NEW MASSES

FEBRUARY, 1929 — 15 Cents

IN SOVIET RUSSIA

By JOHN DOS PASSOS

"A Gang of Little Yids"—By
MICHAEL GOLD

In This Issue—
SCOTT NEARING
JACK WOODFORD
CARLO TRESCA
H. W. L. DANA
H. H. LEWIS
—and Others

"Sherwood Anderson's Confusion"
By
JOSEPH FREEMAN

A RUSSIAN MARKET, by William Gropper

This, and other Russian drawings in this issue, are from an album of impressions of Soviet Russia made by the gifted artist, William Gropper, during his year in that country. The volume was recently printed in Paris, and is on sale at the New Playwright's Theatre, 133 *West* 14*th Street, New York City. It sells for* $2, *and we heartily recommend it to our readers as the most remarkable purchase ever made with dollar-bills. The book is reviewed in this issue.*

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MICHAEL GOLD, *Editor* NATALIE GOMEZ, *Business Manager*

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Harbor Allen, Sherwood Anderson, Egmont Arens, Cornelia Barns, Carlton Beals, Ivan Beede, Van Wyck Brooks, Howard Brubaker, Stuart Chase, Glenn Coleman, Miguel Covarrubias, Stuart Davis, Adolph Dehn, Floyd Dell, Robert Dunn, John Dos Passos, Waldo Frank, Joseph Freeman, Wanda Gag, Hugo Gellert, Arturo Giovannitti, William Gropper, Paxton Hibben, Freda Kirchwey, Louis Lozowick, I. Klein, John Howard Lawson, Claude McKay, Lewis Mumford, Scott Nearing, Eugene O'Neill, Samuel Ornitz, Lola Ridge, Boardman Robinson, James Rorty, William Siegel, Upton Sinclair, Otto Soglow, Rex Stout, Genevieve Taggard, Louis Untermeyer, Mary Heaton Vorse, Eric Walrond, Edmund Wilson, Jr., Robert Wolf, Charles W. Wood, Art Young.

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RAINY DAYS IN LENINGRAD

By JOHN DOS PASSOS

1. *Finland Station*

The train ran into the station and stopped;—an empty station without bustle: broad clean asphalt platforms, grey ironwork, a few porters and railroad officials standing around. Very quickly the American conducted tours were absorbed and disappeared bag and baggage. I waited on the empty platform for a man who was doing something about a trunk. This was where Lenin, back from hiding in the marshes had landed and made his first speeches during the Russian October eleven years ago. How could it be so quiet? I'd half expected to catch in the grey walls some faint reverberation of trampling footsteps, of machineguns stuttering voices yelling All Power to the Soviets. Could it have been only eleven years ago?

At length we get into a much too small cab driven by a huge bearded extortioner out of the chorus of Boris Godunov, and start joggling slowly along the too wide streets under a low grey sky. In every direction stretch immense neoclassic facades, white columns, dull red, blue or yellow stucco walls, battered, silent, majestic, and all like the Finland station, swept free, empty. How could it be so quiet when only eleven years ago...?

2. *Hermitage*

We ducked out of the chilly rain under a porch held up by tired looking stone women that I suppose must have meant something noble and artistic to somebody sometime, and through swinging doors into the vestibule of the museum. That vestibule full of people standing round waiting to check their coats and goloshes was a tower of Babel. A party of Americans was being conducted up the stairs, a few German students in windjackets and shorts stood round, a horde of dark people from southeast Russia were speaking Tatar, there were pale blueeyed soldiers from somewhere in the north. A young man standing next to me asked me something and I tried him on English thinking he was a Chinaman. He turned out to be a Kirgiz.

We walked round together, and as he was as pleased to be talking to two men from America as we were to be talking to a Kirgiz, we none of us saw any of the pictures.

He was a metalworker, an unskilled laborer. He'd been in Leningrad a year just making enough to live. He and his brother had left the tent of their fathers on the Kirgiz steppes and their herd of shaggy-maned ponies, because they wanted to find out about the world and the revolution. His brother was a party member and was studying at the university for eastern peoples. No, he himself wasn't a communist. Well, mostly because he had not seen enough yet, he had not made up his mind as to whether they were right or not. He didn't know. He was too young yet. He'd have to see the world and draw his own conclusions. Criticize? Yes the workers in his factory said about what they pleased . . . of course if someone made a habit of talking directly against the Party, the G. P. U. might bring pressure to bear. He wasn't sure. As for him, it wouldn't convince him that the Party was right if they locked him up, he thought they understood that. He had to see the world and find out for himself.

And his people, the nomad tribes of the great steppes of Central Asia, stock-raisers still living in the age of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? The ideas of the revolution were just beginning to reach them, through schools, through young men like himself who went to work in the Russian cities. They talked about the revolution in their tents at night, 'round their smoky fires. The old people still clung devoutly to Mohamet's law, but the young men were like him, they wanted to know what was right, what was good for the world. Perhaps five per cent. of them were Communists or Comsomols. Many of the rest of them, like him, wanted to see for themselves.

We talked about books. He said he was reading Gorki and until he had read everything Gorki had ever written he wouldn't have time for any other books. It was only since the revolution that there had been books among the Kirgiz.

What about the position of women? At home it was very complicated, it was all a matter of money or cattle, getting a wife, neither party was free; but here among the Leningrad factory workers you could do pretty much as you pleased with your individual life, if a fellow and a girl liked each other well enough they lived together, and then if they got very fond of each other, or if she was going to have a baby they registered the marriage. The only place the police stepped in was if either party failed to chip in supporting the child.

But what about America? We must tell him everything about America, whether you could get work, how much pay you got, what the schools were like, whether life was good there, what kind of marriage we had, whether the workers had power, how mighty was capitalism.

Yes he wanted to go to America, he must see as much as he could of the world, so that he could make up his mind.

3. *Smolny*

We had just come out from the bare stone corridors of Smolny Institute, huge austerely proportioned building that stood serenely athwart the grey drizzly afternoon; we had seen the little room where Lenin had lived and worked from the time the Bolsheviki

Drawn by William Gropper

A Soviet Workingman

seized power in the name of the peasants and workers until the government was moved to Moscow, a bare room with a few chairs and a table and a little cot behind a partition, we walked down the road and out through the gate in a sort of trance. Eleven years ago . . . and now Smolny was history, like the music of Bach, like Mount Vernon, like the pyramids. I wondered which was more actual, the Smolny I turned 'round to take a last look at in the endless grey northern drizzling afternoon, or the Smolny that had been created for me by the hot slugs from the linotype of Jack Reed's sinewy writing. We wanted to find a place to drink tea and asked two youngsters who had also turned 'round to look back at Smolny.

The question of tea was lost for a long while in the questions about America they peppered us with. They were communists, students at the university at Odessa in Leningrad on an excursion run by Narkompros. Smolny for them was the beginning of everything. They were too young to have much memory of the old Russia of the Czar when Smolny had been a ladies seminary for daughters of the nobility. To them the October days seemed as long ago as the fall of the Bastile. They had finished their two years in the red army and were studying to be teachers. It took a definite effort for them to imagine how things must be in the capitalist world outside. Our routine questions about freedom of opinion and the economic position of the peasants didn't interest them. It wasn't that they didn't care about these things, it was that their approach was from an entirely different side. For us October, Smolny, Lenin were in the future; for them they were the basis of all habits, ideas, schemes of life. It was as hard for them to imagine a time when Marxism had not been a rule of conduct as it would be for an American high school kid to doubt the desirability of the open shop or the Monroe doctrine.

"Why," they kept asking us, "why can't they understand what we are trying to do, why can't the workers in America understand that we are building socialism, why can't the workers in England realize that we are working for them as much as for ourselves?" Though we found the tea and sat drinking it a long while the question never got answered.

4. *Proletari*

In the restaurant run by the cooperative "Proletari" you could get a dinner consisting of a vast bowl of cabbage soup with meat in it and a plate of meat with vegetables for forty kopeks (20 cents). The waitress was a large melancholy woman who spoke French. Her husband had been a chef in aristocratic families and restaurants; she had lived in France. She was not enthusiastic about the way things were going, life was raw and grey and there were no more little elegances to make things plausible. You didn't have to work so hard, as a worker, she admitted, she had all the privileges, but the revolution had shattered all her dreams. She and her husband had been saving up, they wanted to open a small restaurant all their own, to cater to a purely distinguished clientele, strictly French cuisine, everything cooked with butter. . . . They would have made it a success, she knew, they would have made money, and have had a little house in European style. She'd never liked to live slapdash the way the Russians do, she was at heart a European. There were tears in her eyes when she took away the plates. When she came back with stewed fruit and tea, she said: "I don't want you to think I'm against the revolution. It was necessary, but it's very hard."

5. *Peter the Great*

The man who was taking us round town that evening was the son of a rich man. He had joined the red guards and fought with them all through the October days. Later he had been head of a division in the Red Army through the civil war. He had gotten into trouble somehow, been expelled from the communist party and spent a year in jail. People told me afterwards that he wrote first rate poetry. He called himself, half jokingly, a counter-revolutionary. He spoke English.

He showed us the great square where the monument to the October dead was and told us how it had been made on one of Lenin's Saturday Afternoons, when bunches of soldiers and factory workers would tackle some particularly unsightly corner of the city and dig it up into a park. He told us about the enthusiasms and comradeliness of those days. He showed us the streets where he had fought eleven years ago, the place where they'd held the barricade against a desperate attack from the cadets, squares where the red guards had camped for the night, houses they had taken shelter in. Maybe he almost wished things still were as they had been eleven, eight, six years ago, when it was still possible to kill and be killed for the revolution, and politics was as simple as the mechanism of a machine gun.

We came out on the bank of the Neva. It was about twelve. You could still see things dimly in a faint milky twilight. The stately palaces along the Neva, the spires of the Peter and Paul fortress, the wide bridges, the clear grey swift flowing river must have looked about the same as they had looked to Pushkin a hundred years ago. We walked down the embankment till we came to a small park. A young man and a girl sat on a bench talking low. At the end of the park on a base of granite rock was a statue, a huge black mass rearing into the pale night, a man on a prancing horse. The man who had been showing us around pointed to it: "There's my favorite Russian in history," he said, "Peter the Great, who brought order out of chaos, the first Bolshevik."

6. *Peterhof*

When we got off the Ford bus at Peterhof a drunken man who said he was a chauffeur offered to show us the way to the palaces of the Empress Catharine. He tried to talk sensibly, there were

Drawn by William Gropper

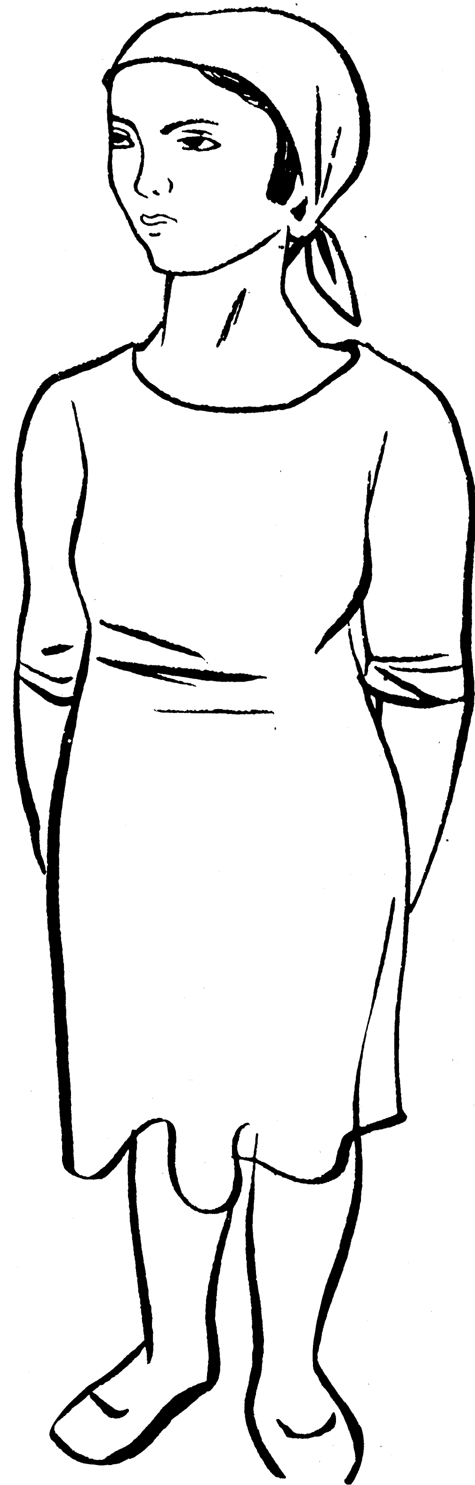
A Soviet Workingman

things he wanted to know about Detroit, about the Taylor plan, but he was too drunk and had to submit to being led away by a little boy, probably his son, who tagged along at his heels. We walked off through dripping gardens full of fountains, eternally autumnal like some place in a story by Hans Anderson, along the edge of the grey sea and the grey sky of the Baltic. At the end of every vista in one way was the sea, at the other a spouting fountain. Then we came to eighteenth century palaces in red brick. Inside you had to put on slippers over your shoes and walk through acre after acre of state apartments carefully preserved by history-loving employees of the department of education. After a mile and a half of royal furniture I balked and we managed to get out through a side door.

Then we walked for a long time down a muddy country road and fell in with a man who suggested we go to see the local rest house run by the Leningrad Trade Unions Council. It was in an immense gawky fake gothic building that had been the royal stables. In two directions enormous parks formed a backyard for the Leningrad workers. One of the doctors in charge showed us around and set us up to an uncommonly good dinner. He was so wrapped up in his work he could talk of nothing else. He wasn't a party member, but he had no private practice, he never had time. As far as I could see he barely had time to eat and sleep, working as he did in several hospitals, inspecting this huge rest house and several subsidiary smaller houses, lecturing on hygiene and popular medicine, attending to people who were in need of special diet and treatment during their stay in the rest house. The house that held three thousand, a combination of sanatorium and summer hotel, was run by the Leningrad Council of Trade Unions. The aim was to have enough such houses to accomodate all the members of all the unions represented in the council for two weeks free every summer. At present there weren't enough, but there would be soon. During those two weeks the people running the place had to see that the workers had plenty of means other than alcohol for having a good time, give them a short course in the care of their own bodies and of those of their wives and children, provide lectures and shows and give each person a thorough physical examination. With the children it wasn't so hard, but to undo the evils of a lifetime of poverty and bad living in two weeks was a pretty desperate task.

Another night we ate dinner with him again and visited various subsidiary rest houses and saw the show gotten up by one two weeks' batch as it was leaving, to entertain the newcomers. There were musical numbers and recitations and a little farce about a mixup among people in the doctor's waiting room, and a physical culture expert made a speech suggesting that people ought to sleep with their windows open. This was too much for the audience that had eighteenth-century ideas about the dangers of the night air, and he was howled off the platform. Then the doctor explained his aims and methods of work and was received with cheers for he was evidently very popular.

When we walked down to the station to catch the last train back to Leningrad, the responsible director of the institution walked part way with us. He was a big quiet faced man with grey hair who had been a baker before the revolution. He was the actual executive and organizer of the entire place. He walked with big strides beside us, asking almost timidly what we thought of it, whether it was clean, whether we thought the food was good, whether we thought the people looked as if they were having a good time. Then he asked us to excuse him as there was still work to do (he worked eighteen hours a day), embraced the man with me who was a Russian, shook hands with me and left us.



Drawn by William Gropper

A Soviet Workingwoman

SOVIET ART IN NEW YORK

The first large exhibition of modern paintings and sculpture from Soviet Russia, is scheduled for February, when the Russian Arts and Handicrafts Exposition opens on February 1, in Grand Central Palace, New York City. It will continue until March 1.

Three hundred paintings, five hundred drawings, and sketches, and seventy-five pieces of sculpture have been received by the Exposition, and will be exhibited under the direction of Dr. Christian Brinton.

The exhibition was collected by the Russian Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and includes representative artists of every important school in Russia, from conservative to advanced left groups.

There will also be a section devoted to native peasant handicrafts from every section of Russia—carving, ivory, linens, toys, lacquer work, silverware, rugs, and the work of the Palekh icon painters, who produce illuminated boxes which have taken first prizes in Paris and Vienna art competitions.

A collection of antiques in furniture, rugs, pictures, and other objects, some dating from the sixteenth century, will be part of the Exposition.

It is sponsored by the Amtorg Trading Corporation and should meet as enthusiastic a response as have the new Russian films.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON'S CONFUSION

[By JOSEPH FREEMAN]

Sherwood Anderson has been the poet of certain types of frustrated people in America. In so far as he has been able to write of things outside himself, he has described the crushing effects of monopoly capitalism on the petty business man and his family. Critics accustomed to think of men and books in geographic, rather than social, terms used to speak of Anderson as the voice of the dreary middle-west; it would be more accurate to say he is the voice of the harassed middle-class. But most often Anderson does not focus his attention on the outside world; he is eternally preoccupied with his own feelings, which he pours out on paper with astonishing profusion and naivete. This, of course, is not in itself, a crime, as some of the younger leftwing critics sometimes pretend to think; on the other hand, it is not, in itself a virtue. It all depends on the quality of the feelings praised by a writer and the thoughts he has about them. It depends, perhaps, even more on the general human wisdom a writer is able to distill from his experiences, as in the case of Stendhal's autobiographies. Though sometimes Anderson says that he does not pass judgment on men, this is precisely what all of us do when faced with feelings, thoughts and events. In fact, Anderson has passed judgment on himself, and no critic has better summed up his mental makeup.

I am thinking of a poem he published nearly fifteen years ago called *Chicago*, in which he said, "I am a confused child in a confused world." It is significant that at about the same time a more objective poet wrote on Chicago, talking less about his own emotional conflicts and more about hog-butchering, wheat-stacking and tool-making. Since then, Anderson has turned out many books, all telling essentially the same story, all saturated with the feelings of a "confused child in a confused world." It would be unjust to upbraid a poet for such a line if it honestly and ably expressed a period of his development and stopped there.

But the line goes on, like a cracked record in which the phonograph needle gets stuck. As book after book came from Anderson's pen, one could not help feeling that here is a man who has only one thing to say, and says it over and over again. The best of these books, it seems to me, is *Winesburg, Ohio*; but good or bad, they all constitute versions of an undisciplined autobiography, expressing, more than anything else, a profound feeling of confusion. Nowhere was there an indication of growth; nowhere did the poet appear to overcome his confusion, at least in part, and attain to that clarity of vision which has moved humanity to admire true poets.

