

LIBERATOR.

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1922

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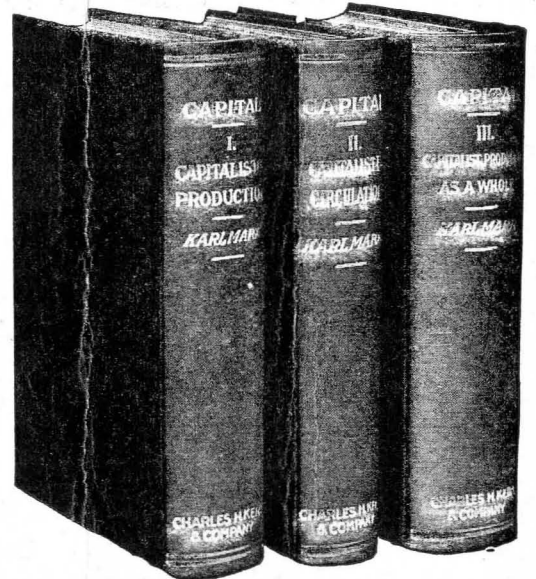


GEOPHER



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Mr. Gompers

THE LIBERATOR

Vol. 5, No. 1 [Serial No. 46]

January, 1922

COMMENT

The Face of Gompers

THE face of Gompers is the face of reality. We give you Boardman Robinson's portrait of it for the New Year, fellow-humanitarians, and bid you paste it on the wall paper of your furnished room, to be stared at every morning before breakfast. It will do you good. Absorbing the iron facts written on that face will make you hard and strong. It will teach you that you are living in America, in the year 1922, and that national progress is impossible until we have solved the problems symbolized by that strange, hard-bitten, practical, sardonic fiery countenance.

The hope of America is in the labor movement, and the main part of the labor movement of America is in the A. F. of L. It is hateful to admit this fact, as hateful as it was to the Victorian divines to admit that an Asiatic monkey was the father of the human race and not Adam. But it is so. Admit it and gird your loins and become stronger for the fray.

Until the A. F. of L. is lifted out of its rut nothing great can happen here. There will be strike after strike, wage-cuts and wage-gains, open shop versus closed shop, the endless struggle on the part of labor to make wage-slavery bearable, "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." Gompers is not an individual despot ruling by whim; he and his corrupt machine hold power because they express the puzzled, halting mind of the American worker. The everyday struggle, bloody and endless, to maintain merely the unions, collective bargaining and a living wage, has absorbed all of the vitality of the American working-class. The administration of this great corporation in its ordinary business has swamped the leadership, and made it a bureaucracy of tired and disillusioned job-holders and wretched, disillusioned grafters. Strong and revolutionary-minded men get jobs in the A. F. of L. and in three or four years are as "practical" as Brindell and Gompers and James Duncan. The nose of the A. F. of L. has been held too close to the grindstone, and its leaders have become as incapable of thinking new thoughts as the average business man is incapable of thinking them. That is their real crime. And it is our task, it seems to me, to remain a part of the A. F. of L. (where it is possible) and to propagate the new thoughts and the new tactics of labor-industrial unionism, labor solidarity and unity, strikes for increasing control of the industry by the workers, not strikes for mere wages.

We must prove to the workers that these are not mere modes of idealism, but are the scientific tools that supersede

the old labor tactics as the harvesting machine has superseded the sickle of the peasant. We must put our brains into the technique of labor organization and tactics; we must solve specific problems and situations.

The left wing must stop dreaming of what is happening in Russia and Italy and Germany; we are living in America. Paste the face of Gompers on your wall, fellow-citizens of the world, and remember every morning that our brains must match the brains of this ruthless old lion, and that workers are realists and follow Gompers only because they think he guarantees them a job and a living wage. We must prove to them that he is inefficient and old-fashioned, and that despite all his militancy and vigor, he is fighting for them with weapons of bronze when there are weapons of fine steel at hand.

The face of Gompers is the face of reality in America, as the face of the Czar was the face of reality in Russia. America, although the richest, is the most socially backward nation in the world because the labor movement is backward. In America it is Gompers that must first be met and overthrown—as in Russia it was the Czar—before the great change can begin.

So look at the Great Stone Face every morning, dear fellow-worker, and remember how long the Czar and his forefathers reigned, and how their jobs seemed cinched for eternity, and what finally happened to the regal line. Happy New Year!

MICHAEL GOLD.

As to Discrimination

IN an editorial last month I accused the yellow socialists of a lack of intellectual discrimination. I said that they never could distinguish the principles upon which we split from them and therefore we ought not to be influenced by their comments, either for or against our policies. In reply an editorial writer in the New York Call advises the Communists not to take me very seriously. "Within a few years," he says, "the incomparable Max has successively championed, with about equal fervor and lack of saving qualification, Woodrow Wilson, the Soviet methods in Russia, and the American Communist movement. In turn Max has duly repudiated all these."

In that brief remark are contained three examples of the incapacity for intellectual discrimination of which I accused the yellow socialists:

- (1) I never championed Woodrow Wilson.
- (2) I never repudiated the Soviet methods in Russia.
- (3) I never repudiated the American Communist movement.

I mistook Wilson for a strong and extraordinarily able

politician of progressive capitalism — capable of leading it in the establishment of an international federation to prevent war. I conceived of war — as practically all of us did at the break-up of the second international — as wholly detrimental to the Socialist movement. And I believed, as I believe now, that progressive capitalism may take this political step to abolish war or reduce its frequency. On the basis of those opinions I said in 1916 that it would be a good thing for the working-class if Wilson were elected. And in 1918, when Wilson had explicitly advocated a League of Nations, and had moreover welcomed the Bolshevik government and prevented Japan from invading its territory—that is, at the height of his popularity with socialists the world over, the most extreme thing I said of his political importance was that he had “ventured into a position of almost militant leadership” of the labor parties of the world “for the purposes of war and peace.”

I underline the qualification because I repeated it twice in the same article. That is what the *Call* describes as championing Woodrow Wilson without saving qualification.

It was an error both in judgment of Wilson's ability, and in understanding the relation between the revolutionary movement and the movement for a capitalist international. But it was not an abandonment of the revolutionary movement. It was not an abatement of my loyalty to the principle of the class-struggle. Indeed as I look back I would rather have my record in that campaign of 1916 than the record of the majority of American Socialists, who endorsed, without a protest, Allan L. Benson as a leader of the American working class—not for the purposes of war and peace—but for the purposes of Social Revolution.

As to the statement that I “repudiated the Soviet Methods in Russia,” it is simply a false statement. I pointed out the fact that an underground party has a different status in a bourgeois democracy from what it had under the Czar. An underground party is not the essence of “Soviet methods in Russia,” nor even a part of the essence of them. It would not take much intellectual discrimination to see that.

And the statement that I “repudiated the American Communist Movement,” is also a false statement. I took my stand against an “Infantile Left” movement or group within the American movement, which I believed was wrecking it. I signified in advance my adherence to the call for a convention to organize “The Workers' Party of America,” a call that is signed by the American Labor Alliance, and its affiliated organizations—The Finnish Socialist Federation, the Hungarian Workers' Federation, the Italian Workers' Federation, the Jewish Workers' Federation—and also by the Workers' Council of the United States, The Jewish Socialist Federation, and the Workers' Educational Association.

The convention is to be held in New York December 23-26, and it seems to me to offer hope of the formation of a revolutionary party adapted to American conditions, and capable of taking root in the American working class.

If the *New York Call's* editorial writer has not enough brains to discriminate between an adherence to this plan and a repudiation of the American Communist Movement, I can only say again that the communists ought not to be influenced by his comments one way or the other.

MAX EASTMAN.

What is Social Equality

NO speech uttered in the past decade on the Negro question in America has created such nation-wide comment as that of President Harding recently at Birmingham in which he declared that there must be complete economic, political, educational and industrial equality between white and colored people in the United States, but there must and can never be any “social equality.” “Men of both races may well stand uncompromisingly,” he said, “against every suggestion of social equality.”

