissions—he would do well to supply a competent American chapter in a second edition.

Like a courteous gentleman, Dr. Laidler acknowledged heavy obligations, in his preface, to a number of assistants. Not much beholden, I should think. The fact is, that the good Doctor (probably confining his choice within strict coterie bounds) has chanced upon as ignorant and incompetent a set of technical and editorial proofreaders as could be found for love or money. His proofreaders show a perfect mania for misspelling well-known names: *Udenich* for Judenich, *Howell* (index) for Howells, *Hochberg* for Hoehberg, *Domniges* for Doenniges, *Babeuf* for Baboeuf, and so forth, along an endless string of notabilities. Where Dr. Laidler's pen slips they

never correct, though the lapse doesn't make sense: Lassalle's *Heracit* the *Obscure* figures in the text as *Heracitius and Obscure*. Prince Racowitza is turned into a *Count* Racowitza, Treves, the native town of Marx, a celebrated *northwestern* centre of the Rhinelands, is turned into a city of *southeastern* Germany, Spargo's and Lockwood's mistranslations are faithfully copied in half a dozen passages, scarcely a single quotation from French or German authors, taken at secondhand, has been verified by consulting the originals (among them such easily accessible pamphlets as the Engels treatise on utopian and scientific socialism)—in short, whatever helping hands could do to diminish the scholarship of Dr. Laidler's book, has been done.

James Fuchs

LASCIVIOUS PAMPHLET

Mexico: Bolshevism the Menace. Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus. New Haven, Conn.

THOSE who still hesitate to judge the situation in Mexico should long ago have cast aside their doubts. The reports of American correspondents, it is true, are usually so varied in opinion, so conflicting in detail, that the average newspaper reader finds it difficult to recognize the truth, particularly if he is unacquainted with the economic and political history of Mexico. That excuse, however, really does not hold. The Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus issued, some time ago, a pamphlet containing facts that enable the layman to take a positive stand. The authenticity of those disclosures, of course, cannot be questioned.

The cover of the brochure portrays a blood-dripping hand, labeled "Bolshevism The Menace," about to clutch what is apparently a cathedral. On the second page may be found the gratifying announcement that the "Knights of Columbus campaign against the introduction of Bolshevism on this Continent has been notably successful. The people are awakening to the peril that is brewing in Mexico. They are beginning to see through the smoke screen of Red propaganda. They realize, now, that Calles and his associates are engaged in a project more potent for evil, more destructive of liberty and justice and human happiness than any mere religious persecution could possibly be."

There follow a number of testimonials by "non-partisan" observers to the general viciousness of the present Mexican government. Lurid tales of the harrowing experiences that innocent priests have recently undergone vie with quoted editorials from such papers as the

Wall Street Journal, *New York City Commercial*, *Riverside (California) Enterprise*, and the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in condemning Calles. The confiscatory clauses of the Mexican Constitution are scored. The Russian ambition, heretofore unsuspected, to set up an association of radical republics in Central America is offered as the inspiration of all the turmoil in Nicaragua. It is noted that in Yucatan divorce may be given for the asking and that birth control advice is freely given. "We have his (Calles') henchmen crying out that their flag is the red flag and that they have come to proclaim class warfare. We have murder on a large scale officialized by the government. We have robbery and plunder made legitimate exercises of the government." We are assured that Calles deserves no credit for the fact that there are hundreds of academies, schools, and colleges in Mexico. Fear (in bold type), finally, is expressed that

Mexico may some day be the cause of our destruction.

On the twenty-fourth page the machinations of Calles' Bureau of Education are laid bare. "Wholesale prostitution and the ideal of free love:—these are the objectives of Calles, Morones, Puig, Leon, and their brothers in viciousness. . . . They force on the teaching corps of both sexes attendance at illustrated lectures on sex hygiene. The birth control pamphlets of Margaret Sanger are thrust upon teachers and students. The type of instruction now being given in the schools is such that a growing number of young girls are being ruined every year. Naturally, we cannot go further in citing cases of this sort. Even in the elementary school the diabolism of these men drives them to demand that every sort of intimate matter be explained, and this process, coupled with the attack on religion and the clergy, stains the innocence of childhood and arouses precocious passions and worse. The esthetic dances inaugurated by Vasconcelos in his mania for Greek revivals, and carried on directly by the Department are little more or less than a wholesale slave market. They consist of lascivious performances of girls and young women before madly applauding audiences intoxicated with lust."

After that juicy bit, of course, nothing remained but an appeal for money. On the last page it is announced that the "Knights of Columbus is raising one million dollars to combat Bolshevism. . . . Knights of Columbus will contribute to this great campaign. But it is the aim of the Order to give non-Knights and non-Catholics opportunity to subscribe." They probably got their million, too; but not one red cent to curb the activities of Sinclair and Standard Oil.

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But what makes the book "smart"? Because it tells everything that can be told, with a breathless "I dare you

to stop me!" attitude. All right, let everything be told—but not as if the telling of it was something fine and brave. It is the viewpoint of the *Cradle Snatchers* heaved up into "highbrow" art. The real basis of this 'smartness' is a denial of everything that is natural, durable or real.