These observations are not original. In an article on *The Writers Trade* which appeared in a recent number of *Vanity Fair*, Anderson complains: "Critics are always abusing me because of my confusion." But he does not deny his confusion. Fifteen years after *Chicago* he repeats: "I am as confused about money as I am about other things. . . . I admit my own confusion about money, government, sex, all kinds of relationships." Yet, despite this admission, Anderson seems to be quite clear on certain rather important "relationhips." He says, for instance, that a foreign radical magazine sent him some questions about working class art.

"How confusing that is," Anderson comments. "Laborers working are often beautiful to me. The banker who sits in his banking house making money, is not likely to be beautiful. But the banker has money to buy rich beautiful things. Money—that is a beautiful idea. It excites me. I rarely look at the banker without wishing to thump him on the head, grab and run, but I have never done it yet. I lack nerve perhaps. My own class, the artists' class, is supported by the rich. If money were not accumulated by the few, how would anything beautiful ever be present in this world."

Anderson has admitted what most bourgeois artists deny. He knows that artists in capitalist society are the hirelings of the rich, and he tries to justify it by the utterly false theory that beautiful things can exist in this world only if money is accumulated by a few. Serge Eisenstein, a cinema director working for a workers' and peasants' republic where money is accumulated by the people as a whole, turned out *Potemkin* and *Ten Days That Shook the World*; Pudovkin, working for the same workers' and peasants' republic, did *The End of St. Petersburgh.* When these movies were shown in New York, the critics of the bourgeois press exhausted their stock of superlatives, admitting that America, where money is accumulated by the few, has never turned out anything as good. John Dewey finds the Soviet educational system cannot be put into effect here. If Anderson realizes these facts, no wonder he is confused. One might even say: look at the beautiful things which money accumulated by the few produces: Hollywood movies, the Saturday Evening Post, and the confused complaints of writers like Sherwood Anderson; for Anderson is by no means the only confused writer in America. Indeed, the more one thinks of it, the more Sherwood Anderson appears as the voice of the American petit-bourgeoisie. Like most small business men, small lawyers, small doctors, small insurance agents and teachers, he hates bankers but loves money, is extremely individualistic, supports himself in the social maelstrom on illusions of aristocracy and profoundly fears the working class.

"I see no reason," he says in *Vanity Fair*, "why the underdog should be given the upper hand of things." But he is much more tolerant of rich men, asking "why should I set myself up above anyone—any thief, any prostitute, any man who has got rich by lying, cheating, stealing—if he has got rich that way? How do I know men get rich? What is it to be rich?" But this humility is deceptive. Like the clerks who lean on the superman idea as diluted in the *American Mercury*, he feels that the artist is an aristocrat. "Now you see," he adds, "I am ready to brush all downtrodden people aside. Well, let them go, let them suffer. If they become slaves, let them be slaves." This is a literary version of the vulgar middle class belief that workers are themselves to blame for their own poverty. Fifteen years ago Anderson wrote a poem called *Industrial America*, in which he said we are surrounded by a lot of little lies. He has cleared up his confusion on at least one point: "I am," he now declares, "as aristocratic as any man in the world can be. I am as cruel and heartless, too. I am, as Mr. Bernard Shaw once said of a character in one of his plays, 'a very simple man, perfectly satisfied with the best of everything.' " But even this clarification is deceptive; for in the next breath he confides to us that he is afraid to have opinions of his own. Surely, no aristocratic man could say, as Anderson does: "If I set myself up—if I have opinions of my own, if I make myself stand for certain principles in life, as sure as I am alive I will do something tomorrow that will do the cause for which I am trying to stand more harm than it will ever do good. And besides what have I to do with causes. How am I to know a good cause from a bad one? Who am I, a scribbler of tales, to be fooling with causes? I should have the dignity of my own trade. I should be afraid of nothing but power."

Reading such a contradictory confession one is likely to feel a little puzzled unless one remembers that such humility, alternating so rapidly with such aristocratic arrogance, and all based on nothing more than one's own feelings, is typical of certain people who feel like confused children in a confused world long after they have achieved physical maturity. But what is more important, is that a social class, for which Anderson speaks and which admires his thoughts, has the same feeling of humility when confronting Big Money, and the same "aristocratic" arrogance when confronting workers. Caught between the upper and nether millstone of big capital and organized labor, the middle class squirms in confusion, cursing the lies of this civilization when things go bad, and feeling as aristocratic as any man in the world when temporary prosperity enables it to enjoy the best of everything.

MEMOIRS OF A DISHWASHER

By H. H. LEWIS

I had big dreams in the days of my boyhood, my happy, happy school-days. I was going to be great in some unforseen way or other, great in my individuality, outstanding above the American rabble. I never concerned myself with any sort of means but fixed my gaze upon a wonderfully vague goal; anticipated so intensely that the means were forgotten, joyfully transcended! In those crazy World War days. But I have lost the grip upon my egotistic confidence, the goal has faded, and here I am—washing dishes.

My job is the last resort of bums without the get-up to beg manfully for money or food. I have begged but always for some job like dishwashing. In other words, I am a craven working for my alms—10 hours per day, for instance. I did that in Phoenix, Arizona. (I paid a labor shark 50 cents for the job! Then a Mexican boy shoved me out by offering to work for 50 cents a day!!) I envy and admire the man who can get out on the stem and mooch in a way that is more like demanding than begging. I have tried that and failed. So there is no irony in my expressing admiration for a good beggar.

Washing dishes, "pearl-diving," is another job that the A. F. of L. doesn't care much about unionizing. It is below the "dignity of labor" as perceived by Messrs. Green, Hoover et Al. Dishwashers cleaning the slobbers off of plates used by plasterers and bricklayers, those aristocrats of trade unionism—how damn low are the dishwashers! Big dog eat little dog. Capitalism has eaten us and cast us out. No wonder there is an odium attached to pearl-divers.

I worked for the Rivercrest Country Club, in their clubhouse kitchen, at Fort Worth. Hired to operate a dishwashing machine (more machines, more starving bums, more Reds, that's the stuff!), I found that my main duty was to gut pullets. Guts! My fist full of them, I would look out over the beautiful grounds where the pot-bellied middle classers were waddling after golf balls. Guts! The lean-bellied fathers of these men chased the bison off these plains, now it is the destiny of bumkind to chase off the middle classers. Verily, verily, I told myself, there is too plain a line between golfers and dishwashers, seeing that I could play golf too, if my pappy was rich. Then the cook would come and urinate into an open drain right there in his kitchen, and go back grumbling about everything.

In Denver I was clean enough to wash dishes, stuff sausage into green peppers, cut ham and even fry eggs in the *back* of an uppity restaurant, but I was too dirty to go into the dining hall to get pie for my meal. I was bawled out for doing so. I jawed back. So they gave me a doughnut and let me go.

And that's the way it is. I dove for pearls in the mess hall of the outfit that put through the Moffitt railroad tunnel 45 miles west of Denver. The steward was a college-bred punk of a slave-driver—damn his face—who was puffed up over a little authority. He wore leather leggins and a forest ranger hat. (Forest rangers are a punk lot too; they have been glorified by cheap fiction and the movies). We were situated in a deep canyon. Now it seems that those two ice-capped ridges holding a threat of landslide to blot us all out—it seems that the majesty of the great mountains would have subdued the man's haughty spirit, making him less overbearing than the boss in some metropolitan sweatshop. But no, his hateful countenance reeked with the consciousness of having someone to boss. Forgetting one afternoon that God made scenery for only the rich to enjoy, I was three minutes late to work. Leather Leggins met me at the door. "You're fired! Get out of camp!" I should have busted him in the snoot right then and there but I didn't. He sent his lieutenant to dog my steps while I packed up; he must have feared that I was going to pocket the tunnel and make off with it. It was not payday and I had no money so I had to hoof it toward Denver through the night.

Out where the west begins and the smile lasts a little longer, the hot suds corroded my fins and I cursed just a little stronger. (Tut, tut, poesy!) I was washing tin cups and chipped enamel plates for 75 spicks, an extra gang laying new steel on the D. and R. D. down the Colorado River canyon. The cook, an inspired genius in the art of using God's name in vain, was friendly. Cooks are an irascible breed but this one sublimated his anger into oaths directed at fate. He and his wife, both bleached to a ghostly complexion by the heat, working from 4 A. M. to 10 P. M., drew $90 per month—45 apiece, I mean. I held down my job till one night, in having to change bunks, I got infected with my favorite aversion, lice, real greybacks about an eighth of an inch long. They get too intimate with a guy. They have such a slimy, oozy way of crawling. So I filled a tub full of water and "boiled up," killing all the lice and Godknowshowmanyeggs. Then I rode blind baggage to Grand Junction and got pulled by a dick with a flashlight.

One morning I slept too late in a cottonseed pile at Yuma, Arizona. The town clown booted me out and told me of a restaurant where I could probably work for a meal. Man, I was famished for victuals! My navel was sore from rubbing my backbone. I dove an hour in that restaurant for all the brown beans I could stow away. Did I eat those beans? No, no, I just WRAPPED myself around them, like an amoeba, and absorbed them into my soul.

2 POEMS — By LEON SRABIAN HERALD

ALL HYPOCRITES

You, pale hues, medium smells,
I swear your skulls are fuller with decomposed gestures
Than your impotent hands of thoughts.
You whose hypocrisies sound like the miracle of the day,
You whose well-trained grossness
Makes the lies of petty thieves sound truth
I will say no more of you.
Thoughts of you strike my head
As a tornado strikes the trees.
But I will say that even the milk of your cows
Tastes like what you feed them,
Even your donkeys and horses have forgotten
Their honest beasts' braying,
And sound exactly like you.
Your books, the exhaustpipes of your automobiles
And your churches make a perfect trio—
Hell-sounds that exist in sickly minds.

CONFESSION

Do not defend me with the blood of your veins
And chastise those who have called me liar and thief.
You defend Charlie's "A Dog's Life" and me
With the same weapon.
Let Charlie be with his dog
And I'll confess you the rest of my villany.
Once I told the stinking mud
That the sun was both its brother and father,
And the mud pumped at my face.
Once I stole breakfast—from nobody's kitchen—
But from a garden, and no worms either.
Is it my fault, brother, that I am a kleptomaniac?
If I said that you were safe from my nimble fingers—
How can I restrain their lovely desire?
Do not let your eyes be deceived by my cunning,
I could easily steal dreams out of them
As I call the sun my child, the bear my father,
And some nice people . . . toads, perhaps.

A GANG OF LITTLE YIDS

(from a Book of East Side Memoirs)

By MICHAEL GOLD

When I was nine years old, Nigger Goldman was leader of my gang. He is now a Broadway gangster.

I first admired Nigger in school, when I was new there. He banged the teacher on the nose.

School is a jail for children. One's crime is youth, and the jailers punish one for it. I hated school at first; I missed the street. It made me nervous to sit stiffly in a room while New York blazed with autumn.

I was always in hot water. The fat old maid teacher (weight about 250 pounds) with a sniffle, and eyeglasses, and the waddle of a ruptured person, was my enemy.

She was shocked by the dirty word, I, a six year old villain once used. She washed my mouth with yellow lye soap. I submitted. She stood me in the corner for the day to serve as an example of anarchy to a class of fifty scared kids.

Soap eating is nasty. But my parents objected because soap is made of Christian fat, is not kosher. I was being forced into pork-eating, a crime against the Mosaic law. They complained to the Principal.

O irritable, starched old maid teacher, O stupid, proper, unimaginative despot, O cow with no milk or calf or bull, it was torture to you, Ku Kluxer before your time, to teach in a Jewish neighborhood.

I knew no English when handed you. I was a little savage and a lover of the street. I used no toothbrush. I was lousy, maybe. To sit on a bench made me restless, my body hated coffins. But Teacher! O Teacher for little slaves, O ruptured American virgin of fifty-five, you should not have called me "LITTLE KIKE."

Nigger banged you on the nose for that: I should have been as brave. It was Justice.

2. *Street Joys*

Ku Klux moralizers say the gangster system is not American. They say it was brought here by "low-class" European immigrants. What nonsense. There never were any Jewish gangsters in Europe. The Jews there were a timid bookish lot. The Jews have done no killing since Jerusalem fell. That's why the murder-loving Christians have called us the "peculiar people." But it is America that has taught the sons of tubercular Jewish tailors how to kill.

Nigger was a virile boy, the best pitcher, fighter and crap-shooter in my gang. He was George Washington when our army annihilated the redcoats. He rode the mustangs, and shot the most buffalo among the tenements. He scalped Indians, and was our stern General in war.

Some of the gang have become famous. Al Levy was known to us simply as "Stinker"; now he writes wealthy musical comedies.

Abe Sugarman is a proud movie director. He also has become a Spanish nobleman. His Hollywood name is Arturo De Sagaar, no less.

Lew Moses shoots craps with high stakes, with skyscrapers; he is now a big real estate speculator.

Others of the boys are humbler comedians. Jake Gottlieb is a taxi driver, and feeds his three kids every day. Harry Wientraub is a clothing cutter. Some of the boys are dead.

There was always something for boys to see in the free enormous circus of the East Side. Always a funeral, a riot, a quarrel between two fat mommas, or an accident, or wedding. Day after day we explored the streets, we wandered in this remarkable dream of a million Jews.

Our gang played the universal games, tag, prisoner's base, duck on a rock. Like boys in Africa and Peru, we followed the seasons religiously for kites, tops and marbles.

One of the most exciting games was invented by Nigger. It was the stealing game. Nigger ran the fastest, so he would march up to a pushcart and boldly steal a piece of fruit. The outraged peddler chased him, of course, which was the signal for us to grab fruit and run the other way.

With a penny one could buy much; a hot dog, or a cup of cocoa, or one of thirty varieties of poisoned candies. Watermelon, apples, and old world delicacies like Turkish halvah and lakoom; liver knishes; Russian sunflower seeds; Roumanian pastry; pickled tomatoes. For a nickel, a mixture of five of these street luxuries produced amazing Jewish nightmares in a boy's stomach.

We turned on the fire hydrant in summer, and splashed in the street, shoes, clothes and all. Or went swimming from the docks. Our East River is a sun-spangled open sewer running with oily scum and garbage. It should be underground, like a sewer. It stinks with the many deaths of New York. Often while swimming I had to push dead swollen dogs and vegetables from my face. In our set it was considered humor to slyly paddle ordure at another boy when he was swimming.

What a dirty way of getting clean! But the sun was shining; the tugboats passed, puffing like bulldogs; the freight boats passed, their pale stokers hanging over the rails, looking at us; the river flowed and glittered; the sky was blue; it was all good.

Nigger taught me how to swim. His method was to throw a boy from the steep pier. If the boy swam, well and good. If he sank and screamed for help, Nigger laughed and rescued him.

Jack Korbin died that way, I almost drowned, too.

But it was good. We were naked, free and coocoo with youngness. Anything done in the sun is good. The sun, the jolly old sun who is everyone's Poppa, looked down as affectionately on his little riffraff Yids as he did on his syphilitic millionaires at Palm Beach, I am sure.

3. *City of Lava Streets*

Let me tell of a trait we boys showed: the hunger for country things.

New York is a devil's dream, the most urbanized city in the world. It is all geometry angles and stone. It is mythical, a city buried by a volcano. No grass is found in this petrified city, no big living trees, no flowers, no bird but the drab little idiot sparrow, no soil, loam, earth; no fresh earth to smell, earth to walk on, to roll on, and love like a woman.

Stone. The ruins of Pompeii, except that seven million animals full of earth-love must dwell in the dead lava streets.

Each week at public school there was an hour called Nature Study. The old maid teacher fetched from a dark closet a collection of banal objects: bird-nests, corn-stalks, minerals, autumn leaves and other poor withered corpses. On these she lectured tediously, and bade us admire Nature.

What an insult. We twisted on our benches, and ached for the outdoors. It was as if a starving bum were offered snapshots of food, and expected to feel grateful. It was like lecturing a cage of young monkeys on the jungle joys.

"Lady, gimme a flower! Gimme a flower! Me, me, me!"

In summer, if a slummer or settlement house lady walked on our streets with flowers in her hand, we attacked her, begging for the flowers. We rioted and yelled, yanked at her skirt, and frightened her to the point of hysteria.

Once Jake Gottlieb and I discovered grass struggling between the sidewalk cracks near the livery stable. We were amazed by this miracle. We guarded this treasure, allowed no one to step on it. Every hour the gang studied "our" grass, to try to catch it growing. It died, of course, after a few days; only children are hardy enough to grow on the East Side.

The Italians raised red and pink geraniums in tomato cans. The Jews would have, too, but hadn't the skill. When an excavation was being dug for a new tenement, the Italians swarmed there with pots, hungry for the new earth. Some of them grew bean vines and morning glories.

America is so rich and fat, because it has eaten the tragedy of millions of immigrants.

To understand this, you should have seen at twilight, after the day's work, one of our pick and shovel wops: watering his can of beloved flowers. Brown peasant, son of thirty generations of peas-

ants, in a sweaty undershirt by a tenement window. Feeling the lost poetry. Uprooted! Betrayed!

A white butterfly once blundered into our street. We chased it, and Joey Cohen caught it under his cap. But when he lifted the cap, the butterfly was dead. Joey felt bad about this.

4. *Little Cop Fighter*

To come back to Nigger.

He was built for power like a tugboat, squat and solid. His eyes, even then, had the contemptuous glare of the criminal and genius. His nose had been squashed at birth, and with his black hair and murky face, made inevitable the East Side nickname: "Nigger."

He was bold, tameless, untouchable, like a little gypsy. He was always in motion, planning mischief. He was suspicious like a cat, quick to sidestep every sudden kick from the enemy world. The East Side breeds this wariness. East Side prize fighters have always been on the lightning type; they learn to move fast dodging cops and street cars.

The East Side, for children, was a world plunged in eternal war. It was suicide to walk into the next block. Each block was a separate nation, and when a strange boy appeared, the patriots swarmed.

"What streeter?" was demanded, furiously.

"Chrystie Street," was the trembling reply.

BANG! This was the signal for a mass assault on the unlucky foreigner, with sticks, stones, fists and feet. The beating was cruel and bloody as that of grownups, no mercy was shown. I have had three holes in my head, and many black eyes and puffed lips from our street wars. We did it to others, they did it to us. It was patriotism, though what difference there was between one East Side block and another is now hard to see. Each was the same theosophist's fantasy of tenements, demons, old hats, Jews, pushcarts, angels, urine smells, shadows, featherbeds and bananas. The same gray lava streets.

One had to join a gang in self-protection, and be loyal. And one had to be brave. Even I was brave, an odd child cursed with the famous Jewish introspection.