There can be no objection raised to many of the utterances of Mr. Harding on that occasion. Much credit is due him for daring to say them in the South. The one point on which intelligent Americans will question his wisdom is the dragging in of that Southern shibboleth which has been used for a half-century to cover countless lynchings, the robbery and exploitation of nine million Negroes through the peonage system, the nullification to all practical intents and purposes of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution, and the denial of common justice to Negroes in the South. That weapon which the South has used so effectively, especially in hoodwinking and gulling the North, is the charge that any Negro who attempts to better his own condition or that of his race is seeking to place himself as a social equal with the white people of that community.

But what is this thing called social equality? Herbert J. Seligmann, in his able analysis of the race question, “The Negro Faces America,” says:

“What does the white American mean by social equality? To take the words at their face value, one would suppose he meant association of colored and white persons in the home, personal intercourse without regard to race. In practice the denial of social equality is not confined to personal relations, but includes civil procedure. The socially inferior Negro is exploited on the farm because white lawyers will not take his case against white planters. As soon as the bar of social inferiority is broken down the Negro threatens the white man with competition. . . . Every demand for common justice for the Negro, that he be treated as a human being, if not as a United States citizen, can be and is met with the retort that the demand is for social equality. Instantly every chord of jealousy and hatred vibrates among certain classes of whites—and in the resulting atmosphere of unreasoning fury even the most moderate proposals for the betterment of race relations takes on the aspect of impossibility. By the almost universal admission of white men and white newspapers, denial of social equality does not mean what the words imply. It means that Negroes cannot obtain justice in many Southern courts; it means that they cannot obtain decent education, accommodation in public places and on public carriers; it means that every means is used to force home their helplessness by insult, which, if it is resisted, will be followed by the administration of the torch or the hempen rope or the bullet.”

And that is just what is done. They would have you believe that if there was not this tiresome repetition of talk about social equality, the very foundation stones of white civilization in the South would crumble. The question reduced to its simplest terms is somewhat as follows. No law can ever be enforced to keep two persons from mutual association, if they find in each other qualities, whether mental or physical, which attract each other. No law can

be enforced which will compel two persons to associate together, if such association is distasteful to either or both of them. If John Jones does not want Henry Smith to enter his home, there is no way for Smith to enter except as a burglar, and then Jones has the right to use physical means to protect his home. Again, if Mary Robinson does not wish to marry James Brown, there is no way for Brown to force his attentions on her, unless he takes her by violence.

In another portion of his speech Mr. Harding quoted Mr. F. D. Lugard and endorsed Mr. Lugard's recommendation that "each race must preserve its own race purity and race pride." One wonders how Messrs. Lugard and Harding propose for colored men to "preserve race purity" in many small towns and rural communities of the South where any Negro is subject to lynching who attempts to interfere with a white man of the community seeking to satisfy his carnal instincts on a colored woman. Such a town, for example, as Milan, Telfair County, Georgia, where on May 24, 1919, Berry Washington, a colored man of seventy-two years, was brutally lynched because he shot two intoxicated white men who were attempting to batter down the door of the home of a colored widow and criminally assault her two comely daughters. If any person doubts this story, I refer him to Case Number One of Governor Hugh M. Dorsey's recent pamphlet, "The Negro In Georgia," which can be obtained from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Or, to quote again from Governor Dorsey's pamphlet (Case Number 126):

"Two Negro women and a man, the nephew of one of the women, lived together. Whites drove the man away and debauched the women. The men were prosecuted and made to *pay a small fine.*"

The words are Governor Dorsey's. The italics are mine. Need I say what would have been the results had the races of the parties involved been reversed. Yet these things happened in the South, the habitat of champions of race purity, of white supremacy and of opposition to social equality. Perhaps these doughty Sir Galahads will explain how they furiously repudiate any thought of racial intermingling, and at the same time the presence of four million mulattoes among the eleven million Negroes of America. What, after all, does social equality mean? Is it social equality if a colored woman bears a white man's child? Or is it social equality if that mother wants to ride in the same railroad coach with the father of her child?

There are certain inescapable facts that President Harding, the South, and all of America must face, sooner or later. First, the Negro is in America to stay. Second, there will never be peace nor even the betterment of race relations until there is complete economic, political, educational, and industrial equality between the races, as far as is humanly possible. Third, there can never be economic, political, educational and industrial equality without potential social equality.

Does this mean that any colored man can force his way into any white man's home and demand of the latter that he allow the colored man to marry his daughter? Not by any means, nor does the converse follow. The right of any given individual to choose his social intimates must and always will remain a matter of individual choice. It does mean definitely, however, that bars to the progress of colored men and women towards the highest development must be removed.

WALTER F. WHITE.

The Seattle Insurgents

IN Seattle we had become the envy of the country. Visitors who came to us opened their speeches with sincere congratulations. Our craft divisions were being overcome. We were the fear of the Gompersian hierarchy. We had maintained for four days a general strike which left little to be desired in the way of solidarity. We had a successful daily newspaper. We attained a great height. But we have sustained a great fall.

All our blood poisons came to a head in the management of the labor daily, *The Seattle Union Record*. Let other labor communities mark well our troubles and the ways we are taking to do something about it.

We were paying Editor Ault three thousand dollars a year, an almost unlimited expense account, and allowing him a free hand in the employment of assistants, and we simply supposed that he was putting in the time on the paper for which he was paid. He never asked us for more, and all went merrily enough until the summer of 1920, when we were suddenly aroused to find that Mr. Ault was not editing the paper at all but was up to his eyebrows in financial and exploitation schemes and sinking deeper. And involved with him we found practically every other leader in control of the paper and of the Seattle labor movement. Mr. Ault's business on the paper seemed to be merely to see to it that his schemes and his financial associates received regular and favorable publicity by way of aiding and encouraging Labor's enterprises! All were interlocked with each other and with outside operators, as officers and directors of capitalist corporations, including banks, finance, stock brokerage, automobiles, theaters and land speculations.

The demoralization is complete. Faith is destroyed. What was the splendid Seattle labor movement is gone. The capitalists, employers retaining union memberships, and the reactionary job-control organizations are in the saddle. They have answered us in true capitalist form. They announced that the time had come to clean out the "reds," and the outside capitalist and employers joined them. The paper is now almost frankly a business man's daily.

What are we doing about it? The delegates in the Central Labor Council, at first a bare majority who supported the investigating committee's report, formed a caucus which at once became known as the "Committee of One Hundred." These were marked for such vengeance as the labor-capitalists could wreak upon them. But we have held on and for a time groped about in the dark for a way to get at our problems. We have formed a permanent organization, adopted a preamble of principles and enlarged our membership to include all members of organized labor willing to subscribe to it. We are searching out the progressive and radical elements in all local unions and appointing caucus leaders whom we call "captains." These are charged with the duty of propagating the radical sentiment in their separate locals, reporting to and taking instructions from the central caucus or Committee of One Hundred.

Through this committee, which in reality is an expression of rank and file insurgency, we have set our faces hard against secessionist activities, urging radicals to stand their ground and do battle, and that local unions retain their affiliations unless a mass movement should develop when all should go out together.

BRUCE ROGERS.

The Wheels of Injustice

DURING the war the camouflage corps in Congress passed what was known as the Lever act, a law designed to stop profiteering. The masses were beginning to fret against the pot-bellied patriots who were coining the blood of sacrifice into Rolls-Royce cars, and so the Congress passed this law. They had to. The law was never enforced, except against a few insignificant speculators who could not pay big legal fees. About two months ago it was repealed, all but a little amendment that had been tacked on it at the last moment. This amendment was aimed at union labor, and provided severe penalties for anyone conspiring to stop the production of war materials. It is under this amendment that James P. Cannon and Charles Baker, two members of the Communist Labor Party, are to be tried next month in Kansas City, Mo. Their offence was that they made speeches and distributed literature to the Kansas miners during the general strike of 1919. It was the first case in which Communists had been arrested for going into a strike area and performing definitely industrial propaganda. That is why it is important, besides the fact that this trial is a savage bit of irony on the part of those impartial statesmen who administer the State for the common good. Capitalist offences are quickly forgotten, but the working-class protest is never forgiven by the law-makers.

