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OUR LETTER BOX

DEAR NEW MASSES:

May I say, without seeming invidious, that I think some of the articles in THE NEW MASSES are too long for a magazine of its kind and size? And I cannot make out what the pictures mean (Art Young and a few others excepted), and that to my mind need an explanation. Not being an artist, I do not know to what school they belong—if impressionistic or cubistic, or some new name I never heard of.

St. Petersburg, Fla.

Agnes C. Watson.

DEAR NEW MASSES:

Let Agnes C. Watson seem invidious. What does it matter? I hate long winded articles, but I see no reason why the NEW MASSES, in spite of its date in history, should deliver itself always in tabloid snippets. Just suppose some month there was a ten thousand word communication of some sort, throwing light on the times we live in, would the editors have to turn it down saying, "No, our customers like their stuff in little easy packages." Until such noble, hefty contribution comes along, give us variety, but warn the readers to prepare their digestions against a day when the magazine might be issued in one big swig.

Tell Agnes Watson in particular to keep on looking at the pictures no matter if it's hard. Just keep on looking. Forget the name they go by. Tell her some of them don't mean anything. That will ease her a little. But some of them do, and if she has any curiosity just to keep on looking and she'll find out which ones.

Ernestine Evans.

DEAR NEW MASSES:

Many many thanks for your timely reminder of October 17th. I seemed to have quite forgotten that a journal like yours, with the mission that it has set before itself, would not be the kind to find financial support or favor among American plutocracy but that such support must come essentially and only from the ranks of the workers. The NEW MASSES is a milestone and flaming beacon in an era of putrid and vile journalism and literature that is conspicuous for its sickening servility to the coal, steel and oil kings.

No! NEW MASSES must never be surrendered to the all-devouring greed of bloated capitalism.

Let every American worker that holds the interest of his class to

OUR LETTER BOX

heart rush to the help of NEW MASSES to enable it to continue its mighty task—*to lay the foundation of a new, clean and invigorating proletarian literature and journalism—.*

Fraternally,

Nov. 14, 1927 *I. Amdur.*

Dear Mike Gold:

I see by the November issue of the NEW MASSES that your opinion of intellectuals is growing more temperate, and I am not much pleased thereby. I am an intellectual myself, perched on the dizziest peak of metaphysic, and this enables me not only to condemn the universe and other intellectuals, but also myself.

Every intellectual is a living synonym for contempt and every philosopher is great in the measure he can conceal this contempt. Action, of whatever kind and hue, is the most contemptible, as the unconscious ideal of every intellectualist is that asceticism described by the ivory tower, or Nirvana.

I feel, however, a contempt for this attitude of contempt, and I enjoy every assault you have hitherto aimed at American intellectuals. You represent to me the young and fresh viewpoint that always springs from a feeling and intuition as yet unawed by the technic of knowledge; the only god intellectuals worship.

When you come to respect the American intellectuals on their valuation—to enjoy their backslapping and being a Best Seller—you ought to resign from the NEW MASSES in favor of a more ingenuous enthusiastic newcomer.

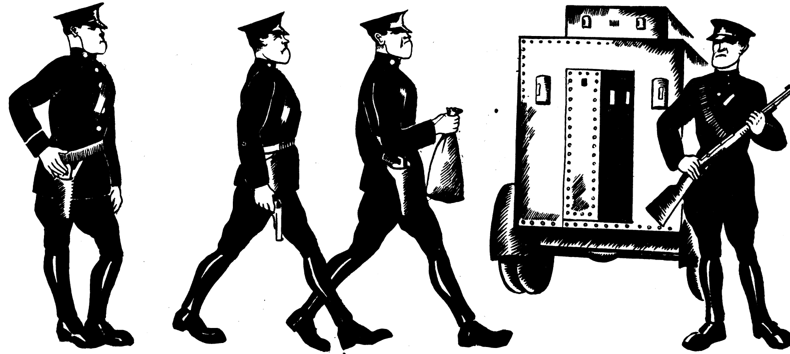
But I hope you keep up your vigorous questioning of the intellectual pose of omniscience.

Yours for more capitalists and cops,

Louis Siegel.

P.S.: You example Lenin and others as "action intellectuals." In my view, however, the word "intellectual" describes a mind perpetually aware of the two opposite extremes of every idea, afraid to commit itself by any act because of its finality to thought. Lenin intellectualized the technic of revolution better than Marx, another technical intellectualist. When you abandon pure idea, you become a technicist, and American "intellectualists" are such because they are still in the fuzzy stage of "pure" idea.

Cleveland, Ohio.



Drawing by William Siegel

Mr. Dollar Takes a Ride

NEW MASSES

VOLUME 3 JANUARY, 1928 NUMBER 9

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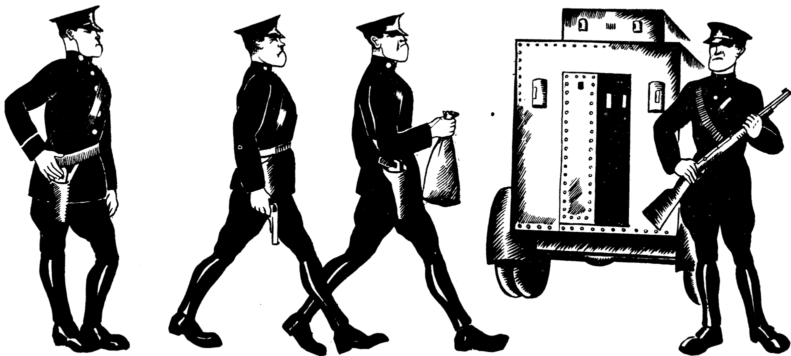

Drawing by William Siegel

Mr. Dollar Takes a Ride

NEW MASSES

VOLUME 3 JANUARY, 1928 NUMBER 9

Courtesy of Our Gallery *From a Etching by Peggy Bacon*

THE PATRONESS

WHY DO THE RUSSIANS WORK?

By STUART CHASE

IN 1921, Russian industry collapsed to 17 per cent of the 1913 output. Since the inauguration of the New Economic Policy in that year, however, output has increased regularly and remarkably. Sometime in 1926, the total volume of manufactured goods by weight exceeded the 1913 pre-war total. In 1927, according to the careful figures of the State Planning Commission — popularly known as the Gosplan—industrial production will be from eight to ten per cent above 1913. The increase is now in the neighborhood of 15 per cent per year. It is probably safe to say that no other country in the world is increasing its industrial output at such a high relative rate.

This does not mean that Russia is a Utopia, or that the standard of living is high, or that material conditions are satisfactory. Far from it. It simply means that Russians are producing more and more goods every year, and steadily improving an industrial structure that god knows was no great shakes to start with, and that is still far, far below standards of output per man hour in American industry.

The American visitor is somewhat at a loss to understand what motivates this astonishing relative increase; what makes the Russians work? Save for the diminishing number of private manufacturers and traders, there is no incentive furnished by the hope of private profit in the whole mechanism at all. Why do the wheels keep turning faster and faster? It is quite contrary to our accepted rules for industrial behavior; indeed enough to make old Adam Smith himself stir in his grave.

A close inspection, however, reveals a fairly elaborate series of incentives which have displaced the incentive of private profit, yet give substantially similar behavior reactions. Profit as a mechanism in Western countries of course, never applies to anything but management. No industrial worker the world around—save in a few rare cases of genuine profit-sharing—has the slightest interest in his employer's balance sheet. What makes the manager of a Russian factory strive to increase production, lower costs, introduce more efficiency?

For one thing the manager instead of being driven by a group of hungry stockholders, as is so often the case in America, is driven by a hungry government. This government is Argus eyed, it is informed by battalions of statistics and by a trusted member of the Communist Party whom I found close to the manager in every factory I visited. Oftentimes this agent is himself the Manager, and to date he needs no further incentive that the burning zeal to create a new heaven and a new earth which flames in the breast of every good Communist. It is something —this flame—that one has to see to appreciate. There is nothing like it anywhere in America, probably nothing like it anywhere in the world today. One would have to go back to Cromwell, or Mohamet, or St. Paul. In its presence, dollar grabbing or ruble grabbing seems a weak and clumsy instrument. Will it last? I do not know. All I can report is that after 10 lean years, it still scorches the face of the curious onlooker—if indeed it does not burn and abase his very soul. So must the flaming sword of Allah have come over the plains from Mecca. No Communist in Russia is entitled to draw a salary greater than 225 rubles a month—a bare living of $112, with sometimes housing space provided. At any hour of the day or night a telegram may call him to an industrial post on the Pacific, on the Arctic, in a trackless desert. And he goes . . . Human nature is a more complicated thing than as comprehended in the doctrines of the Manchester School.

For the manager who is not a member of the Party, a financial incentive is provided, but within rigorous limits. He may be paid up to 600 rubles a month or $300. Very few achieve this lordly rate, however. What keeps him going primarily, is the very human desire to "beat yesterday", to join in the grand game of pulling Russian industry out of a sink hole. His face lightens, his personality visibly expands as he shows you his charts and curves with the line leading ever upward. He measures himself against the Gosplan quota, he takes pride in beating it; he takes pride in beating out another plant in the same industry. The chief of the Ukrainian Sugar Trust chuckled as he showed us an operating statement which carried more profit than the trust to the east. Managers get no profit, but they like to keep out of the red, and as high in the black as they can. Also there is an elaborate system of honors, decorations and modest cash prizes for new inventions, new processes, improvements in operating method. The engineer of the Port of Odessa pointed out a pair of new grain loaders, invented by himself, with ill-concealed satisfaction and told of the favorable notices in the press, and the welcome 300 rubles.

When this period of rapid expansion — the journey up from nothing to something—is over, and the curves flatten from mountain contours to something more in the nature of a plateau — then will come the acid test. But the plateau has not been reached, the game is still universal and bracing, and other than mercenary incentives seem for the present to suffice.

In respect to the worker, I noted decidedly more interest in the job than is displayed by the normal American factory hand. More interest and less tangible efficiency. The Russians are a patient folk, but not precisely broken to the machine age. They have little genius for organizing, for contriving, for speeding up. They are pathetically eager to learn these habits! they will sit up all night to talk about them; they will gather eagerly around the American visitor ten deep in the shop to talk about them. But they have not the Yankee knack. The tradition of the East is all against it.

Meanwhile they do the best they can. Every factory has a "production committee" composed of workers whose duty it is to cooperate with the management in promoting efficiency. Nor is it a paper committee. New suggestions are constantly being forwarded. We saw the tabulated lists in factory after factory. The workers have really been converted to the idea of "rationalization" and mass production; they really feel that they are the owners of the industrial structure—as indeed they are—and that upon them depends an increase in living standards, and the meeting of the challenge of the hitherto superior efficiency of the West.

They have accepted an almost universal system of piecework which automatically provides a tremendous financial incentive, even as it does in the West. They watch each other for slackness—and woe betide him that is caught. They know where their industry fits into the general industrial picture, and what they have to do to meet the Gosplan yard stick. Their intelligence as a working group is remarkable, even as their daily output—while gaining all the time—is deplorably low judged by Western standards. But as a system of applied incentives, the Russian method affects the mind of the worker, particularly the younger man and woman, far more profoundly than any other I have seen in operation. It is not inconceivable that this mental stimulus may some day break the ancient working habits of the East.

THE DRINKERS

Except for their clothing and the room,
Gonzetti's basement on MacDougal,
The men are a painting by Franz Hals,
"Flemish Drinkers" or "Burghers of Antwerp."
They have a speakeasy here, however,
Four men drinking gin, three of them drunk.
Outside is the street that sleeps and screams,
Beyond it are other sleeping streets,
And above us, above the paper'd ceiling,
Above Gonzetti's private roof
Is a black tremendous sky that crawls.
They have a Village speakeasy here,
One curtained room with ochre lights,
Four men drinking gin, three of them drunk.
Four new men are born in their brains
That would not show in a painting by Hals.
They do not hear each other. Now
They listen to voices in themselves,
Mad with hot, bright sanity.
Hals could not show Gonzetti's room
Reeling and stretching out in space.
Hals could not show their brilliant eyes
Watching a thing beyond the walls
Step from air and beckon them
To follow through streets, and nights, and days.
They have a basement speakeasy here.
Gonzetti, for three dollars cash,
Is giving the drinkers ten thousand things
Not Hals or any man could show.

—KENNETH FEARING.

ARMISTICE DAY — LONDON

SOME people have waited since dawn watching the frost, that had been bright in the moonlight, melt from the pavements in the morning sun, huddling together for warmth. No need to huddle any longer though, for by ten o'clock the crowd was dense, close packed and solid all the way up Whitehall into Parliament Square and New Scotland Yard. The cold wind bit to the bone in spite of the sun.

"Christ! get off my foot, can't yer?" An undersized man with rheumy eyes and a two-days beard hissed the words through a gap in his teeth. The crowd round the Cenotaph swayed backwards. "Sorry," I said, "they pushed me on to you. This is the biggest crowd yet." He moved his mouth about but his eyes did not smile. He seemed surprised that anyone should speak to him. "That's right, miss, it is a bit of a knock-out. Got caught in it myself, as yer might say. Put my medals up, thought I'd have a bit of a beano, but yer can't get out of here. Out there I was in the bloody Bantams. Clean out o' luck, though, never got a scratch. Not so much as trench feet even. Clean out o'luck. Not that I wanted to come home mind yer." He began to sing waveringly,

"What d'yer want wiv eggs and 'am,
When yer got plum and apple jam."..

The woman next to him edged away.

Again the crowd surged back uncontrollably. Over their heads swung the colors of the Household Cavalry. The little man was in trouble again. "Keep off my bloody corns, can't yer, there's nothing to see but a bloody box of soldiers out for a walk."

Big Ben struck eleven and guns in the Horse Guards Parade barked once. In the stillness a gentle whirr of pigeons' wings sounded loud and boisterous. No one moved.

The Bantam whispered, "Did yer hear what that was? You have a look in *The Evening News* tonight an it'll tell yer. That was the great heart of London ceasing to beat, that was." He looked proudly at me as he rolled the words on his tongue, spat quickly and hobbled away.

* * *

She was leaning heavily against the big mirror in the "Underground" ladies' lavatory. Her face drawn and weary looking, her hat rakishly a little on one side. Her eyes under the swollen red eyelids showed no gleam of brightness.

"This cold is awful, dear," she said in a listless voice, "but the sunshine's a bit of a treat. I been crying all day. Lovely day for the celebrations though. I been in the French Church in Soho. I paid five shillings for a mass. Five shillings, dear. Four brothers killed in France. The church was full. Two old women next to me crying their eyes out. One lost a husband and son, one was over eighty, poor dear. There was a young girl, too, *looked* young she did. The priest come up to her and said, 'Yvonne'—like that, 'Yvonne, I'm going to say your mass now,' and she bursts out sobbing. It made you come over queer. I been crying all day myself. My old mother'll be mad today. Four sons. That young girl she came out of the church with me. She said, 'Brings it back, these celebrations. It brings it back.' She had half a bottle of brandy with her. It seems to steady you."

A thin girl in very high-heeled shoes was busily painting a red mouth onto her chalk white face. The naked electric light emphasized its color. She took up the conversation eagerly. The gas in the geyser hissed an accompaniment.

"I don't mind telling you, I'm done in. Selling Remembrance poppies all day. It's been a lovely day but it makes you think. I said to a gentleman this morning, I said, 'One half the world doesn't know how the other half lives.' 'That's true, miss,' he said, 'that's true, but Time heals.' 'That's right,' I said, 'Time heals,' But it does make you think."

The other woman still leaning heavily against the tiled wall went on in her listless drawling voice, "That young girl in the French Church in Soho said she'd lost all, that's how she put it, she'd lost all. I gave the priest five shillings for a mass. I thought, I'll have a mass for the boys and so I gave him five shillings." She pulled up her sleeves, "See these, I got them nursing in a bombed hospital. The rotten pigs—bombing hospitals."

The white-faced poppy-seller craned forward. "Scars!" said the livid red mouth, "Scars! London was a bit rough in the air raids. It makes you think. And nothing to stop another war but a lot of cranks. No one bothering much. But Time heals as that gentleman said and a day like this makes you think." She finished her mouth and pottered quickly up the steps on her unsteady heels.

* * *

In Lyons Corner House mirror after mirror reflected reflections of other mirrors. Light looked like something solid, heat hung in the thick air intensifying the noise of the band. Tobacco clouds dimmed everything. Quick swinging doors, the incessant clatter of crockery, and the hissing of human conversation only seemed to spur the band to further efforts. It beat its way through all the other noises, insistent and thumping,

"Take me- back- to- dear-old- Bli-i-i-ty-pom,
Put- me- once- again- in- London Town- pom-pom."

The man at the next table shouting above it all said, "I know who'll be in town tonight. He wouldn't miss this for anything—Whitaker! If ever the War made anyone, it made Whitaker. My! what a lad! He got his chance then and no mistake about it. He took it. If it hadn't been for the War old Whitaker would still be where I am." There was no trace of envy in his voice, just sheer admiration. His grey head nodded quickly and appreciatively on its thin stalk of a neck. Through the clouds of smoke and heat the triumphant band punched its way into another tune. The "lady" conductor turns quickly, embracing all in a rakish glance. Her boy wags backward and forward in its scanty dress, as she leads her men to victory in,

"Oh tomorrow night, O-oh tomorrow night!
I'll set the town alight!
I've been a good boy for two long years— BUT- *O-OH* tomorrow night!"

* * *

Outside in the clean night air the stars wink above Piccadilly Circus and its multitudes. Flower sellers reap a quick harvest. The murmur of the crowd and the roar of motor buses does not drown the hoarse cries of street hawkers who sell colored pictures of a dying soldier seeing a vision of Christ. "'Ere yer are—'ere yer are—the great sacrifice—tuppence, the great sacrifice—tuppence!"

Winifred Horrabin.

Drawnig by J. C. Orozco

MEXICAN FLAPPER

A thin girl in very high-heeled shoes was busily painting a red mouth onto her chalk white face. The naked electric light emphasized its color. She took up the conversation eagerly. The gas in

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MEXICAN FLAPPER

PAPER BULLETS

By

ART SHIELDS

Drawing by I. C. Orozco

I THINK Jack Bentley was the most picturesque gunman I have known. His silken ties and beautiful Luger gats;* his soft Virginia speech and his graciousness of manner, all lent him a rare quality of gunman de luxe, so seldom seen among the thousands of plug uglies along the railroad sidings and rows of shanties of the soft coal towns.