Joey Cohen, a dreamy boy with spectacles, was brave. Stinker claimed to be brave, and Jake Gottlieb was brave, and Abie, Izzy, Fat, Al Levy, Maxie, Pishteppel, Harry, all were indubitably brave. We often boasted about our remarkable bravery to each other. But Nigger was the bravest of the brave, the chieftain of our brave savage tribe.

Nigger would fight boys twice his age, he would fight men and cops. He put his head down and tore in with flying arms, face bloody, eyes puffed, lips curled back from the teeth, a snarling iron machine, an animal bred for centuries to fighting, yet his father was a meek sick little tailor.

Nigger began to hate cops at an early age. The cops on our street were no worse than most cops, and no better. They loafed around the saloon backdoors, guzzling free beer. They were intimate with the prostitutes, and with all the thieves, cokefiends, pimps and gamblers of the neighborhood. They took graft everywhere, even from the humblest shoelace peddler.

Everyone knew what cops were like. Why, then did they adopt such an attitude of stern virtue toward small boys? It was as if we were the biggest criminals of the region. They broke up our baseball games, confiscated our bats. They beat us for splashing under the fire hydrant. They cursed us, growled and chased us for any reason. They hated to see us having fun.

We were absorbed in a crap game one day. Suddenly Fat yelled: "Cheese it, the cop!" Everyone scattered like rabbits, leaving around fifteen pennies on the sidewalk. The cops usually pocketed this small change. It was one of our grievances. We often suspected them of being moralists for the sake of this petty graft.

Nigger didn't run. He bent down calmly and picked up the pennies. He was defying the cop. The cop swelled up like a turkey with purple rage. He slammed Nigger with his club across the spine. Nigger was knocked to the sidewalk. The cop forced the pennies out of Nigger's hand.

"Yuh little bastard," said the cop, "I'll ship yuh to the reformatory yet!"

Nigger stood up quietly, and walked away. His face was hard. Five minutes later a brick dropped from the sky and just missed the cop's skull.

It was Nigger's grim reply. The cop rushed up to the roof, and chased Nigger. But Nigger was too daring to be caught. He leaped gaps between the tenements like a mountain goat. He was ready to die for justice. The cop was not as brave.

For months Nigger remembered to drop bricks, bundles of garbage and paper bags filled with water on this cop's head. It drove the man crazy. But he could never catch the sombre little ghost. But he spread the word that Nigger was a bad egg, due for the reformatory. This cop's name was Murph. It was he who later tipped the balances that swung Nigger into his career of gangster.

Drawn by Dorothy Owen

Tenement Death

5. *A Magic Spot*

Delancey Street was being torn up to be converted into Schiff Parkway, and there were acres of empty lots there.

On our East Side, suffocated with miles of tenements, an open space was a fairy-tale gift to children.

Air, space, weeds, elbow room: one sickened for space on the East Side, any kind of marsh or wasteland to testify that the world was still young, and wild and free.

My gang seized upon one of these Delancey street lots, and turned it, with the power of imagination, into a vast western plain.

We buried pirate treasure there, and built snow forts. We played football and baseball through the long beautiful days. We dug caves, and with Peary explored the North Pole. We camped there at night under the stars, roasting sweet potatoes that were sweeter because stolen.

It was there I vomited over my first tobacco, and first marvelled at the profundities of sex. It was there I first came to look at the sky.

The elevated train anger was not heard there. The shouting of peddlers like an idiot asylum, the East Side danger and traffic rumble and pain, all were shut by a magic fence out of this boy's Nirvana.

Shabby old ground, ripped like a battlefield by workers' picks and shovels, little garbage dump lying forgotten in the midst of tall tenements, O home of all the twisted junk, rusty baby carriages, lumber, bottles, boxes, mouldy pants and dead cats of the neighborhood—everyone spat and held the nostrils when passing you. But in my mind you still blaze in a halo of childish romance. No place will ever seem as wonderful again.

We had to defend our playground by force of arms. This made it even more romantic.

One April day, Abie, Jakie, Stinker and I were playing tipcat under the blue sky. The air was warm. Yellow mutts moved dreamily on the garbage. The sun covered the tenements with gold.

Drawn by Dorothy Owen

Tenement Death

Drawn by Dorothy Owen

Tenement Death

Pools of melted snow shone in the mud. An old man smoked his pipe and watched us.

Boys feel the moments of beauty but can't express them except through a crazy exuberance. We were happy. Suddenly a bomb shattered the peace.

The Forsythe Street boys, our enemies, whooped down like a band of Indians. They were led by Butch, that dark fearless boy whose "rep" was formidable as Nigger's.

They proceeded to massacre us. There were about fifteen of them. Abie and Jake were buried under a football pyramid of arms and legs. Stinker, who had earned his nickname because he would whine, beg, weep and stool-pigeon his way out of a bad mess, howled for mercy. Butch worked on me. It was a duel between a cockroach and a subway train.

At last they permitted us to get to our feet.

"Listen, you guys," said Butch, sneering as he wiped his hands on his seat, "this dump belongs to us Forsythe Streeters, see? Get the hell out."

We ran off, glad to escape alive. Our shirts were torn, our stockings chewed off, we were muddy and wounded and in disgrace. We found Nigger. He was loaded with an immense bundle of men's coats which he was bringing to his family from the factory. His family worked at home, and this was his daily chore.

He turned pale with rage when he heard of the massacre. All that afternoon strategy was discussed. We spied on the Forsythe Streeters, we visited the Eldridge Streeters and formed an alliance against the common enemy.

The very next day the historic battle was fought. Some of our boys stole tops of washboilers at home, and used them as shields. Others had tin swords, sticks, black-jacks. The two armies slaughtered each other in the street. Bottles were thrown, heads cut open. Nigger was bravest of the brave.

We won back our playground. And after that we posted sentries, and enjoyed passwords, drills, and other military ritual. The old maid teachers would have been horrified to see us practice their principal teaching: War. War.

6. *A Boy's Head*

But the Schiff Parkway was an opponent we could not defeat. It robbed us of our playground at last.

A long concrete path was finally laid out, with anemic trees and lines of benches where jobless workers sit in summer.

We went back to our crowded street. Joey Cohen was killed by the horse car not long afterward.

He had stolen a ride, and in jumping, fell under the wheels. The people around saw the flash of his body, and then heard his horrible scream.

The car rolled on. The people rushed to the tracks and picked up the broken body of my playmate.

O, what a horrible joke happened. The head was missing. Policemen arrived. Joey's father and mother screamed and moaned, everyone searched, but the head could not be found.

Later it was discovered under the car, hanging from the bloody axle.

Our gang was depressed by this accident. Jake Gottlieb said he would never steal another ride on a horse car. But Nigger, to show how brave he was, stole a ride that very afternoon.

Joey was the dreamy boy in spectacles who was so sorry when he killed the butterfly. He was always reading books, and had many queer ideas. It was he who put the notion in my head of becoming a doctor. I had always imagined I wanted to be a fireman.

JULIO MELLA

Julio Mella, a brilliant young Cuban writer and student leader, was assassinated last month in Mexico City. He was walking in the street with Tina Modotti, the artist who contributes photographs to the NEW MASSES, when two men fired on him from a window. Mella was secretary of the Cuban Anti-Imperialist League. He was active in the fight against the insidious enslavement of Latin-America by Wall Street. That was his crime. He was undoubtedly executed for it by orders from some Wall Street Mussolini. We mourn the loss of the brave young rebel. We hope the agitation among the Latin-American workers over his murder will increase. This is a Matteoti case.

GYPSIES

You beautiful hall-room poet,
Aesthetic shut-in,
Escape-from-life futilitarian,
Beauty-seeker,
Beauty-monger—
You . . . you!
Coughing consumptive lyrics
To the vagrant salubrity
Of the toys in Romanyland,
Why don't you get out and try it?

You well-fed newspaper hack,
Rolling on balloon tires
From an overstuffed lounge
To a form-fit office chair,
And back again;
Padding your daily column
With footloose poems,—
You fat-buttocked,
Short-winded,
Haughty old bluffer, you!
Blaa! blaa! blaa!

And you day-bed poetess,
Marcelled, manicured, powdered, perfumed;
"Mated to Wanderlust"—
But in name only!
How would you like
To be a thousand miles from nowhere
And without Listerine?

H. H. LEWIS.

THE GREAT POET

He shall come, naked, with raw words, with blood redder than red and richer than black.

The sky has radioed it and the sun has promised.

Sappho, Homer, Chaucer, Milton, their graves shall warp in envy of The Great Poet, the man from an elected orb, from an inventive sphere other than earth.

He shall be The Great Poet, the Engineer Of The World!

Something like a cyclone sweeping through a "boom city," something like a sea rushing madly down a busy avenue, his alarm and fierce fury will stop the world on its own pivot.

His songs will be songs of men gone wild and men to come, of men greater than the Dead Great.

He shall come brandishing the moon and a star in his hands and in his mouth the smoke of industry, and his raw words shall be like rain over the land flooding, in a forty day spree, the cities and the hills.

And the world shall be still and calm while he sings.

ALBERT EDWARD CLEMENTS.

AUGUST 22, 1927

Bartolo Vanzetti wrote a poem about a nightingale,
Singing in Italy, in an April long ago.
Nick Sacco sent a letter to his little son:
"Take your mother to the country, gathering flowers here and there."

They were soldiers in a war, in the great war of the future,
The good shoemaker and the poor fishpeddler,
And they died greatly, as they had lived.

When you hear a bird singing, remember Sacco and Vanzetti.
When you see a wild flower growing, remember Sacco and Vanzetti.
Remember justice crucified in Boston;
Remember how America rewards the justice-lovers;
Remember that the great war needs other soldiers.

MIRIAM ALLEN deFORD.

THE COMING WAR WITH ENGLAND

[By SCOTT NEARING]

"The Coming War With America," by John McLean, was the title of a pamphlet widely circulated in the British Isles about 1920. McLean summed up the growing economic conflict between the United States and Great Britain and showed how inevitably this conflict must lead to war.

Today British writers of all shades of opinion are freely discussing the coming war with the United States. Jingoes like Bottomley waste no words in balanced argument, but indulge in the most violent denunciations of "yankee imperialism" and "the American Menace." The *London Nation,* one of the leading English journals of liberal opinion writes: "The government's policy, we say, is heading for two wars,—another large scale war in Europe and a war between ourselves and the United States." Bertrand Russell believes that "a half century of victorious investments would make the United States the masters of every continent. They could not be resisted except in unison, and therefore the war provoked by their oppression would be world-wide." *Foreign Affairs,* a British liberal monthly edited by Norman Angell, devoted its December number to Anglo-American relations. The first article by the editor was devoted to "the unthinkable" possibility of war with the United States. Subsequent articles dealt with the British public policy and British public opinion which point to war with Amerca.

The *Monthly Circular* of the London Labor Research Department for December, 1928 discussed "Anglo-American Rivalry" and reached the conclusion that: "British capitalists are seeing themselves ousted from the world's markets. The U. S. A. capitalists, owing to increased production, are being forced to look for larger and larger markets abroad."

How true are these British contentions?

Begin with the simplest of all the tests: exports. Until 1927 Britain was the world's leading export nation. Both for 1927 and for 1928 United States exports exceeded British exports in total value. Since 1927, therefore, the United States, and not Great Britain, is the world's principal export nation.

More serious for British business interests than the volume of United States exports is the character of the exports. Until recently the United States exports consisted chiefly of raw materials, which did not compete with British products. Thus, as lately as the years 1910-1914, almost exactly half of the United States' exports consisted of food-stuffs and raw materials. Mass production and war demand have brought about great changes in the situation. From the years 1910-1914 to 1928 United States exports of raw materials increased 68 per cent, while exports of partly manufactured products increased 109 per cent and of finished manufactured goods 215 per cent. Partly manufactured and finished goods are the basis of British export prosperity. In 1928 they made up three-fourths of all United States exports.

Drawn by William Gropper

Tartars Never Hurry

Where should the business interests of the United States sell these exports? Where but in those very markets that were held by Britain up to 1890 and by Britain and Germany up to 1914.

United States exports to Europe in 1928 were 72 per cent higher than the average for the years 1910-1914. To Canada and New Foundland they increased 173 per cent; to Latin American 175 per cent; to Oceania (Australia) 264 per cent; to Africa 349 per cent; to Asia 369 per cent. These were Britain's pre-war markets and into these markets, since 1915 the business interests of the United States have poured in an ever-increasing stream of manufactured goods directly competitive with the goods of Great Britain.

United States competition is driving British business from world markets—not only in Latin America, but in Canada, Africa, Asia, Australia,—in the British Empire itself.

This rapid and powerful thrust of United States business into Britain's profit making preserves has been made possible by the immense increase in basic productivity. Coal and iron, the two chief foundation stones of modern industrial supremacy, will illustrate the point.

Coal production in Britain was: 1875, 132 million tons; 1900, 225 million tons; 1913, 292 million tons; 1925, 247 million tons. Thus British coal production in 1925 was approximately double the production in 1875.

Coal production in the United States was: 1875, 47 million tons; 1900, 241 million tons; 1913, 509 million tons; 1925, 528 million tons. Thus United States coal production in 1925 was approximately eleven times production in 1875.

Britain produced 3 tons of coal to every one produced in the United States in 1875. In 1925 the United States produced more than two tons of coal to every ton produced in Britain.

The same changes have taken place in the production of pig iron.

Pig iron production in Great Britain was: 1875, 6.4 million tons; 1900, 8.9 million tons; 1913, 10.4 million tons; 1925, 6.4 million tons. Thus at its maximum in 1913 British pig iron production was less than twice the figure for 1875, and in 1925 it stood exactly at the 1875 figure.

Pig iron production in the United States was: 1875, 2.0 million tons; 1900, 13.8 million tons; 1913, 30.9 million tons; 1925, 37.4 million tons. Thus United States pig iron production for 1925 was nearly eighteen times as great as in 1875.

Britain produced 3 tons of pig iron to each one produced in the United States in 1875. In 1925 the United States produced six tons of pig iron for each ton produced in Great Britain.

Other figures might be cited. These are sufficient, however, to clinch the point: the United States is rapidly out-distancing Great Britain in basic industrial production.

The ruling class of Great Britain has dominated the economic life of the world for more than two centuries. During the years following 1880, the rulers of British economy found themselves in a life and death struggle with German economic interests that eventuated in the War of 1914. Since 1921 the menace of United States capitalism has been even sharper than the menace of German capitalism in 1912 and 1913 and the need for effective steps to check these inroads upon British business has been even more apparent.

Declining British capitalism faces rising American capitalism. The conflict between the two must be fought to a finish. It is only a question of time: of adequate preparation, before the ruling class of Great Britain, their world-wide empire and their world-wide alliances will fight the coming war with America.

Drawn by William Gropper

Tartars Never Hurry

HEAVEN DOES NOT PROTECT THE WORKING GIRL

2 Episodes By ELSA M. ALLEN

The greasy looking man in the box office nodded his head. In a greasy voice he said:

"Sure, we need goils. See the manager back there."

He waved his hand in the general direction of the stage.

A rehearsal was in progress. A melody issued from a battered upright piano. A score of tired girls in bathing suits gyrated back and forth. A perspiring individual beat time with a rolled newspaper.

Finally the cadaverous pianist hammered out the last note. The girls stopped abruptly. They gazed eagerly at the instructor. They were hoping for the few words of praise that would release them until the matinee.

He surveyed the troupe with disgust. Throwing his improvised baton on the floor he moaned.

"My God, that's awful."

Looking away from the stage he saw me. His tongue played with the cigar in his mouth. His eyes narrowed. He gazed at me speculatively.

"D'ye dance?"

"Yes."

"Lesse. Shoot, Joe."

Joe lit a cigaret and banged the opening bars of "Hallelujah." I embarked on a snappy Buck and Wing.

As I finished a flood of oaths poured on me.

"What the hell do you think this is?" he roared, "Bronx social tea or a Sunday School picnic? This is a Boilesk show, See? A Boilesk. Keep them ladeda steps for the day nursery. In this show you shake, see? Shake!"

I wanted to slap his face. Instead I promised to shake.

"Get on the end of that line and strut your stuff with the other girls. Shoot, Joe."

Joe shot. For two hours he ground out jazz. For two hours twenty weary bodies endeavored to radiate sex appeal and pep.

My legs ached. My spirit was broken. I was wet with perspiration. At last the paper baton crashed on the piano. Joe stopped.

"You're all lousy, but I can't do anything. The matinee is at 2:30. Be on time."

The long damp barn-like dressing room was devoid of everything save hooks and mirrors. Nude girls wandered carelessly in and out. The faces of some were cold and hard. Some were utterly disillusioned. Only a few retained the flush of youth.

The raucous notes of a third-rate orchestra chased each other up the iron stairway.

"Overture," came a voice.

Suddenly I found myself on a brilliantly lighted stage. Laughter and ribald comments came out of the darkness in front of us. Interminably the weary performance dragged forward. We were on the stage. We were off . . . on . . . off . . . on again. . . .

"Christ, lissen to those Bozos laugh, willya?"

Then the illuminated runway stretched out over the heads of the audience. We pranced forth for a closer inspection. Five hundred pairs of hands clapped in anticipation. Five hundred pairs of eyes stripped us of our last vestige of clothing.

At last the finale. We were arrayed in flesh colored tights. I vaguely wondered why the subtlety. Twenty girls standing in divers poses while the audience avidly gulped in sex. Down came the dimmers. The stage grew darker. The back drop parted. In the center the leader was revealed, stripped to the waist. She was in view for a fleeting second. Full light for a moment, then . . . curtain.

Thank God!

Back in the dressing room I smeared cold cream on my face.

Weary . . . disillusioned . . . disgusted. . . .

"Grand life, ain't it?" asked the blonde on my left.

I nodded. Quickly I put on my clothes, then groped my way down the darkened iron stairs. I hurried past the few men who loitered hopefully near the stage entrance.

Away from syncopation . . . spot lights . . . sex . . . out into the dark, cool loneliness. . . .

II. SUMMER HOTEL

It was early. The employment agency had just opened its doors letting in a job hunting mob. By ruthless pushing I found my way to a seat near the window. Weeks of severe discipline had developed an ability to gore my way through even this most practiced crowd.

The matronly woman at the desk ran quickly through her cards and with cool aloofness squinted at us through her glasses. She must have felt like Christ with the five fishes trying to feed the multitude. But she wasn't Christ, and so there remained a wide hiatus between the prospective jobs and the ever increasing mob.