Cannon is one of the best men in the American revolutionary movement, a clear-headed, shrewd, brave, practical man, who must be kept out of prison for the large and necessary work he has been doing outside. The enemy must not be allowed to capture him. We must do what we can to keep him where he is. Watch this case in Kansas City next month; it is important; do all you can to block the wheels of injustice.

MICHAEL GOLD.

The American Type

THE best critical reviews and comments on John Dos Passos' "Three Soldiers"* insisted that the book was intrinsically, the protest of youth against war. And it is a fine tribute to the author's achievement that Americans of all sorts of opinions who cherish some hate of war, should join the large chorus of praise for his work. One passes from reviews and conversations to the book itself with the expectation of finding a convincing and artistic argument against war's ugliness, a story possessing the force, passion and sharp vividness of Siegfried Sassoon's war poetry, and one is not disappointed. But the book is very much more than that. For many years American literary voices have been crying out for real, virile American types in American fiction. And now a young author who feels life to the very marrow comes along and paints the genuine types with universal truth, and the notices tell us it is a great book of protest and that these types are "products of the war."

Essentially, however, these types are not "products of the war," although the three soldiers are sharply silhouetted against its gray background. Dos Passos might have created them whether American Business had been forced to fight or not. He could have made his three men loom out of other backgrounds more characteristically American, such as an Electoral Campaign, a Lynching League, a Steel Strike or an American Legion convention. All that the author needed to let himself go and create, was—the most striking thing lacking in the vast rich desert of American life—a large and intimate contact. The war and conscription gave him his opportunity and he gave us "Three Soldiers."

As this post-war period is naturally an era of excessive sentimentalism and hypocrisy it is easy to understand our literary intellectuals getting soft-headed over Fuselli's and Chrisfield's smash under the machinery of war. The author has etched them in truth and with sympathy, but these two would not be very different against any other machinery of a state whose energy is organized to make money on a vast scale to the exclusion of every individual and social ideal of man. Whoever has been up against the granite of our industrial life knows Fuselli, the foreigner, who apparently does not want to do his fellow workers dirty, but connives at every point and every chance to gain something for himself only at their expense. The wobblies call his sort the pace-maker. And everybody between Key West and Puget Sound should recognize Chrisfield from Indiana, who stands out clear as the highest composite type of the United States

* *Three Soldiers*, by John Dos Passos—Doran.



John Barber.

Waiting-room

civilization. A strong, sentimental ape-man who refuses to use his intellect under any circumstances and touches everything that is fine in civilized life, friendship, sex, duty, with the hand of the brute. In him is embodied the new war-strengthened America that means to trample on all the cultural values of life, in the West Indies, the Philippines, Europe and the East, armed with Yankee bluff and money-power. He is the terrible vital soul of lynching, mob chivalry, the posse, rough-house movies, Billy Sundayism, strike-breaking firms, state constabularies, election-campaign thugs, the American Legion, pulpit pimps, the Hearst headlines, the Trusts and Wall Street. Of such is Chrisfield, a man who carries a little hate about with him like a pocketknife, and never takes an analyzing look at the thing, but is led on by it to murder a comrade-in-arms, one of his wretched kind, who was helpless, wounded from the enemy's action.

But in contrast to him and of the real aristocracy of life is Andrews, the private and musician, who deeply hates the military machine that destroys manhood. He loathes the cringing and all the low things that a man must do to get something material. He hates, for himself and all the world of unfortunates. And he pities, too, the Fusellis and the Chrisfields. He also nurses original social ideas, but they are as yet, like the struggles of classes in this rapidly fermenting country, not clearly defined.

Andrews is also an American type—a little ripple on the triumphant waves of Chrisfields. The author pursues him relentlessly but lovingly to his harsh end in the army. But we breathe no final and fatal sigh over him as we do over Fuselli and Chrisfield. He is not broken and dead to the finer gestures of life as they. He is the American type that inspires us to a note of hope.

CLAUDE MCKAY.

Lament

I AM a Negro Woman.

Through my veins runs the rebellious blood of a mother who once beat her singing drums under the hot skies of Africa.

My body is toil-scarred, and my hands are gnarled and swollen from the never-ending drudgery of the wash tub.

My mate is as strong as the oxen in the fields and as tender.

I have known the sorrows of Mary, Mother of Christ. One bitter, black night my son, my first born, was torn from my arms by a band of ghostly, hooded riders and burned alive at the stake.

The soft summer air is sweet with pink honeysuckle, but its fresh perfume brings no joy to me. My nostrils are filled with the unforgettable stench of burning human flesh.

I look up from my wash tub and watch the cloud-curdled sky. But I see no beauty there, for I have also watched the blue spirals of smoke curling upward from the charred body of my son.

My daughter is coarse and ignorant because of lack of school advantages. But she is a comely Negro girl, therefore the lawful prey of all men. And I grow cold with dread when I look into her eyes, for their deep prisoned secrets.

It is because of these things that my heart has become a sorrow-blasted wound, with stumps of raw, bleeding nerves.

Oh God! If death indeed brings peace and forgetfulness, then I long for death!

Daytie Randle.

Announcement

THE friends of the Liberator have responded generously to the appeal of the Editors printed in last month's issue. We have been enabled to bring out the present issue and with the proceeds of the ball we hope to bring out another issue.

Our main problem remains unsolved. We must find a way for guaranteeing the life of the Liberator, year in and year out, through sun and storm. Our estimated deficit is \$6,000 a year. One way of meeting this would be to have our friends organize sustaining groups who would pledge enough every year to carry us through.

What do you think, readers and friends? Can you do this? Let us hear from you.

Six hundred loyal readers who give us each \$10 a year out of their earnings would mean a Liberator forever.

We are working on this scheme and other schemes of which we will tell you next month. Of one thing be certain: the Liberator will not go under. It means too much to its readers. The letters we have received in great quantities, touching and humble and beautiful, inspire us to the highest faith that this magazine will not stop in its fight for the better world we all want.

Here are a few of the letters:

"I am a poor man—have five dear children just coming up, but I must certainly help you all I can—it is people like you who make my life worth living. Hope you understand my circumstances, and why I can't give more."
Baltimore, Md.

I. G.

"Although I am a confirmed and irreconcilable Tory, Saleonist, Low-brow, Wrong-thinker and Backward-looker, I, none the less, hope that your 'organ of the deepest social hope' will see its way to accepting the enclosed Ten Dollars from me. I earn my living by denouncing radicals and 'saving' America from them. If the radicals now go out of existence I'll be out of a job, and, as you know, these are bad times to have to seek new employment."
ANONYMOUS.

"I am sending what I can. Editors, don't be discouraged, the comrades are back of you one and all. Stick to the wheel—a favorable wind will yet save the day."
Schenectady, N. Y.

S. P. S.

"I am sending a dollar—which is the best I can do, being myself unemployed about six months during the past year. I would deeply regret to see such a magazine of enlightenment and progress as the Liberator die."
Brooklyn, N. Y.

J. L.

"Here is a hundred dollars—I am a bourgeois, and can spare it. I will give more when necessary—my conscience hurts and I want to remove some of the taint off my unearned increment. I hate to think people are starving in America, and I know no better way of helping them now and for the future than by helping the radical propaganda. You are such a young and brilliant and sincere crowd on the Liberator—your work counts."
Chicago, Ill.

S. M.

THE LIBERATOR

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Sacco and Vanzetti in Paris

By Ida O'Neil

GARDE republicaine in helmet and cuirass. Cavalry, infantry—soldiers, soldiers. The streets that turn about the Arch are thick with them. They stretch away to the East and South; regiments stock arms in the square of the Trocadero and the Place Vendome. Never since the days of the 1920 railroad strike has there been such a display of horizon blue.