Bentley should have flourished in the costumed days of the buccaneers, or strutted his stuff with jeweled rapier in Isabella's court. But instead, fate flung this personable thug into Somerset County, Pa., in the early nineteen hundreds, and he was using the lobbies of county seat hotels, or the main streets of Rockefeller mining towns, as the stage for his gunman grand mannerisms when I made his acquaintance during the 1922 strike.

That strike broke him, and a year ago a coal digger reported seeing him in a ball park near Johnstown, keeping the crowds back. It was almost as great a fall from glory as though a gold epauletted colonel had been reduced to K. P.

For Jack Bentley was sitting on top of a county till the newspapermen kidded him out of his prestige. As chief of the flying squadron of the Somerset Coal Operators Association he was field marshal over some 600 deputies, Coal & Iron police, and common mine guards, and large was his fame. Awed barroom gossips whispered of the men he had killed. Bentley himself claimed 12 notches, and even his arch deriders admitted to two, one of them nicked when he stuffed a thirty-eight into a Negro miner's mouth.

It was Jack's very picturesqueness that ruined him; that and his fluency of boasting. His graceful swaggering speech made him such good comic copy that he could not last. A trio of reporters who liked the miners' side of the fight used to sit in at the typewriter in the little office of the Penn Central News, a labor paper in Cresson nearby that the miners' union had taken over. In the daytime they listened to Jack Bentley's yarns and at night they knocked out racv interviews And the labor paper, distributed to nearly every miner in the county by John Brophy's organizers, made Jack Bentley into a funny man.

He lost his prestige, and eventually his job, perhaps the first time a gunman fell before paper bullets.

* * *

Sergeant Freeman was a good cop and the Penn Central News puffed him. He was in charge of the mounted constabulary assigned to Somerset County during the strike and he made the men almost behave. He disciplined some troopers who rode down a miners' parade and an American flag and promised the union it would not happen again. Against the protest of the officers of the Berwind-White Coal Co. he arrested a thug who raped a miner's wife, and at an injunction hearing he was a cracking good witness for the workers. Broad-shouldered, clear-eyed, manly looking, the strikers liked him: and yet a labor newspaperman, who liked his style, refused to take a drink with him, because he was still a cop, and you never can tell what a cop will do if it's his job to do it.

But as the weeks went on, and the newspaperman got better acquainted, he was half sorry that he hadn't taken that drink. A drink, whether of gingerale or rye, is a gesture of good fellowship with cops and reporters, and Freeman seemed worthy of the gesture. Cynics said the sergeant was merely playing for a good job with Pinchot, who was just then winning the Republican nomination for governor in the spring primaries on an unwritten plank, pledging reform of the state police. But Freeman's own explanation seemed genuine: "I have two children in school in Greensburg," he told the reporter; "I don't want the other children to say 'Your father broke the miners' strike.' "

Years passed: a little to the west of Greensburg the cops were breaking a strike in the Pittsburgh field. The same labor newspaperman, sitting at the press table of an American Federation of Labor conference in Pittsburgh heard of Sergeant Freeman again. Gifford Pinchot, now out of office, was telling how much better the state police behaved when he was governor than before or since. Much credit he gave to Sergeant Freeman, whom he had promoted, and put in charge of the investigation of complaints against members of the state constabulary and the Coal & Iron police. The newspaperman was moved by the recital. Turning to a brother scribe he murmured: "Gee, I'm sorry I didn't take that drink with him."

Meeting Pinchot in the lobby of the Roosevelt Hotel next morning he eagerly inquired for Freeman—and received a shock. The ex-governor in a casual, matter of fact way informed him that the sergeant was a police chief for one of the coal companies. A tiny, oldish Pittsburgh newspaperman by his side added more specifically: "I can tell you where to find him: he's with the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Corp. You'll find him at the Wabash Building."

So, after all, the first instinct about the drink had been right. The only role Freeman could play on the payroll of the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Corp. was to be a strikebreaker. His job would be to enforce the Schoonmaker injunction forbidding the miners almost to sneeze. . . . He took the job, because it was the best one open in his trade as a cop, when Governor Fisher froze him out of the state constabulary.

*i. e.—the Rolls-Royce of revolvers.

Drawing by I. C. Orozco

Drawing by Hugo Gellert

BULLETS FOR BREAD

Six miners were killed and 25 wounded when coal company police fired into a crowd of unarmed workers at the Columbine mine, Colorado, on November 21st. Colorado's labor policy is dictated by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., largest stockholder in the Colorado Fuel & Iron Co.

Drawing by Hugo Gellert

BULLETS FOR BREAD

Six miners were killed and 25 wounded when coal company police fired into a crowd of unarmed workers at the Columbine mine, Colorado, on November 21st. Colorado's labor policy is dictated by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., largest stockholder in the Colorado Fuel & Iron Co.

COLORADO STILL GOING STRONG

By J. McVARISH

DEAR NEW MASSES:

The strike, in spite of organized murders, military terrorism and thuggery, has entered upon its seventh week. The strike is fully ninety per cent efficient. Our ability to hold out rests entirely upon the generosity of those outside. Given even average financial support, we shall win.

We are handicapped by lack of able human material—the "polizei" seeing to that. All of us exist in an unreal and uncertain atmosphere, not knowing when we leave the office at night whether we will be on hand in the morning. The police are making arrests daily, on the mildest of pretexts —or none at all.

But we shall continue to carry on.

Yours for industrial freedom,
J. McVarish.
Walsenburg, Colorado.

HEADQUARTERS building is easily distinguished by the crowds of persons—men, women and children—gathered about the front entrance, reading bulletins, passing in and out. All is verve and movement—activity.

On the ground floor is the "hall", where meetings packed to overflowing, are held twice daily, at 2 p. m. and 7 p. m. The meetings are particularly interesting. Immediate questions of the day and of the strike are threshed out ably and forcefully. A fiery speech from a Spaniard brings forth an ardent response not only from the Latin element, but from the Slav and the Nordic as well. The enthusiastic "sings" make the meetings lively affairs and *Solidarity* is their favorite song!

On the ground floor also are the kitchen and mess-hall, presided over by the cook and many willing assistants. Here meals are served to the unmarried strikers twice daily. In the morning the fare consists of such staples as porridge, fried bacon, boiled potatoes, bread and coffee, and is served from 8 to 10. For the second meal, served from 4 to 7 p. m., there are boiled beef and spuds, or cabbage and ham, or pork and beans, bread and coffee.

A system of feeding has been worked out that safeguards against company spies. The actual workers on strike have no difficulty of course, in establishing their identity. A numbered card is issued to each. This he presents at the door of the dining-room, to the striker in charge of the messing. He is checked when he enters and when he leaves.

The stranger who presents himself for a "feed", must get from the Relief Committee the necessary credentials. A card is not granted to the stranger for the asking. If he is a new arrival in the camp, his presence there in the first place must be inquired into. Finks and stool-pigeons have been known to apply for relief, in order to find out the quantity and quality of the food supplied. The morale of strikers may be appreciably lowered if the food is of poor quality or badly prepared. And from information thus gained, employers may conjecture the extent of the existing morale and the possibility of a long drawn struggle. The inquisition of the Relief Committee however, usually succeeds in sifting the fink to his true level, whereupon he is cast into the outer darkness, unfed.

It is in other portions of the headquarters building however, where one finds the most intense activity. One room is allotted to the Strike Committe; another to the Relief Committee; one to the Publicity Bureau; and yet another for the routine work of the Branch Secretary and his assistants.

Typewriters click far into the night: reports are being made, bulletins issued, vouchers filed, all the hundred and one loose ends attendant upon the strike, gathered in and organized.

Work is constantly being interrupted by fellow-workers. A striker or a striker's wife comes in to submit a query or a plea. This one is threatened with eviction; that one needs shoes for the kids; one woman's husband has not been seen for forty-eight hours—she is sure he has been arrested. Not infrequently she is right. Her husband may be a Martinez, a Smith, or a Pulaski, and due inquiry elicits the information that he is held by the sheriff's office — no charges preferred—he is just held! (In the Colorado strike zone, the jails have been filled to overflowing with those who are just "held").

Drawing by Hugo Gellert

AT GENEVA

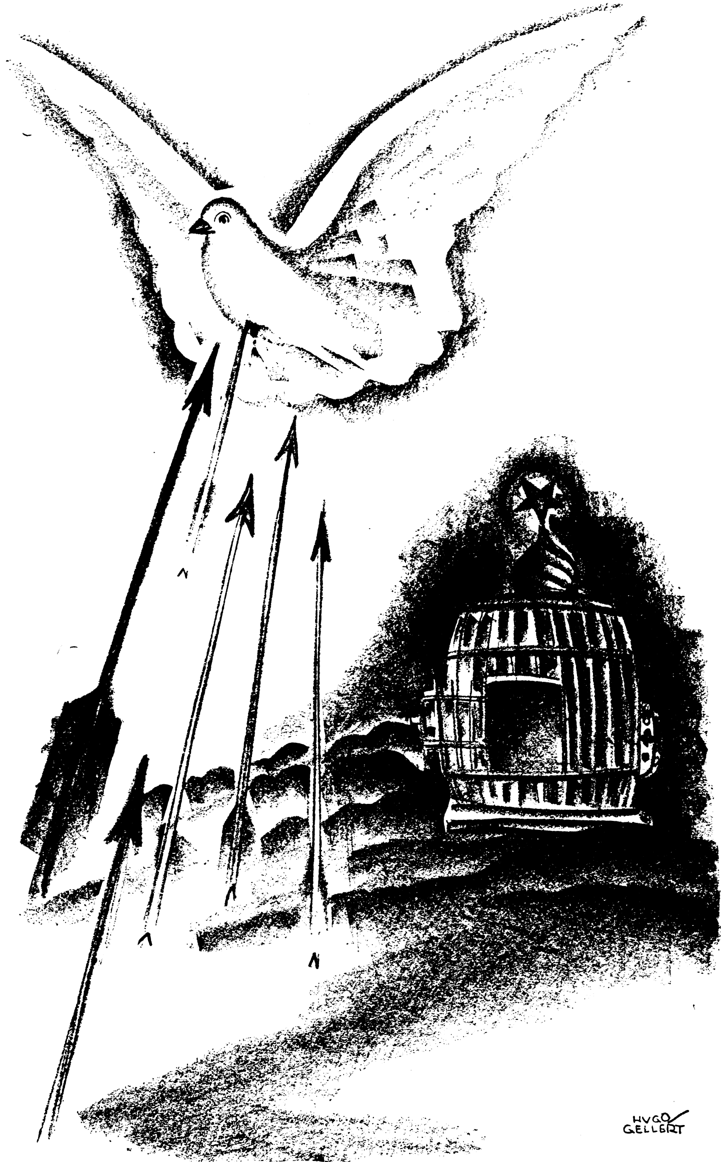
The Soviet peace dove receives a warm reception from the Great Powers.

There are other difficulties. By the third week of the strike, most of the "leaders" had been imprisoned. It was hoped by the authorities that these arrests would seriously cripple the functioning of the strike. They reckoned, however, without the elasticity of a revolutionary organization. It was only a matter of hours until another directing force had been quietly assembled and was edging its way into the affected zone. These individuals, properly credentialed, arrived on the scene unheralded. Highways were being patrolled; on passenger trains travellers were carefully scrutinized; and freight trains were assiduously overhauled. Nevertheless these men came through. Their duties are exacting and trying. Eighteen hours of work is not at all unusual—is all in the day's routine, in fact. They live like the strikers themselves, eating at the relief kitchen, quartered at night with a striker's family. Necessarily they keep in the back ground, directing and supervising the various activities.

Amusing sidelights of the struggle are furnished in the grotesque activities of the military and the slum-gendarmerie. Their chief concern is to provide reason for their existence. The appearance, all dressed up, of these cavaliers, is an occasion for mirth—ten-gallon hats, twelve-hour boots, open-work breeches, low-slung "gats"—all in the approved mode of Hollywood. They constitute the funny supplement of the situation.

With the development of new tactics in the conduct of a strike, the need for these mental eunuchs has disappeared. As offal from the camp of the enemy, as fertilizer to engender strife and dissension they have been highly unsuccessful in this campaign. Their incapacity to break our ranks has been demonstrated, their impotence against our solidarity established. Even their own obscure consciousness has enfolded this fact.

The spirit and morale of the strikers is magnificent, in spite of hardships and annoyances. For we have our sorrows. And as November draws to a close, and we see the cold, gaunt shadow of December just beyond the threshold, we know that these hardships will not diminish. But we face the outlook unflinchingly, even cheerfully and with confidence. We know that we shall win. Rockefeller and all his gentlemen stockholders shall not triumph in 1927 —nor even in 1928.



Drawing by Hugo Gellert

AT GENEVA

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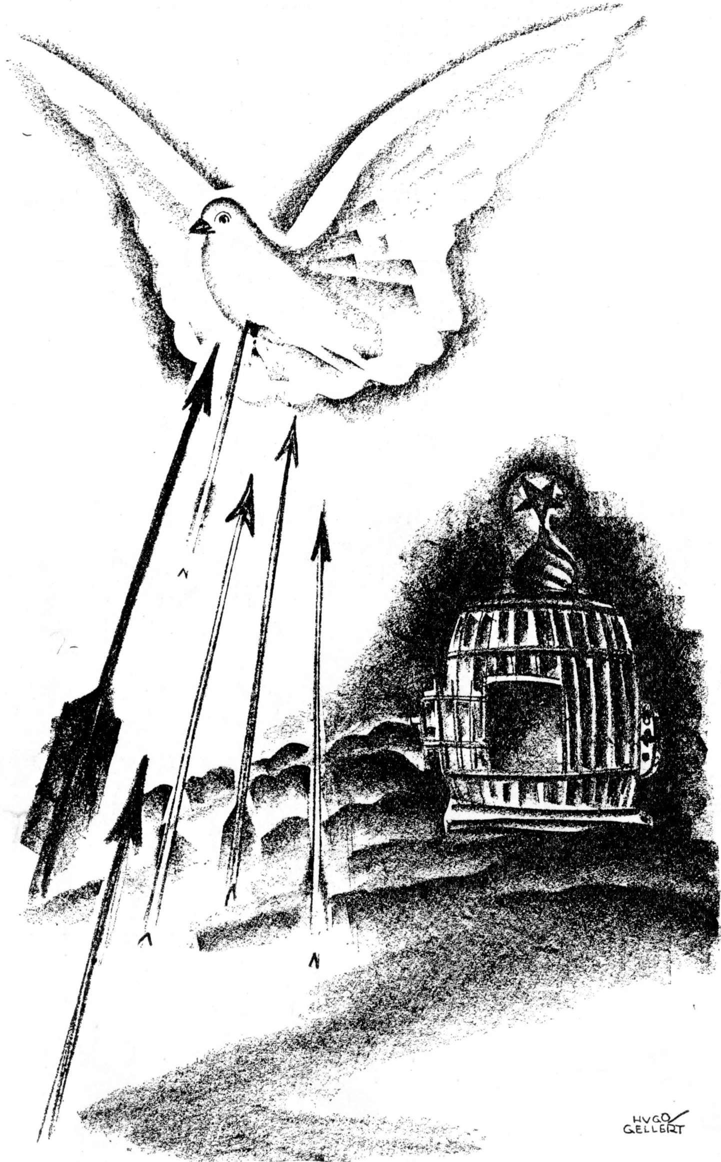

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AT GENEVA

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THE MINERS MARCH ON LONDON

By CHARLES ASHLEIGH

DOWN the long narrow streets of the South Wales mining valleys, they came marching. Mostly they sang a tune called *Stick It, Welsh!*, a marching tune without words, a good swinging tune which they had used during the lock-out, when marching from colliery to colliery to oust the few scabs. Sometimes, however, it was the *Internationale*, sometimes a hymn in the Welsh language, and now and again they tried to adjust their crisp marching steps to the dragging measure of the *Red Flag*.

Red banners waved above them. They carried haversacks upon their backs, with their scanty belongings. Their boots were old, or badly fitting, their clothes worn. Their caps were worn at the jaunty angle affected by the miner, and they carried their pit-lamps in their hands. A British miner carries his lamp in his hand—or in his teeth —when working; not in his cap, as does his American brother.

From their cottages, miners and miners' wives cried farewell. These were their emissaries, carrying the story of their woe, and the bitter weight of their protest, to London. London is the centre. When a man is cut off the unemployment benefit, the clerk says: "I'm sorry; it's orders from London." When parish relief is refused also to the unemployed collier, the guardians say: "It's not our fault; the ministry of health in London makes us do it." What more obvious, then, than that the unemployed miner, destitute and desperate, should resolve: "Well, by Christ, if London's the seat of my trouble, I'll go to London!"

They're going to London, threading the valleys, in their contingents, converging on Newport, where the march is to start on November 9. I am marching with them, the only press representative who is marching, feeding, sleeping with the miners, all the way. The *Sunday Worker* picked me for the job; and I'm glad of it. Ex-hobo, ex-convict, ex-wobbly, as my editor said, I was just the technical expert for the assignment.

There are 60,000 unemployed miners in the South Wales field; and 300,000 in all Britain. Many of the Welsh pits are closed forever—they are what are known as "uneconomic workings." In some villages, all the pits, four or five, have been closed down already for a year or more; and the village is derelict, rotting slowly while the miners starve on bread and tea, with an occasional bit of bacon.

When volunteers for the march were called for, thousands responded. But they had to be weeded out. No man receiving national unemployment benefit could come, because he would thus forfeit his "dole." Every man on the march has already been disqualified for both national unemployment benefit and for local parish relief. They are those who have reached the ultimate suffering. Their wives still receive a few shillings, to keep life painfully alive. And the men are on the march. Even then, we could have had more but we could not support a larger number.

Two hundred and seventy-three men left Newport. Two hundred and seventy men marched into Trafalgar Square, London, on November 20. Since then one man has had the life crushed out of him, in London, in a street accident.