I was persistent in my search for work. I had to be. That morning the landlady's looks had been even more menacing. Like a cat watching a canary she had glared at me walking in and out of my room.

And so today I was even more dogged in my pursuit.

"I must have a job." I insisted.

The matronly woman went on writing punctuating her sentences with a loud "humpf."

"It's almost three months now that I've been coming here," I addressed my remarks to the swiftly moving pen.

It was the bottom of the page. She looked up.

"My dear child, what can I do?" she queried with professional suavity, and then continued hesitatingly, "of course there is always a call for a chamber-maid. They generally want them older, but you might try." She looked at me apprehensively.

I felt the eyes of my landlady peering at me.

"I'll take the job. Where is it?"

"This is a large hotel in S——. You might catch the afternoon train if you hurry," and she made the proper notations on a card.

"Oh yes, Miss, you want Hotel Aldridge," and the genial little station master pointed out the road to me. "Never been down this way before, I reckon."

I assured him I had not.

I walked down the road, oppressed by the stillness.

I heard the shriek of a whistle . . . the moan of the waves . . . the clatter of carriage wheels . . . they left me more lonely than before.

But I was forgetting . . . watchful landlady . . . Hotel Aldridge . . . chamber-maid. . . .

The seaboard is pock-marked with hideous little hotels. Every week-end the city sends out an exodus of pulsating humanity. Feverishly snatching at a moment of joy, they succeed only in filling the hallways with ribaldry and the shore line with discarded salami sandwiches.

Hotel Aldridge had intriguing little balconies. They merely accentuated the discordant architecture. I rejected the need for harmony and went in.

"I am the new chambermaid you sent for," I informed the manager simply.

"Chambermaid, eh?" The cigar rolled sensuously from one corner of his mouth to the other. "You're kinda young, ain'tcha?"

"Not too young to work."

"Well, we'll soon find out. Go through the dining room and in the pantry you'll find the Missus. She'll tell you what to do. And anything she forgets I'll tell you about." His bawdy laugh echoed through the empty dining room.

It seemed I had a job!

I found the "Missus" sorting and counting silverware. She grumbled something about "sending 'em too young" but lost no time in setting me to work.

All my life I had made my own bed. But I was told I knew nothing about it. All the little intricacies were revealed to me.

The sheet must lap over just *so* much . . . the pillow must *stand* up . . . the shade must be pulled down half way only . . . I was lost in a maze of insignificant details.

Beds . . . single beds . . . double beds . . . three quarter beds . . . always beds . . . I was amazed at the number of beds in the world.

Drawn by William Gropper

Committee Meeting of Soviet Trade Unionists

Soiled sheets taken off . . . clean sheets put on . . . floors swept . . . wash stands cleaned . . . slop pails emptied. . . .

God, what disgusting work!

Three times a day we went down to a narrow space behind the stove. Three times a day we gambled on the ability to eat decaying food. Like arsenic taken in small doses, we gradually became immune to its poison.

Putrid food . . . putrid living . . . putrid talking. . . .

George was the Italian waiter. With florid gestures he stumbled through the language. He had become voluble in Anglo-Saxon profanity. With what child-like glee he would call the manager a goddam son of a dog!

It might have been true or might have been false. But you had to laugh with him.

Harry was the sophisticated waiter whose Sta-Comb hair and debonaire mien shattered the equanimity of all the village girls.

When the evening meal was over he was free to go his seductive way. The morning meal always brought him back with alluring details. He recounted them with a sensuous joy. Each illicit passion was made to render still another thrill.

"Suppose you maka de trouble for your littla Rosie, what you do?"

"Travel, Georgie, my boy, travel."

"Goddam good idea."

My bed-mate and I always stayed to the end of the meal. We hoped something eatable would find its way to our table en route to the garbage can. It rarely happened. Invariably she would say:

"C'mon dearie, the guy on the second floor left two rolls and a hunka butter."

Thank God for the overfed!

With our pilfered food we crawled up to our little room permeated with the smell of a toilet that didn't work. Through some freak of nature our bed was always unmade. I revolted. I wouldn't make it. My bed-mate didn't care. She didn't notice it.

"'Sa tough racket, eh, kid?" she munched avidly.

"Kinda," I agreed.

"Not so bad when you get on to it, though."

"Suppose not."

"Wanna got to bed?"

"'Salright with me."

Each night I sank into bed close to my edge. Each night I prayed the bedbugs would not be too insistent. Each night I thanked the gods for sleep that intermittently broke the eternal round of bed-making.

BLUE NIGHTS

winter comes on.
I in winter, always the russian,
    do enjoy myself.
my pop said to me when I was young:
in Russia, i as a boy, went sleighing
    into blue nights.
pop, there are blue nights here too.
blue nights of frost,
strange blue frozen evenings
and I do enjoy myself,
pop.
as though I were a Russian
boy; sleighing, sleighing.
nights of snow and the white tang
of empty snow.

HERMAN SPECTOR.

A WRITER'S APOLOGIA

By JACK WOODFORD

My ancestors were among the first gangs of religious fanatics, malcontents and ne'er-do-wells to come over from England. Some of them fought in all of our holy wars. Seven that I know of were customary colonels in the Civil War. One had bits of himself shot off in the late Wilson fiasco—and is now starving with the rest of the banged-up patriots, who were dragged whimpering from good jobs to make the world safe for American Dollar Diplomacy and English Imperialism. Another was recently ordered out with the Marines, to put down sales resistance upon the part of a South American republic and learn 'em that God is Love, and America God's Country—with the aid of such evangelical organons as machine guns, poison gas and æroplanes with which to drop bombs upon their women and children.

I am the black sheep of the family, "irreligious and unAmerican," because I have never killed for Apis, or spent enough time cheating and haggling to become objectively "successful."

* * * *

Being a writer of some experience, most of it pretty sad, I know that anything flowing from the Castalian fountain must be pretty liberally treated with chlorine before being served upon McCall Street.

The costive *res publica*, disintegrating before our eyes, smelling to the skies of corruption, materialism, ignorance, lechery and a perversion of values which amounts to a complete triumph of the meretricious, in every department of our national life, may be kidded, in a half humorous vein, but never pictured precisely as it is: a conscienceless oligarchy, ruled by thieving politicians who bleed us and then, through publicity addressed to the mob (and paid for by Big Business) bring the greater part of us stupidly to the polls at election time to perpetuate them.

Book publishers place no rigorous taboos upon political and economic "controversial subjects" but authors avoid them more and more, as they get richer and richer, and become almost indistinguishable from the dollar-rooting swine whom they fawn before in their books, and in their social contacts.

* * * *

Today public utility magnates and oil mongers, both before and after they have blandly confessed to corrupting Congress and the Cabinet, mingle with reasonably honest people and move about in society with the utmost bravura—as though they were as good as anyone else!

Certainly it is bad anough that Americans should be dedicated almost entirely to pouncing upon cash, but it is doubly lamentable that, becoming hardened, even our men of letters recognize no distinction between merchants and those who create beauty.

Even were one to confine oneself to ordinary matters, it would still be impossible for a novelist, writing and publishing in the United States, to make his characters real.

* * * *

If any American novelist were to paint life as Zeuxis did grapes, he would be pecked at by a swarm of vultures so numerous as to shut off the sun and drown out completely, with the flapping of their wings, the feeble objections of those few who still rally weakly to the defense of the truth teller.

* * * *

The American novelist writes, primarily, to make money; because, in America, a man without money is in as perilous a position before his hanseatic peers as a murderess, who has no sex appeal, in an American court of justice.

* * * *

I am fully aware of writing as though the novel were the only literary vehicle in America today. It is. Poetry has shriveled up and swooned pinkly, not to say wetly.

As for the short story form, nobody with the slightest vestige of self-respect would write for publication a short story which he knows is to be used merely as a bait to attract the attention of morons to the illuminated business cards of wights wanting to market mild antiseptics as cures for bad breath and baldness, teachers desiring to impart French in ten lessons, and the fifty or sixty motor car manufacturers, each of whom make the "One Best Motor Car In Any Price Class."

Those who simulate literary criticism, in the pay of newspapers and magazines having book publishers' advertising accounts to solicit, are too much absorbed with the greasy side of their bread to bother about being inconveniently honest. Not that these gutless prægustators are downright dishonest; they are merely "contacted," being the quarry of a powerful lobby that makes Good Fellows of ninety percent of them, willy nilly. Pope, in his *Dunciad* described the condition well enough, as it existed in his time:

> *"Blockheads with reason wicked wits abhor,*
> *But fool with fool is barb'rous civil war.*
> *Embrace, embrace, my sons! be foes no more!*
> *Nor glad vile poets with true critics' gore."*

Hence, we have the growing group of reviewing pediatricians who never definitely find a book good, bad or indifferent, but content themselves with putting their names at the top of review columns and writing below essays touching upon the complex and vaguely highfalutin idiosyncracies of the man whose name is at the top of the column.

This contemporary coterie have succeeded in setting up the dicta that a critic who frankly kicks hell out of a rotten book is a crude fellow having no rightful place among the male Eleanor Price Posts who dictate the correct manipulation to be accorded book criques.

With the exception of a handful of sticklers, such as Upton Sinclair, who are thought not quite nice by their gigman colleagues, no one in these states feels it worthwhile to call attention to the low condition to which our letters have fallen.

* * * *

Of course, many an American Literary Guy longs to write cleanly and wholesomely (in the true, not the American connotation of the words)—but timidity prohibits: our wives would give us hell and the members of the bridge club, however much they would sympathize with us if we got jailed for having traffic with contraband liquor, or falsifying our income tax reports, would frown social excommunication upon us if we got locked up on behalf of our more complex ideals, however praiseworthy the same.

So, most of us content ourselves with vehemently declaring that we don't even want to write honestly—lots of us, after a time, begin to believe it.

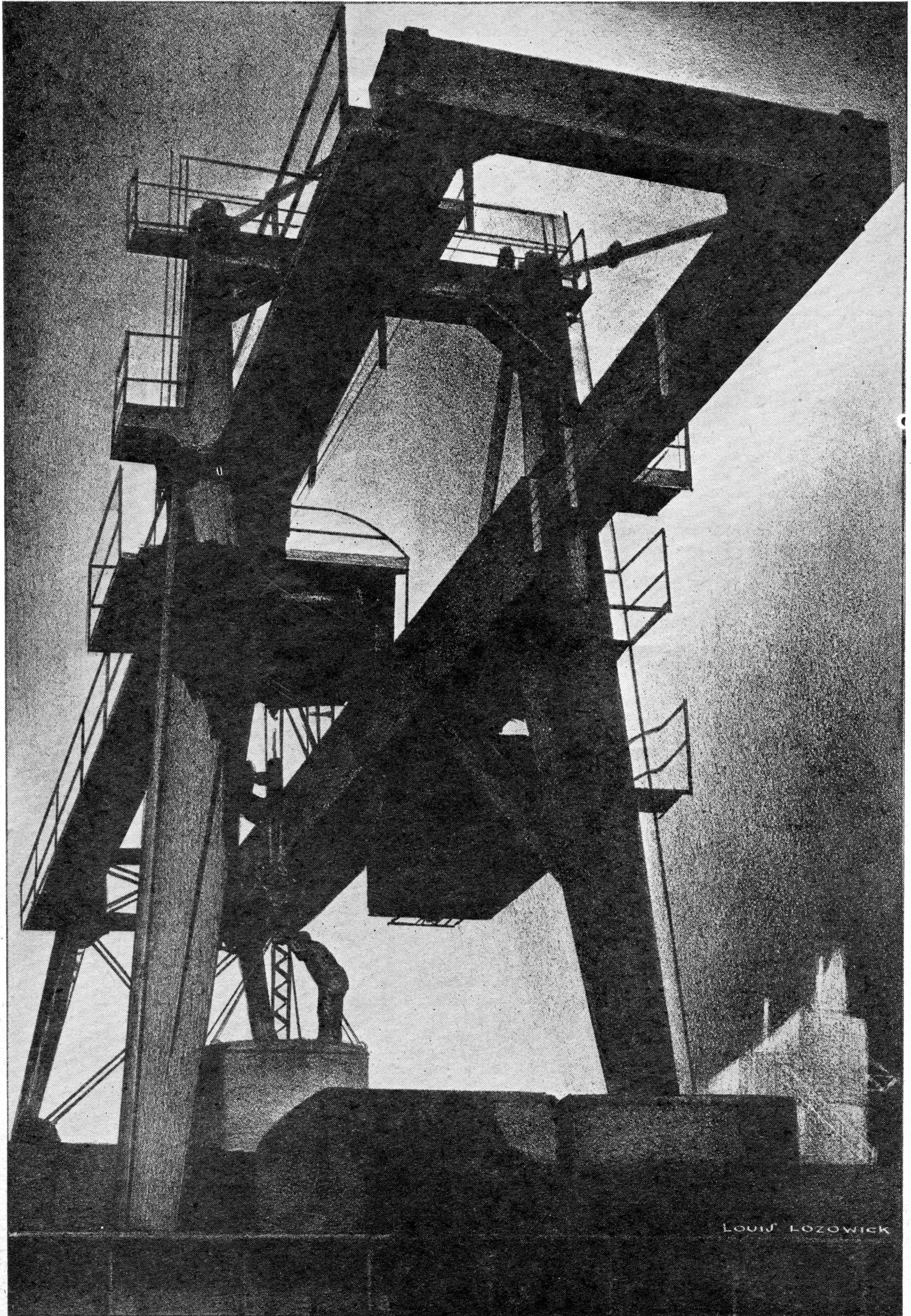
After all, in a country where it matters not at all what one *is*, and what one *has* is all that counts, why not don the red kimono, put an automatic piano in the study to provide the proper atmosphere, spring to our typewriters when our publishers call out "Gentlemen calling; ladies in the parlor please!" and when Upton Sinclair calls us prostitutes, let Mencken answer, unchallenged, in the pages of his publication (now well filled with advertising matter) "Prostitutes, certainly—but they are content."

In another generation even the inhibited desire to be men will have disappeared in the United States, the flame of art will have been completely stamped out, and we shall become a loathsome fascisti.

TO A FINANCIAL OCTOPUS

Now
In exclusive cafes
You smack your fat lips
Over dainty and luscius morsels of food
Adding pound on pound to the fat
That balloons your abdomen;
But someday,
When you feel even more secure
In the process of your gluttony,
The hungry will arise,
And on the debris of your selfishness
Will proclaim: He who works not,
Neither shall he eat.
Then will you know
The meaning of hunger.

JIM WATERS.



THE CRANE, by Louis Lozowick

FANTASY: 1929

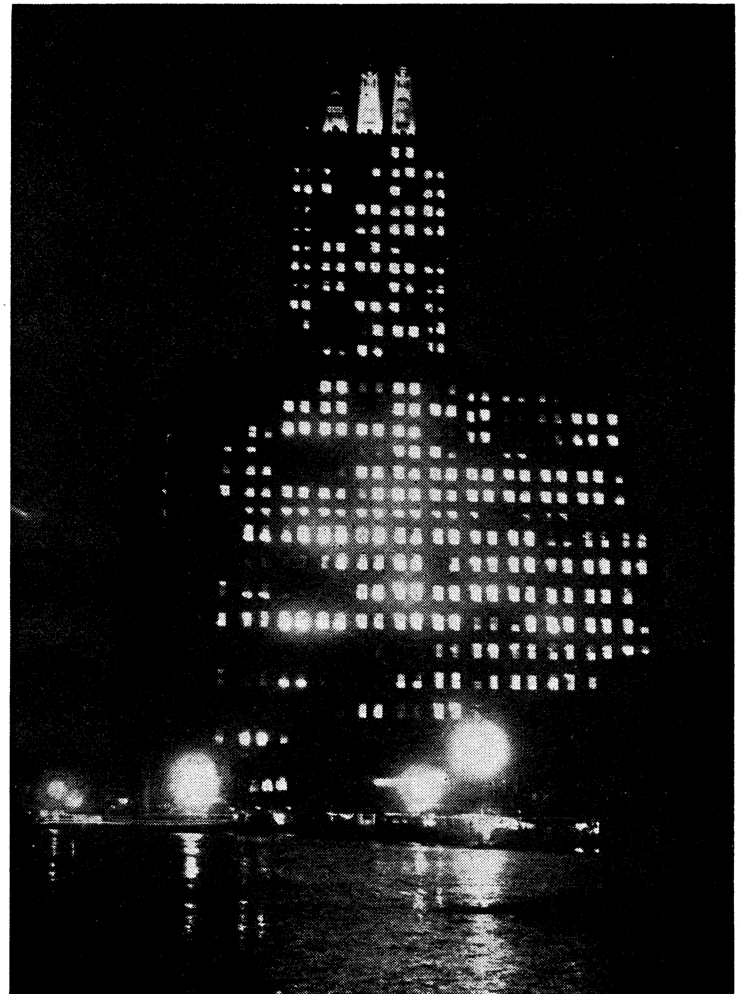
By HERMAN SPECTOR

It was a National Safety Week, sponsored by the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Poets. Religion was in a bad way: the church funds were being defecated. Signs in all the cars of every train in each subway-line read as usual:

Spitting is Prohibited,
being a Crime, or $500,
or BOTH!

There were newspapers, and where there were newspapers, there were journalists. Seven pimply virgins had committed crimes in a single week: the situation was Enormous. Two famous novelists, (married to each other), said that the main issue of the forthcoming election was prohibition. A professional jew had written a novel advertised to be "As TENSE and PATHETIC as an Erotic Dream. Freud was overwhelmed with remorse. A notorious broadway playwright announced that the communists had no money and no influence, whereupon five bookreviewers cheered. "Nation's Business" promised an american mussolini, and Dorothy Parker rhymed "zowie" with "-andhow." A manifesto depreciating the purity of public comfort stations was issued and signed by Wyndham Lewis, F. P. A., Wood Krutch, and Charley Chaplin. High-school girls began to find Mencken an awful bore, realizing the infinitely greater wisdom of Valentino, who died on time. This kind of repetitious cynical bilge was probably discovered and patented in the times of Gilbert Seldes, god rest his weary soul, and later adapted and used with phenomenal success by Variety, Vanity Fair, The New Yorker, and The Commercial World.