Waves of police on the Avenue de la Grande Armee. A creeping barrage of gendarmes carry forward the crowd as fast as it comes out from the subway stations, pushing it away from the Etoile, where the demonstration was to have rallied, and down the broad avenue to the fortifications. "Circulez, circulez!" shout the policemen. Swept along with the throng we are caught in the eddy that swirls about the Porte Maillot. Three times we turn about the gates before we succeed in forcing our way back into the Avenue Malakoff. There we find ourselves face to face with a formidable barrier of troops.

They look dangerous enough, drawn up in battle line across the asphalt, but the under-officer in command lets us pass after a glance at our press-cards. Farther down the street my companion stops to light a cigarette and exchange a word with an affable gendarme. "Got a few lemons (hand grenades) in there?" he inquires, tapping the policeman's knapsack with an inquisitive forefinger. The gendarme nods. "Yes—and we'll use them, too, if there is any trouble," he explains. We would like to ask him about machine-guns, for rumor has it that several hundred have been stationed in the vicinity, but just then our policeman catches sight of a man wearing a cap who is following in our footsteps, and he dashes off shouting the French equivalent of "Get-the-hell-out-of-here!" The man, very evidently a workman, is hustled away towards the avenue we have just left. "If there were not so many Sunday promenaders," muttered a gendarme beside us, "we'd give those fellows a lesson they'd not forget!"

In the meantime ten thousand manifestants have gathered in the square beyond the Porte Maillot. There is a hurried consultation on the part of the leaders. A demonstration before the American embassy is not to be thought of. Thousands of armed guards bar the way. "Ours is a peaceful gathering," says Marcel Cachin. "This is no time for violence." It is decided to hold the meeting in the socialist suburb of Levallois. The crowd moves off in orderly fashion, a long procession, and ten thousand throats send up a shout that can be heard blocks away . . . in the rue Tilsit and the Avenue Kleber.

"Justice et liberte! Vive Sacco et Vanzetti!"

The campaign for the liberation of Sacco and Vanzetti was launched last September in Paris. L'Humanite, with an editorial on the Sacco-Vanzetti trial gave the rallying cry.

Immediately all the radical organizations responded—the communist party, the trade-unions, veterans of the great war. A committee composed of representatives from the various associations drew up a plan of action. Five Paris newspapers published series of articles dealing with the affair. Meetings were organized throughout France. Orators toured the country explaining to large audiences everywhere the methods of American justice. Brest, Lyons, St. Etienne, Marseilles, scores of French towns echoed to the slogan: "Justice and liberty!"

Hundreds of letters came to the American ambassador and to the consul: protests, entreaties, resolutions, no threats, however, according to the statement made by the secretary of the embassy on the day following the incident. In so far as the bombs are concerned—one was thrown at the Salle Wagram, another found under a park bench; and their somewhat paradoxical appearance at demonstrations otherwise peaceful gave rise to various conjectures. . . . Certain Frenchmen maintain that their origin was similar to that of the Palmer bombs. In all events they furnished a plausible excuse for mobilizing thousands of police and soldiers for the two most important demonstrations in Paris.

In the past three weeks nearly every ward in the capital has had its Sacco-Vanzetti meeting. The meeting in the Salle Wagram which preceded the demonstration that was to have taken place before the American embassy brought out eight thousand Parisians.

The hall was crowded to the doors. An overflow meeting was held in the basement of the building, from which hundreds were turned away. The bomb was thrown as the first group of manifestants came out from the hall. In the confusion that followed only the presence of mind of the crowd itself averted a panic. No one left the hall until nearly half an hour later. The meeting broke up in orderly fashion and without further incident.

The Sacco-Vanzetti trial has given liberal France an entirely new insight into conditions in America. "That never could happen here," I heard a metal-worker say the other day. "We may have lost much of our personal liberty, but the tradition remains. We even had to acquit the men accused in last spring's conspiracy case."

"America, your democracy is a lie!" were the words of the principal speaker at the Wagram meeting. Not only the "Red" Left but the liberal center has taken up the cry. The "Ligue des droits de l'homme" has issued a statement protesting against so "gross a violation of individual liberty." The Progres Civiques would like to know whether in the republic of today men must die for their ideas. An appeal for pardon sent to President Harding is signed by Romain Rolland, Henri Barbusse and Anatole France. Anatole France himself is sending through the Nation an appeal to the American people.

Today many thousands of the workers and thinkers of France are shouting across the Atlantic the words of a cartoon that appeared in yesterday's Humanite.

"Hey you, Liberty over there—free Sacco and Vanzetti or come down off your pedestal!"

What will be America's answer?

French Civilization in Berlin

THERE is perhaps not another street in the world so crowded with prostitutes, female and male, as the Friederichstrasse, in Berlin, A.D. 1921.

But yesterday something exceptional in the Friederichstrasse display hit my eye. In one of the cafe doorways stood two young women—soliciting. One of them was quite the regular thing; the other was pregnant, looked as if her time was very nearly come. She seemed in fairly good health; her face had that full ruddy look of health, of ripeness, that so many women get at this period of their lives. This young woman swung a handbag in the regular manner. She wore a short skirt, that had once hung down evenly about her knees, but was now pulled up in front by the distended stomach.

I stopped and stared at her with amazement scribbled all over my face.

“Nu, lieber willst du mit gehen—?”

I fled.

About an hour later when I passed this point again, the young women engaged in conversation with a man.

He was about forty-five, had his hair shaved off the back and top of his head in the regular German style, leaving a crest of bristly hair in front and revealing the full ugliness of a bull neck and three rolls of fat bulging just above the collar.

It seemed evident that a bargain was being made. I caught “Nu wenigstens ein Hunderter,” and his protest. But finally they went off arm in arm.

I thought of rather austere Moscow, where, at any rate, in theory, motherhood had become the sacred care of the state, and where this dirty, bag-swinging street prostitution had been pretty well wiped out.

* * * * *

The above was written in Berlin some months ago. I sent a copy at the time to a hundred per cent American friend of mine with the idea of making him realize what he and the rest of his gang had done to Europe by putting it under French bourgeois rule.

But the only effect of my efforts was a horrified letter which I received some weeks later saying that he had carefully burnt up the Friederichstrasse sketch because it certainly was not worthy of my better self and that I would regret it later on!

My friend was not worried by the fact that there was a terrible truth; he wanted merely to have it hushed up as inartistic.

HENRY G. ALSBERG.

Joseph Plunkett

May 4th, 1916.

HE was a dreamer, that I know,
His eyes were fixed on distant stars,
He had no talent with the sword,
He was no worshipper of Mars,
He was a scholar, loving books,
Of gentle and of humble mien,
And yet the crimson of his blood
Was shed to nourish Erin's green;
He was so young and yet so brave,
So eager in the fearful strife,
So poor in poor things, rich in great,
The gift he gave was Love and Life!

James Waldo Fawcett.



Balfour in Berlin

Balfour: “We grieve for the (British) dead but we don't forget.”



Borden on Robinson

Balfour: "We grieve for the (British) dead but we don't forget."

At the Gates of Tombs

CVILIZATIONS are set up and knocked down
the same as pins in a bowling alley.

Civilizations get into the garbage wagons
and are hauled away the same as potato
peelings or any pot scrapings.

Civilizations, all the work of the artists,
inventors, dreamers of work and genius,
go to the dumps one by one.

Be silent about it; since at the gates of tombs
silence is a gift, be silent; since at the epitaphs
written in the air, since at the swan songs hung in
the air, silence is a gift, be silent; forget it.

If any fool, babbler, gabby mouth, stand up and say:
Let us make a civilization where the sacred and
beautiful things of toil and genius shall last—

If any such noisy gazook stands up and makes himself
heard—put him out—tie a can on him—lock him up
in Leavenworth—shackle him in the Atlanta hoosegow
—let him eat from the tin dishes at Sing Sing—
slew him in as a lifer at San Quentin.