Everything was against us. The capitalist press proclaimed the march a "Bolshevik stunt." The official Labor movement — the Trades Union Congress General Council—took up this cry, and circularized the local Trades Councils to that effect, hoping thus to starve the men *en route*. The Secretary of the London Trades Council, A. M. Wall, who himself had recently left the minority movement—he is a Labor Party candidate for Parliament, and wanted to remain such — stigmatized the march vehemently as a Communist recruiting manoeuvre. There was a united front, you will note, of official Labor, the capitalists and the Tory government, against the march. But the march took place, and the march has gone through!

Drawing by Peggy Bacon

"Your gang's all right, but they don't know the artists."

This march was no out-wandering of a nomadic mendicant rabble. Within one day, the marchers had formed themselves into a machine —or, as we preferred to call it, into an army. The lowest unit was the detachment of twenty men, headed by a Detachment Leader. Two detachments formed a company, with its Company Leader. At the head of the march was the Marchers' Control Council, with eight members, all tried class-conscious workers. One of them, Wall Hannington, National Organizer of the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, was Commander of the march. Hannington was the only non-miner in the march, except myself. He is a bulky broad-shouldered young man, with a turbulent past. This is the third march he has led. He is an engineer, a machinist, and is an active Minority Movement leader. He is enthusiastic, humorous and imperturbable. He is a cockney, with the quick jovial wit of his kind, and he has been something of a pugilist, as one cauliflower ear testifies.

Down the highroads of Wiltshire, one of the most beautiful counties of England, came our march. Here, the villagers had never seen miners; and they crowded to watch the Army as it swung by, the men marching four abreast, six paces between each detachment, marching in perfect step, singing and sometimes cheering.

Sometimes a man falls out on the arduous trek. One of the Red Cross squad — which is captained by an ex-sergeant of the Army Medical Corps—at once attends to his blistered feet. If he cannot proceed, he is carried on the covered truck, whose sides bear a large red cross, which accompanies the march. There is another truck as well, which carries the two army field-kitchens and provisions, under the command of the cook—a one-legged ex-army cook, who rules his kitchen squad with an iron hand and a wide winning smile.

At one o'clock, the men reach the place where the cooking squad has prepared the mid-day meal. The whistle blows, and they fall out, sinking onto their haversacks by the wayside, weary and hungry. Detachment orderlies bring the steaming kettles of soup, which the men eat, with huge chunks of bread, in their tin plates.

The Second-in-Command, Tom Thomas, a Welsh miner with seven years' military experience, again blows shrilly upon his whistle. And again we are marching. On to London. Left, right, left—left—left; two hundred and seventy-odd men, tramping implacably on, foot-sore, weak from long periods of under-feeding; but ever on, each day nearer, through sweet insanitary old-world villages, smug country towns and industrial cities, to London, the center of oppression. There is something of iron,

alive. And the men are on the march. Even then, we could have had more but we could not support a larger number.

Two hundred and seventy-three men left Newport. Two hundred

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something which cannot be answered with politicians' soft excuses, something primal and menacing, in this monotonous music, which I heard every day, in my place in the ranks—left, right, left—left—left—left. It was pain welding itself into a weapon, mass force arising rhythmically out of uncentered discontents—it was Revolution being born upon the highways.

At night, the hall—provided by the local Labor Parties or Trades Councils, in defiance of the T.U.C. edict—would be crowded with sleepers. Lying in rows, close together for warmth, with overcoats and blankets for cover, and haversacks for pillows. A multitudinous breathing in the darkness around us, as the Control Council sat late in whispering session. The stirrings and murmurs of men sleeping. The air heavy with breathing, and heavy with foreboding, I thought. These are men with nothing to lose—the dynamics of subversion.

Between executive meetings and other engagements, A. J. Cook, the General Secretary of the Miners' Federation, met us on the road, marched with us; and slept on the floor with us for three nights. He spoke to immense crowds at Swindon and Reading when we arrived there. He is rightly beloved of his men, this fighting leader, member of the General Council of the T. U. C., a lone militant there, hacking his way through the jungle of trade union reaction.

Arthur Horner, a member of the Miners Executive, was a member of the Marchers' Control Council. He also marched with us. Tom Mann, vigorous as ever, seventy-two years young, came to Reading, met us on the road, marched with us into the town, spoke for us; and that night, insisted on sleeping on the planks.

For twelve days it continued, this march. And then London. London in a driving rain that went pitilessly on the whole day. But rain did not stop the cheering thousands of London workers who met us. And, during two hours of speaking, singing and cheering in Trafalgar Square, the rain did not send them away. It was one of the greatest demonstrations ever held in London. And the collection was the biggest ever made in Trafalgar Square. Here was a fire the rain could not quench.

The men are staying in Bethnal Green Town Hall, awaiting the Premier's decision as to whether he will receive their deputation.* Not that they expect relief from a Tory premier, office-boy of the coal-owners. But here is a chance to let the world know. Thousands of workers greeted us in the various towns, and mighty meetings were held. They are making known the objects of the march: to publish the tragedy of the minefields, to demand repeal of the Eight-Hour Act, and a return to the seven-hour day; to press for pensions for miners over 60; to demand adequate maintenance for unemployed miners; in short, a series of demands which no capitalist government could concede in this time of capitalist decay. But millions will hear of these demands; through the press, millions will have the miners' problem brought home to them. And millions will realize the impotence of capitalism, in this crisis, to do anything but increase the terrible burden upon the miners and upon all the workers of Britain.

The march is the definite symptom of the British workers' emergence from the apathetic reaction which followed upon the betrayal by their leaders of the general strike. It is a new call to action. It marks the uprising of the rank and file, not merely against unemployment and all capitalism's evils, but also against the comfortable, slinking leadership of the British labor movement.

*The Premier refused to meet the deputation.

Drawing by Otto Soglow

THE SEWER DIGGER'S REVENGE

"It ain't right, you puttin' yer dirty feet in my bran' new washtub!"
"Well, Lizzie, this sorta makes it square, my feet's been in some terrible places today."

Drawing by Otto Soglow

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RIPSAW—A WOODCUT

By L. H. COLMAN

LUMBER; hemlock, fir. The hemlock is heavy and red and brown, close-grained, waterlogged. Two by fours and two by sixes. One by fours. One by threes. The hemlock smells of tide-flats. Rank, rich, oozy and soggy with salt. The fir has a sweeter, cleaner smell. You get used to it, and don't notice it at all, unless it pinches on the saw and burns. Then it has a rank, sweet smell. Longer, lighter pieces than the hemlock, wider, thinner, thicker. All sorts of sizes and grades of fir. Sometimes a piece of spruce, waterlogged, olive like the skin of a new-drowned man.

It's all lumber, and it all has to be pushed into the saw, pushed in between the rollers that grip and pull it, while the saw slices through. Some is heavier, some is lighter, and the fir smells sweet, and the hemlock salty. There are variegated patterns on the fir. Scrolls and castles, and queer distorted faces. At that not much more distorted than the faces of the men in the mill—not if you look at them closely, and at the lumber faces too.

Pitch, too. It mucks up the saw, and you have to clean it off, but it makes beautiful pictures on the lumber—all depends on how the head-saw cut the lumber from the log. The best picture is the constant variation of bluish-purple outstretched pheasant wings. Or a twisted gnomish Indian face. Humped high cheek-bones, and the lines from nostrils to mouth-corners twisted in curious curlicues around the chin. No forehead. The top-head twisted into a curling cone. Pictures, millions of pictures, a new picture on each piece.

The saw groans singingly. Oh! It's good steel. How many revolutions a minute does the band-saw make? Three inches wide, with curled down-pointing teeth. At the speed the rolls suck in the lumber, how many times does each tooth strike on the same fiber? The teeth are bored. They don't care at all. They just rip, and rip, and rip. It's no exertion for the saw's teeth. They go so fast they don't feel the lumber that they cut.

The knots in the wood too. Pitchy, colored knots, blue, and purple, lavender, red, yellow, even sometimes green, all blend in, with the rich brown of ingrown bark for frame. The saw pushes through the frame of bark, and feels the iron of the knot and grits and twists in agony, then the bark again, and then the plain, straight grain, and the saw feels no more.

Jimmie Logan feeds the saw. He adjusts the set-works for the straight-edge, two inches, three inches, four inches, up to twelve. He pushes the lumber onto the unfeeling saw, and the rollers suck it in. Four seconds to rip twenty feet of lumber. Fifteen pieces of lumber twenty feet long in a minute, one after the other, quick, with the constant adjustment of the set-works. Ten hours every night. Sometimes the skinner does not bring the loads of lumber to be ripped fast enough. Then Jimmie Logan rests.

Jack, from Omaha, is Jimmie's helper. He is new to the coast. The shipping up and down the river in the early hours of night fascinates him. He puts a piece of lumber on the feeding rollers, crooked, a long piece, and turns away to watch a ship. Ships frighten him. Water in great expanse, and a ship going down. Himself down in the engine room. Going down, drowning. Jack stands fascinated.

Jimmie adjusts the piece himself, pushes it towards the saw, and the rollers take it, drag it. Jack wakes up. He does not look, but he remembers that he had not adjusted the piece of lumber, and makes a grab for it, twists it. Jimmie Logan cries out "Hey!" He jumps aside. Back, stumbles, falls down off the platform on his back, but safe.

The steel tinkles as if merrily, then crash. The fast-moving steel, speeding at high tension, snaps. You get an awful leverage from the end of a twenty-five-foot piece of lumber, with the fulcrum at the other end. A thin, twisted, vindictive streak of light shoots out from the wheels on which the saw is stretched; up, out, twisting, writhing, through the board of the wall on the right, and lies limp, gathering strength. One end is still entangled in the wheels. A moment only. Jimmie leaps and pulls back quickly at the rope that holds the tightener. A moment only, fastens it, and as the streak of steel renews its life, and one tooth grabs a spoke, the other following, twisting, writhing, snapping, the belt that runs the saw is loosened, and the lithe twisted death stops slowly. There is no danger now, only don't go too close until it altogether stops.

Loads and loads of lumber, fir, hemlock, clean and smelly, gather in the yard and watch as Jimmie sweats and pulls out the twisted remnants of the saw. Jack stands a little back and bites his lower lip, but Jimmie Logan says nothing to him, only works. Jack gathers up his courage. Jack comes from Omaha, he has killed steers, although he is only seventeen. He must not be afraid. Don't let anybody you're working with get away with anything on you, that's all.

Jimmie says something: "Go up to the filing-room and see if there is another saw ready."

"Why don't you go yourself?" asks Jack. Jack is nervous. Don't let anybody get away with anything on you, that's it. Jack sits down and watches Jimmie taking out the tangled saw, and disregards the order Jimmie gave him. Jimmie looks at him.

"Go up to the filing-room, and see if there is another saw ready," he repeats, evenly, hardly.

Jack goes, surly.

Jimmie soon takes up the tangled pieces of murder, dead now. He carries them up to the filing-room. Throws them down before the night-filer.

"I wish to Christ that day-filer was here. Look at what a little knot did. He never puts enough swedge on the teeth."

A lie, but there's no help for it. He can't say Jack twisted the lumber and broke the saw. That's too absurd. Besides, it isn't done. One has to lie. Jimmie doesn't care, anyway. Why get Jack fired? What's the use. He'll learn. Maybe he'll be more careful after this.

A fresh saw on. Jimmie loosens the tightener, and the saw starts. Six loads behind. No chance to rest now before whistle blow. The boss comes around, having been to the filing-room and seen the broken saw.

New Year's Party On The Farm

New Year's Party On The Farm

New Year's Party On The Farm

"How come you broke that saw?" he asks.

"Broke on a knot two inches wide, in a one-inch piece," says Jimmie.

"Well, you be careful. Those saws cost money." The boss looks at Jimmie strangely, for he knows he is lying, but for some reasons he feels the lie is justified.

"So long as he doesn't admit that he broke it through his own carelessness, I'm protected," the boss thinks.

"THE CHEER COLUMN"

We were four at the table sipping wine and listening to a flabby syncopated song. Mr. Holt, we were told, was an accountant. He kept time with his feet, but he did not stop his flow of talk though the entertainment was being offered for our benefit.

You're an artist? he asked my companion. And before he could receive a reply, he continued: I'm an artist, too. But not your kind. I don't like your kind. You're too deep for me and you get 'nomonia' from it. He chuckled at his own wisdom, then continued: This highbrow painting stuff and classical music gives me the whoozies. Say, waiter! Another glass here!

A woman entered the underground restaurant offering a little magazine for sale. Mr. Holt threw a quarter to her and took a copy of her wares.

Here! You're a writer, you say? Read it. Mr. Holt offered me the meagre grey sheet, and continued his monologue: As I said, I'm an artist. But my art pays. You bet it does! I'm an expert income-tax accountant. I don't mean the kind of guy that adds up figures. There's a lot of suckers who do that for fifty bucks a week. My clients are gents who can make a bank deposit in seven figures not counting the pennies neither.

I looked at the eight-page publication yawningly. *Sunshine Bulletin of the International Sunshine Society*. I have never seen it before. I turned the page.

Mr. Holt was still talking. Sure thing they can.

Sure, this world is full of trouble—I ain't said it ain't. Lord! I've had enough an' double reason to complain—

Mr. Holt called for more wine. More songs were sung. I turned the page of the *Bulletin*. Reports from various districts.

Mr. Holt was still talking. If you can show a man how he can get around the law and instead of paying a million dollars in income taxes only pay one half or less, he's damn glad to pay five to ten percent for every dollar saved. And I know how to interpret the law inside out. Damn right I know!

I turned the page again. Patterns for April. And a joke. Then I noticed the boxed heading: THE CHEER COLUMN. I was bored by now and needed cheering. The wine was bad. The songs were awful. And that Mr. Holt — I brought the *Sunshine Bulletin* closer.

"Mrs. P. B. Rucker, of Anherst, Virginia, a Sunshine member, has been very ill. She and her husband are poor, and Mr. Rucker, who is nearly 80 years of age, has a hard time to get along. Mr. Rucker is weak and childish. Mrs. Rucker needs cotton union suits with long sleeves. Mr. Rucker needs underwear, too, and woolen socks—his feet swell so he needs large ones. . . . She would also like shoes for herself and Mr. Rucker—her size is 4, and Mr. Rucker's size is 8. There is a poor woman helping Mrs. Rucker who is almost barefoot herself, and a pair of shoes for her would be welcome—her size is 8."

They were dancing in the aisle, in the narrow crowded aisle. A stubby bald-pated man and a young girl. He was drunk and clung to her. He had high blood pressure and the dancing was too much for him, I noticed.

I noticed, in THE CHEER COLUMN, that Mrs. Beatrice Law is an invalid with five children. Her address is Corner 8th and O Streets, N. W., Washington, D. C. This family needs cheer from all who can send it.

In Washington, D. C. A disabled war veteran lost a child three years old from malnutrition. They need about everything.

Mr. Holt was still talking. He seemed disgusted with our lack of appreciation of his art. I was just down to Washington the other day and the trip netted me forty thousand berries clear. You'd have to paint a lifetime to get that much. But it took me a week. It just happened by accident, too. I came in one morning to see one of my clients and I learn that he's away in Washington about some trouble with his report—

"Any kind of clothing, for boys, girls, men, women and children, will be much appreciated by Miss Fleeta Burleson, Hawk, N. C. The poor in that section of the country is appalling and anything sent will be appreciated. Miss Burleson will distribute the garments, or food or anything you may send. This is an urgent appeal and we hope all our readers will do what they can to help."

I may be losing my hair, as you see, but I still have my brains. Especially when I see cash. That's the kind of artist I am! In this country no one needs be poor—all you have to have is a little brains and a lot of go.

"Mrs. E. Courtney, General Delivery, Findlay, Ohio, would like clothing for three boys, ages one year to six, and also reading matter. This family lives away out in the country and is reported to us as being most deserving."

Mr. Holt was still talking. C'mon, clear your glasses and let's get out of here. Not much fun. You three look like undertakers. What do you say if we jump into my showcase and run up to the Harlem? I know a dandy place there. Get 'em white an' brown—Want to go? Come, I'll foot the bill. Uncle Sam is rich. Come. It'll cheer you fellows up a bit!

Yossef Gaer.

On the day of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in Charlestown Prison, a Boston sleuth sat all day long in a Ford car in front of the Hotel Bellevue. The next day a friend asked him what he was doing decorating a Ford car all day long. He explained that the people who had planted the bomb in the New York subway were coming to Boston to plant a bomb there. They were coming, he said, to the Hotel Bellevue.

"Do you know the names of these bombers?" asked his friend.

"Sure I do. Ruth Hale and Edna Millay."

Drawing by Wanda Gag

Drawing by Wanda Gag

Drawing by Wanda Gag

FRENCH "HONOR" IN THE CONGO

By FELICIEN CHALLAYE

Translated by FANNY CRAIG VENTADOUR

"THE honor of French colonization is to have totally transfigured the spirit of colonial enterprise by going into it from a profound sense of human right. Colonization is no longer for France an operation of a mercantile character: it is essentially a creation of humanity."

Thus did the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Albert Sarraut, former governor of Indo China, express himself in his discourses of last April in Constantine.

The minister becomes indignant at the thought of a revolt of "the French subjects and protegés upon whom tutelary France has never ceased to spread benefactions."

The same theme is developed by Raymond Poincaré in the discourse delivered at the General Council of the Meuse on the 2nd of May, 1927:

"Our country has always brought honor upon itself by its constant effort at the amelioration of the living conditions of its colonials."

* * *

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the negroes in French Equatorial Africa have been under the yoke of a regime of forced labor, worse than slavery in certain respects.

About 1890 certain capitalists and politicians began to demand the formation of privileged companies for the purpose of exploiting the natural resources of the colonies in general and the French Congo in particular. The principal defender of this scheme was Eugene Etienne, then secretary of state to the colonies.

Another secretary of state to the colonies, Delcassé, accorded discreetly, without official publication of contract, a concession of eleven million hectares (one-fifth of the area of France) situated in the Haut-Ogooué. Then from March to July, 1899, Minister of the Colonies Guillain accorded by decree, forty concessions in the French Congo. The concessionaries were to receive, for a period of thirty years, immense domains varying from 200,000 to 14 million hectares. During this time all the natural resources were to belong to the concessionaries. Ivory, rare wood and rubber. The company must pay to the colony a fixed ground-rent and fifteen per cent of its benefits.