. . . The lights glow tenderly on fifth avenue, they sweat on broadway, they sneer and smirk on riverside drive. There are persons who prefer to read Books and go about thinking Art. Homosexuality attracts them; they are Liberal that way; they live in the Village for a thrill. Others drugged in a routine of work, productive or assinine, go to hear a blackface jew comic at the Hippodrome, with a glib tongue, enunciate nothing painfully. In the public libraries there are crowds of people trying to forget that they need a job, money, happiness; they have been taught to laugh at communists. Hunchback literati, sincere or careerist, they go from the Automat to Zero's Tub, talking Art: they have been taught to sneer at communists. A columnist in the World jocosely explains that animal good-health is making of him a "philistine" (hee,hee!)—having had a fairly adequate meal at the Algonquin, he observes that the rebels are envious. A reader replies: I spit upon your stale cautious phrases, you puerile academician, you . . . He weeps into the wastebasket, rebukes the correspondent for lacking a sense of humor. Ohhh-h-h! the jazzmusic cries, dress-models think the Boss is the nicest kind of man since he predicts greater prosperity for All, and a kid of 16 with gloating hopeful eyes works 13 hours a day for advancement: he has been taught to despise communists. If at first he dont succeed, he has been taught to try, try again. Thus doth virtue triumph, say the teachers of the land, who are virtuous, crabbed, and Loyal. And near times square a moving lighted sign announces: "Prince Matchiabelli Smokes Our Cigarettes!" . . . Suddenly: "And Who the Hell Are You?" it asks. The logic is indisputable. A white-haired philanthropist stands in the center of columbus circle and shouts to an audience of fairies, disappointed soda-jerkers, tired harlots from new england, crummy bums: "God is Love and money is Money; so don't confuse the two, or rather, the three!" The louder he shouts, the wider their mouths. It is late, late as hell; they are missing precious sleep; the white-haired philanthropist sleeps all day long; my, what pleasure he takes in trying to make these people as miserable as possible; he is not long for this earth; thank God. These thoughts, and others even less pertinent, assail them as they wait and listen undecidedly, but for a God which is Love but not MONEY they have nothing but scorn. Listless, they leave one by one; until at last, alone in the center of columbus circle, the spick, philanthropist, suddenly ceasing to smile, stumbles from the platform. . . . In central park the lamps are languid, dazed with the slow death of night, its last lingering caress . . . turning over and over, the sleeping phantom form of a lover, the park, involute paths and bends. . . . Once, in a dream, a man approached another man along a solemn silent street at night, and guided him up tenement steps to a room where a pink girl lay; pacific, placid, toothpick-chewing. He looked, and lo, it was good, and as it sayeth in the Bible, he went in and was surfeited. He walked outside; the streets were still, and pools of phlegm shone under lights; the stone was smooth, hard, 2 a. m., and no-one moved. Coldly the wind came, filled his nose, bitterly blowing: he drank and he sobbed and he stifled a yawn. . . . Rumor later reaching him to the effect that the panderer was her illegitimate son; he recalled with a shudder the ratty softspoken guy, the sad look in his eye. And her name was Mary. . . . So reads the sunday-morning paper, and it shows how an gorilla or orang-outang; it do not think; but We, We are M-E-N; we Think. Therefore we also see the estimable Mr. Brisbane, he writes a cartoon showing how some peop-le, they are Drunkards, and enjoy them-selves; but Good peop-le, they do not Enjoy themselves; they work for a Boss. Moral: Think, think; if at first you don't succeed, don't Drink yourself to Death or play Roulette at Mounty Carlo; but try, try again. And so, blithely remarked F. P. A. and Heywood Broun, two of our leading liberals, and So to Bed, each by each, and nicey nicey dreams. . . .



New York Telephone Building

New York Telephone Building

TIA JUANA

By JOSEPH KALAR

Tiajuana—

It is the mecca of union bartenders suddenly cast upon an arid United States. It is a noisy gaudy sheep pen where good little fat American bourgeoisie, brave defenders of subdivisions, czars of groceries, majordomos of speakeasies, garages, and California climate, can satisfy a wistful nostalgia for the bold and bad evils of the frontier.

It is the paradise of mechanics lying prone under cadillacs with tongues parched by thirst—

Of high school girls saying, "What difference does it make?"

Tiajuana isn't a town—it is a noisy pinwheel of brothels, saloons, gambling dens, curio shops whirling to the neighing screams of a calliope, imagining it has found the secret of life. The clink of hard American dollars battles with the dust in the streets—the hard shrill of tipsy women rises above the shuffling of feet, the clattering of dishes, the popping of corks. A jazz orchestra, with epileptic drums and flatulating cornets, bursts through the swinging doors. People laugh, talk, caress feet under tables. Waiters with affected humility scrape, fawn, and bow.

Everybody is being bold and terrible—everybody is bowing before a mirror, saying: Ain't we hard? There are rich farmers from Iowa, forgetting rows of clean yellow corn in the white madness of tequilla—there are fat blowsy matrons simulating the siren sexual leers of Greta Garbo.

(The Mexicans pace deferentially down the street, their feet shuffling in the dust, their eyes upon the ground.)

The longest bar in the world is a powerful magnet—a pool of stale spilled beer with drunken flies drowning happily in an amber sea.

Even the flies get drunk in Tiajuana.

The longest bar in the world is flanked by four shelves filled fat with beautiful brown bottles cunningly displayed. The fat men gape, decapitated by hesitancy; what shall we take? Tequilla? Sunnybrook? Old Crow? Mexicali beer?

It is hard to choose when one has money jingling in his pockets and is from dry America.

It is easy to forget hands stealthily reaching for your dollars back home; it is easy to forget that your wife made eyes at the proprietor of the corner delicatessen; it is easy to forget that the lot bought from the self-sacrificing realtor in Los Angeles is situated in the Mojave desert.

Nothing matters but tequilla. Tequilla makes pasty sons of fat men become hard and big. Drink tequilla. It is bad for white men but there is always somebody to look out for you. Drink tequilla. And if your gorge rises within you and you choke terribly the agonized throats of your enemies in your imagination—drink tequilla. It does not matter. This is Tiajuana, Baja California. This is Mexico.

(And the Mexicans walk with eyes upon the ground. Do not be afraid, dear lady. This is not Villa; this is not Zapata; this is not Rivera; this is not Laborde. This is a brown Mexican walking humbly with his eyes upon the ground, his feet shuffling on the cement. This is a Mexican in rags standing in the street selling Mexican candy.)

We stamped and roared and laughed and pounded our fists on the bar. Give us tequilla, tequilla, there is nothing quite like tequilla. We stared foolishly at each other, right through each other, and our eyes smiled; we were in Mexico drinking tequilla.

A woman tugged at my arm. "O, I am dying for a drink," she said. "Feel my neck, how hot it is," she said. I looked around me blushing, but nobody was looking. Feet were caressing feet under tables, eyes were raping beautiful languid ladies draped in brown chairs, eyes were tearing dresses to pieces. I put my hand stealthily on her neck. Gee, I thought, it is hot. But I know you, lady, I'm not going to buy a drink if I die from shame. I utter confused apologies—really, damned near broke, you know, and all the way to Minnesota to go yet. "O, are you from Minnesota," she said. "Long way from home, aren't you?" Drink tequilla, the good homely American virtues are on a spree, and the Saturday Evening Post lies on the table collecting dust.

My friend was talking confidentially to another woman. Jesus, I thought, but he's got a big woman. About six axhandles across the back, I told him later. He felt insulted.

God, God, but we are hard. Look at me, dear lady, see the fire in my eyes, hear my heels pound sharply on the floor. If terrible Mexican bandit with wild rolling eyes and fierce mustachios and abominable cigarros comes roaring and stamping into the room, his spurs jingling beautifully: Do not be afraid, I shall save you, dear lady.

In Tiajuana the curio shops are busy. Everybody was busy buying postcards. A few days later and people in Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska and Illinois will be reading: "We finally reached Mexico. This is a picture of Tiajuana. Ate some enchilladas today. Talk about good beer—and say, that tequilla is awful stuff. Will be leaving tonight." And people in Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska and Illinois will stare long and thoughtfully at the Mexican stamp and put the postcard carefully away.

To be a brave bold American means a dollar slotmachine, means two-bit pieces painfully placed on little squares on green tables, means a whirling roulette wheel in the Foreign Club. If we can't go to Monte Carlo, we can go to Tiajuana. We can always go to Tiajuana.

We began to get a little drunk and our legs began to give under us. It wasn't quite so much fun now, I felt sleepy and dull and not at all bold and brave and bad.

We climbed into the car grinning foolishly and smiled at the Immigration officer.

"Americans?" he asked.

"Yes, Americans," we said.

The car sped swiftly over the hot sands, into San Diego, past the green bellowing sea, new subdivisions, filling stations, San Clemente by the Sea, Laguna beach. We sat in the car beginning to feel sleepy and dead.

"Well, we had quite a time at that," my friend said.

"Yes, we had quite a time at that," I answered.

MINE-SONG

I am the dreamless dark of the mines,
My breast filled with terrible secrets——
My silence streaked with dead men's blood!
I am fate—I am destiny to thousands
Whose lamps flicker through timbered tunnels,
Groping through caves of coal and rock.

Through endless ages I keep my stern silence,
Watching pygmies crawl through tiny holes,
Seeking the treasured coal. . .
Slaves, dropping trails of sweat as they walk,
Their lungs choked with dust,
And the dampness soaking into their feet
As they plod and dig through tight places
In my secret and terrible bosom.

O men, have you not darkness enough inside your breasts,
That you must seek it so dangerously here?
Are your nights so flung with stars
That you enter these windy caverns to flee
Their sharp beauty?

Or is it something gnawing deep inside,
Something that cannot leave you rest—
Whips and stings and the pinching stomach,
Lashing and driving you up and down these dark entries,
So many helpless mules
Drawing your loads to the end of the gangway?

I watch you through your curses and your confusions.
I may seem to you silent and horrible—
But deep inside of me,
I laugh, and sympathize,
O brothers of the dark!

ED. FALKOWSKI.

ON STRIKE WITH BILL HAYWOOD—By CARLO TRESCA

For years prior to 1912 two names were almost continually ringing in my ears: William Haywood and Eugene Debs. I was a new arrival in America then, had little knowledge of English, spent my time working among Italians, but somehow or other those two figures loomed up in my mind, illuminated with an almost supernatural light.

It was only in 1912 that I was destined to meet Bill.

We were conducting a vigorous propaganda in Lawrence, Massachusetts, for the release of our comrades, Ettor and Giovanniti, leaders of the Lawrence strike, who had been accused of murder. Haywood himself was at that time under indictment for conspiracy in connection with the strike. We were bending all our efforts to mobilize the masses in favor of the innocently imprisoned comrades. We used up all our resources. Months passed and our comrades were still languishing behind iron bars. To give impetus to the movement, we decided to invite Big Bill.

We had first of all to overcome the resistance of the local I. W. W. Union, which was afraid that his presence might only increase the antagonism of the authorities and thus make the situation more dangerous for the prisoners. I was one of those who particularly insisted on Haywood's coming. Let it be admitted that a strong desire to meet the famous leader was not the least of my motives. We finally won our point. Haywood was to appear. We staged his appearance with all possible ostentation.

The meeting was called (July, 1912) to assemble at the Boston Commons. We invited strikers to come from Lawrence. I had promised them Bill, expecting that some 500 would follow the call. They came from Lawrence 4,000 strong: they were going to see their father, their friend, their general. "Go to see Bill" seems to have been the most captivating slogan of the day. We marched through the streets of Boston singing the *Internationale* in twenty-eight languages. A crowd of 60,000 met at the Commons.Under the wooden platform Big Bill was hiding. (This was my personal little ruse. Bill had not yet furnished bail and there was a standing order to the police to arrest him on sight.) There were speeches and singing; but when we announced the name of William Haywood and he climbed from his hiding place into broad daylight, a tremendous wave of enthusiasm surged over the huge gathering. There was no end to singing, shouting, waving of hats. The detectives rushed to seize Bill, but the Lawrence strikers formed a solid wall around him, keeping the invaders back. Bill was allowed to speak. When he finished he was seized by detectives. My Lawrence crowd (I was marshall of the parade) went marching to the railroad station under the red flag. No sooner had we arrived when we found Bill was waiting for us. He had in the meantime furnished bail and had been released. He had come to see his brood, his children. Never in my life have I witnessed men and women so frantic with joy, as those several thousand Lawrence strikers. No children ever greeted a beloved father with such an outburst of almost ecstatic elation. He made a little speech, a very brief one. Then he put his big arms around my shoulders. I, a young man, just beginning my career in the labor movement, thought this compensation enough for all my work. The general recognized the services of his lieutenant. The general was appreciative. On the following day the papers published a photograph of the scene, the caption reading, "Big Bill Haywood and his Lieutenant."

Afterwards Bill came to Lawrence to help us free the prisoners. There had been organized in Lawrence a Vigilance Committee which combined manufacturers, Chamber of Commerce members, detectives, and generally respectable citizens, intent on breaking the strike. The Vigilance Committee was preparing to organize a *Columbus Celebration* on October 12. That was supposed to be a decisive blow to the strikers. Detectives and other dark personages were pouring into the city by the score. The Catholic Boy Scouts and Catholic Clubs, led by one of the Irish priests, himself a large shareholder in one of the largest factories, were becoming cold. Every night some of our boys with strike buttons in their lapels were attacked and beaten up. Haywood was literally showered with anonymous letters promising to kill him. Of course, he remained unmoved. There was, however, one letter that made him suffer terribly. The letter promised to "close his second eye" if he would not leave town. (One of Haywood's eyes was gouged when he conducted the miners' strike in Colorado.)

The Lawrence atmosphere was becoming ever more feverish. An attack was obviously being prepared against the workers. A day or two before October 12, an I. W. W. striker was beaten to death with fists. There was no doubt in our minds that that was an act of the Vigilance Committee. We had to strike back, so we organized a huge funeral demonstration for the victim. The day of the procession arrived. Haywood was making the last arrangements in Lexington Hall. We all expected the Vigilance Committee and the police to make an attack on our march. I communicated with Bill by 'phone. He had an idea that we ought to postpone the march. This, however, would have been a setback to our movement. We had to go through with the undertaking. I told Bill to meet me at the cemetery. He retorted I was a fool. The only concession we made was not to pass through the Common, where police were waiting for us with machine guns and hose, but to use side streets. This made a change in the original plan (we were supposed to march through Park and Main Streets), but it was a way of avoiding bloodshed. We arrived at the cemetery without appreciable mishaps. Bill was there waiting. For five minutes a shower of red carnations was poured on the casket from a crowd of 20,000 workers. Above the crowd, towerlike, stood Bill. We were all nervous; we had just evaded a danger that might have cost us many lives; we were still half panicky, half indignant. Still, when Bill spoke there was absolute silence. He had cast his spell over the mass. There was no way of avoiding the influence of this bulky, towering figure.

In the vicissitudes of a mass struggle against overwhelming odds, we had thus gained a point. The funeral march was a success. Bill Haywood was not the man to sulk when his advice had proved wrong. Bill shook hands with me saying, "Carlo, you have a good head on your shoulders." I do not know if anything in the world has ever thrilled me the way these words of a general to his junior officer did.

Columbus Day was approaching and the situation was becoming very tense. On October 11 Bill received word from newspaper men, among whom he had many friends, that the Vigilance Committee had obtained reinforcements from the outside for an attack on our men. I was in Boston conferring with lawyers, when I received a telephone message from Bill advising me to come back to Lawrence. In the streets of Boston newsies were selling "extras" containing the sensational information that the Vigilance Committee was in command of Lawrence, while Haywood and Tresca had run away. In Lawrence I found Bill at headquarters. We were in a besieged city. Something had to be done. Bill was sure of an attack. Still he would not leave headquarters. "If we die, better die in our own home." It took some persuasion before I conducted him to a safer place. We had a section on Common Street which was known as *Fort du Macawli* because it was almost impregnable against police attacks. The street was inhabited by Italians only, and as soon as a bluecoat would appear, women would raise a howl, children would scream, windows would be opened, and missiles, sometimes quite sharp and quite effective, would be hurled at the invaders. As a matter of fact, the police did not like to appear in that section of Common Street. It is thither that we brought Bill. We gave him a room with an Italian family. Eight husky Italian young fellows were sleeping on the floor in the same room, guns in hand. The house was patrolled outside by armed comrades. That peaceful Italian house certainly looked like a fort. All through the eleventh of April Vigilance detectives were preparing for an attack, but we had undertaken a counter-move. We had summoned sympathizers from surrounding cities, and in they came, armed and determined groups from Providence, Nantucket, Quincy, Needham, Plymouth, Lynn, etc. We even had a little skirmish with the Providence detachment. They knew where I usually spent my nights, and instead of trudging the streets of Lawrence all night

long, they decided to visit me in the dead of night. About 3 A. M. our patrols sighted a group of sinister-looking individuals approaching our fort. There was no doubt in their mind that the Vigilance forces were launching an attack. Shooting began. Fortunately the guests had the presence of mind to realize the mistake of our comrades. They were allowed to approach closer. Inside, Bill heard the shouting and sprang up, ready for action. He looked somewhat like an elephant on his hind legs. "Boys, here they are. They are coming," was his only remark. He placed himself before a window to fight the invaders. When the error was cleared up, nobody went to sleep until morning.

In the morning we had devised a new item of strategy. We called our men to a picnic out of town. We had to overcome the resistance of some of our members who were eager to fight. However, it would have been foolhardiness to precipitate a head on collision when the enemy was armed to his teeth. By organizing the picnic we withdrew our forces from the city in perfect order. We had to admit, however, that our orders were not literally obeyed. Some workers were too fascinated by the spectacle of that parade to let it go. So they kept on walking in and out of the lines, purposely disturbing the march. There was no bloodshed, but it was obvious to everybody that we were undaunted. The comment of the papers on the following day practically amounted to the same. Bill was pleased. "Eh, these Italians are good soldiers," was his comment. Soon he decided to go back to Chicago, as our case had been practically won. In a few days Bill departed. One month later the prisoners were released.

I admired Bill greatly during those crucial weeks. I realized his influence over the masses, but wherein lay his real strength I recognized only a year later, when we were working together in the Paterson strike. At the beginning there were only Elizabeth Flynn and myself in the field. We were doing our best, but day in and day out we were confronted with the insistent questions: "Where is Bill?" "When is he coming?" "Why is he not here?" It was upon the insistence of the strikers that we were compelled to invite him.

Those were days of epic struggles. We had several halls in Paterson proper: The Turnhalle, where the crowd was mostly Italian; the Helvetia Hall, with an overwhelming German attendance; we had many other halls; but our great gathering place was Haldon, New Jersey, which at that time had a socialist mayor. On Sundays, when due to the blue laws, no meetings could be held in the rest of New Jersey, we addressed between 30 and 40,000 workers from the roof of the Haldon city hall. It was into that crowd that Haywood threw himself with all the power of his unique individuality.