It is the law; as a civilization dies and goes down
to eat ashes along with all other dead civilizations
it is the law all dirty wild dreamers die first—
gag 'em, lock 'em up, get 'em bumped off.

And since at the gates of tombs silence is a gift,
be silent about it, yes, be silent—forget it.

Carl Sandburg.

In You

IN you, desire is not a maddened thing
That crashes terribly across your breast,
And screams along your throat, destroying fear,
And shattering the lilies of your rest. . . .

In you, desire is but a timid bird
That sits upon the wall of hope and sings
Of old-rose pleasures; and if passion comes
Too near, it flies away on fainting wings.

Alan Breese.



From a Cut by Ilonka Karasz.

Sing, Cornbelt Men!

SING, tramp; sing, cornbelt men; sing, young boys, sing—
Of the false front, flat, monotonous towns,
Sing of the smell in the hardware stores,
Sing of the midnight mail train roars,
Sing of the mud on the scooped-out shores of the artificial
ponds.

Sing, tramp; sing, cornbelt men! sing, boys, sing—
Of the new street, wind-kissed poplar leaves,
Of the hearty sweat beneath men's sleeves,
Of the shimmering dance which the noonday weaves above
the railroad dykes.

Sing, tramp; sing, cornbelt men; sing, boys, sing—
How the windstorm carries the northbound geese,
How the eastbound, westbound trains increase,
How the ocean cornfields whisper peace over undulating
sloughs.

Sing, boys; sing, cornbelt men; sing, tramp, sing—
The horizonless view past the red caboose,
The horizonless view from a calaboose,
The horizonless flight of a soul let loose with nothing to do
till to-morrow.

Sing, tramp; sing, cornbelt men; sing, young boys, shout!
Shout like the barker at a fairground show,
Shout with the pains of things that grow,
Shout with a team voice, "Yo, heave, ho!" for the building
on the prairies.

Sherwood Trask.

Baal—Moloch

WE who are grown for sacrificial wine
And bread, find beauty in our slaughter-fold.
The morning sun regilding the dear gold
Of your uplifted head, could hardly shine
Brighter in Phoebus' home; the pulley line
That knits us to our neighbors, could not hold
Whiter wash if Nausicaa of old
Had beaten it. No, not for Greece I pine,
Nor Italy, nor any otherwhere
Than this my country. Not geography
Betrays us — dying, let us still be just;
This land, like any other land, is fair;
The monster is this blasted century
That grinds the young to shapeless golden dust.

Florence Tanenbaum.

Eternal Recurrence

I SHALL come back, by God, even though my sons,
Denying me before the universe,
Should all be Baptist ministers or worse,
For countless generations, while time runs
Its spiral course. And I shall wait, meanwhile
Letting the semi-conscious aeons roll
Without my premature, prepotent soul,
And my faith-keeping skeleton will smile
Over a progeny that's so unwise;
Till, some fine day, I shall again be born,
Descendant of myself, splendid with scorn,
Weary of being dead, and proudly rise,
And find—perhaps—by then, humanity
More worthy of a nobleman like me.

Rolfe Humphries.



From a Cut by Ilonka Karasz.



India Welcomes the Prince of Wales

On to Harding, Then Home Again

By Michael Gold

Drawings by William Gropper

AS everyone knows, I had been out of touch with the pestilential world of humanity for about a month before the disarmament conference opened. The world had bruised me sorely; a lovely feminist had spurned my offer to be her complete guardian; three magazine editors and a prominent theatrical producer had insulted my genius with rejection slips; my landlady had waylaid me on the stairs at least twice, and in a mercenary fashion had demanded the rent for her vile, cold, dark, ill-smelling hall bedroom.

Worst of all, I was becoming discouraged about Progress. My schemes for a world-state, my plans for a beautiful era of brotherhood, communism and universal joy were still unfulfilled. The masses would not listen; it was as if my years of preaching had been flung away like dirty dish-water.

I had despaired. I had renounced my Bolshevism, given up my tenderness for the world of humble men and women, and after slaying my conscience and morals I had gone over completely to the pagans. I bought several numbers of the *Little Review* and the *Dial*, and soaked myself in Art. For a week I meditated and read, and then, entirely emancipated from my former character, I went out and killed an amiable old man in a silk hat whom I found wandering in poetic solitude through the canyons of Wall Street one dark night under a clouded moon.

He had \$245,678 in bills of a large denomination sewed up in the folds of his bourgeois silk underwear, and I stripped this from him and built myself, in the Xanadu of New York, a pleasure dome more stately and imaginative than that of Khubla Khan, if I may be permitted to flatter myself.

George Moore, Theophile Gautier and other great modern pagans who have thought deeply upon the problems of interior decoration furnished me with some valuable hints, but the main design, the barbaric exuberance and fantastic, scarlet abandon of it all, came chiefly from the depths of my own Oriental-Sclavonic-New York soul, if I may claim so, with an artist's simple pride.

I was lolling in this paradise on a bright autumn afternoon when the news came of Secretary Hughes' proposal. The world was as completely blotted out as if I had embraced Christian Science, or the Berkeleyan metaphysics. I had built a large square building with an enormous enameled roof of peacock blue. There were no windows facing outward; the only contact with the world was its light that came from the sky through my marvelous canopy. There were no telephones in my heaven, no jangle of visitors' bells, no mail, no newspapers. No one in my retinue was permitted to do the shopping; a corps of thieves had been engaged, and every midnight they brought the choice booty of the city to our doors, delivering it down an underground chute and receiving their pay through the same impersonal medium.

The house was built around a courtyard, surrounded by a white marble colonnade. A crystal fountain played in the centre, with a jet of quicksilver, after the Arabian fashion.

Boxes of orange and pomegranate trees were placed alternately around the yard; large white Russian greyhounds with pike-like noses lay sleeping here and there; and from time to time, barefooted Negro slaves with rings of gold on their legs, and beautiful white slender serving-women, clothed in rich and capricious garments, passed through the hollow arcades, a basket on their arm or an amphora on their head.

Humming-birds darted about the great, steam-heated square; I could hear their fragile murmur mingle with the sweet, confused sound that came like a single gentle voice from my seraglio, where my darling wives discussed my merits.

My symphony orchestra, in an embowered corner, played music soft as the harmony of a green lush meadow on a summer's afternoon. From another part of the establishment came the sweet, acrid smoke of my distillers, as they brewed new and strange concoctions, colored purple and amber and gold.

"I am happy! I am happy!" I murmured to myself, not too violently. "I am happy at last!"

I lay in the midst of this all, motionless and silent, beneath the magnificent canopy, with a huge tame lion supporting my elbow, and the naked breast of a young slave like a stool beneath my feet, smoking opium in a large jade pipe. I had just finished feeding a terrified rabbit to my pet python, a most interesting practise that I had culled from Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man*, and now my favorite slave, Garbanza, in her flaming imperial robe of Aztec feather work, was reading to me in a voice like a lute the more passionate poetry of Max Eastman and Claude McKay, whom I still dimly remembered. I was happy.

"Ah, Beauty!" I sighed in a voice of sweet melancholy, "the world is well lost for thy dear sake! How intolerable Life would be without thy priests, the poets, without thy gifts, these poor possessions about me! How I have wasted my youth away from thee, how I have squabbled and argued and fought, mixed with the unshaven and strident-voiced and moral, how I have become bitter in the beast-like quarrels of men, when all the time thou wert waiting! But I have been true to Thee in my fashion! And now I am here forever, forever I yield myself to Thy soft breasts, Beauty!"

I picked a red rose from the thousands heaped near my couch, and sniffed at it delicately as I observed the effect this little bit of eloquence had had upon Garbanza. She was weeping; a lucent tear quivered on her cheek. For a moment I enjoyed an artist's triumph, and then I was alarmed. Perhaps she was weeping in earnest; had happiness crept into my heaven?