The lands that the state, in conceding them, baptized "vacant lands" were in reality the collective property of native tribes. These tribes utilized to their profit those vast stretches of swamps and forests upon which they reserved the exclusive rights, rights recognized and respected by neighboring tribes.

As a result of the establishment of the concessionary regime, the blacks have become the victims of an immense expropriation. By a stroke of the pen, all their natural resources have been taken from them. And the companies, finding they could not count on the voluntary cooperation of the negroes because the work is so badly remunerated, have used threats and then violence.

The companies themselves fix as low as possible the price of the rubber they buy. Deciding that the latex belongs ot them by virtue of the act of concession, they refuse to pay except for the actual work of gathering the crop; and

Decoration by William Zorach

they value this work at the lowest possible figure. They buy the rubber at five or ten times less than the price paid by the merchants in the regions of free commerce. Also the companies often pay for the products of the soil or rather the work necessary to gather the produce, not in money but in merchandise valued at the highest price, often at 300 per cent to 500 per cent more than its real value, and frequently compel the negroes to accept merchandise of which they can make no possible use.

Thus in exchange for their rubber, valued at a ridiculously low price, the natives receive merchandise valued at exorbitant prices.

The concessionary companies cannot count on the voluntary work of the negroes. From the beginning the companies have demanded the right to force the negroes to work for them. Having acquired by concession the products of the soil, they take for granted that the state has accorded them likewise the man power necessary to cultivate the lands; they regard the natives as their property, their tools. The state does not officially accord them the right to force the negroes to work but as often as possible they usurp it.

When threats do not suffice, violence is employed to force the negroes to gather the rubber. They are imprisoned, they are whipped with the *chicotte* (a huge whip of hippotamus hide which inflicts horrible suffering). The chief of the village is sometimes arrested, and the women and children taken away as hostages and only released after a certain amount of ivory or rubber has been gathered. The insubordinate ones are shot. When a village as a whole remains obstinate a "punitive expedition" is organized. The cabins are burned, plantations destroyed, and men, women and children massacred as an example to the others.

The state exacts from the blacks, to whom it renders no service, a tax per head payable in rubber. And then turns this rubber over to the concessionaries.

In April, 1904, an administrator sent a commissioner of colonial affairs from Bangui to collect taxes in the environs of Mongouba. The commissioner, accompanied by an agent of the concessionary company, ordered sixty-eight hostages (58 women and 10 children) to be taken from two villages which had not paid sufficient taxes. Sent to Bangui these hostages were herded into a narrow cellar without light, polluted by bad air and excrement. They were then forgotten and were scarcely fed. When a young doctor, a recent arrival, demanded the liberation of the survivors it was testified that there remained 21 hostages out of the 68 (13 women and 8 children). Forty-seven hostages were dead from hunger and lack of air. One woman, whose child had died, found and nourished the child of a dead woman.

In spite of the efforts which were made in France by the "League for the Defense of the Natives", little by little silence settled upon the miseries of the blacks of the Congo.

The war put an end to the activity of the "League for the Defense of the Natives." Little is now known of the true situation of the Congoleans: ministers and governors continue to repeat the habitual banalities upon the benefits which the natives enjoy under the protection of the French flag.

However, quite recently a tourist visited Africa on a pleasure trip —a well known writer, endowed with a keen spirit of observation, absolute independence and sincere audacity, Monsieur André Gide. His *Journal de Route* was published by the *Nouvelle Review Francaise.*

He showed up the misery of the natives in the regions still occupied by the concessionary companies, notably the *Compagnie Forestiere Sangha Oubangui* which succeeded in obtaining the prolongation for ten years of its monopoly on rubber.

Monsieur André Gide has seen whole villages abandoned: all the men sent far away into the forest throughout a period of weeks to gather the rubber exacted by the company.

One day, André Gide encountered a group of women occupied with mending the road which served only as a passage once a month for the automobile of the representative of the *Forestiere* accompanied by the administrator. "The poor beasts were toiling in a drenching rain. Numbers of them were nursing their babies (tied on to them) at the same time that they worked. About every twenty yards along the side of the road there was a huge hole often nine feet deep; it was here that these miserable workers without the proper tools had to extract the gravel for the road bed. It often happened that the sandy quarry would cave in, burying under the loose sand the women and children who were working at the bottom of the hole. Often working too far from their village to be able to return for the night, the women construct huts of reeds and branches in the forest. We afterwards

Decoration by William Zorach

learned that the guard who supervises them had forced them to work all night long in order to repair the damage of a recent storm and to permit our passage."

One evening, M. Gide's companion, M. Marc Allegret, explored the surroundings of the camp in order to see what cannot always be seen by daylight. He returned overcome by what he had discovered.

"Not far from our camping place, in sight of the guards' hut, a large band of children of both sexes, from 9 to 13 years were gathered around a very insufficient fire. Wishing to interview the children, Marc called Adoum; but the latter did not understand Baya. A native offered to interpret and translated into Sango so that Adoum was able to translate into French. The children had been led from their village by ropes around their necks; for six days they had been made to work without pay, and without food. Their village was not far; they counted on parents, brothers and friends to bring them food. No one had come; too bad."

As soon as M. Marc Allegret had gone the benevolent interpreter was apprehended by a guard and thrown into prison. The next day he was hurried away by two guards to work in a distant part of the concession.

One night a native slipped into the hut occupied by André Gide and his friend. It was a village chief who said he desired to speak to them immediately because a black guard sent by the white administrator Pacha, had intimated that he had better return at once to his village. The chief wished to complain about a black sergeant employed by Pacha; "On the 21st of October (it was then six days later) the sergeant Yemba was sent from Boda to Bodembere in order to discipline by punishment the inhabitants of the village. The latter had refused to obey the order to transport their residence to the Carnot road, not wishing to abandon their crops. They argued also that the people already established on the road were Bayas whereas they were Bolis. The sergeant Yemba then left Boda with three guards. This little detachment was accompanied by Baoué and three men commanded by the latter. While en route the sergeant Yemba requisitioned two or three men from each village through which they passed and took them along after having put them in chains. Arrived at Bodembere the punishment began: they took and bound twelve men to trees, during which time the chief of the village was able to take flight. The sergeant Yemba and the guard Bonjo then fired on the twelve men and killed them. There then followed a grand massacre of women, beaten down by Yemba armed with an ax. Finally having seized five children all of tender age, he imprisoned the five in a hut to which he set fire. There were in all thirty-two victims."

From a Woodcut by Saul Yalkert

WATERFRONT

M. André Gide interrogated another native chief:

"The accounts of the chief of Bambio confirm all that Samba N'oto had told me. He recounts in particular the "ball" on the last market day of Boda. I here transcribe the account exactly as I have copied it from a notebook belonging to G—.

"At Bambio, on the 8th of September, ten rubber gatherers from the Goundi gang working for the *Compagnie Forestiere* were condemned, for not having brought in rubber the preceding month (even though this month they brought a double harvest), to march around and around the factory under a leaden sun, carrying heavy wooden beams. If they fell the guards beat them with the "chicotte".

"The "ball", begun at eight o'clock, lasted throughout the long day under the supervision of Messrs. Pacha and Maudurier, the latter an agent of the *Forestiere*. About eleven o'clock, one Malongué of Bagouma fell, to rise no more. M. Pacha, notified, at once replied, "I don't give a damn"—and continued the "ball". All of this passed in the presence of the assembled inhabitants of Bambio, together with all the chiefs of the neighboring villages there for the market."

In the diary of a white inhabitant of the region M. Gide read the following terrifying lines on the subject of the crimes of the administrator Pacha: "M. Pacha announces that he has finished his repressions of the Bayas in the environs of Bodo. He estimates (his own avowal) the number of killed at one thousand of all ages and both sexes. In order to prove the results of the battle, the guards and partisans were commanded to bring to the commander the ears

From a Woodcut by Saul Yalkert

WATERFRONT

and genitals of the victims. The date of this affair was the month of July, 1924.

"The cause of all this is the C.F.S.O. (*Compagnie Forestiene Sangha Oubangui*). With its monopoly on rubber and with the complicity of the local administration it reduces the natives to abject slavery."

The courageous revelations of M. André Gide come at the opportune moment: for at present certain concessionaries, notably the Trechot brothers of the *Compagnie Francaisé du Haut Congo,* are making overtures to the minister of the colonies and in parliamentary circles, even in those of the extreme left, in an effort to obtain a prolongation of their concession which is due to expire in 1929.

* * *

The blacks of the Congo, if they could read and understand the accounts of the ministerial discourses published by our bourgeois press. what would they think on learning from the lips of M. Raymond Poincaré that "our country has always brought honor upon itself by its constant efforts at the amelioration of the living conditions of its colonials."

And the poor negresses working to repair the road through the concession by scraping the ground with their nails, if they could hold in their poor grimy hands one of our big newspapers and translate it would they not laugh to read one of M. Albert Sarraut's grand phrases about "the French subjects and protegés upon whom tutelary France has never ceased to spread benefactions."

— AND THE BRITISH IN SOUTH AFRICA

While the British protest their horror over the slavery continuing under native chiefs in the British Protectorate of Sierra Leone (and upheld by two British judges who stick to the defective letter of the British law in the case), their white kinsmen in South Africa are fixing a virtual slavery on the native peoples in that Dominion. And all, apparently, because the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of South Africa has become a militant union with a membership of nearly 100,000 African workers and an income of more than 50,000 dollars.

Norman Leyes, the British medical officer of Kenya, who wrote and spoke himself out of a job because he could not stomach the British policy in East Africa, has recently visited the Cape and gives in the Manchester *Guardian Weekly* an authentic analysis of the new Native Affairs Act which became effective in the Dominion of South Africa in September. He calls it "the coping stone of the policy which is embodied in the Color-bar Act, that prohibits natives from engaging in certain skilled trades, and in the measure that deprives the natives of the Cape Province of the restricted franchise they have hitherto enjoyed."

The Act destroys the last vestige of free tribal government and sets up tribal representatives appointed by the Governor General. It introduces the principles of native reservations: The Governor General may "whenever he deems it expedient in the general public interest, order the removal of any tribe or portion thereof or any native from any place to any other place within the Union upon such conditions as he may determine, provided that in the case of a tribe objecting to such removal no such order shall be given unless a resolution approving has been adopted by both Houses of Parliament."

The Governor General may obliterate any native African's rights in land, even if he has acquired or inherited a freehold with a full legal title, and the African may appeal not to the ordinary courts of law but only to a specially appointed board of three persons whose decision shall be final.

The white authorities will be able to prohibit any meeting of Africans public or private, arbitrarily, without giving any reason. And "any person who utters any words or does any other act or thing whatever with intent to promote any feeling of hostility between natives and Europeans shall be guilty of an offense and liable to conviction to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or to a fine of £100 or both." Further, any magistrate may deport from South Africa any person convicted under this section who was not born there—a clause aimed at the leader of the Union who came to South Africa from Nyassaland.

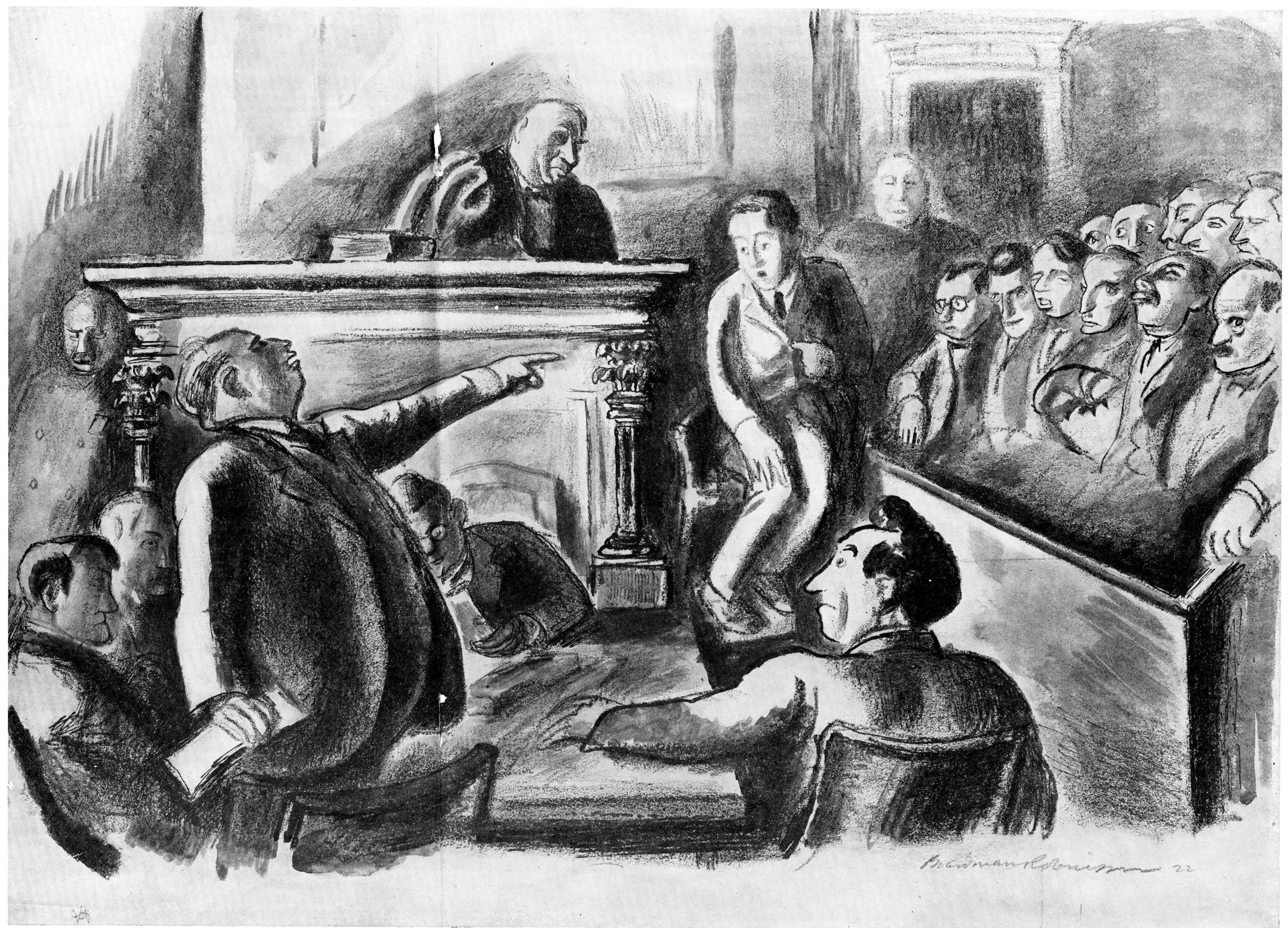
Dr. Leyes says: "The effect of this section will be appreciated by those who are aware that, in South Africa, language that would be thought innocuous in the mouth of a European is considered criminal in an African, so that, for example, the demand for equal rights will be held to promote feelings of hostility, as in South Africa it certainly will; while for a European to assert that, as the constitution of the Dutch Reformed Church states, Africans are inherently incapable of the rights and liberties proper to Europeans will not be held to be an infringement of this Act, although everyone knows that among educated Africans it promotes the angriest feelings."

Anna Rochester.

"YOU AD

Drawing by Boardman Robinson

"YOU ADMIT THEN YOU'RE AN ALIEN?"



Drawing by Boardman Robinson

"YOU ADMIT THEN YOU'RE AN ALIEN?"

FIGHT INJUNCTIONS!

In the canyons and on the plateaus of the Rocky Mountains 11,000 coal miners, under the banner of the I.W.W., are setting a glorious example to the whole labor movement. Anti-picketing laws, the Rockefeller company union, the strikebreaking industrial commission, are so much rubbish before the defiance of the workers. Even violence, that last argument of the employers, failed. The blood of the six murdered pickets before the Columbine mine has stiffened the determination of the survivors.

The Colorado miners have broken through the shackles fastened by anti-labor legislatures, governors and courts. They knew they could not win by obeying the rules set by the employers. That is the disastrous mistake that John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, has been making. His army of striking miners in the east, numbering seventy-five to eighty thousand, is being jammed to the wall, because it is fighting in the shackles, attempting to win while obeying the rules set up by the employers.

The rules are set forth in injunctions and by sheriffs. Near Pittsburgh Judge Schoonmaker restricts picketing and enjoins taking eviction cases to civil courts; in Indiana County Judge Langham bans attendance at the Magyar Presbyterian Church and strikers are forbidden to sing within hearing of scabs. All through western and central Pennsylvania are many other writs that have grown up in the last three years since the big employers began jumping the Jacksonville contact. In every county where men are on strike the sheriffs add their own rules—often forbidding more than two men to walk together on the highways, unless they are mine guards or mine officials.

It can't be done: victory cannot be won by the side that lets its enemy make the rules. Imagine Grant fighting only along lines directed by Lee; imagine Sherman told that he must not march to the sea. And behold American labor obeying the rules of injunction judges.