The number of persons involved in the strike, including strikers' families, was no less than 125,000. All the strike relief collected for six months amounted to $72,000. The strike lasted from February to July, 1913. How could the strikers hold out? Through the power invoked in the masses by this huge, towering figure. He was not elegant. He was just one of the mass. He was immensely convinced of the righteousness of his cause; he had a deep feeling regarding the I. W. W. labor movement, and his place among the workers. He was a simple man with a simple purpose. He never harangued a crowd. He *explained* things in the simplest, most beautiful, imaginative words. It was remarkable that people like the Italians, who had a scant knowledge of English, understood his speeches. He had the unusual ability of reducing issues to their simplest realities, but these realities he knew how to present in a magically compelling way. Many speakers had talked to the workers about the necessity of holding together. Bill, however, would do this. He would lift over the crowd his huge, powerful hand. He would spread the fingers as far apart from each other as possible. He would seize one finger after the other with his other hand, saying to his audience: "Do you see that? Do you see that? Every finger by itself has no force. Now look." He would then bring the fingers together, close them into a bulky, powerful fist, lift that fist in the face of the crowd, saying: "See that? That's I. W. W." The masses would go wild. Not the least factor in his successes was his physical vigor, the unusual amount of vitality that throbbed in every one of his gestures. One certainly could not repeat Bill's demonstration with a puny fist.

Never in my life have I heard anybody giving in words an idea of the industrial society of tomorrow as Bill did in Paterson. The strikers were hungry, miserable, hounded by police, scared by the sufferings of the children and the aged. Still, for months they were living in an imaginative world, in a world of emancipated labor. This was Bill's work. Other speakers would take up "highbrow"topics like evolution, economic laws. Bill never dwelt on such things. He never lost much time in reading or getting his ideas of socialism from others. He received his inspiration from his own life of labor, and from the surrounding workers. He made Paterson strikers realize, not in thought but with all their being, that there is a world to gain. Somehow he managed to make them realize that the city hall is theirs, that the theatres and all the beautiful things will be theirs in due time, that there will be a brotherhood of men—free, careless, unbent human beings who dance, sing, create, work. *The Commune of Paterson* lived in the minds of the strikers, and this was Haywood's work. He elevated them above the sordidness of their everyday life. He made them see the light of a new, beautiful society.

He was a proletarian by birth and choice. All workers of all nationalities and all trades, whether weaver, carpenter, miner, or ditch digger, were one family to him. It was through his influence that women and children were drawn as an active factor into the strike. I shall never forget the ripples of laughter that shook an audience of Italian women when he spoke to them on the strike. What was his topic? He was trying to make it clear to them that

WAKING-UP THE TEXTILE SLAVES

WAKING-UP THE TEXTILE SLAVES

the eight hour working day was needed, not only for the men, but also for the women. He said in substance: "When a man works twelve hours, he comes home exhausted; he is morose; he gulps down his meal and soon is fast asleep. He has no strength to be a husband to his wife. The woman is suffering as well as the man." That provoked mirth, but it struck home.

Bill wished to speak to the kids. We had never thought of that before. The meeting was organized with myself in charge of the hall. It was a big event. One hundred teachers came from New York, crowding the galleries in a desire to witness the unusual performance. Many local teachers were in attendance. When the doors of the hall swung open, there was a terrible rush. In no time 4 to 5,000 children, shouting "Solidarity forever," and "Big Bill," crowded every corner of the hall. First we called upon the children to make speeches. I remember one of them saying: "I ain't going to school no more. Teacher says father is bad because he's a striker." The little fellow lifted his head, scanned the galleries, and pointing his finger to one of the teachers, exclaimed, "That's her! She tells me my father is bad. I don't like her." This aroused the children to a frenzy. Cries of "Strike, strike" filled the hall. There seemed to be no way of quieting the young audience but to introduce Bill.

I can still see him standing on that platform,—before him a sea of children's heads. The platform is crowded with children, some clinging to his huge legs, some hanging on to his coat, all of them looking up at him with adoration. All faces are lit up with ecstatic joy. Bill had no difficulty in speaking to children. He spoke to them with the very same simplicity with which he addressed adults. There was something of the child in his own makeup. He told the crowd a simple story of how he worked in his own childhood, and what he went through; he explained the meaning of the I. W. W. He held every child's heart throbbing in his big hands. The following day the picket line was crowded with children who proved to be the most faithful fighters. Subsequently Mr. Bimpton, the Paterson Chief of Police, asked me whether I could not withdraw the kids from the picket line. "For God's sake," he said, "remove those kids from the field. My men can't fight children." Later we began to place the strikers' children in the homes of workers' families in surrounding cities. This too was Big Bill's idea. He lived like one of the people. During the six months of the strike his salary was eighteen dollars a week. He was not only what you call a leader. He actually loved to spend time with the workers, to talk with their women and children. He went to supper with the strikers nearly every night.

Few knew that this hulking figure of a notorious fighter was kindness itself. His great craving was to possess a family, to be surrounded by little tots. He hated to stay alone in the evening. He begged me to take him somewhere, anywhere. He would sleep in the houses of Italians, Syrians, Irish, Poles, Letts. People were all brothers to him. Still, how he enjoyed those little Italian families full of genuine fondness, crowded with children, with numerous other possessions that give zest to life! How he would fondle the little ones, rocking them on his huge knees!

After six months in Paterson his health was completely shattered. Even Bill, with his powerful constitution, could not stand the strain. He had a trying stomach ailment which made him feel miserable. As soon as the strike was over, friends took him to Europe. It was not before a year that he completely recovered.

Bill Haywood was not only a picturesque fighter. He was the type of a practical idealist who never lost sight of the realities of life, while keeping a firm hold on the ultimate goal of the movement. He will live in the memory of the working class.

WITCHES IN PENNSYLVANIA

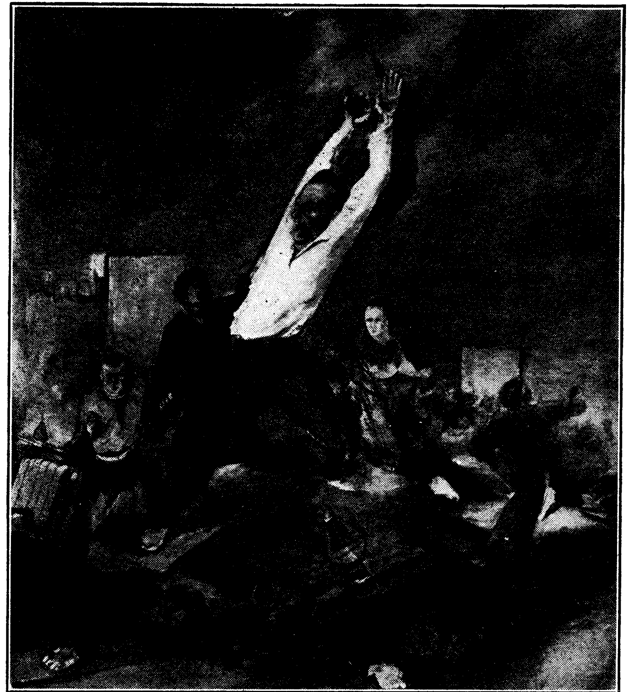
A whole community of farmers at York, Pa., believes in primitive witchcraft. A murder resulted recently from this belief. Much surprise has been shown by editorial writers, but they should not be so naive.

It is as if they thought America a civilized country. Don't they know all of America is superstitious? The Pacific Coast believes in spiritualism and Theosophy. The South believes in hell-fire and the Baptist church. The Middle West believes in the Saturday Evening Post. The eastern slope believes in Al Smith.

The mass-mind of America is medieval. It is the mind of a church-ridden moujik, without his country simplicity.

The intellectuals who should be educating that mind are too busy making money to be clear, and hard and truthful.

EXPOSITION of RUSSIAN ARTS and HANDICRAFTS



REVOLUTIONARY ART

The Red Guard posters of 1918—paintings, etchings, drawings, sculpture from every important artist in Soviet Russia — more than eight hundred examples of the art of the revolution, will be shown at the Exposition.

The handicrafts of the Russian peasant, from every nook and corner of Russia, will be displayed in a real Russian setting, a miniature fair. Toys, linens, carving, ivory, lacquer, Palekh boxes, china, porcelain, jewelry, stone ware, rugs, textiles, books.

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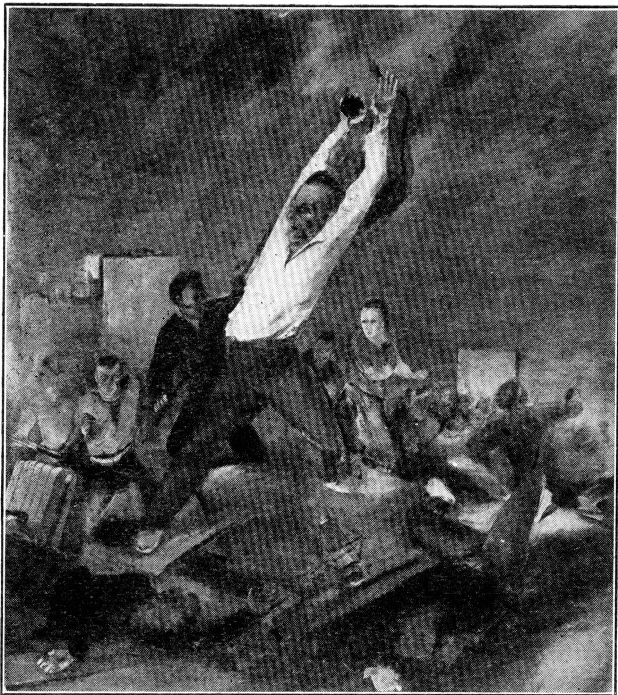

BOOKS

GROPPER ON RUSSIA

Opinions seem to me like dead oysters and opinionated books give me a sort of ptomaine so that I find it hard to see straight or enjoy life. And of all books, books about Russia manage oftenest to be hashes of opinion. They stand between reader and the dynamic experience of feeling the vigor of a new world. Now and then some book turns the trick . . . it isn't a book ABOUT Russia, but a chunk of Russian experience. There were Albert Williams' tales of the Russian village, full of Russian weather, and Russian folks; there was Trotsky's "Literature and Revolution" with a tempo in the prose that brought back the excited lively violence of a hundred Russian discussions of what life and art is all about. . . .

But better than any single book that has happened to the American reading public since the Revolution is Billy Gropper's. Neither glut nor sparkle of words is here. Like one great animated cartoon, a strip for all, here are fifty-six pictures for the motion picture public, for the old family album public, for people who've been to Moscow and know how to the identical quirk he has caught the hips of patient, chatty hags with baskets in the cooperative queues, the meetings, the schools, and the tea shops, and the triumphant rags of a Russian orphan, as downtrodden, say, as Huck Finn.

Here's a book for people who have not been. An eye opener for them, a real glimpse into a revolutionized society, where the line between literate and illiterate is being rubbed out, the line between east and west doesn't exist, and a big eraser makes fun of the line between jew and gentile, and gives the young more than an even break along the line that used to separate the generations. I tell you here is a book that will let you see what it is that is the nucleus of revolution in our own lives.

I wish I could draw a picture of myself looking at Gropper's book. Better still, make a talkie, to take in all the whoops and shouts . . . its a nice noisy book to look at. You want to open your mouth and sing out over the accordion player. There's a picture makes you remember how many times the accordion player has sprung up on trains, in villages at parties, in Red army barracks, and turned a whole crowd into singers. There's a red soldier on page three with the nose of the soldier traffic cop on the Kuznetski Most who said to me "You're a nice dumb girl, Comrade," and sticking his rifle into a snow drift, walked along until he rang the bell of the magazine office I was seeking. Page four has the very kids that used to storm out of school around the corner of Archangelski perulok, not a lot of poor folks' children growing up to fit in as best they could in a world where poor folks' children might be even be president . . . but a bunch of brats with grinning handsome homely faces who owned the earth.

I slog along. I prove by words how much better it is to look at pictures than to summon pictures out of words, until some day again when we make our own words, and language isn't a magic thing.

Look at Gropper's pictures. Art for Life's sake. Full of the Gropper gusto . . . fine design, beautiful line. Here and there a picture that tells you what fellow artists Gropper has liked enough to absorb. There is a Moscow bedstead that brings back Wanda's Tired Bed, and a roomful of people seen with the medical interest of Grosz. No imitation here but the power to absorb points of view and to see more richly because others of the same penetration look at the same thing.

Look at Gropper's picture. He gives you a novel, a travel book, a poem, a hefty volume on political theory. They're all there in these fifty-six pictures . . . meetings . . . a sense of a people who are making a great art of politics, and of social and political expression, a theatrical ritual that galvanizes the masses into chucking heaven and sowing better seed corn. See the sledge stuck in the bad roads . . . get that droshky to take you across the cobbles at a clip if you can . . . brief cases . . . who but Gropper can pack ten laughs into the way he draws a brief case?

See the tulips on the table-cloth you know is dirty . . . listen to the talk . . . what makes soviet court rooms seem so like debates over WHAT INDEED IS JUSTICE rather than the smug spectacle of the Giant society protecting itself from its own mistakes?

See page fifteen . . . stand that soviet brat up against any lambkin in proper frock in Junior Vogue and see whose shuba and valinka have the most style.

People who write books about Russia usually include chapters on the trade unions. More is communicated on Gropper's page sixteen . . . a group of workers. See the hands. See the legs. See the jaws. See the ease and bustle.

Pages eighteen, nineteen, twenty . . . three good chapters on the theater, adult education, lectures meetings.

Page twenty-two. Sure they have tooth-ache in Leningrad.

The seasons . . . jobs . . . cut wheat, hauled logs.

A picture maker like Gropper has it all over the opinion-toters. He can communicate something that warms you, and restores a sense. We don't believe our eyes any more or we wouldn't be believing our ears when so much nonsense resounds in them. Gropper saw Russia, and from this day I shall use my eyes on New York. Thanks, Gropper, for new eyesight.

E. E.

56 *Drawings of Soviet Russia. New Playwrights Theatre Book Service, N. Y. Distributors.* $2.00.

CRIME IS A BUSINESS

Chicago May, A Human Document, by Herself. The Macauley Co. $2.50.

Chicago May was one of the crooks who are called crooks. The crooks who are not called crooks supplied her with large or small amounts of money, inadvertently, sometimes willingly, for the favors of her sex, and immunity from blackmail. Chicago May considers crime a business. The real interpretation is: Business is a crime. She knows the interiors of numerous prisons. She has witnessed the sufferings of the proletariat under capitalism; she leers at the preachers and philantropists and all the monocled liberals of the bourgeoise. She asks: "Is it any wonder crooks are crooks, under society as at present organized?" What she really means, but is either afraid or is not permitted to say, is: This society is organized by successful crooks who are jealous of their spoils and hound us little fry into an early grave. We labor for "the State" in prisons, and die of lousy diseases, because we are outlawed guerillas fighting an immense predatory system. We are too dumb to learn economics and the tactics of the class struggle, but oh, you lousy filth on top, how we detest you and how we wish we were in your place! We know there is something rotten in America, but we are futilitarians, we gotta live meanwhile, and we are too tired and harassed to think! "Chicago May" is valuable as record. Personally, the author exhibits a lively intelligence and was probably advised, by editor and publisher, to tone down on the "preaching." Yet, from observations that do occasionally escape her, I conclude that Chicago May, one of the crooks who are called crooks, has radical opinions about society and the crooks who are not called crooks.

HERMAN SPECTOR.

RUSSIA LOOKS AT DREISER —AND MISS THOMPSON

By HARRY DANA

Dreiser looks at Russia, by Theodore Dreiser. Horace Liveright $3.00.

The New Russia, by Dorothy Thompson. Henry Holt and Company. $3.00.

When Dreiser looked at Russia, Russia looked at him.

It was the Tenth Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Six red rivers of singing men streaming all day through the Red Square. Standing in the crowd beside the tomb of Lenin, a group of Americans—delegates appointed by the Society for Cultural Relations. Among these the Russians see a thick-set man who looks like one of the bourgeois Americans he has satirized—heavy, powerful, coarse. Is he a "Titan," a "Genius," or "An American Tragedy?"

Again the Russians see him seated solidly at a banquet eating and drinking, like a spoilt, over-grown boy, wanting attention paid to him, waiting for President Rykov to come and shake hands with him, wanting a special car put at his disposal to travel in.

Again, with his necktie off and a good proletarian look, he goes to Bukharin. In talking of Russia he feels at a disadvantage. So he shifts the conversation to the Universe. "Does not Comrade Bukharin think that the sun is exploiting the earth?" Bukharin suggests that the earth ought to exploit the sun. "Say, Bukharin, you're an opportunist," retorts America's brutal realist.

Some Russians put up their hands to their faces. It is not because they have weak vision. It is to hide their smiles. (Compare Trotsky or Lenin's interview with H. G. Wells.)

In America Dreiser is a great whale among the little fish. In Russia the great whale was out of water.

A "brilliant" American woman newspaper correspondent from Germany "also came." She has beautiful complexion and beautiful dresses. She notices the "tired skin" and the "sleazy dresses" of the Russian women. 'I never saw while I was in Russia a single *soignee* woman, she writes. She is distressed because her second trunk of dresses has not come. The trunk came. Russia looks at her too, and sees.

Like conquering Cæsar, these two Americans—the big author and the little reporter—come-and-look—but do not see.

From disgruntled Russians who lie in wait for American newcomers to poison their minds against the Soviet Government, from the hard-boiled correspondents of capitalist newspapers, from the Fascist Embassy, from similar "reliable" sources of information,—and from each other—they pick up all the floating jibes.

When she publishes her articles, he sees her and raises her one. Listen to the echoes:—

She writes, "Moscow is a dull city."

He writes, "Moscow is the dullest city in the world."

She speaks of "that tired look about the skin and eyes which is rather common among Russian intellectuals."

He speaks of "tired look about the skin and eyes which is almost universal in Russia."

For her Mayakovsky "is large and blond, wears rough tweeds, and looks like a prize fighter."

For him, it is Mayakovsky, "large, blond and dynamic, who looked like a prize fighter and dressed like an actor."

And so on for pages—echoing each other.

They are both more at home in the field of literature than in politics or economics, but even in their realm of culture they make amusing enough mistakes:—

She speaks of an "art for art's sake" poet, "Jesenin." She writes of Ehrenburg as living in Russia. In place of Tretiakov she writes "Stretjakoff" (sic).

He confuses Pudovkin's "End of St. Peterburg" with Eisenstein's rival film. He writes of a play called "Podovkina Mother." He confuses Einstein with Epstein. He twists "The Magnificent Cockold" into "The Magnanimous Unicorn."