"What is wrong?" I asked uneasily.

"Master!" she sobbed, "I have a horrible secret to confess! You are not entirely alone here with Beauty; I have broken the contract I came here on and have spoken to one

of the outside world! I have contaminated your ivory tower!"

"Traitor!" I shouted. "Off with your head! Who was it you spoke to?"

"I have a sister who lives in the Bronx," Garbanza answered in tremulous tones. "She is a member of the Young Communists' League of that borough—"

"Enough!" I howled. "Enough! Do not remind me that there are communists in the world! But go on!"

"My sister stole down the chute last night, disguised as a box of caviar. She is a fanatic, and she could not restrain herself from sharing with me the information that the world's statesmen have pledged themselves to scrap the battleships, and that there is to be no more war. After all, I was her only sister, and she had to tell me!"

Garbanza then furnished me the great news; it was thus I first heard of it. For a moment I was still disposed to lock her up with the lion for a week for having betrayed me, but then, as I am a swift thinker, and an even more rapid doer, I saw the whole situation in a flash. The world had suddenly become good enough for me to live in again. There was hope for humanity once more. I rushed to the wardrobe, took off my crown of lank, lost lilies and my purple Virgillian robes and donned the uniform of careless corduroy that I and the others on the Liberator had adopted when we had taken our Communist vows. Kissing my wives in less than half of the twenty minutes this task usually consumed, I was out on the street and on my way to Gropper's studio on Christopher street within the half hour after I had heard the immortal tidings.

Though it was high noon, the artist still slept on his mattress in the festering, dim chamber over a table where he practises in a noble fortitude his Art. The honest smell of manure came through his slightly raised window; there were sheets of drawing paper scattered about him, like the leaves that covered the Babes in the Wood; an emptied bottle stood by his head.

"I have come back to you all!" I said with emotion in his ear. "This changes everything!"

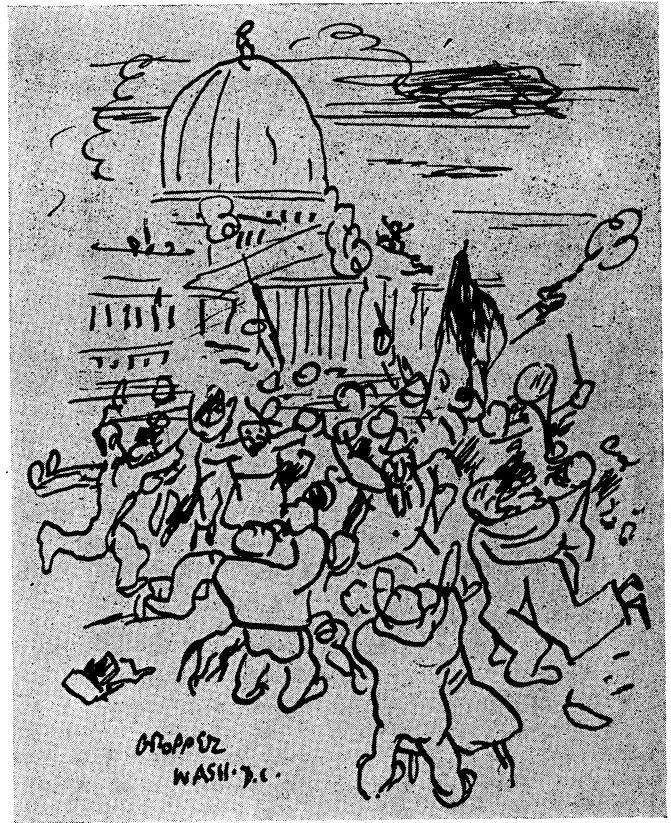
"Yes," Gropper said drowsily, as he scratched under his underwear.

"On to Washington!" I said. "Let us interview the statesmen! The whole world must hear of this!"

"I'm game!" he said, closing his lids over a pair of puffy blue eyes.

I shook him into wakefulness, we snatched a cup of coffee and some crullers at the lunch wagon, and after vainly trying to borrow five dollars from the Liberator business staff for expenses, we went down to the freight yards and fixed ourselves into a most comfortable box-car covered with straw, the former residence of quarters of beef and mutton. A brakeman discovered us here about half the distance out, but Gropper made a sketch of him on his cuff, and tore it off and presented it to him, while I recited one of Floyd Dell's most eloquent book reviews. The brakeman saw at once that we were friends of the working-class, and became our warm intimate, and he invited us to ride with him even to Chicago, did we wish it. We declined, and after a pleasant trip spent in elevating conversation with the worthy proletarian, we arrived at the capitol.

Here we each bought a pad of paper and a pencil, and I hurried Gropper at once to the White House. On our way we met a strange Washington. I had seen the city on a hot summer Sunday once, in the hasty five hours of a cut-rate



Red Washington

excursion trip. It was transformed now, it was not the dead, sticky mausoleum I remembered, baking like an empty desert in the Virginia sun. It was the wonderful stage now of a real pageant of all the people of the city; they were in the streets, as if there had been a revolution, marching bands of congressmen meeting assembled groups of Negro bootblacks with red banners and embracing them tearfully and joyously; militant suffragists walking arm in arm with hoary senators and singing the Internationale as they puffed at each other's cigarettes; bemedaled foreign diplomats, of whom there were thousands in the capitol, throwing confetti and roses at the shopkeeper's wives sitting on the balconies above their Goodman's tobacco and delicatessen shops, smiling down at the hilarious scene, pale genteel little government clerks, their sub-cellar faces lit with excitement, their immaculate white collars cast to the dogs, turning somersaults and shouting like human beings.

It was marvelous, this spectacle of all the ossified strata of mankind melted into one grand throbbing mass of brotherly love. There were Dukes in this crowd undoubtedly, premiers, admirals, millionaires and statesmen and their grand wives; there were also firemen, street cleaners, boiler makers and prostitutes, and one could not tell the difference between them all—they were all lost in the joyous, happy, singing mass. There were even policemen; I saw a crowd of them marching; they had taken their revolvers and clubs and slung them on long poles, from which red pennants were flying; and as they marched they sang the Marseillaise in big, manly voices. Bands were playing everywhere; everywhere flags were blazing in the wind, American, Chinese, French flags, Mexican flags, even the German flag—

yes, and a thousand times the blood-red flag of the international fatherland.

It was thrilling; it was the day of reconciliation, when men were meeting each other again like long-estranged brothers; tears came to my eyes, and I wept for joy. This was what I had lived for—this sight was the fruit of my days. I shouted for joy. Gropper seemed impressed also.

"What's all the shootin' about, Mike?" he asked, turning his hazy eyes upon me.

"Don't you know?" I shouted at him in amazement. "Don't you know what we've come here for?"

"I thought we came here for the ride," he muttered stupidly, staring at me with his lackluster eyes.

"No, I bellowed, "no, you poor piece of bootleggers' carrion; no, you rambling wreck of poverty, you sad-faced humorist and defiler of clean white paper, No! We came here for the Disarmament Conference! Haven't you heard that Harding has induced the world to disarm, and that there is to be no more war?"

"Well, that's all right," Gropper murmured. "I'm glad to hear it. But you don't have to get excited, you boob!" he added, with a touch of spirit. "I'm just as smart as you are!"

Peace re-established, and the purpose of our mission explained to Gropper, we pursued our way. Oh, the divine city of Washington, where the pentecost had descended on this lovely autumn afternoon! We forced a friendly path through the singing, uplifted throngs, smoking two huge Havanas that an ecstatic tobacconist had pushed into our hands as we passed his shop. There were hosts of celebrities scattered through the crowds, and every time I passed one I was tempted to interview him. We greeted H. G. Wells and a band of riotous college boys and girls and their parents, all playing those strange American instruments known as bazoos that they had raided from some store. Elihu Root, flushed, coatless and in pink suspenders, was being carried aloft on the strong arms of a group of railroad men in blue overalls. William Jennings Bryan, Arthur Balfour, Otto Kahn, Henry Ford, Jack Dempsey and Arturo



Arturo and His Friend Briand

Giovannitti had formed a rowdy group of their own, and locked arm in arm were battering through the crowds like a football squad, singing the Carmagnole and other songs Arturo had taught them. Arturo was red and excited; he had just made six favorite speeches to his new-found friends, and was beginning on the seventh, his famous one on feminism.