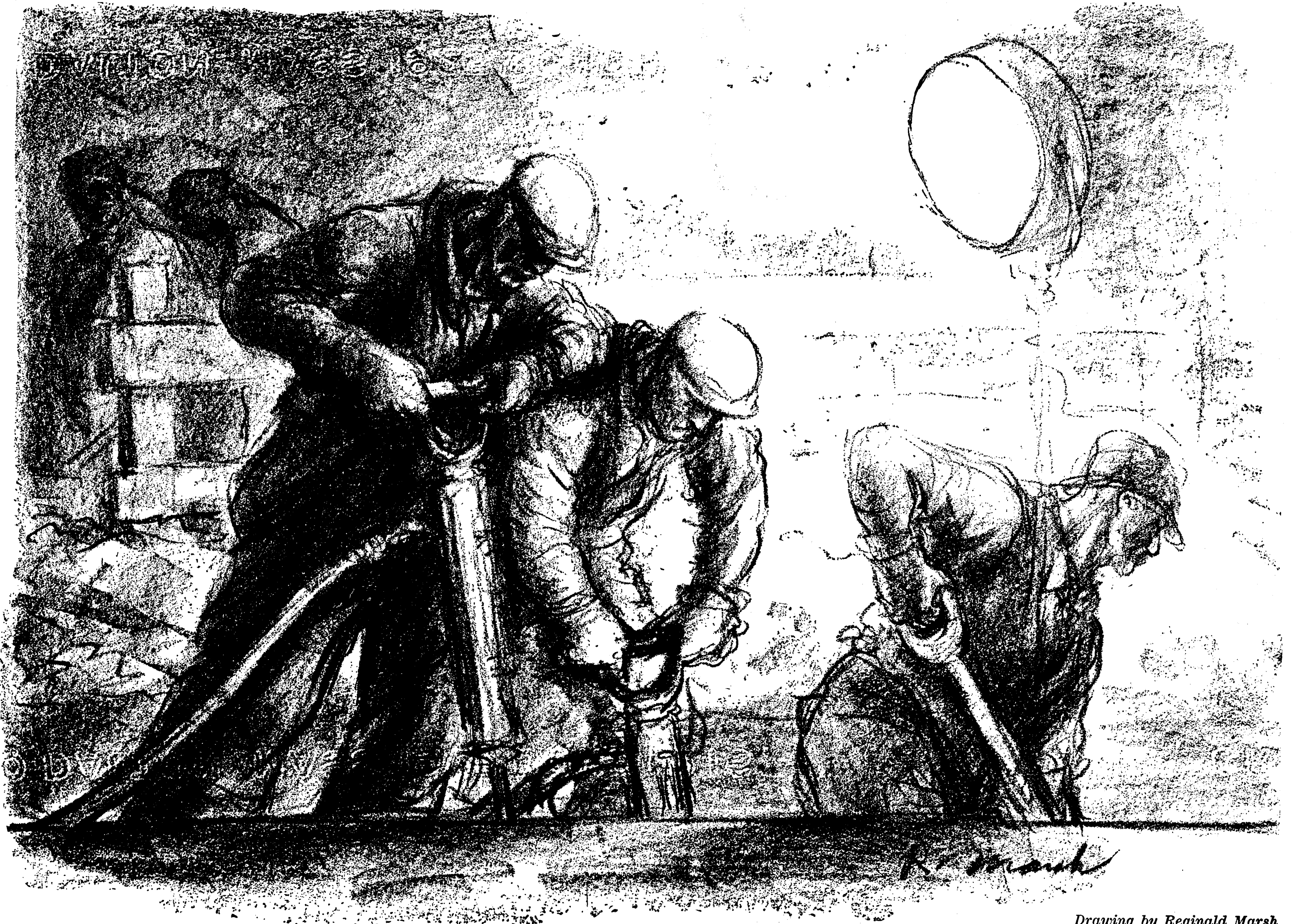
Obediance killed the United Mine Workers in West Virginia. In the days of the Cabin Creek strike the union made its own rules and it built up a strong organization that embraced some 50,000 members at its peak. But a change in administration came: the workers were advised to obey the law. The law, as made by injunction judges, said they must not ask a scab to join the union—and thus violate his individual (yellow dog) contract. And the union was ironed out. Last year more than 140,000,000 tons of West Virginia coal were produced by cheap non-union labor and used to win markets away from the northern union fields and crush the union.

It is a national fight, and a national policy of defiance of the enemy must be followed. After all it's the same enemy, east and west. Rockefeller in Colorado and Rockefeller in West Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, Pennsylvania. The same man who dominates the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company is the principal stockholder in the Consolidation Coal Company, Davis Coal & Coke and others. Mellon, Schwab, E. J. Berwind, are just a few of the multimillionaire interstate coal operators who are guiding the pen hands of the judges as they write injunctions and directing petty sheriffs and petty United States presidents and legislatures and Congresses as they make the rules that the miners are asked to obey in the name of government.

* * *

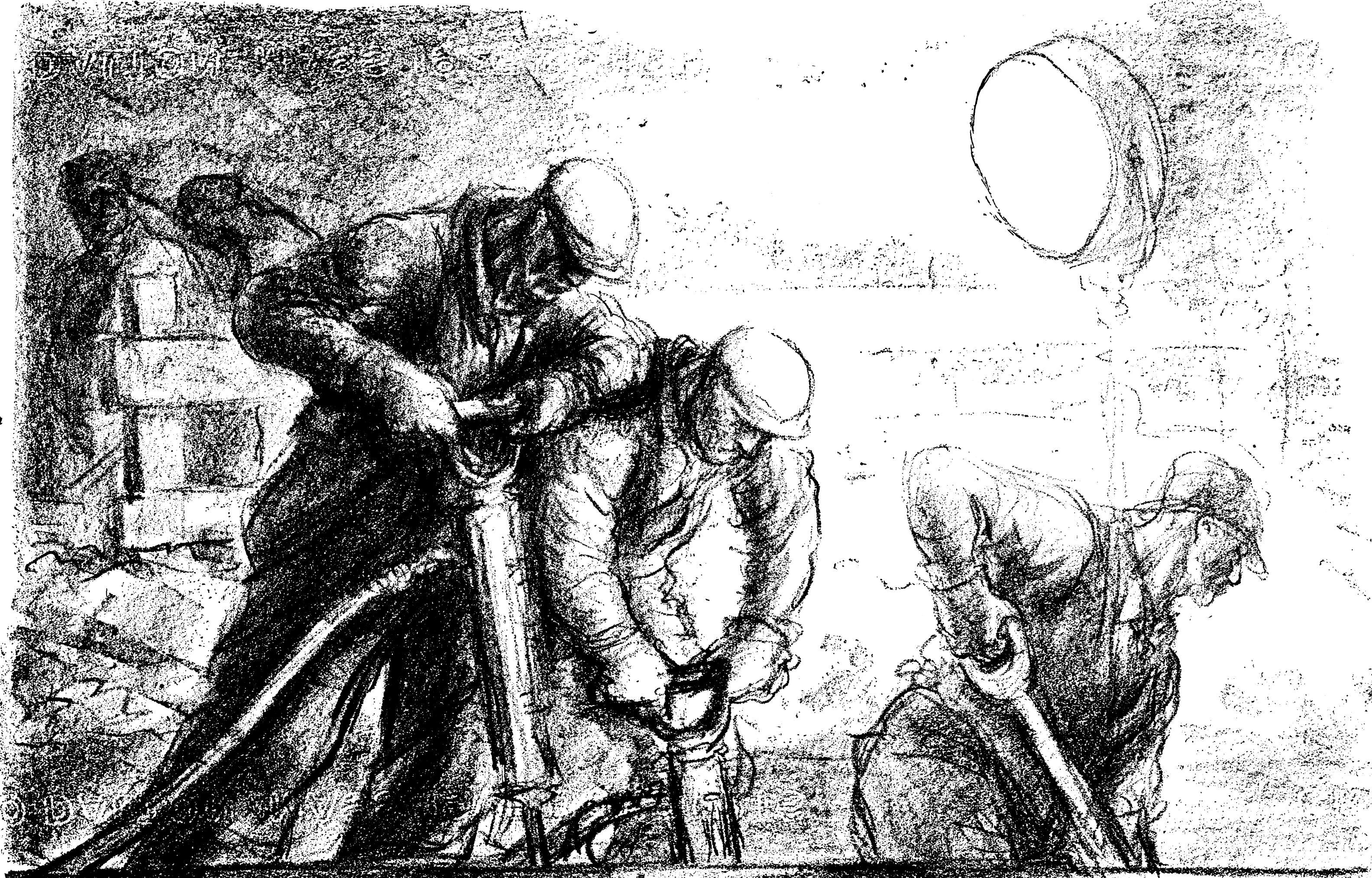
HELP THE MINERS

150,000 miners are on strike in the United States. They and their families need help—food, clothing, shelter. The non-partisan Emergency Committee for Strikers Relief has been called into action to provide direct relief to the miners in all striking areas in the United States. Money for food and medical attention for strikers should be sent to the committee headquarters at 156 Fifth Avenue, Room 1027, Forrest Bailey, Treasurer. Send clothing directly to Pittsburgh, 611 Penn Avenue, Room 307; to Colorado, Interstate Trust Bldg., Room 314, Denver, or to the New York headquarters. All funds collected go directly to the neediest families to provide food and immediate necessities.



Drawing by Reginald Marsh

PNEUMATIC DRILL



Drawing by Reginald Marsh

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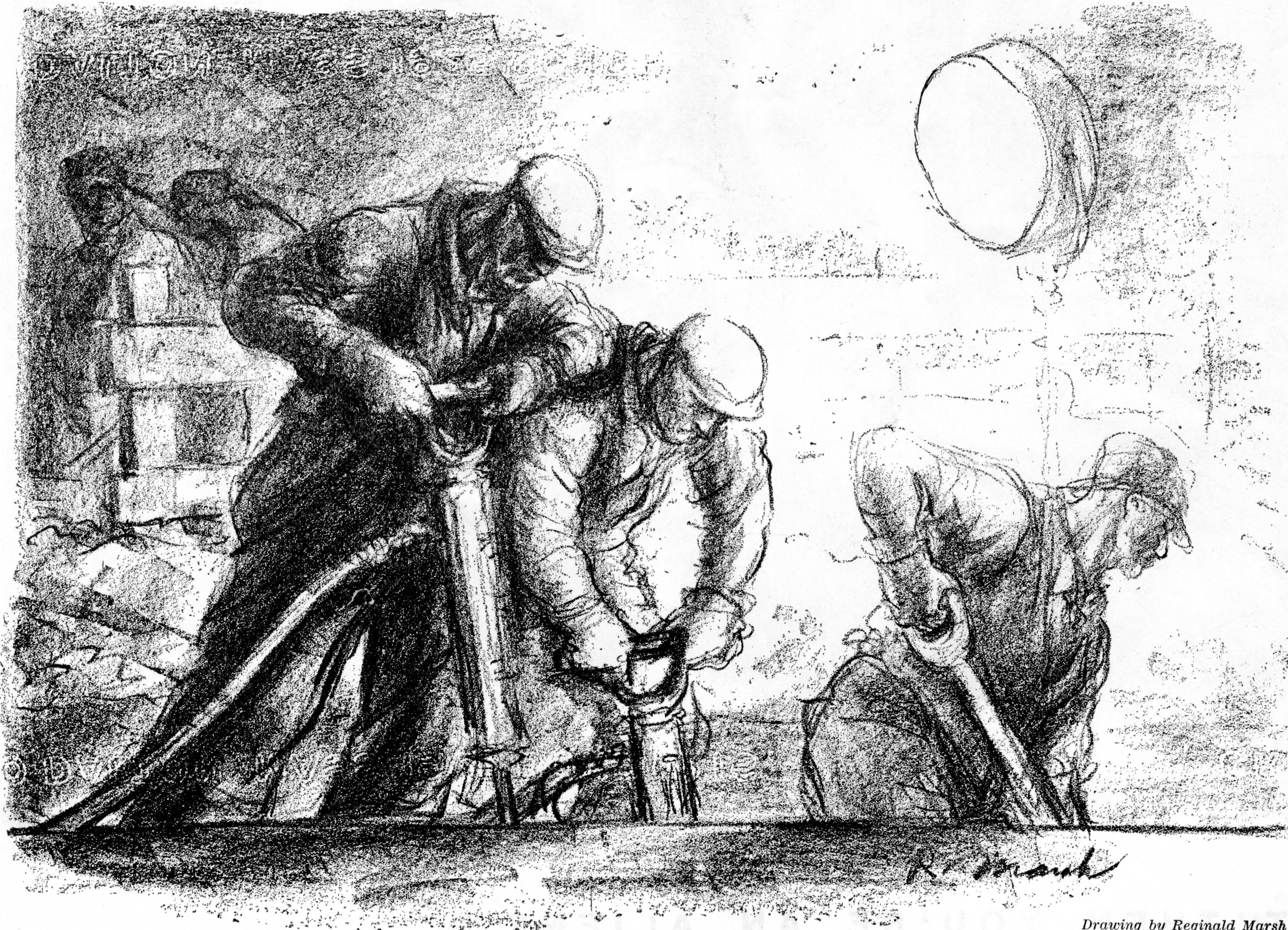


Drawing by Reginald Marsh

PNEUMATIC DRILL

OUT OF A COAL HOLE

By DON BROWN

Vincent Kamenovitch and Anthony Minerich, striking Pennsylvania miners, came to New York City in their working clothes this month and spent a few evenings telling church people, ministers, and liberal and radical organizations about the desperate fight of the Pennsylvania mine people against the coal operators and their state and private thugs and judges.

I saw these two men walking down the beautiful shining cubistic canyon of lower Fifth Avenue on a bright morning in their stained and strangely picturesque mining clothes with lamps on their caps—straight out of the dark coal-holes hundreds of feet under the rugged surface of Western Pennsylvania.

A lady in a limousine looked at them and a gentleman in a top hat turned and stared with raised eyebrows, startled.

Kamenovitch sat still as a lump of coal for an hour in the office of the American Civil Liberties Union while I made a drawing of him and then told me this story which may help some of us to see why the Pennsylvania miners who went on strike last April will fight to the last ditch against hunger, cold, sickness, prison, company thugs and judges to save their union.

"When I was fifteen years old I went to work in the mine of the H. C. Frick company in what is known as the Coke region of Pennsylvania. We had no union organization. We got up at 3:30 o'clock in the morning, gulped down some coffee and stumbled down the long hill in the dark to the mine. I walked three miles to my job, because it would have cost the company about one dollar a day to haul us all in a wagon. The manway was always full of water. We had to wade up to our knees and climb over gobs (piles of fallen stones) sometimes fifteen feet high, under wires carrying 1,000 volts of electricity, with no protecting guards. The guards would cost money. I was knocked insensible for several hours once when I touched one. Many miners were killed by the electricity.

We worked sometimes in water above our knees. There wasn't any union to make the coal company install pumps. Ice cold water dripped on us from the roof. The coal company wouldn't spend a few dollars to have a waterproof protection stretched above the miners. There were no timbers to have the working places timbered properly. Many miners were injured or killed by falls of stone for lack of timbering.

"The bosses or coal company white collar employes were on election boards. The bosses dictated to the miners how to vote. They discharged men that did not vote as they were told to. The churches were built on coal company property and the ministers lived in coal company houses. They were fired and evicted if they didn't preach as the bosses told them to.

"There were no scales to weigh the coal and no check weighmen for the miners. The post offices were on coal company property and generally in the coal company's store. The postmaster was generally the boss or his son or daughter. All mail was strictly censored and if a man got union or radical literature he was discharged. The miners were forced to buy all their food, clothing and other necessities in the coal company store where the prices were always twenty-five per cent higher than in independent stores. Hucksters had to have a pass to come into the camp and anyone coming in without a permit would be arrested by the Coal and Iron police, taken before a company squire and in many cases get a beating beforehand. Miners had to buy explosives, tools, etc., pay for their lamps, doctors, red cross and other expenses without any say as to how the money was to be spent.

"For all these and many more reasons the miners, who have been on strike for the last eight months at Mellon's Pittsburgh Coal Company and Schwab's Bethlehem, are willing to strike another twenty-eight months rather than give way to the present attempt to break the unions and send us back to slavery."

Drawing by Don Brown

VINCENT KAMENOVITCH

TIMES ARE SLACK

Times are slack in Detroit. They're slack too in Minneapolis, and Chicago, and Pittsburg. It's pretty tough when times are slack.

Every few minutes on the main streets you get hit.

"How about a dime for a cup of coffee, mister?" "How about two-bits for a flop, mister?"

Unshaven, weary eyed men tired out from pounding the pavements. And the parks are full of them, strewn about on the benches, even in this cold, slushy weather. Huddled together for warmth. Hungry eyes looking at the papers, the help wanted columns. Fierce eyes watching for another searcher to drop his rumpled dirty sheet so that they can look.

When the sun finally smashes through the foggy, cold haze of the morning it throws long wavering shadows of men in line waiting outside the automobile plants in Detroit. And the same shadows along the steel plants in Pittsburg and the flour mills of Minneapolis. Long wavering lines of men grimly waiting. Waiting for hours.

Sometimes it's hard to turn them down. Sometimes they just have to be thrown out.

"For the love of God, Mister! I've got a wife and three kids and there ain't nothing to feed them with, or pay the rent." It's tough when times are slack.

And those that have jobs aren't so happy either. Every day they walk to work with a queer funny feeling inside of them. A 'wonder if we'll get laid off today' feeling. Joe don't eat so well at night and after dinner, while Mary's cleaning up the dishes, his hands shake a little as he looks at the little blue book and wonders if there is enough to last, in case . . . . And Jim tells Maggie, of the hot, waiting eyes, he guesses they'll have to wait a little longer. He worries, too, when he tells her—he don't like that look in her eyes.

And Tony, who runs the little grocery store, says times are slack and it's pretty tough trying to collect what they owe. Tony's wife just had a baby and the notes are due at the bank next month.

And up on the row, or the avenue, or the hill they feel it too. The Boss tells his wife he guesses they'd better wait a little before they buy that new Packard sedan. She'll have to to make last year's do another month or two. He had to lay off another hundred men today. Times are pretty slack.

William Closson Emory

Drawing by Don Brown

VINCENT KAMENOVITCH

Drawing by Don Brown

VINCENT KAMENOVITCH

ON A CHINESE RIVER BOAT

By SCOTT NEARING

THREE o'clock struck. The last of the hawsers was thrown off, the bow of the little river boat moved out from the pier, cleared a sampan or two, and was on its way from the Canton wharf to Hongkong, six hours distant.

The river at Canton is only a couple of hundred yards wide, and its waters are nearly filled with sampans, junks and river boats. The thousands of sampans and junks are anchored and tied eight or ten deep along the wharfage. They handle the river commerce—the charcoal, coal, wood, vegetables, bamboo, city refuse, grain, baskets, and every important product of the countryside.

Day after day the boats come and go, while the families that man them live on them, work them, are born there, eat and sleep there and probably die there.

A mile or two and the river-boat was clear of heavy traffic. It was time to look about.

On these river boats there are a few first class passengers, generally foreigners or rich Chinese; a goodly number of second class passengers, largely well-to-do Chinese; and a mass of third class passengers—farmers, workers, students—all Chinese.

Forget the first and second class passengers. They can be duplicated on the Hudson River night boats. But here are the third class folks, who spend 41 cents (American money) for the six hour trip —Canton to Hongkong—and who have no likeness anywhere in the United States of America.