Seeing what flimsy foundations they build upon we need not be distressed when they give their conclusions—for example when she says that "Leninism meant the death of art"; that the "ambitious louts" and "bobbin-feeders" "have produced nothing original"; and that the Revolution "was riddled with damn-foolishness." Or when he writes that the "Communist upheaval in Russia has done little more than to confuse the aims "of the writers" and to "enslave the arts."

Dreiser calls himself an incorrigible individualist. Miss Thompson is the daughter of a Methodst minister. The Russians who looked at them wondered what the devil they would say. Yet Dreiser and Miss Thompson after all have brains. They do not stomach that mess of lies that Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick, authoress of "The Hammer and the Scythe" (sic) has swallowed undigested—and vomited.

No! Dreiser and Miss Thompson are both in the main favorable to Russia rather than hostile. They both patronizingly condescend to speak well of the "experiment." In America, the convinced Bolshevik baiters had hoped that Dreiser and Miss Thompson too when they got home would turn altogether against the U. S. S. R. Somehow, when Miss Thompson got back to Germany and Dreiser got back to the U. S. A., each felt more kindly toward Russia. That in itself is perhaps after all the best tribute to the Soviet Union. For if neither of them is a very good authority on Russia, Dorothy Thompson is an authority—on Germany, and Dreiser an authority—on the U. S. A.

Drawn by William Gropper

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Drawn by William Gropper

Comrade Chairman—*(A Meeting of the Eastern People's Soviet)*

A DUMB GENERAL

Meet General Grant, by W. E. Woodward. Horace Liveright. $5.

As a personality, General Grant is singularly poor material for a biography. Woodward's attempts to inject a little color into his subject are brave but inadequate. Grant was one of those drab, dull people who haven't imagination enough to know when they are making fools of themselves—and that is why he was such a good general.

As a focal point for a portrait of a significant era in American civilization, however, Grant is incomparable. He was at once a symbol and center of forces: symbol of the backwash of the pioneer community and center of immense and shady political and financial deals. Born on an Ohio homestead, raised in a peasant atmosphere, educated indifferently at West Point, discharged from the army for drunkenness, reappointed during the Civil War, he became the savior of the North, the idol of society, the president of the nation, the guest of monarchs . . . and the defender of thieves, the associate of swindlers, the hireling of wealth.

In brief outline Grant's career seems to sparkle with opportunities for romantic melodrama. It is strange, but there was nothing brilliant about the man, nothing really mysterious, nothing intense. The human element in him, from the point of view of the biographer who seeks to awaken either sympathy or antagonism in the reader, was neither subtle nor warm. He had, it is true, a certain suppressed softness, but it was the softness of a confused and eternally helpless child rather than the delicate softness of the poet. His hard exterior, naturally, was a defense mechanism. Pushed by unintelligent stubbornness into the world's spotlight, he shrunk, although he liked the sensation, a little bit toward the shadows. That was the result of an unfortunate childhood environment. His mother was a silent, embittered small-town woman; his father was an enormously ambitious egotist. Never particularly bright Ulysses Simpson was one of those boys who want merely to play and to be left alone. The coldness of his mother and the incomprehensible ambitions of his father disturbed him and made him turn more and more toward the purely physical activities of the farm, things that he could understand. He developed into a muscular lout, sluggish, careless about his appearance and his position in the community.

At West Point he was a poor student, except in mathematics. In the army he was a lonely drunkard. The boy who was forced to amuse himself became the man who chose to drink by himself. Discharged, he sank to the level of a sponger, not because he wanted to, but because he wasn't intelligent enough to be anything else. Then the war. Men were needed. He was reappointed. Opportunities were thrust upon him, and because he was too stupid to quit when others would have quit, he won battles that others would never have won. He became commander-in-chief.

As the president, he chose to play the part of the "good fellow." His cabinet was composed of personal friends who were incompetent statesmen but shrewd thieves. Scandals showered about him, and Grant said nothing, defended his friends and appointed more thieves. Grant himself was probably honest but sufficiently stupid to believe that the swindlers around him were merely clever business men. Like most small-town paupers, he worshipped wealth. Since that era in American history marked the beginnings of modern capitalism in this country and was fertile in sudden millionaires, all of whom were exploiters and rascals, Grant's idols were the worst elements. And those people utilized him for their fraudulent schemes. The last years of his life were blackened by a resounding Wall Street bankruptcy in which he was involved.

Woodward says of Grant's decade: "The moral standards of the nation had touched low water mark. All the great altruists had been quietly lifted over the backyard fence of public affairs and sent home, but their sentiments—hammered out in the shape of crisp slogans—were still carefully cherished. Phrases took the

Drawn by William Gropper

Comrade Chairman —*(A Meeting of the Eastern People's Soviet)*

place of honesty. The spiritual decay of the time ate its way through the tissue of events. It was an epoch of rusty souls.

"Money had become the measure of human values, and most of the people who possessed money in large quantities did not possess anything else. War profiteers, contractors in shoddy goods, manipulators of the stock market, vendors of quack medicines, brazen promoters of fake enterprises . . . it was people of this type who filled the public eye. Millionaires without taste, suavity or ordinary common decency. Money was a raw force, untempered by taste or elegance."

That is an excellent description of Grant's time, a direct product of growing capitalism, and that fact should have suggested itself to Woodward, who is supposed to know something about economic determinism. But this book was written for popular consumption, and best-sellers do not quote Marx. Woodward frequently gets sentimental and elegant, seeking to give his book that very essential quality of Ritz demanded by the Park Avenue crowd. *Meet General Grant*, consequently, is uneven and inconsistent. When Woodward is sentimental, he is false and dull. When he is an economic determinist, he is decidedly interesting.

BERNARD SMITH.

LABOR IN POLITICS

Farmer and Labor Parties in the United States. By Nathan Fine. Rand School. $3.00.

At the opening of a year when the power of both organized workers and farmers is deflated to a point where politicians have not the slightest fear of it, a history of attempts to organize politically is not out of season. A hundred years ago the first labor party was organized in Philadelphia. The struggles since that time, and the organizations that have arisen since, are all dealt with in this volume—gangers, knights of labor, populists, socialists, deleonites, farmer-laborites, liberals, communists, all pass in review. Long quotes from their speeches and platforms solidly document the volume.

Nathan Fine has been in some way related to labor parties for at least a decade. His inspiration to study labor problems came from Prof. Hoxie of Chicago University. Fine was organizer of the Labor Party of Cook County, Illinois in 1919 and later an organizer of the American Labor Party of Greater New York, and still later Secretary of the Farmer Labor Party of New York and a delegate to the national conventions of labor parties for several years. He ran for the assembly on the Farmer Labor ticket in New York four years ago. He is now a socialist, and specially interested in forming a labor party that would make a united front with anybody—except a Communist.

Contact with formerly militant trade union leaders in the days of 1919-20, when labor parties were growing like mushrooms, leads Fine to admire these amiable men. But they have all since capitulated to the powers of the A. F. of L. in Washington. Only recently Fine's personal hero, John Fitzpatrick, deserted the Brookwood ship when Woll cracked the whip. But association with the more typical old-time labor leader has left the author rather gloomy. He is familiar with the sell-outs of the Berrys and O'Connors, Lewises and Wolls. But, although he pans Daniel De Leon, quoting from his most extreme diatribes, he deals much more gently with the outright crooks and misleaders whom Foster has properly handled in his *Misleaders of Labor*. Fine reserves most of his criticism for the radical groups with whom he has differed and whom he considers more or less crazy. Naturally, he has profound respect for all socialist leaders although some of his quotations covering periods when the socialists were having internal fights are not too complimentary to some of them.

In describing isolated events, in his treatment, for example, of the Non-Partisan League and organizations that do not touch his anti-Communist complex, the author handles his material much more impartially. But on the whole he deals too lightly with causes and the influence of one movement on another.

Whatever defects the book may have, it is clear from a reading of it that labor parties cannot be organized successfully in a vacuum by high-minded lawyers, ministers, social workers or researchers. The organization of the American workers in steel, textile, automobiles, aluminum, meat packing, electrical plants is the primary job. Until the factory workers of this country are organized, labor parties will remain hopelessly sterile, and purely educational. The group of radicals that has its roots deepest in the work of organizing the basic industries will be the group that organizes the first effective and permanent labor-farmer party.

ROBERT DUNN.

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A NEW SCIENCE

Propaganda: The Public Mind in the Making, by Edward L. Bernays. Horace Liveright. $2.50.

In this day of scientific precision, the machinist goes to work with his "mike." It doesn't matter that he gets only 60 cents an hour. The engineers have planned his work and timed the speed of his machine. The micrometer will gauge his work to a tiny ten thousandth of an inch. Like the machinist, the chemist, engineer and the Communist work with scientific accuracy. We live in a world of mathematics and gauges. Steinmetz, Einstein, Ford and Lenin are products of this age. The capitalist develops a Taylor system of efficiency and with revolution accomplished Lenin studies Taylor. Anything that does not measure up to the specifications and needs of the hour is discarded: phonograph for the radio and television; horse for the auto and the aeroplane; socialist for the Communist. Science measures a gadget and a revolution.

In such an age (and it is still in its lusty infancy) the scientist looks into the air we breathe, the food we eat, our body and our mind. He is figuring it all with mathematics and a micrometer to a ten thousandth of an inch. Today, the press agent becomes the public relations counsel—a scientific propagandist. Don't mistake this fellow for the barber turned tonsorial artist. He knows mass psychology and economics. He knows also the value of this knowledge in dollars and cents.

In *Propaganda—The Public Mind in the Making* Bernays attempts to formulate the theory and practice of "the conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses"—for the imperialist owners of the world we live in, of course. This is not a study of science for its own sake. Ivy Lee works for the Standard Oil Company. Bernays served leading industrial organizations in America. Like most scientists he works for a boss. He goes to work with his "mike" like the machinist.

Bernays addresses "Propaganda" to the business man, the church, the school and the politician. Become scientific he urges, do away with inefficiency in propaganda. Make it a science. "Modern propaganda is a consistent, enduring effort to create or shape events to influence the relations of the public to an enterprise, idea or group.

"This practice of creating circumstances and of creating pictures in the minds of millions of persons is very common. Virtually no important undertaking is now carried on without it, whether that enterprise be building a cathedral, endowing a university, marketing a moving picture, floating a large bond issue, or electing a president."

Wars are not conducted in a hit or miss fashion. In the last world war ". . . the manipulators of patriotic opinion made use of the mental cliches and the emotional habits of the public to produce mass reactions against the alleged atrocities, the terror and the tyranny of the enemy. It was only natural, after the war ended, that intelligent persons should ask themselves whether it was not possible to apply a similar technique to the problems of peace."

This fellow ought to know. During the war he was a member of the U. S. Commission of Public Information, in charge of the propaganda material directed to South America. He was with Sisson at the Paris Peace Conference. He was "public relations counsel" to Lithuania and Arabia. He has served as adviser to big business.

Publicity and advertising are coming under the measuring rod of the public relations counsel, because we have reached a new era where both are done on a mass scale. The Dodge Victory Six appears and the news is broadcast on a cost-to-coast hook-up over 47 stations to thirty million people. On the same program are Al Jolson, Will Rogers, Fred Stone and Paul Whiteman at a cost of $25,000. The program is broadcast at a total cost of $60,000 to allow a four minute talk on the new car. More than a press agent is needed here!

"Unfortunately, the methods of our contemporary politicians, in dealing with the public, are as archaic and ineffective as the advertising methods of business in 1900 would be today.

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Be more efficient, Bernays tells them. He is not content with the old method of keeping an ear to the ground as a way of formulating policy. That's out of date. "If one is dealing with a democracy in which the herd and the group follow those whom they recognize as leaders, why should not the young men training for leadership be trained in its technique as well as in its idealism?"

After reading "Propaganda," I'm not ready to give this fellow the sophisticated razzberry because he began as press agent for Caruso, Elsie Ferguson and other stage celebrities; or because he happens to be a nephew of Sigmund Freud. From experience, too, I have learned to have some respect for the efficiency expert. In my department at the Ford factory, time-study men appeared one day. They stood behind us with stop-watches checking every motion we made. We turned out 320 pieces of machine work then. We stalled, we developed an unusual amount of machine trouble, we visited the toilet, we broke tools, we made sure that we did not produce more than 320 pieces. During all this time not a single word was said to us. The time study men simply hovered about us like buzzards with a stop-watch, pad and pencil. A week after they left, the machines were speeded up, we were taught new tricks, and production went to 380 pieces. It went to 520 within two months. It wasn't all at the expense of our hides either.

We ought to watch these fellows. I would advise eveyr revolutionist to read "Propaganda." Believe nothing you read in it, but get that technique. We need it for our own use.

WALT CARMON.

SHANTY IRISH

Shanty Irish, by Jim Tully. A. and C. Boni, N. Y. $2.50.

Jim Tully is an example of the influence of H. L. Mencken on young writers in this country.

If Tully had not lived too long in Hollywood, and had not worshipped the bar-room wisdom of the Bum of Baltimore, he would have been America's greatest writer today.

Tully has a black bitter heart. He has in his heredity the scorn, the heroism and the poetry of generations of Irish rebels. It is a sacred inheritance, but he has been cheated out of it the way a peasant is cheated of his farm by city sharpers.

Tully started like another Jack London. He had been kicked around as a boy, he had done all the dirty work of America, he had been hammered to steel on the road. He knew the life Jack London had known, and began by writing at least one book that told of it honestly.

Then they got him, I mean Hollywood and Mencken. In every book since Beggars of Life there are broad streaks like bacon-fat of the mushy romanticism of Hollywood and the fake literary swagger of Menckenitis.

Shanty Irish, Tully's latest work, is almost ruined by the curse. It is the story of Jim Tully's family, a group of shanty Irish. They are ditch-diggers, fighters, and drinkers, they are hard and fiery with that Irish rebel passion that grew through centuries of famine and that at times is almost insane.

Jim Tully's grandfather dominates the book, a remarkable study of a proletarian that can stand with Gorky's portrait of his own peasant grandmother.

What imagination, what power, what humor, what knowledge in the hard facts of proletarian life, what passion and mastery of technique Jim Tully displays!

He is underestimated in this country. This roughneck has achieved the finest and most dynamic prose style of our generation. I care for it more than any writing I have read in ten years.

But his latest book has no point. Its only tendency, as far as I can discover, is to glorify and romanticize the amount of hard drinking an old Irishman can do. It is simply another one of these foolish peans to the saloon that Mencken has inspired among people who are old enough to know better.

It is not what Tully believes. Deep in his heart he must have other things to say of his grandfather and family, rebel things he was ashamed to say because Mencken and Hollywood might smile at his naive sincerity. Will he ever say them again?

MICHAEL GOLD.

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THE NEW YORK THEATRE

There is a crisis in the New York theatre, thank God. Hokum is a drug on the market; the boobs won't buy tickets; shows are flopping right and left; 15,000 actors are out of work; managers chew their cigars in helpless rage; the scarlet parlors are short of customers.

There are many conferences and discussions. Many wise solutions have been offered. What no one has yet said is that most Broadway shows are tripe, and that people are tired of paying $3.00 and more a seat for the same vapid imbecility the movies offer at 50 cents and a dollar.

Our solution for the crisis is simple: Let that big fraud called the Broadway theatre perish of its own vanity, stupidity and greed.

When the earth is clear of it, something better will come. The real Theatre can never die.

BLACK SHIRT RULE

Making the Fastcist State, by Herbert W. Schneider. Oxford University Press. $5.

It should be stated at once that Mr. Schneider's study of fascism is not the work of an anti-fascist. It should also be stated that Mr. Schneider is not a radical in any sense of the word. But it is equally certain that he is not pro-fascist, and that he attempted in this book to write a philosophical interpretation of present-day Italy with a maximum of impartiality and a minimum of personal argument.

Mr. Schneider's analysis of fascist syndicalism is important for the facts he lists, but utterly unimportant as an account of the capitalistic tendencies of the official Italian labor unions. His study of fascist philosophy is interesting as an illustration of degenerate mental acrobatics, but uninteresting as a diagnosis of bourgeois ideology. What Mr. Schneider's treatise is important for, what it incorporates that merits the attention of every student of fascism, is its authoritative record of fascist activity during the formative period of the movement. Compared to the viciously false books on Mussolini and his henchmen that have recently been published, it is a monument of truth.

It has been said that fascism is a mass movement. Mr. Schneider answers that lie: "In Bologna, Reggio-Emilia and neighboring cities the socialist cooperatives had established practical monopolies in the business of the cities, which threatened to ruin private enterprises and which were almost as oppressive (to the wealthy farmers) as the labor leagues were in agriculture. Fascism's strength therefore lay in the lower middle classes, merchants, whose economic position was exceedingly precarious and whose sentiments were outraged, intellectuals, students and small shopkeepers, but it received both moral and financial support from the big commercial and agrarian corporations, whose private interests dominated the economic life of the entire region and who were most seriously menaced by the peasants' revolt.

"In Venetia, and especially in the newly 'redeemed' territories, fascism had a very special function. In Trieste early in 1919, on the initiative of Captain Francesco Giunta of Florence and Professor Ruggero Conforto, a fascio was founded to combat the Slav minorities who were beginning to organize. Almost immediately on its foundation it attacked the *Sedi Riunite*, a Slav headquarters, and the *Balkan*, the headquarters of the Slav communists."

In Florence the fascists were organized to put down a general revolt which "broke out among Tuscan peasants against a growing tenant system, which was threatening a general revival of feudal tenure and big estates."

So much for the affiliation of the masses with Mussolini.

It has also been stated that Mussolini has held tenaciously to a political ideal, reactionary though it may be. This is true. Mussolini's ideal, from the day he was expelled from the socialist party until last night, has been the acquisition of personal power.

After his expulsion he continued to call himself a socialist, hoping thereby to win the support of the Italian masses. His newspaper, *Il Popolo d'Italia*, called itself a socialist paper. The support that came to him, however, was not from the rank and file. "He began to look about for support wherever he could find it." What he got at first were mostly "white-collar" slaves.

Shortly thereafter, the great idealist Benito Mussolini sold out to the bourgeoisie. Mr. Schneider does not commit himself, but you can draw your own conclusions from the following passage: "The fact that he was practically penniless when he left the *Avanti* coupled with the appearance after only a few weeks of his own full-sized paper, contributed to by a number of very competent writers, gave a certain plausibility to this charge in its most literal meaning."