"We will not interrupt these celebrities in their joy," I explained to Gropper, "nor will we go to the conference to watch the sessions. We will not waste time on digressions; no, we will proceed to the fountainhead itself of all this beautiful revolution in the world's affairs."

"The fountainhead?" repeated Gropper.

"Yes, Harding; on to Harding!" I said.

So to the fountainhead we came, to Harding, the President and Prince of Peace. He was sitting in his little private sitting room off the main porch of the White House, silent and massive at a desk, a tall, strong, kindly sage with serene eyes and white hair.

"Newspaper boys?" he asked, turning his calm face upon us as we entered.

"Yes."

"Sit down." We did so. He unbuttoned his long black statesman's coat, cleared his throat, and in a clear, steady voice made a statement for us:

"All of us demand liberty and justice. There cannot be one without the other, and they must be held the unquestioned possession of all peoples. Inherent rights are of God, and the tragedies of the world originate in their attempted denial. The world today is infringing their enjoyment by arming to defend or deny, when simple sanity calls for their recognition through common understanding.

"We are met for a service to mankind. In all simplicity, in all honesty and all honor, there may be written here the avowals of a world conscience refined by the consuming fires of war, and made more sensitive by the anxious aftermath. I hope for that understanding which will emphasize the guarantees of peace, and for commitments to less burdens and a better order which will tranquilize the world. In such an accomplishment there will be added glory to your flags and ours, and the rejoicing of mankind will make the transcending music of all succeeding time."

I jotted this down, and Gropper made a sketch of the President as he uttered these words.

"Did I understand you to say, Mr. President, that simple sanity calls for their recognition through common understanding?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"Thank you. You would not then claim that the transcending music of all succeeding times might come through uncommon understanding?"

"I would not. I meant common understanding when I said it, and I stand by the word."

"Would you go so far as to say—damned common?"

"Yes, damned common," he repeated firmly.

"Or hellish common?"

"Yes, hellish common," he said.

"Thank you," I said, making a note of his vigorous affirmation. "And now, Mr. President, will you tell us why the arms conference, or parley, or conclave, as we newspapermen put it, has been called?"

"It is a coming together, from all parts of the earth, to apply the better attributes of mankind to minimize the faults in our international relationships."

"I see. May I quote you as saying that?"

"Yes," he answered quietly.

We sat in silence, while the President thought a moment, and I framed my next question. Before I could ask it, the President looked at us with kindly interest in his eyes, and asked, "What newspapers are you from, boys?"

"We come from the Liberator."

The effect of this was electrical. The President sprang to his feet excitedly, and came over and kissed each of us on the cheeks in the fraternal Latin fashion.

"Comrades!" he almost sobbed, "come with me!"

He took each of us by the hand, and dragged us out on the lawn, where he whistled for a photographer, and made him snap the three of us in varying poses, all indicating a deep and touching solidarity.

After this operation, we returned to the office, and the President sat down at his desk again, and mopped his brow, breathing heavily.

"Pardon my emotion, boys," he said, "but this is a great moment for me—I have always yearned to be interviewed by the Liberator—I have always felt that you and those you represent alone would understand. We have so much in common—you have tried to save the world, and I have tried. Our methods have been different, of course, but both our hearts were in the right place. And now at last the world is to be saved."

"Yes?" I cried in glad surprise, "how and when?"

"I have already begun saving it," the President said solemnly. "You see, you revolutionists have been wrong. Marx was wrong—the adherents of the class war were wrong. The world is to be saved by good-will."

I jotted this down anxiously, missing not a word. This was the most momentous interview of all times—I could barely restrain my excitement.

"I will tell you everything," the President said, a far-off mystical look shadowing his fine eyes. "I want you to know what is in my soul. About three months ago, as I was sitting here on the porch smoking a corn-cob and resting after the day's labors, a revelation was vouchsafed me. I was gazing at the sun as it set in clouds of fire and glory, and I was dreaming of all the heavy problems that beset the world, when a strange miracle happened. The seven veils of the infinite seemed to open before my eyes, and out of the sun loomed a great figure. It came toward me and stood quite near me on the lawn outside, tall as a mountain. I looked closely with my dazzled eyes—who was this? And then I realized, from the pictures I had seen, that this was God Himself.

"I fell to my knees at once. 'Lord,' I cried, 'I am flattered that Thou hast visited me. I am too humble for such an honor, but now that Thou art here, let me ask Thee, and Thee alone, for advice. Tell me how to save this stricken world. Tell me how to heal the wounds of war and famine and unemployment and strikes and race riots and the other uncountable evils.'

"God stroked His beard a moment, turned the matter over in His efficient mind, and then traced, with His colossal finger, a word of flames across the western sky. I looked up to read it, and meanwhile He had disappeared, and I have not seen Him since."

"What was the word?" we asked in awe.

"Conference!" said the President, with religious solemnity. "It is Conferences that will salve the wounds of the world and establish the immortal harmonies in the hearts



Harding Poses With Gold and Gropper

of men. How simple it all is, and how great! The divine wisdom is majestic and perfect; it needs but a word to make us understand; mere men like Marx had to write huge books filled with statistics."

I meditated on this strange event, comparable only to the vision Paul saw at Tarsus, and then, with understanding dawning in my soul, I asked slowly:

"So that was why you called the unemployment conference soon after?"

"Yes," said the President, "it tortured me to think that there were six million human beings starving and homeless in America, and I felt that that was our first great problem to be solved; so I called a conference and solved it."

"I see," I said, making a note of this. "And how did you happen to think of the war problem next?"

"Well," said the President, with a trace of confusion, "it may sound unpatriotic, but war is a problem, is it not? Why not solve it, I thought, and be done with it? So I called this present conference next."

"I see. But there are people who say that this conference was not called to solve the problem of war. They say it is a conference to reduce the high cost of killing. Others claim it is merely a convention to abolish the use of bows and arrows in war—battleships, you know, as against chemicals and aeroplanes."

"They simply don't understand," the President said, in a pained manner. "They simply do not know. You must tell them all I have told you here—then they will understand."

"We will," I cried, speaking for Gropper and myself, "we will. And now, Comrade Harding, what is the next conference to be held by you?"

The Saviour rubbed the white bristles of his chin thoughtfully, and gazed into space.

"I really don't know," he said. "I was thinking of having a national conference on the tobacco problem. One of the truest words ever spoken by a Democrat was that enunciated by ex-Vice-President Thomas Marshall when he said during the last campaign that what this country needed was a good five-cent cigar. I may work on that next. But sup-



Harding Poses With Gold and Gropper



The Conference on Far Eastern Questions

pose you boys give me some suggestions—what problems do you think I ought to go about solving?"

"There are almost a million small children working ten hours a day in this country," I said.

The President made a note. "Good, I'll call the representatives and the employers in for a conference," he said.

"Every four days a Negro is lynched in this country," I reminded him.

"We'll have a conference of Southern gentlemen and Negro farm-hands," said the President.

"Two hundred political prisoners, including 'Gene Debs, still rot in American jails for opposing war as you are now opposing it, Mr. President," I said.

"I'll have them elect delegates to meet delegates from the American Legion for a conference," said Mr. Harding. "How will that do?"

"About seventy per cent of the wealth in this country is in the hands of about two per cent of the people," I said. "More than five million American workingmen have to apply for charity yearly in order to stay alive."