There is one lower deck on this river steamer. Cargo is stored there, and third class passengers occupy the space that the cargo does not fill. To-day there is much cargo and little deck-space. The passengers crowd into it. Some sit on the packing boxes and baskets that make up most of the cargo. Others spread strips of matting on the deck and lie about in family groups. Still others occupy little deck chairs consisting of narrow strips of canvas stretched across wooden frames.

It is a motley crowd to western eyes. Women sit about in their baggy trousers, with their short socks, gartered below the knee, and their upper garments made like the top of an American pajama costume. They are bareheaded, for the most part; their hair is long, falling in glossy braids down their backs. When they sit down, they slip their feet out of their loose sandals—anything for comfort in the humid heat. The men wear trousers too—loose ones—falling to the knees or a little below. The better dressed wear shirts and socks, with sandals, or in a few cases, shoes. But many among them wear the familiar pajama top, and some are stripped to the waist. There are many children, too, with their dark oval faces, bright black eyes and soft voices.

When the passengers have all wedged themselves in, walking is next to impossible.

Still people walk.

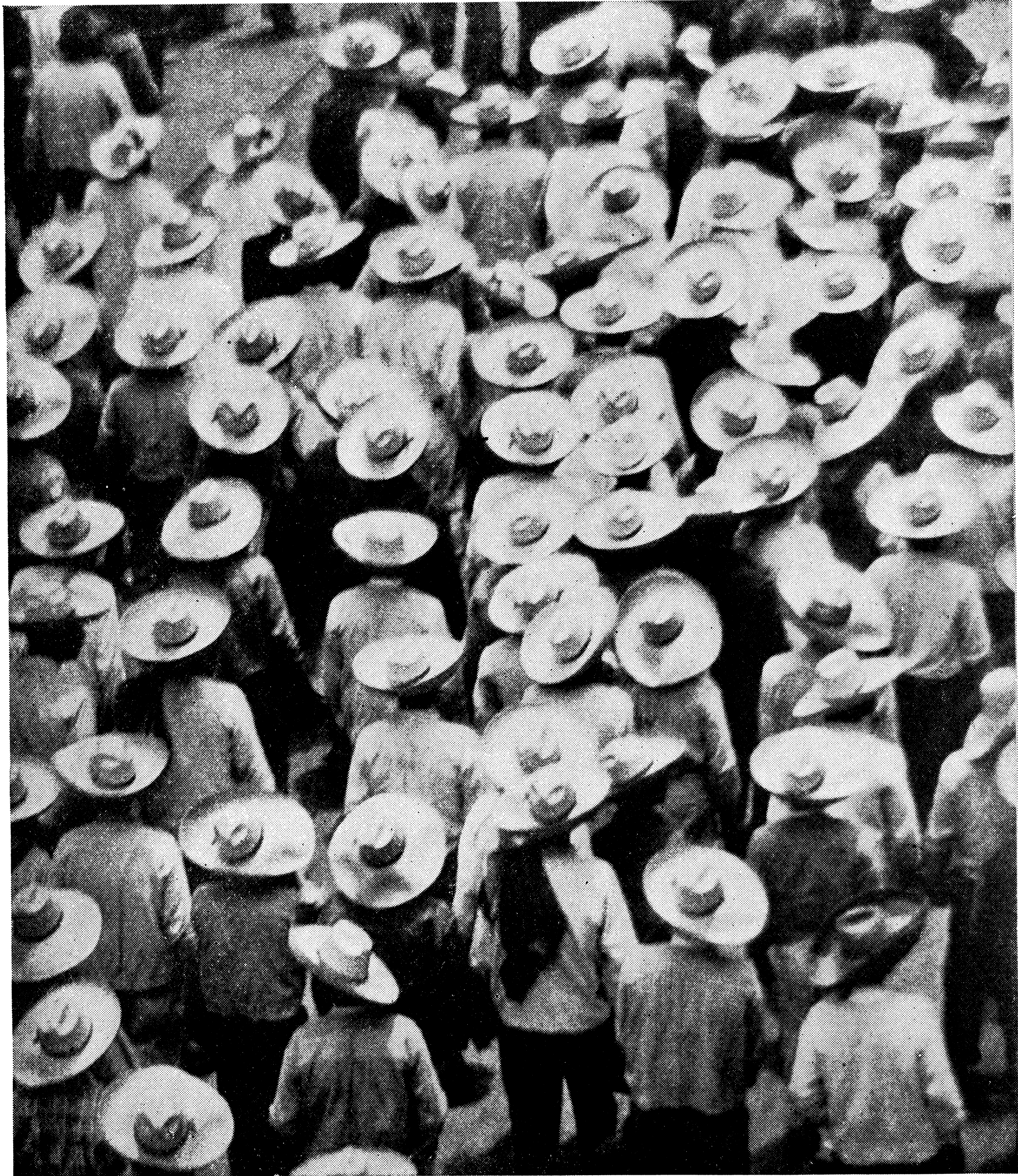
First come the fruit and candy venders, crying their wares in musical Chinese. Then boys offering to rent army cots for the trip, as though there were any place to set a whole cot down! Next there are the ticket collectors, with two wicker baskets to hold the pounds of big coppers that some of the passengers pay—245 of them for an American dollar. Cigarettes may be had from half a dozen offering hands.

At about half past four waiters pick their way back and forth, announcing dinner. These waiters are as picturesque as anyone aboard. They wear baggy Chinese trousers, belted about the waist; and falling a little below the knees. Two have on ordinary undershirts, rolled up on their chests as Americans roll their sleeves, so that a broad strip of brown flesh shows between the top of the trousers and the bottom of the rolled shirt. Other waiters are naked to the waist—fine specimens of lithe young manhood. All wear wooden sandals on their bare feet. It is in this garb that they clatter along the deck, calling their menus.

The kitchen is a simple, temporary affair, set up on one part of the lower deck. With the excep-

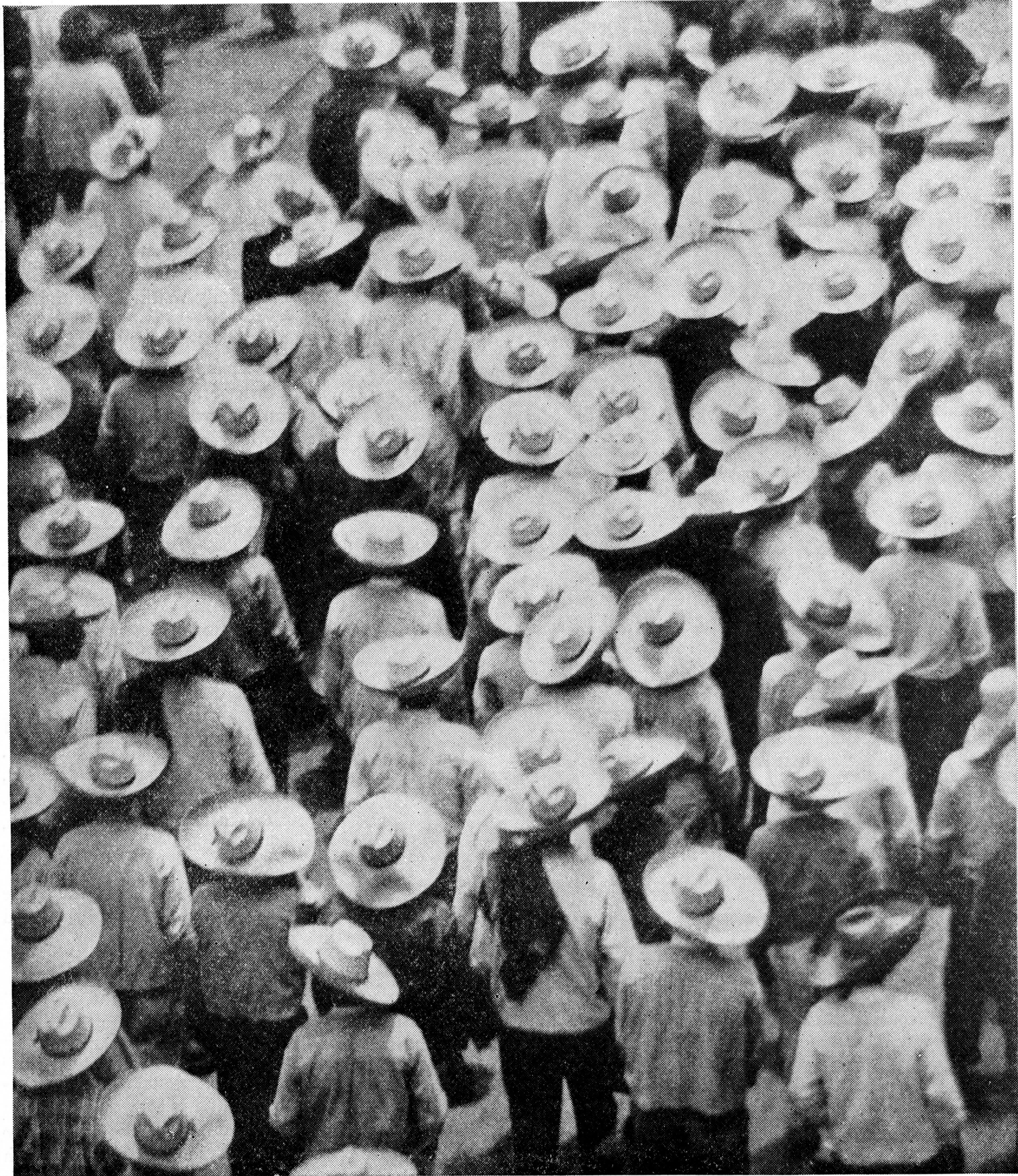
From a Photograph by Tina Modotti

MAY DAY IN MEXICO



From a Photograph by Tina Modotti

MAY DAY IN MEXICO



From a Photograph by Tina Modotti

MAY DAY IN MEXICO

THE FLAG, THE LASH, THE SWORD AND THE DOLLAR!

These are the symbols of Uncle Sam's Monroe Doctrine as they appear to 6,055,747 people of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica, the five countries ("5 Paises") making up historical Central America. The above drawing is taken from a manifesto recently issued by the Nicaraguan section of the All-American Anti-Imperialist League. Observe the dollar sign—a serpent winding itself around the sword of imperialism, which is plunged through the fresh wound of Nicaragua. The serpent bears the legend "imprestitos," or loans. As the result of the present United States military intervention in Nicaragua, American bankers have only recently arranged for loans totaling $20,000,000, which gives them control over practically everything worth while in the country. They already had control of the railroads and the National Bank of Nicaragua. Similarly secured and of similar character, are most of the investments ("inversiones") which Wall Street has made throughout Central American. The profit-imperialism of Wall Street and Washington wraps itself in the American flag and American workers spill their own blood and that of their Nicaraguan brothers to defend it.

tion of the big open stove where the rice is boiled, the whole could be put in a small wheel-barrow. A great pot of cooked rice is kept warm over an open charcoal burner. A Chinese griddle-pot, also over an open charcoal fire, does all the cooking. There is another charcoal fire for heating water, and there the kitchen equipment ends. As for the dishes, they consist of a small supply of teapots and tea cups, several rice bowls and a number of chop-sticks, besides the larger dishes. The larder contains some live animals, a few pieces of meat and green beans, onions, bean - sprouts, bamboo shoots and other ingredients dear to the Chinese stomach.

A waiter secures an order for frog legs. The cook goes to a wicker basket, takes out three frogs, stunning each one with a bang against the edge of the basket. He takes a frog by the hind legs, lays it on the little work-block where he has just sliced his last order of turnips, cuts off the head with his cleaver, and with a jerk of his practiced wrist he has the skin completely off the body. The frog-body is still alive. It wiggles its legs and hops about as a chicken frequently does after the head has been severed from the body. The cook pays no attention. He disembowels the frog, takes to his cleaver again, and less than five minutes elapse between the frog in the wicker basket, wearing "a precious jewel in his head," and several score pieces of frog meat, sizzling on the griddle and ready for chop-stick consumption.

As each order is made up, it is placed on a tray with a generous bowl of rice and a pot of tea. Thus assembled, the meal goes steaming hot to the customer.

Eggs follow the frogs into the griddle — eggs mixed with green beans and sprinkled with onion—to come out a moment later as an appetizing form of egg-fooyung.

Chicken runs short. The cook goes to a crate, takes out a white leghorn, wrings her neck, pours a ladle-full of hot water into the ever-useful griddle, scalds the bird, turns her over to an assistant for picking, rinses the griddle sparingly and puts on his next order of greens in preparation for the chicken-breast that will follow in a moment or two.

The cook's assistant squats on the ground deftly picking the chicken. A great gray rat slips out from behind a packing case, surveys the situation critically, decides that it is still too early for supper, and disappears behind the case.

KEEP THIS DATE OPEN

March 9, 1928

New Masses Artists'

AND

Writers' Spring Frolic

WEBSTER HALL

All this time the waiters continue to call their wares; the griddle sputters as frog meat, pork, eggs, greens, and chicken follow one another in quick succession. Among the packing cases is a newspaper covered cage, full of songbirds. Throughout the meal they continue to warble and twitter a gay obligato to the stern business of preparing and disposing of food.

The passengers sit or lie about. Chairs are close together. Many of them must be intensely cramped and uncomfortable. One man, his wife and two small children are huddled up asleep on a small square of matting. The older child might be five. The younger is about three. A tiny anklet of silver wire decorates the baby's left leg. Its stomach is distended. Its bones protrude through the skin. Another case of malnutrition. The father wakes, buys a bowl of rice and egg from one of the waiters, and tries to tempt the younger child. The little one refuses fretfully. The father urges, but to no purpose.

Most of the freight is stowed near the centre of the boat, where it will be easy to get at. The stern is littered with passengers. Among them are numbers of young people, but not one of them gives the slightest indication of affection. Evidently the art of petting in public has not yet been learned in South China.

In the bow of the boat two fan-tan games are in full swing. Further on, and removed a little from the rest of the passengers, a dozen Chinese are lying in little stalls, smoking opium.

Dinner is over at last. It is still hot and stuffy in the hold. People fan themselves, nod a little, pick their way to a port-hole and look out at the green river banks as they glide past.

The sun sets in a turgid sky. Twilight falls. The waiters begin to cry supper dishes. Passengers settle in their places. The color fades from the West. The yellow water of the river grows purple. Freight and passengers huddle together in the gloom of the lower deck. Another hour to Hongkong.

New Masses Bound

Our first year, in two volumes. Bound by hand in gay red boards. Sold singly or together, $2.50 per volume.

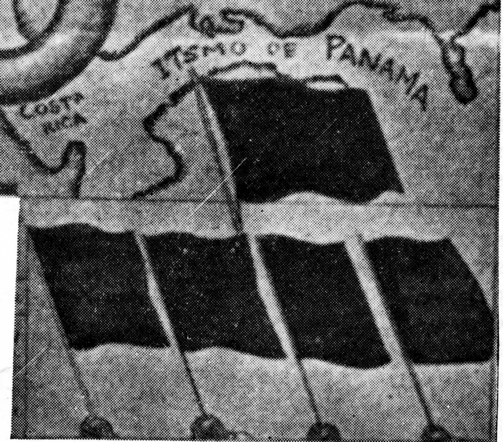
THE FLAG, THE LASH, THE SWORD AND THE DOLLAR!

These are the symbols of Uncle Sam's Monroe Doctrine as they appear to 6,055,747 people of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica, the five countries ("5 Paises") making up historical Central America. The above drawing is taken from a manifesto recently issued by the Nicaraguan section of the All-American Anti-Imperialist League. Observe the dollar sign—a serpent winding itself around the sword of imperialism, which is plunged through the fresh wound of Nicaragua. The serpent bears the legend "imprestitos," or loans. As the result of the present United States military intervention in Nicaragua, American bankers have only recently arranged for loans totaling $20,000,000, which gives them control over practically everything worth while in the country. They already had control of the railroads and the National Bank of Nicaragua. Similarly secured and of similar character, are most of the investments ("inversiones") which Wall Street has made throughout Central American. The profit-imperialism of Wall Street and Washington wraps itself in the American flag and American workers spill their own blood and that of their Nicaraguan brothers to defend it.

tion of the big open stove where the rice is boiled, the whole could be put in a small wheel-barrow. A great pot of cooked rice is kept warm over an open charcoal burner. A Chinese griddle-pot, also over an open charcoal fire, does all the cooking. There is another several score pieces of frog meat, sizzling on the griddle and ready for chop-stick consumption.

As each order is made up, it is placed on a tray with a generous bowl of rice and a pot of tea. Thus assembled, the meal goes steaming hot to the customer.

out from behind a packing case, surveys the situation critically, decides that it is still too early for supper, and disappears behind the case.



TRAINED BY THE STATE

By ERNEST BOOTH

SPAWNED by an inebriate parent, and literally sluiced out into the gutter of a great industrial center before he was hardly able to walk, Johnny was taken into charge by the State. His infancy was passed in the dulling atmosphere of orphanage routine. In conformity with the peonage system of those political footballs, he was sent into bondage, at the age of ten. His master was an impotent shop owner—and to him and his wife, Johnny was but another unit in his system of acquiring help.

Crammed with the indigestible mess labeled "grade-school-education," Johnny had no further opportunity to study; the certification from the orphanage relieved his master of the necessary compliance to the compulsory education law. A maximum of work and a minimum of comfort for his charge was the rule of the shop owner. Johnny ran away from him after two years servitude.

An interval elapsed while he sought to accustom himself to the strange world of competitive employment. He had glimpsed freedom from behind shop windows, through half open doors, but the possession of it found him totally incapable of using it. The state had not trained him for freedom. In a blind trail he traveled through temporary jobs. Washing dishes, shining shoes, selling newspapers, he learned to fight—fight fearlessly, ferociously, and ever take the aggressive.

I met him in a reform school. He was then about sixteen. Small of stature, with delicate features, his pale face and washed-out blue eyes gave him a mild, almost-apologetic appearance. His determination to fight against the forces which constantly thwarted his efforts to advance, had brought him afoul of the police. That he had come from an orphanage weighed heavily against him. In the omnipotent wisdom of a police officer's suggestion, the learned judge had found solution for the problem of what to do with Johnny. The state would take him in hand once more and give him a training that would enable him to earn his living, and do away with his fighting on street corners and disturbing the peace and dignity of Christian citizens.