The march on Rome was followed by the most amazing manouvres in the history of politics. First the Duce angled for the socialist support against the catholics, then for the catholics against the socialists, then a center party against both. He ended up with the catholics, having started life bitterly anticlerical. What actually happened was that Mussolini got the bankers and industrialists behind him, and then decided that with the aid of the pope, he could rule Italy. He succeeded, of course. But for how long? At present Italy seems to be economically stable—with the aid of J. P. Morgan and Andrew Mellon, says Mr. Schneider. This stability won't last forever. What will Benito do when the Italian masses realize how he has framed them with the interantional bankers? B. S.

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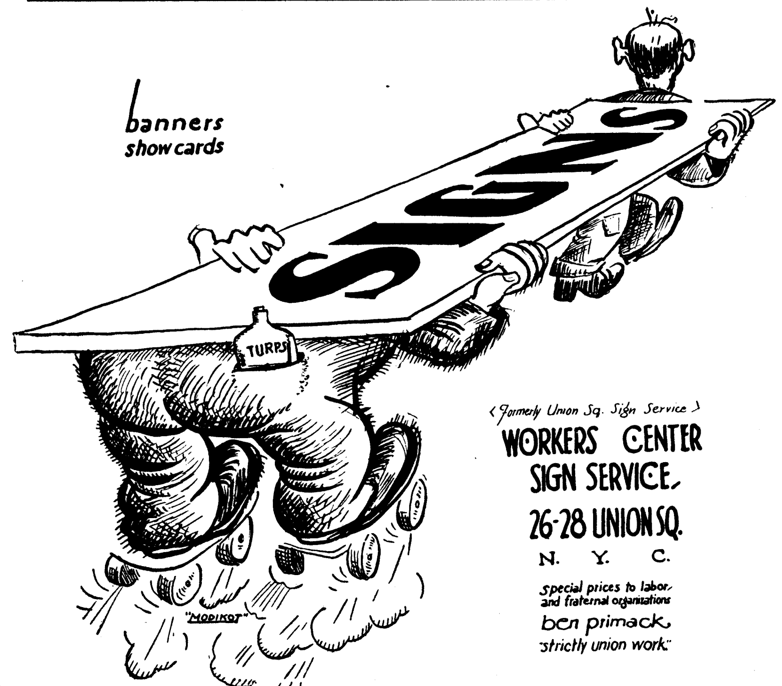

A HOBO'S PROTEST

"And what friends he had! Andrew D. White wrote the preface to one of his books; Arthur Symons the introduction to another."

Your William Edge goes into ecstasy over his Josiah Flynt and recommends him as an extra social prophet.

Social prophet me eye-ball! Josiah's shrivelled soul battened on the spectacle of the migratory humans of his day. Like your college boys gone radical he looked for thrills. They tell that in Russia he once ordered a police raid on a sort of hidden jungle in order to please himself with the sight of human mice scampering from the uniformed cat. Later the biggest railroad in the U. S. hired him to help them suppress the migratories' free transportation. He used to insist on the shacks' oaken stick. Many a rambler got his skull knocked in because of prophet Josiah's social vision and message.

J. F. was a queer thug. In a way he was kind of scientific; the migratory submerged were the insects and rodents he used to pickle in alcohol, cut up and study.

It is natural for this William Edge to romance about Josiah Flynt. He too must be interested in "Social Studies."

Some years ago, when the Hobo Outcry group met in San Francisco in order to consider possibilities of a true migratory workers' organization, we hung two pictures on the wall, those of James Eads How and Josie Flynt. And we voted to put the superscription "Thrill Seeking Louse" over one and "Flea" over the other.

H. GERSON.

New York City

Josiah Flint was not an "extra social prophet." He had no social vision and no message. I did not choose him as the subject of an article because of his stalwart fight in the class struggle. He was, for a brief time, employed by a railroad to track down the men who rode the freights. If Mr. Gerson will do me the justice of re-reading my article, he will find that I censure Josiah Flint as severely, almost, as he censures.

But he was interesting. He led an interesting life and wrote books crammed with vivid detail. He was the first American to reveal the migratory to a bourgeois public. He was a man who knew the hobo and the criminal well enough to ridicule the academic criminologists —Lombroso, for example, whom Flynt particularly detested.

WILLIAM EDGE.

THREE YOUNG WORKERS

We are a trio of boys in the early twenties, who were as conscious of classes when we entered the field of industry, as all other imbecillic 15 per week shipping clerks and delivery boys are. Surrounded by folks and relatives of the most ignorant types of midget-bourgeoisie class. In my case an old bewhiskered father and bewhigged mother, outside of a hypocritic rabbinical uncle and so many other uncles, cousins and immediates who continuously squeeze U. S. currency by slaving in shops and in their little businesses in order to go into "real" business and enslave others. Our companions at the time were no radicals either, not even aware of the world about them, except the latest popular, the latest step, the besmirched "Goils," the sport page and the comic strips. How we happened to disentangle ourselves from this dull and stagnant Americanism sounds like a Salvation Army convert's confession at a revival. We saw the light. We stopped to listen to soap box radicals at one time. Picked up red hot literature at another time. And Union Square. Ah, Union Square! The demonstrations held on its north end helped so much to drag us out of this ignorance imbibed in American school rooms. The patriotism they push down into the youths' heads by force, and the passiveness they call democracy, when workers are fettered by capitalism, which is preached by the entire press. Of course once you begin thinking you can't help reading a radical paper and a fighting magazine, and let me tell you if this militant magazine NEW MASSES will be more and more circulated among the youth, there is much hope for a revolutionary awakening among the young workers.

LESTER EHRLICHMAN.

Bronx, N. Y.

SHE HATES THE NEW MASSES

I resent your magazine. It has filled my mind with bothersome truths that it would be inconvenient for me to acknowledge. The foot prints of your ideas have crossed and recrossed the conventional pattern of my mind, until I can no longer discern the old simple diagram they overlie. If I follow where these suggestions lead me, I shall be led into action that my associates would consider neither good nor fitting. Do you realize that, as an intellectual, I am trustee of the Dignities? Have you no scruples that you thus make restless an honest citizen who enjoys all the comforts and some of the luxuries of our civilization? What have you done to me that now when I pass a flunky, I think: "What nonsense"; when I play with the implements of a broker's office, a voice in me says: "Bunk, Bunk." When I walk from Avenue V to 1 everything within me exclaims: "It is neither reasonable nor right!"

CHARLOTTE WILDER.

Northampton, Mass.

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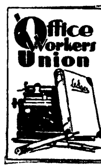

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INTELLECTUALS and REVOLUTION

Letters from
EGMONT ARENS and JOSEPH FREEMAN

Dear Joe Freeman: I want to ask you a question. Didn't you just about miss the point in your review of the honorable professor Pitkin's "The Twilight of the American Mind?" The professor handed you a bomb, and the best use you made of it was to fizzle it out with a sneer at his phrase "superior intelligence." Certainly no one can deny that Pitkin's main thesis is correct. And the conclusion to be drawn from that is that capitalism is doing exactly what Czarism did. It is failing to enlist the "best minds" in its interests. That is very good news for the Revolution, provided you, as a revolutionary tactician, will, like Lenin, know how to direct those intelligences against the common enemy. It is perfectly absurd to suppose that a socety, as highly organized as is ours today, whether capitalistic or communistic, can survive without persistent application of the highest intelligence. Capitalism will break down just as soon as it becomes unintelligent, as Czarism did. And Revolution will triumph whenever, like Leninism, it recognises and uses whatever social ferments are at work for its own ends.

If you will turn to another page in the same issue of the New Masses as your review you will read "Lenin on Art." There is set down only another example of Lenin's amazing power to seize upon whatever social forces could be used for his purpose. There were times of revolutionary preparation when the narcicistic talkers and writers were the only ones who could keep the revolutionary spark glowing. Lenin knew how to enlist them. There were other times, when those who loved to hear only their own voices were in the way of action. Lenin knew as well how to silence them. Just now, here in America, and in all countries where capitalism is still vigorous, intelligent dissenters against capitalism of all shades of opinion are more valuable to future Communistic action than actual members in the Communist party. Instead of sneering at them revolutionary minds ought to go amongst them, and without ever revealing their purpose, draw them imperceptibly further and further left, just as Lenin's agents did time and time again.

Time for sneers and taunts and calling names is when you are ready to arouse the masses to action behind the barricades. That time is not ripe yet, and what makes me sore at your review, and at the general tone of the New Masses is that, for the time being, your attitude is so ineffective. Ineffectiveness is the worst enemy of the revolution. EGMONT ARENS.

Dear Arens:

Perhaps my review did miss the point of Professor Pitkin's book, but it seems to me that the correct conclusion from his observations is not (as you say) that "capitalism is doing exactly what czarism did"; i. e. failing to enlist the "best minds" in its interests. As a matter of fact, American capitalism today *is* enlisting the "best minds" in its interests—if by "best minds" one means people useful to it. The big bankers and industrialists hire not only the ablest lawyers and scientists, from Charles E. Hughes to John B. Watson, but even hire so called labor leaders, like Mathew Woll, to fight its battles against labor. The bulk of American intellectuals are "enlisted" in the service of capital, including the majority of preachers, teachers, engineers, writers, editors, etcetera. The real conclusion from Pitkin's book, I think, is something else. The book voices the complaints of the middle-class intellectual against the effects of mechanisation and trustification under capitalism. These are effects against which the petit bourgeoisie as a whole complains. It is the little businessman who "fights" the trusts; the small proceryman who hates the chain stores; it is they who support anti-trust candidates like La Follette, and it is their children who appreciate Sherwood Anderson's melancholy reflections on the machine-age. Machinery

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everywhere reduces the number of manual workers at a given job and their initiative, and this holds true of the intellectual worker no less than of the manual worker. Perhaps Professor Pitkin's chief complaint is that the centralization of production reduces the number of necessary executives. My review of his book tried to indicate the position of the **middle-class** intellectual, and to imply that his dissatisfaction at present does not take the form of organized revolt against the capitalist system as such.

Professor Pitkin did not hand anybody a "bomb." The observation that machinery and mass-production change the role of the intellectual worker is not original with him; and if you will re-read the review you will see that I do not deny this assertion. On the contrary; I support it with a long paragraph citing an incident out of my own observation. I do, however, differ with Professor Pitkin on other essential points. His use of the terms "superior intelligence" and "best minds" is not scientific description but the expression of an intellectual's class prejudice. My review cites the fact that Professor Pitkin's conception of "best minds" is based on so-called intelligence tests used by psychologists and widely applied to the universities; and that his evidence consists almost entirely of the results of these tests in the Columbia University school of journalism where he teaches. The IQ business, as carried on in the universities, has been questioned even by bourgeois psychologists, who point out that a Zulu chief, unfamiliar with the materials of western civilization, might fail in these tests and yet have ntelligence of a high order applied to the familiar materials of his own civilization. The IQ superstition has furnished a "scientific" basis for racial snobbishness and class arrogance.

You complain that it is "perfectly absurd to suppose that a society, as highly organized as is ours today, whether capitalistic or communistic, can survive without persistent application of the highest intelligence." Of course, such a supposition would be absurd in more ways than you perhaps suspect. Nowhere in my review is such a supposition implied. It is possible to draw such a conclusion from the review only if one shares Professor Pitkin's illusion that the upper crust of the intelligentsia has a monopoly on intelligence. Obviously one ought not to confuse **intelligentsia** with **intelligence.** The term **intelligentsia** is used to describe professional people like doctors, lawyers, engineers, and school teachers, as well as writers, artists, and so on. Professor Pitkin himself uses the term in that sense, placing the "best minds" among college professors, journalists, and statisticians. My review does not attack **intelligence.** It criticizes (by implication) the assumption that a college professor, by merely being a college professor, automatically falls into the category of "best minds." Such an assumption is possible only if you define "best minds" to **mean** college professors, lawyers and the rest. It is like taking alleged Nordic qualities and making them "superior" by definition, and then "concluding" that the Nordics are superior to everyone else.

It is necessary to distinguish not only between the terms **intelligentsia** and **intelligence,** but also between highly paid experts and intellectual day laborers. Whether or not a $100,000 a year corporation lawyer is "innately" more intelligent than a $1500 year member of the Teachers' Federation, I don't know; but it is obvious that they belong to different social classes. I tried to indicate in my review that Professor Pitkin speaks for a group of intellectuals whom he would like to see occupying the higher (i. e. better paid) intellectual posts in bourgeois society.

The role of this type of intellectual in the Russian revolution is familiar to everybody. You are mistaken if you think Lenin sought or found much help among the better paid managers, doctors, lawyers, professors or journalists. If the collapse of czarism and capitalism depended merely on desertion by these elements, as you imply, the workers would never have obtained power. One of the earliest obstacles of the Soviet regime was the sabotage of intellectuals left over in important technical posts from the old regime. The Bolsheviks have a slightly different notion about the distribution of intelligence from Professor Pitkin, and the doctors, lawyers, journalists, and engineers of the old ruling class are being supplanted by young workers and peasants trained in Soviet universities.

It is difficult to make dogmatic predictions about how middle-class intellectuals will act in social crises, except that they are a vascillating element. Some times, as in Germany immediately after the war and during the inflation, they flock to the Communist Party, only to desert it during temporary prosperity; some times, as in Italy, they join the ranks of the fascists. This is partly because intellectuals as such do not form a social class by themselves, but are part of those classes on whom they are dependent for a living, or in which they were brought up, by whose social philosophy they are influenced. The attitude of the intellectuals shifts with changes in the relation of economic classes.

I do not see how you could think Lenin "knew how to enlist" the kind of intellectuals Professor Pitkin discusses. In the article you advise me to read Lenin says explicitly that the "independence of the bourgeois author, the bourgeois artist and actress is merely a pretended independence from the money-bag, from bribery, from being kept." It is only by misreading Lenin's words that one can conclude, as you do, that "just now, here in America, and in all countries where capitalism is still vigorous, intelligent dissenters of all shades of opinion are more valuable to future communistic action than actual members in the Communist Party." I don't know whom you have in mind, but I do know that during the presidential campaign a lot of people who would accept your description as applying to themselves signed petitions for Hoover and Smith.

I am compelled to express my astonishment that you should continually bring Lenin into the discussion in the manner you do. But since you have, it is necessary to point out that Lenin's view was quite different from what you say it was. Throughout Marxian and Leninist literature you will find Professor Pitkin's "best minds" referred to as a reactionary group. One of the chief points of conflict between the bolsheviks and the mensheviks, when they were still in the same party was over this very question of the role of the intellectuals in the revolution. The Mensheviks thought that a

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large number of intellectuals, loosely affiliated with the party (i. e. free of its control) was highly necessary for the proletarian revolution; while Lenin thought it would be dangerous to fill the party with "the professors, high school students, individualists, and the radical youth." Certainly Lenin was the last man in the world to suffer from the illusion that such elements are "more valuable to future communistic action than actual members in the Communist Party." To say this not only misrepresents Lenin, but distorts the facts of history and gives a false picture of class forces.

JOSEPH FREEMAN.

EINSTEIN AND THE NEW MASSES

Dear Mike:

I liked very much your editorial "Go left, young writers!" in the January number. Only, I wish your mathematics were more modern. You know, in these Einsteinian days, the straight line of Euclid no longer exists: it has been replaced by the geodesic line. And the geodestic line, you are aware, follows curved space so that at last it meets itself—comes back where it began.

Now, if your young writer goes left on a geodesic line, sooner or later he must turn up at the right; and finally he will be just where he was. All his motion will have been for nothing. This, indeed, is what has so often taken place in the past, in revolutionary and historic movements. The geodesic line is an accurate symbol to explain their failure to move anything at all.

Would you therefore not amend your admonition to read:

"Young writer, go left and at the same time go **down** . . . down into yourself, in the resources of self-knowledge. Go left and at the same time go **up** . . . up into intellectual and emotional and aesthetic growth."

Thereby, while going left, your man will reach new planes in the sphere of life, and not end where he started: his dream of a new world for all of us will not turn out to be a running-around-a-circle.

Good luck to you, brother, and to the magazine which I read carefully each month and—since it improves—not hopelessly.

WALDO FRANK.

MACHINE ART IS BOURGEOIS

A Communist artist must endow his worker heroes with invincibility. Vanzetti was an example and there are thousands of Vanzettis. The heroes of the working class are like Atlas, carrying the burden of the universe on their shoulders. The worker hero represents the forces of creation. He is the embodiment of the new world order. His voice and his actions are the spiritual and physical declarations of the working masses.

The machine artist as well as the jazz composer are not serving the cause of the working masses, they are the opportunists in the world of art. Mozart composed for a romantic bourgeoisie; the jazz artist composes for a bastard capitalistic generation. Gershwin the jazz composer can work hand in hand with the reactionary White guardist, Damrosch. Lozowick draws pretty machines, still his art is not more "modern" than the art of John Carrol or Georgie O'Keefe. All of them serve the "enlightened" bourgeoisie. The difference between these so-called "modern" artists and those of an older generation can be summed up as: Bourgeois romanticism, versus capitalistic realism.

Heroism will be the everlasting theme of the true artist. The heroic age of the workers is just at the beginning. Not jazz is the workers' music, but martial songs. A long and hard struggle is yet before us. Go among those workers who are warriors and do not let yourself be drowned in slime and sophistication of the petty bourgeoisie.

PAULINE ZUTRINGER.

New York

One way in which a revolutionary can affirm allegiance to his cause is by repudiating that petty bourgeois legacy,, the unsolicited heroization of the worker; another way: by recognizing the paramount importance of machinery and technique in the achievement of the revolution and the functioning of the new sciety.

Incidentally: ar thas its own specific problems of importance to the artist and the worker. People who make flying excursions into sociology and esthetics would do well to remember this.

LOUIS LOZOWICK.

OUR RIVAL THE NATION

Some weeks ago, in his page in the *Nation*, Heywood Broun offered an opinion as to what was wrong with that godly mouthpiece of prosperous liberalism.

He suggested that the *Nation* was too solemn, and that its editor, Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, ought to be taken to a night club occasionally, and shot full of synthetic hell.

Wrong. Sin and gin will not help the *Nation*. Mr. Broun himself has been helped by neither. Tex Guinan has not helped him to courage, or wit, or passion or greatness. A Broadway night club is not a nursery for brave thinking. Mr. Villard might do better if he left off his boiled shirt for a few nights, and panhandled his bed and board along the Bowery.

Mr. Villard needs bitterness, not expensive fun. He has had the latter all of his life. Heywood Broun needs a little iron, too. This country just now badly needs a few bitter men like William Loyd Garrison. It stinks with a well-fed, mellow complacency, the spirit that elected Herbert Hoover.

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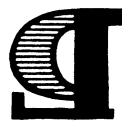

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