The most that can be said of the writing of the book is that it suits the material in hand—it is swift, cold, grammatical and sure. As a document it may be interesting to the psychologist, and for those who have a taste for the murkier details—the book cannot escape the atmosphere surrounding a clinic or a psychopathic ward. As literature it has no value or interest at all.

Clinton Simpson

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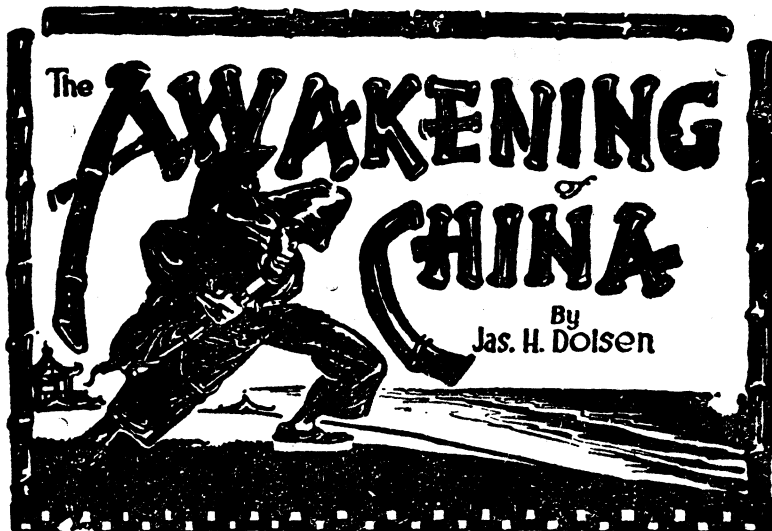
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From the title of the book one might infer that the stories of this "unique yearly anthology" were gleaned from the world's harvest of short-stories for 1926. Upon investigation, however, one discovers that they represent only the alleged best stories reprinted from American magazines and syndicated to a number of newspapers over the country, with the *New York World* at the top of the list. These stories, sixteen in number we are informed, were "selected by seventeen famous editors."

If the fame of the editors is somewhat shrouded in mystery, the authors represented, almost all of them, are very well known, as manufacturers of commercial fiction. The "famous" editors clamor for stories to harmonize with their advertisements, and these well-known writers manufacture the stories very understandingly: their products are carefully calculated to encourage the sale of chocolate-coated laxatives. The pseudo-cynical F. Scott Fitzgerald, in the company of adolescent Booth Tarkington, infantile Peter B. Kyne, W. C. Tuttle, are presented with such color smearers and tear-squeezers as Achmed Abdullah, Lois Montross, etc.

There are only three stories in this "unique" collection that deserve mention: *The Lost Speech*, by Honore Willsie Morrow, is an excellent story—too good to appear in the poor company of *The World's Best Short Stories of 1926*. *Six Reasons Why*, by Richard Connell, is good. It has a purpose. A literary purpose. Last to deserve special mention in an entirely different sense is *The Traffic Squad*, by Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, which, I am certain, must have been an insult even to those advertisements which it was calculated to adorn. *Yosief Gaer.*



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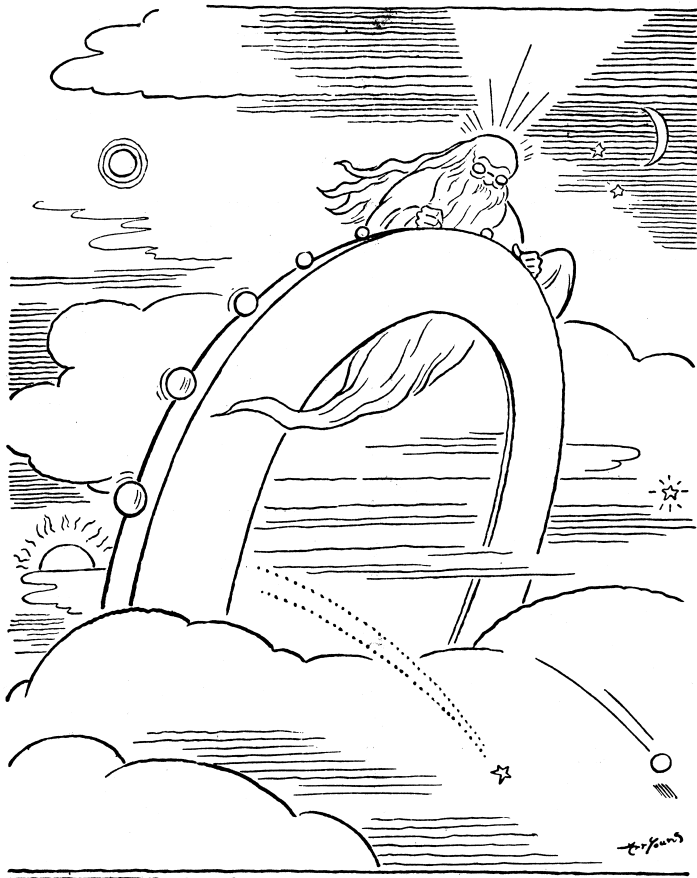
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