Johnny's reform school training was thorough. What disgust the orphanage had instilled in him of manual labor was speedily developed into an active loathing. I first saw him in the steam-clouded shower bath room, engaged in a fight with a husky young Greek who was at the School for forceful rape of a girl. Johnny repelled the boy's advances, but the fight broke out anew when they reached the dormitory that night. The result was that Johnny was transferred to another company—one that worked with pick and shovel exclusively. There he spent ten months, later being transferred to a squad which alternated between chopping wood and digging ditches, or leveling ground. Twice he made the only gesture of protest he could against the dissipation of his youth, and each time he was recaptured, beaten unconscious, and returned to the pick and shovel company.

Paroled from the School two years later, he was mentally no older than when he entered—and he was thoroughly "institutionalized". He had been told what time to get up, what time to go to bed, what time to work—when he should eat, and what—and when to bathe. All his initiative had been destroyed. The energy that should have been expended in forming constructive habits had been diverted and found outlet in laying plans for "getting even" when he should be released. Older boys, whose experience in crime enabled them to discuss "the best way to steal", gave of the richness of their experiences. That they saw their crimes, real or imagined, only in the light of memory, and so visualized them shorn of the actual hardships which their perpetration had occasioned, was beyond Johnny to comprehend. He had a surcharge of animal spirit, and the past actions of the others suggested the only manner in which he could release it. Instead of a training in any trade or gainful occupation, the State had provided as mentors others whose early life too closely paralleled Johnny's.

Drawing by Jane Belo

PORTRAIT OF JULES PASCIN

In prison, three years later, Johnny accosted me. His face was yet the pale, expressionless oval that had marked him during his youth. But his eyes held a glint within their depths that was not good to see in a chap just old enough to vote.

"I'm doing a three-spot for clouting a heap (automobile)," he explained, "but I only got eight months more to go—and what I mean I'm goin' to make up for this time. I was a piker before, but I learned plenty here. Come on over an' meet a friend of mine. He's a three-time-loser, and about as smart a guy as ever hit this joint."

The "loser" was doing twenty-five years for bank robbery. He had come to the prison a few months previous. In the following months, preceding Johnny's release, I saw them together often. The time when Johnny was not engaged in his assigned work of picking up waste paper about the prison yard, was spent in conversation with the "loser" and others of his ilk. Johnny's training was being completed. He had nothing to contrast with the lessons in crime he was daily taking. There had not been one constructive effort made by the State during his whole life to start his mind along other channels. The hatred, bitterness, and monotonous regularity of institution life forced him to look inward for escape from the deadening sameness of his existence. In his introspection he found that work—such as he had known it—was a futile effort; and that robbery—on a large scale—was attractive.

Endowed with this perspective of life, convinced that all restraint was hateful and an unjust curbing of his desires and that all symbols of law and order were despicable, he concluded his term and was discharged.

Supplied, on one hand, with five dollars and the usual ill-fitting shoes and clothes—the parting gift of his foster-parent, the benevolent State; and on the other hand with an introduction from his "loser"-friend to some thieves in the near-by city, Johnny logically discarded

Drawing by Jane Belo

PORTRAIT OF JULES PASCIN

Drawing by Jan Matulka

"RIDE 'EM, COWBOY!"

the former and embraced the latter gift. In prison he had made the acquaintance of morphine. He never became addicted to it because the supply was irregular. But he had acquired an affinity for it which, for awhile, made it loom large in his calculations of the future.

He was accepted as a man eminently qualified for his profession, and fitted into a group which made raids upon banks. Flushed with his first success, possessing more money in one sum than he had ever handled in all the previous years of his life, Johnny sent considerable portions of it to his prison friends. Loyal to those who had made possible his elevation into the realm of "big money", he showed his gratitude in the only way possible for him.

He used an increasing amount of morphine. As the habit grew, his need for greater sums to sustain it became an imperative. Through some curious attraction he met and actually married a young member of the world's oldest female profession. She too craved morphine —and Johnny supplied it. He did this, actuated by the same motives that impel a previously honest man of reputable family to embezzle, that the object of his illicit affection might be satisfied even to her slightest whim.

Contrary to the prevailing opinion, so rife among fiction-writers and learned nitwits, morphine does *not* give a false courage, an irresistible desire to rob and murder. Its effects are to make the user harmless in his raids upon society, once he has become fully dominated by desire for it.

Johnny, however, had lived less than four months out of prison when he realized dimly, the end to which continued use of the drug pointed. With his wife as a willing helpmate, they went into a sanitarium and began treatment for cure of the habit. Six weeks later, pronounced cured, they returned to the city. The treatment had been expensive. Johnny needed money, and his friends were scattered. One of them was in jail, and he implored Johnny's aid financially.

Two days later, Johnny walked alone into a branch bank. Vaulting the counter he flourished a pistol and captured three employes. Herding them into one of the small cashier's cages, he rifled one drawer of its money and was proceeding to the next when a policeman entered the doorway. One of the employes had touched an alarmbell, which had sounded on several corners and in stores surrounding the bank.

As the policeman advanced toward him, drawing his revolver, Johnny leveled his pistol and fired. The bullet grazed the officer's skull. He rushed over the counter and was about to grapple with Johnny when another shot from the gun struck him just below the heart. Devoid of any physical strength, Johnny was disarmed and handcuffed a moment later. The officer died before he could be taken to a hospital.

Cold-blooded? Cruel? Merciless? Vicious, and warranting the extreme wrath of the law? Stop and think a moment. I hold no brief for murder—but *who* committed that murder? Lest you skip a paragraph in reading this, to find just penalty imposed upon Johnny, —know that he was condemned, and, in the gloating presence of fifty brother-officers of the slain policeman, he dropped through a trap and strangled to death.

But in exacting the supreme penalty, the State, which had trained him and formed him wrote the most damning indictment against itself—the system that had taken him as a child and left him a Frankenstein Monster, kicking out his life on the end of a hempen rope. . . .

Drawing by Adolph Dehn

POOR LITTLE TABLE

some curious attraction he met and

Drawing by Adolph Dehn

POOR LITTLE TABLE

some curious attraction he met and

Drawing by Adolph Dehn

POOR LITTLE TABLE

FIVE POEMS

By STIRLING BOWEN

I

Come down around me, snow, come down tonight
and cover us in this our house of wood,
our little house where quietly we live.
Come down with white and weightless wonder on
my roof. I want to know you deepen there
above my head. Creep upward on the wall,
white flake on flake, obliterate the door
without a sign or stroke or stir of wind
and, as the evening did, creep upward past
the window pane, a double night. Outside
the warrior trees rise gnarling in the storm.
Their antlered limbs are white with being held
against the sky. Come down then snow and with
your soft white darkness hide us for a while
with all the outside world so vanished, lost,
we two might almost wonder whence we came.

II

The jail was built by workers for their friends,
for those that flee the drudgery of shops
and take to jobs annoying to the cops.
Bricklayers built the stairway that descends
to dungeons and the cell the burglar spends
his five long years in. Yankees, Hunkies, Wops,
whose widows someday will be pushing mops,
might see their own sons here making amends.

So old among us here the jail has grown
that lying in his narrow cell in gray
may be a man whose father built with stone
the high walls, one whose father hauled the clay
for the dark bricks that close him in, or one
whose father wired the gongs that mark his day.

III

Frame doubled forward,—never, though, in mirth,—
he saw things from the level of his hips.
His eyes were pointed downward at the earth
when he went walking forth on little trips.

As if grown tired from stooping toward the ground
for something he had lost he locked his arms
behind him. Up and down the streets around
him life rushed by with laughter and alarms.

He almost saw his ear, his own dried ear,
from peering sidewise, in the course of time,
and looking down found buttons, hair-pins, queer
small stones and every day or so a dime.

IV

We lie and listen for the owl to cry.
We lie and watch the midnight on the wall.
We see the slow hypnotic rise and fall
of shadows on our door where the near-by
slow-swinging corner lamp's one winking eye
projects four clownish forms. And this is all
the world. And be it large or be it small
it seems enough to hold us till we die.

We drowse. The foolish owl cries out no more.
The planets are forgotten on their steep
far altitudes of darkness. And the four
slow clowning shadows gesture as they creep,
like dream shapes making ready on our door,
leading us toward the circus tents of sleep.

From a Lithograph by P. Kurka, Moscow

V

" . . . . And therefore the name thereof was called Babel because there the language of the whole earth was confounded."

The big cranes lurch. They rise 100 feet—
"John Farmer pitching bundles in the mow,
he thinks 10 feet is high. But this is how
we city guys toss things around." The beat
of riveters on steel in the red heat—
"God damned good drumming!" Danny mops his brow
and, spitting, scoops 2 tons of dirt up now
in the crane's fist—"Hey, pipe the blond broad, Pete!"

The day fades out. And at the end of day
the crane beams lean against the slanting sky.
Once there was Babel's Tower—"Well, ours'll stay
put up. You get me, brother? Good and high!
What if a Wop does mix his words? Why, say!
This here's a union job. You bet your eye!"

From a Lithograph by P. Kurka, Moscow

From a Lithograph by P. Kurka, Moscow

THE RED COMMANDER

OUTLINE FOR A TRUE STORY

By JOSEPH FREEMAN

SHE was born in Moscow of well-to-do parents. Her father was a Russian businessman who owned three factories; her mother was English. She was always considered a frail and precocious child. At six she began to have day-dreams of becoming a soldier, especially a cavalryman. She used to lie in the dark and imagine herself riding on a black horse, faster, faster, faster, with the wind whistling in her ears.

Nevertheless she was a terrible coward. Loud noises frightened her, and she was afraid to walk alone in the streets at night. She was constantly haunted by a fear of death; she would imagine herself falling dangerously ill, or being killed by a runaway horse, or by a vicious bandit, or just going to sleep and never waking up.

When the world war broke out she was only thirteen years old, but she could read the papers, and followed the campaigns day by day. Her soldier fantasies became stronger than ever; often she would be seized by a desire to run away from home and join the army. But knowing in her heart that she was a coward she decided to overcome her fear of death. She began walking the dark streets of Moscow late at night; she sought out of the way places where people said hooligans might pounce on one at any minute. At the end of seven days she quit; the strain was too much.

When she reached her sixteenth year everybody began saying she was pretty. Rather boyish, people said, slim and hardboned, with a tilted nose, yet there was profound feminine charm in her soft eyes and clear voice.

Her family had not begun to think of her future. They let her attend lectures, and at one of them she met a Hungarian student. After they fell in love with each other she discovered he was a Communist. It took him a week to convert her, and after a secret marriage they eloped to Budapest. There she entered the Communist Party of Hungary, worked hard, and lived poor.

She was in the streets of Budapest when the workers' uprising took place. The bullets were flying all around her and she found her fear of death unbearably painful. The fear lasted a few minutes in the most intense form in which she had ever experienced it. Suddenly it occurred to her: after all not every bullet hit you. There were at least as many chances of escaping alive as of being killed. A strange calm came over her and she went to Party headquarters to work.

During the brief Soviet regime she occupied a minor post in the government, while her husband did more responsible work. One night they received a telephone call. The revolution was broken; the Whites had seized power; but they had promised there would be no white terror; the Communists would receive the fullest protection. The next night she and her husband and a number of other comrades were arrested. In prison she heard that comrades were being tortured. She had lost her fear of death, but now she realized that what she feared most was not death but pain. If she could only be hit by a bullet and die at once; a swift clean death. She could never stand torture.

They brought her before a White tribunal for examination. The officers asked confusing questions, and she stumbled in her answers. She would incriminate nobody, no matter what it might cost her. She would be a good Communist. When she hesitated over some answer the soldier standing on guard behind her kicked his heavy boot into her back and she fainted.

When she regained consciousness in her cell she decided to kill herself. She had no weapon, and there was no rope in the cell. She broke the window-pane and started to cut her wrist with a jagged piece of glass. The prison guard who was watching her through the spy-hole rushed in and beat her unconscious.

They kept her in prison several months longer, and she developed a touch of tuberculosis. She was convinced she was about to die. Her childhood death fantasies came back stronger than ever. If she could only be back in Russia, where her death would be useful; if she could only die for the Revolution instead of dying like a dog in jail.

Finally they released her, and the guard who opened the door of her cell told her that her husband had been shot by the Whites. She had only one thought: I must get back to Russia. I must fight for the Revolution. Fight with my hands. I shall not live long. I must die on the battlefield.

She joined the Red Army in the Ukraine. They gave her a man's uniform, boots and a rifle. She shaved her head, the way many Russians do in the summertime, and bandaged her breasts so they would not be noticed. Most people took her for a boy, and those who knew she was a woman didn't bother her; nobody thought of such things on the battlefield.

She killed her first man in a room. He was a counter-revolutionist caught spying. She emptied her revolver into him. His death throes revolted her, but on the battlefield later she found herself very calm. They assigned her to reconnoitering because she was a good rider, and to political work because she was educated and could be trusted.

Once her regiment was quartered for a week in a village and the soldiers took sweethearts. All the village girls thought she was a young man and one of them fell in love with her. She had to play up to her role, took the girl for moonlight walks, bought her sunflower seeds, and kissed her; but when the girl began to make impossible demands she broke it off.

The soldiers in her regiment admired her profoundly for her courage on the battlefield; she was known as the coolest "man" in any situation. The commander praised her military talents and sent her to an officers' school. It was there that she began to study Marx seriously.

When the civil war was over she decided to remain in the Red Army and to have a baby. She did not want a husband or a lover;

Drawing by Peggy Bacon

METROPOLITAN MUSINGS

"There's nothing to see here!"

Drawing by Peggy Bacon

METROPOLITAN MUSINGS

"There's nothing to see here!"

Drawing by Peggy Bacon

METROPOLITAN MUSINGS

"There's nothing to see here!"

she merely wanted a father for her baby. The air was full of such ideas, and she wanted a man with intelligence, good health, and will power who would be willing to endow her child with these qualities and after that to leave her alone. She confided her plans to a young man, a comrade who was doing political work in her regiment. He obliged her.

She continued to participate in cavalry manoeuvres until well into the sixth month. At the end of the eighth month she came in from field exercises to ask for a leave of absence, stating her reasons. The commanding officer raised his eyebrows and stamped the proper documents. The first thing she did on arriving in Moscow was to put on a skirt for the first time in five years. It had a strange effect on her psychology. In the army uniform she had felt like a man; in her new skirt she felt like a woman. During the civil war she had been eaten by lice, and now she began to live decently.

She gave birth to the baby, left it in charge of a nurse and returned to the military academy. One day she came home and found that the nurse had carelessly left the baby lying with its face down and it had been smothered to death. She was terribly upset. For the first time since her elopement to Budapest she wrote to her mother, who was an emigré in Paris. She wrote her a long letter about herself and the baby and about the Revolution.

"If you feel," her mother replied, "that what is going on in Russia meets with the dictates of your conscience, I am satisfied. All I want in this world is to see you happy."

She continued to work hard at the military school, and was known as one of the best students. Off duty she wore women's clothes, and men found her attractive. She decided she wanted another baby, but this time she felt under present conditions, during the transition period, a baby needs a father, a home, and a family. She married a fellow army officer at the military school, and continued working until the baby was born.

When she is not at the school, or at maneouvres, or taking care of her home, or keeping social engagements, she conducts political classes for Comsomols. In her spare time she studies English, German, and French.

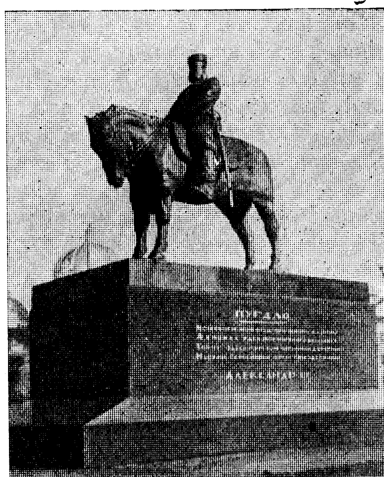
"CRUEL AND UNUSUAL"

One of the Bolshevik atrocities committed most often in the newspapers of New York, Paris, and London, was the destruction of the art treasures of the old regime.

In Leningrad, in front of the October Station, the terminus of the Moscow-Leningrad railroad, stood in the old days a huge equestrian statue of the Czar Alexander III. This monarch was the son of one Czar who was assassinated, and the father of another, but his own end was hastened by nothing more painful than drink. The statue itself was executed by Prince Troubetzkoy, at the order of that not very widely lamented son of Alexander, the late Nicholas the Last. As statues go it is a pretty good statue—at least there is a lot of bronze in it—but curiously enough, once your attention is called to it, it is so exaggeratedly heavy, so overwhelmingly solid, that whether by inadvertence, or from the deliberate intention of the sculptor (who was a liberal), it becomes almost a cartoon in bronze.

So the Bolsheviks left it standing—just as they left the shrine, opposite which stands carved the famous legend "Religion is the opiate of the people", just as they left most everything useful or beautiful under this regime, which, in spite of the fact that it calls itself and is a proletarian dictatorship, operates so much more by education than by the use of force.

But they didn't leave it standing without adding the proper postcript. Here it is chiselled deep into the base of the statue, written by Demian Biedny, a sort of Communist George Ade or Mr. Dooley, and translated more or less literally (with help) by me:



THE SCARECROW

My father and my son
Were killed before their time.
My fate has been to stand
Dishonored here in rhyme,
A scarecrow for the land,
Freed now from such as I'm.

Robert Wolf

Moscow, November 24.

LIFE IS A WELTER

The Centuries, by Em Jo Basshe. New Playwrights' Theatre, 40 Commerce Street.

Three things bothered me in *The Centuries*—certain literary conventions; the fact that the play obviously had had to be cut out of all resemblance to its first form; and the treatment of the radical sections. Otherwise it was beautiful, racy, effective; and it possessed, as it was played first to last, a very genuine crowded power. And this, I think, I liked best of all: that it managed to treat life as a welter, not as a personal tragedy, as a bitter adjustment, not as a classic and individual story.

At the same time, it kept all the pleasure that is to be had in character—that is, in some of the characters. The Shamus who turns pawn-broker, and the two old Jews, are the best things in the play and they are gorgeous. The hard young tough is well conceived and well acted. In these parts the play is alive. To recall certain of the lines is enough to find out how good they were:

"This is *my* bag, these are *my* words."
"What keeps you from being rich?" "Money."
"God must be in the Bronx."
"Old shoes without laces, size nine."

But then I come to the literary characters. [I don't know the East Side, and all the East Siders in or out of the East Side may rise to tell me that all of these people are authentic.] But I am dead sure the old mother who goes into "the old business," doesn't belong in a play for a revolutionary theatre, because she is false. And the prostitute scene, where the little strike-breaker, (who looks by the way, very much like a George Grosz drawing, very well cast,) is enticed into the whorehouse by the purple-shawled Madam, where the old prostitute sings, *Hush, Little Sister Don't You Cry,* with literary unction, until the girl jumps out of the window—that doesn't belong in a revolutionary theatre. That belongs in 1890, and in the cheapest literature of the period. If I may be permitted to use a much abused word, that part is bourgeois.

Then comes the radical stuff—the strike, the two young strike-leaders, the machine treatment. And the chief trouble with it is that it is out of drawing. It doesn't live in the same world with the singing squabbles between the two old beggars, the contests about their prowess with women, their arguments about the merits of the cemeteries they want to be buried in. The author might have said in effect—"See how people change when you force them into this new way of life; some become shrews, some pawn-brokers, some crook politicans, some beggars, some shoot themselves, and some become radicals." But before getting to the last phrase, and after saying all the others, the author jumps back inside the radicals and expects the audience to change with him. I think some one might be able to write a play from the young radicals out—this kind of thing is done with authentic effect in Russia — but this wasn't *that* play. The young radicals are laughable, preposterous, little, frightened creations; it is hardly possible to sit still while they are on the stage. Which I submit, in spite of all the dual-minded people who like to profit by keeping the two things separate, is neither good propaganda nor good art.

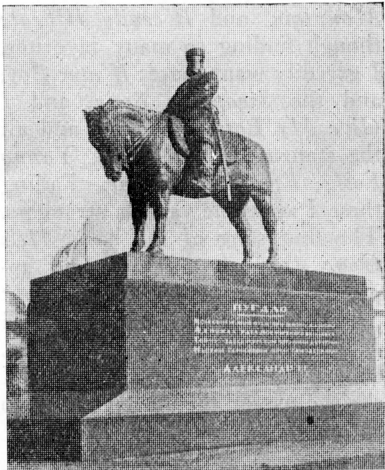
Drawing by Don Brown
Edouard Franz in "The Centuries"

Up to date, for all their excellent sets of the Machine Age, the New Playwrights have so far cast the machine in the role of the villain. That doesn't square completely with a world civilization that hangs on so hard to its Fords and radios, its brilliant devices for production against the tedium of life. And that doesn't entirely square with the word revolutionary, which this theatre uses proudly.

I wait for the play that will have the pride of the age in it.

Meanwhile, I like *The Centuries* for its gentleness and its brutality, its beautiful-spoken irony, its swarming effect, its many lives intwined into one life. And for its production, its color. It has all the poetic qualities of feeling in abundance—what it lacks is a certain mental clarity, that would give it better structure, throw out its literary conventions, and really place it in relation to something else.

Genevieve Taggard.



THE SCARECROW

My father and my son
Were killed before their time.
My fate has been to stand
Dishonored here in rhyme,
A scarecrow for the land,
Freed now from such as I'm.

Robert Wolf

Moscow, November 24.

Drawing by Don Brown

Edouard Franz in "The Centuries"

Drawing by Don Brown

Edouard Franz in "The Centuries"

SANDBURG'S SONGBAG

By MARIAN TYLER

The American Songbag, by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace and Co. $7.50.

My Pious Friends and Drunken Companions. Songs and Ballads of Conviviality. Collected by Frank Shay. Magnificently Illuminated by John Held, Jr. The Mäcaulay Co. $2.00.

THERE are people who like songs as playthings, and people who like them as friends. If you like them as friends you do not take liberties with them; at least you do any necessary harmonizing or cutting sympathetically and respectfully. For songs, especially folksongs, have a definite life of their own. They change and marry, well or badly; they are suppressed by well-meaning friends; they prosper or grow poor. Carl Sandburg says something like this in one of his two hundred and eighty introductory notes, which I can't seem to find again. To him songs are persons, not playthings. You can look into the *American Songbag* without any of the usual misgivings about finding your favorites improved beyond recognition. Naturally they will not all be quite the same as you have known them, any more than any individual is the same to two different acquaintances; but they are treated with affection and respect.

That is one reason why his collection is so far ahead of any that has ever been published. Carl Sandburg has lived with these songs for years, gone around the country collecting and singing them; and he wishes, in his quite genuine Apologia for the imperfections of the collection, that he could have "taken ten, twenty, thirty years more in the preparation of this volume." At least a hundred of the songs have never been published before, and most of them have passed from singer to singer rather than from book to book. The little introductions are so personal that you feel you are meeting each song in the life instead of on paper. The grouping is apparently a very subjective matter with the collector, and therefore illogical but attractive. The section called *Kentucky Blazing Star* is a hundred and fifty pages away from the section *Southern Mountains,* and three hundred pages from the Negro spirituals grouped under the title *Road to Heaven.* The three *Bandit Biographies* might have been included with *Dramas and Portraits;* and hardly anything is in the section where you first look for it; and groups like *Lovely People* and *The Lincolns and Hankses* obviously have a special significance for Carl Sandburg at which the reader can only guess. This adds to their charm.

The railroad and work songs are probably the most impressive

AMERICA

new contribution of the book. Beginning with *Bolsum Brown — There's a red light on the track for Bolsum Brown;* going on with *The Railroad Cars are Coming,* an authentic product of the work gangs that pushed the rails westward, scaring the rattlesnakes and prairie dogs; *Jerry, Go an' Ile That Car,* whose stanzas were reassembled by a general order sent out to all employes of the Santa Fe railroad; *Casey Jones,* of course, with a second version beginning on an excited treble—

> "Mama, mama, mama have you heard the news?
> Daddy got killed on the C B and Q's."
> "Shut your eyes and hold your breath,
> We'll all draw a pension upon papa's death."

And the plaintive air:

> There's many a man killed on the railroad,
> Railroad, railroad;
> There's many a man killed on the railroad
> And cast in a lonely grave

of which Carl Sandburg says: "The crying out loud is heard here; over smash-ups, head-on collisions, cow-catchers telescoped in cabooses, the iron horse meeting a broken rail and taking a tumble down an embankment, the undertaker's harvest that came after some one was asleep at the switch." Then there is *Ever Since Uncle John Henry Been Dead,* to be sung to the swinging of a hammer or a pick and shovel; and *My Lulu,* about whom "cowboys, beggars, pick and shovel stiffs, leathernecks, scissorbills, bootleggers, beer runners, hijackers, traveling men, plasterers, paperhangers, hogheads, tallowpots, snakes and stringers, and many men who carry gadgets and put on gaskets, have different kinds of verses;" and *The Wind it Blew Up the Rilroad Track,* to be sung around the stove in the switch shanty to the tune of the Three Crows; and the fierce, primitive *Hog-Eye,* of which only one stanza is printable; and *Hangman, Hangman, Slack Up on Your Rope,* which Mr. Sandburg might have said is a direct descendant of the old *Briery Bush,* probably the oldest English folksong that survives; and a song about putting up rail fences in Kentucky: and the sad tale of Young Munro and the log jam, and a sheaf more of lumberjack, cowboy, and shanty boy songs, hobo ballads, jail songs, and sailor chanties.

There is no end to the book because the songs you don't discover at first reading are likely to strike you at second or third. I for one am glad to have text and setting of *Willy the Weeper,* and *Git Along, Little Dogies,* and *Sourwood Mountain,* and *Weevily Wheat;* though finding so many favorites, I greedily want more: *Water Boy,* and the *Swapping Song,* and *I Give My Love a Cherry,* and all the stanzas of *Old Folks, Young Folks, Everybody Come.* Failing these I welcome various strangers. The first song of the book, *He's Gone Away,* is a gem; and I appreciate introductions to *Midnight Special* and *Little Scotchee* and *Waillie, Waillie,* and *Coon Can,* and a half a dozen more that I shall discover the next time I go through it.

The settings vary with the distinguished composers who provided them; Alfred G. Wathall's are inclined to be difficult; H. L. Mencken's for *The Drunkard's Doom* is chastely and inexorably simple. In general they are over-decorated —interesting for one reading, but too elaborate to wear well, and negligent of the range of the untrained human voice. The book itself is practical and substantial. The decorations, mostly engravings from old broadsides, are modest and appropriate—probably too modest to be admired as they deserve. On the shelf of American songs, as the collector calls his bibliography, are an admirable row of sources, with Lomax and Spaeth

Drawings by Amero

NICARAGUA

and Niles and Densmore and Joanna Colcord and Franz Rickaby and others down to the fall of 1927. I miss the Johnson collections of spirituals, and Howard Brockway's *Lonesome Tunes,* and some reference to the useful American section in the second volume of Florence Botsford's *Folksongs of Many Peoples.*

Frank Shay's very different volume makes me suspect him of being a person who likes songs as playthings; and gorgeous toys they are. He has collected the words of a hundred or more very amusing specimens. While sometimes he seems to laugh at rather than with them, he treats the words with really scholarly respect. Toward the tunes, however, he shows an almost criminal neglect. Those that appear are badly proof-read; all but a few, and those few chosen apparently at random, are omitted entirely. Perhaps the publisher, in his enthusiasm for Mr. Held's engravings which leads him to use the detail of some of them at least twice, is more to blame than Mr. Shay; but the result is tantalizing. The engravings are worth having, however, if you can forgive them for crowding out the tunes, and so are the words of *Samuel Hall* and *The Dying Hobo,* and *Back and Side Go Bare Go Bare;* and the words and air of that thrilling song *The High Barbaree.*

THERE are people who like songs as playthings, and people who like them as friends. If you like them as friends you do not take liberties with them; at least you do any necessary harmonizing or cutting sympathetically and respectfully. For songs, especially folksongs, have a definite life of their own. They change and marry, well or badly; they are suppressed by well-meaning friends; they prosper or grow poor. Carl Sandburg says something like this in one of his two hundred and eighty introductory notes, which I can't seem to find again. To him songs are persons, not playthings. You can look into the *American Songbag* without any of the usual misgivings about finding your favorites improved beyond recognition.

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pick and shovel stiffs, leathernecks, scissorbills, bootleggers, beer runners, hijackers, traveling men, plasterers, paperhangers, hogheads, tallowpots, snakes and stringers, and many men who carry gadgets and put on gaskets, have different kinds of verses;" and *The Wind it Blew Up the Rilroad Track,* to be sung around the stove in the switch shanty to the tune of the Three Crows; and the fierce, primitive *Hog-Eye,* of which only one stanza is printable; and *Hangman, Hangman, Slack Up on Your Rope,* which Mr. Sandburg might have said is a direct descendant of the old *Briery Bush,* probably the oldest English folksong that survives; and a song about putting up rail fences in Kentucky: and the sad tale of Young Munro and the log

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Drawings by Amero

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EPIC OF HUNGER

City of Bread by Alexander Neweroff. Doran. $2.50.

THERE has always been something singularly moving to me in six day bicycles races. Whether this is bound up with my own mood when I first saw one, or whether there really is some epic quality in the onerous grind of human endurance, watched so breathlessly by such unfashionable audiences I do not know. They never seem to me like "sport", but to be rituals of worship for heroic and enduring flesh by working people.

Alexander Neweroff's story of a Russian peasant boy of twelve who goes off in the famine year to beat his way to Tashkend where bread is said to be plentiful, to fetch back sacks of flour to his starving family has for me that same undazzling fascination as the long bicycle races. Here is a fight for life itself, harsh combat with triumphant and terrible hunger. The two boys Mishka and Yashka leave the village, now wily as peasants grown, now lost as children. One pants. One is tired. One is hungry as one reads. The story is told with a hard tenderness. And with great objectivity. We see bodies of the dead and dying. The crowded stations. The frightful scramble for places on the train. Hope. The loss of hope. Mysterious luck. Self-made. On to Tashkend where bread is.

If you feel as I do that none can understand the Russian people today who does not know the feeling of the famine year, you must read this book. If you care for remarkably vivid writing, or an epic tale, here is this story of a boy in the hunger year. Huck Finn floating perilously on the raft has not more power to share his experience than Yashka; the unknown soldier were he but freed from forever being buried in state by the known masters is a symbol universal like Yashka . . . who seems to be himself and more—ten thousand Russian boys of 1921.

Ernestine Evans.

BLED TO THE WHITE

The Pale Woman, and Other Poems. By Sara Bard Field. William Edwin Rudge.

NOT pallor of the cloister or the sepulchre, but the serene incandescence of the militant distinguishes these pages. This poet has fought in the decisive battles of the world, has partaken of life's victories and defeats. One never doubts the value of her experience, even when one is not sure that the raw material has always been transmuted to complete poetry. Such poems as *Mary Magdalen to her Unborn Child, The Passing, The Icy One,* seem to me overwritten; their language flies too high, tries too hard. The energy generated by tremendous human emotion breaks into refractory fiery particles where it needs to be steeped down and intensified to its ultimate pure burning.

The poet whose social consciousness is generous and eager is often pathetically betrayed. Righteous or not, crusades are apt to be abject, unscrupulous, and jesuitical; they will take from an artist anything of his they can use. They lack impatience with less than his best. Upton Sinclair, for example, would, I suppose, rather read a bad radical poem than a good conservative one; he might, in all honesty, prefer Mike Gold's *Hoboken Blues* to Shakespeare's *King Lear.* Shelley was a great poet; he wrote many a bad poem in a good cause. So, in the book under review, while I can not definitely cite any one poem saying Lo here, I have a feeling that many poems now included in the book might not have appeared had they not previously been printed in the numerous magazines to which acknowledgements are made.

So, to sum up what I would hope for in Sara Bard Field's next book: sterner stuff, more acid on a tendency toward diffuseness and sentimentality, more rigid exclusion of those poems whose writing was good practice merely, less tender compromise on behalf of those which she herself knows in her heart to be short of what she would have them.

Turn from this severe prose to the poetry of the book itself. Parts three and four seem to me by far the best; of these, the former is a group of portraits, of which I should like to quote all but one, but will content myself with the last stanza of

A QUIET SOUL

(Anne Bremer)

All that you gave to life you give
to death.

More nobly tranquil that mysterious place

Where you were summoned, and your calm, sweet breath

Mingles with white, illimitable space

Even as our world is gentler for your face.

and all of (*continued on p.* 30)

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QUAKER PAGAN

Quintessence of quietness,
Gesture of trees
Or grasses
Bending in the breeze,
His rafters yellow-hammers choose
To rear near him their helpless brood;
First urged willows use
His garden. When he walks the wood,
No trill abruptly falls to hush,
No sudden whir of winged dread;
Nor run the timid crests to brush,
Warned by the cock-quail overhead.
No frightened furry feet are seen
Scurrying to secret green.

His pagan spices purify
A puritan-polluted land;
A step, a snapped twig near at hand—
Never a girl need snatch her dress
Fearing dripping loveliness
Be withered by the evil eye.
Only forbidding is forbidden,
Only ugliness is hidden.

The threnody which is part four abases with its perfect rightness all talk of art, confutes with its intensity of feeling and inevitability of expression all lesser workmanship. *The Great Gift* is a dark relentless poem. Here is also

CRESCENDO
(To a Young Son)

I.

For me the feet of Time stood still
Beside the place you lay with Death.
My future fell asleep and will
Only awake if wakes your breath.

Should not the shadow creep away
After the crimson blossom goes—
A blot prostrate on the day
Under the stem that held the rose?

II.

You have been dead so long, my son.
Month after month piles on my loss.
Weaker I grow with each day done—
Heavier the cross.

Where is Time's boasted tenderness
To slowly heal this ache and wrong?
The years but deepen my distress—
My son, you have been dead so long.

In face of that, what price reviewers? Comerado, this is no book. Who touches this, touches a Woman.

Rolfe Humphries.

MINOR BRILLIANCE

Blue Voyage, by Conrad Aiken. Scribners. $2.50.

It is impossible to make a true distinction between major and minor literature on a basis of technique. What is generally known as a minor novel, or a minor poem, may be superior in method to the classic. The writer may treat his subject with the utmost skill, and yet create a work merely of transient interest, the interest in that case arising, of course, simply from the aesthetic appreciation of perfected form. The point of difference lies essentially in the problem, in the scope of the work. If a work of art is to have lasting value, if it is to affect profoundly its environment, it must be comprehensive; it must deal with the fundamental experiences of human life. Never has this truth been more evident than in our own time, when our most cherished beliefs are undergoing a process of revaluation, when our society is shaken by the heavy tread of historical change. The artist today who closes his eyes to the great human problems is rewarded with isolation. "The pure aesthetic" is becoming increasingly meaningless.

One cannot deny Conrad Aiken's talents. Long recognized as a gifted poet, he evinces similar gifts as a novelist in *Blue Voyage*. His mastery of prose is admirable. Utilizing the familiar technique of Joyce, he succeeds in making the "stream of consciousness" something tangible and comprehensible simply by breaking the flow of thought-associations with conventional descriptive passages. Lack of consistency is here a virtue. Nor can the reader be oblivious to Aiken's imaginative power, to his sensitiveness to beauty and his ironical understanding of human motives. And yet it is precisely these excellent qualities that cause the reader to close the book with sharp disappointment. What a pity that such brilliant writing has been wasted on so insignificant a subject!

William Demarest, a young writer, sails for England to find the girl he is in love with, and finds her on his ship engaged to someone else. His lady-love is an irritating little snob, to whom the fact that Demarest is sailing second-class, while she is in the first-class cabin, is evidently a matter of momentous import. The sufferings of Demarest, his relationship to Cynthia, the lost love, and to his fellow passengers, make up the novel. It is obvious that all these things are not very important. Demarest's probings into his soul, his torturous self-analyses, and his reflections on his place "in the sun" leave us undecided whether to sympathize with him or despise him. Certainly one is not bored by reading the book, but we are concerned neither in the situation nor the people, but in the writing. It is Aiken that is interesting, and not *Blue Voyage*.

Bernard Smith.

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