"Fine!" said the President, beaming. "This is just the sort of thing I want to remedy. I will call a conference of millionaires and paupers, and they will thrash it out. The same warm red heart beats in all of us—it is easy to agree, once hate and suspicion are removed, don't you think? What next?"

"There are more than a half million prostitutes in this country, humble women forced into vice by poverty."

"We'll give them a conference, too—we'll have them meet with the ministers."

"And the employers of this country have set out to reduce wages and smash the labor unions," I said. "They have been hiring gunmen, and have murdered workingmen in West Virginia and other places."

"It will stop," said the President. "We are all brothers, and should meet in conference. And now," he said, rising, "good-bye, and don't forget to tell the revolutionists what I have told you. They must work with me—we both have the same sublime objects in view. Good-bye."

He embraced us both, tears dimming his eyes.

"Mr. President," I said, as we stood on the porch shaking his hand, "tell me, how long do you think it will take you to hold all these conferences and save the world?"

He thought a moment, and looked at us with his fine, high candor. "I could say five months, boys, but I will be honest, it may take almost a year," he told us. "Good-bye."

As we went back through the streets of Washington, dusk was falling, the lamps were being lit, and the crowds still buffeted us about, the singing, revolutionary crowds with their red banners, celebrating the beautiful thing that had come into the world through the man we had just left.

"The world will be saved in a year," I said to Gropper.

"I don't believe it," he sneered, speaking for the first time that afternoon.

"You don't believe it?" I shouted in amazement. "Don't you believe we're in Washington, don't you believe what your own eyes are seeing at this moment? There, there goes William Howard Taft and a bunch of rip-roaring stokers from the power-house singing 'Hallelujah! I'm a Bum! Isn't that so?'"

"No," said Gropper sullenly, and I could not make him believe it, though I argued all the dusty way home. And in New York no one would believe, either, when I told them all I had seen and heard.

"Pooh-pooh!" said a stubborn Marxian, who was convinced that there were to be two or three more great wars before capitalism finally collapsed and the workers took control. "Bah!" said an I. W. W. boy who had been crippled for life by a policeman's club during the unemployment demonstrations of 1914. "Rot!" sneered a Negro bitterly as he showed me the daily news item about another horrible lynching. "All lies!" said a fine old Jewish matron, whose son is a Communist spending ten years in prison for speaking against capitalism. "Ha, ha, ha!" sardonically laughed a poor, miserable, unemployed mechanic, the father of four children, when I informed him of Harding's great plans. "Tut-tut!" said a West Side gunman when I met him on Eighth avenue the other morning and told him the news. "Tweet-tweet!" sang a roguish little bird as I sat on a Central Park bench and tried in a long speech to convince it that the human race was at last to know happiness.

No one believes the news, no one! I am bewildered. I think I do not believe it myself any longer. I think I will return to my harem, to wait another year until Harding has really made the world fit for a minor poet to live in. So long! adios! farewell! au revoir and auf wiederseh'n! until the millennium!

The Singing Wives

OF the loves of the poets, there has been sore miscarriage;

Here are all tales of errant loves, and not a tale of marriage!
Had Dante wedded Beatrice and loved and housed her well,
Maybe he had not sung so long and robustly of Hell!
Had Shelley left his patronym with any son of Emily's,
Maybe his tenuous ecstasy had grown to stronger melodies.

There's one stout peasant, Robert Burns, so near to earth
and life

He gives us jocund pipings of a girl that was his wife.
What though he roved and freely loved! Let's pay him what
we owe,

Let every woman thank him for John Anderson, my Jo,
In that an old wife found her man a lover and a friend
And sang a gallant song of him, as they came near the end.

I say there is a pride in us that never will be taught
Our love's a flying bubble over lovely till it's caught.
Shall it be owned a stimulant to keep the soul awake
That it may knit long stanzas for some false passion's sake?

With that much of my passion as is songworthy and good
I have born a man his children and served a man his food.
If I'm to dream of moons and dews, that dreaming shall be
done

With the same fertile ecstasy as yielded me my son.

Show me that man of judgment whose goddess bears his
name!

Though he be mute I'm his repute, I'll guarantee his fame;
There'll be such crash of song on earth as never yet was
heard;

Ten thousand sleeping singers shall awaken at his word.
Women shall sing in Kansas, in Peckham and in Greece,
The song of Woman Justified, the song of love's release.

Anna Wickham.

All American

THOSE who pretend to hate war go to Washington; those who really hate it go to Atlanta.

BRIAND said he had no idea of putting a damper on the festivities. But if that was his idea of being the life of the party—

WOULDNT it be delicious after everything that happened about four years back if the net result of our disarmament conference would be to increase the importance of the submarine.

“**B**RTAIN will not ask for discussion of the debt.” We often feel that way ourselves. It is our butcher who keeps dragging this subject into the conversation.

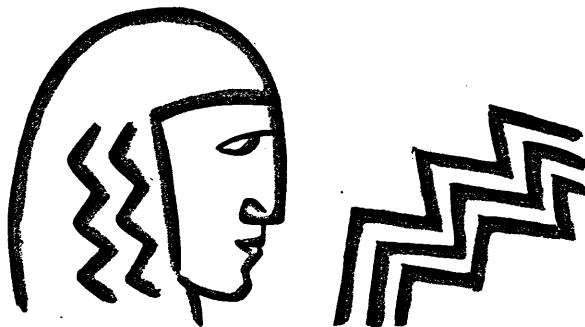
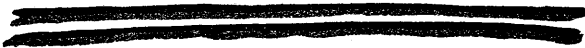
OUR delegates at the disharmament conference have received and acknowledged with snickers gifts of 45 caliber revolvers from a movie star who does not shrink from publicity. There is harmony, at least, in amusement circles.

IT is not yet clear why Tumulty was chosen as the arbiter of our destinies for eight important years, but the N. Y. Times has settled one point. His name is pronounced as in tummy, not as in tumult.

THE Interborough borrowed money and paid it out at once in big dividends. This is what is technically known as rapid transit.

THE Princess Mary's royalty, we learn with relief, will descend to her heirs. We hope that the future little royalties will have their grandmother's looks and their grandfather's mentality.

THE Garment Workers' Union asks damages for loss of wages due to the employers' breach of contract. It will be interesting to learn whether the Danbury hat can be worn on the other foot.



Hugo Gellert.

A LOT of Americans have left the Spanish army and re-joined the army of the unemployed. They allege cruelty and failure to support in the style to which they were accustomed. Also it appears that the enemy is no gentleman.

THE late Congress failed in its task of raising money without danger to business. Somebody must invent a safety raiser.

THE Postmaster General has ordered every postmaster to be a bureau for finding missing persons. Inspired, no doubt, by their brilliant success in finding missing letters.

OBJECTION is being made to these mirror books which poke fun at government officials. Now let's have a little mirth control.

THE President in two fearless letters has come out in favor of babies and against cancer. A first page fiend would have reversed the process, but Harding is a man who can resist sensation.

AS if in response to a widespread demand we offer our selections for the 1921 All-American footless ball team.

Scenter—Daugherty.

Black Guard—Lusk.

Mud Guard—Hylan.

Receptackle—Hughes.

Spectackle—Harvey.

Near End—Newberry.

Weak End—Lodge.

Quartersnatch—Rockefeller.

Half Bakes—Coolidge and Miller.

Throwback—Harding.

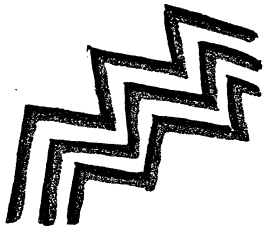
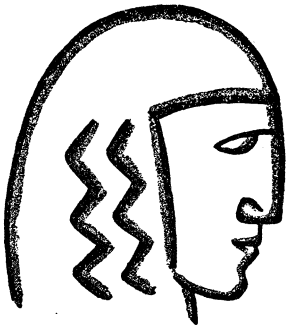
The best individual record was made by cheer leader Root.

HOWARD BRUBAKER.

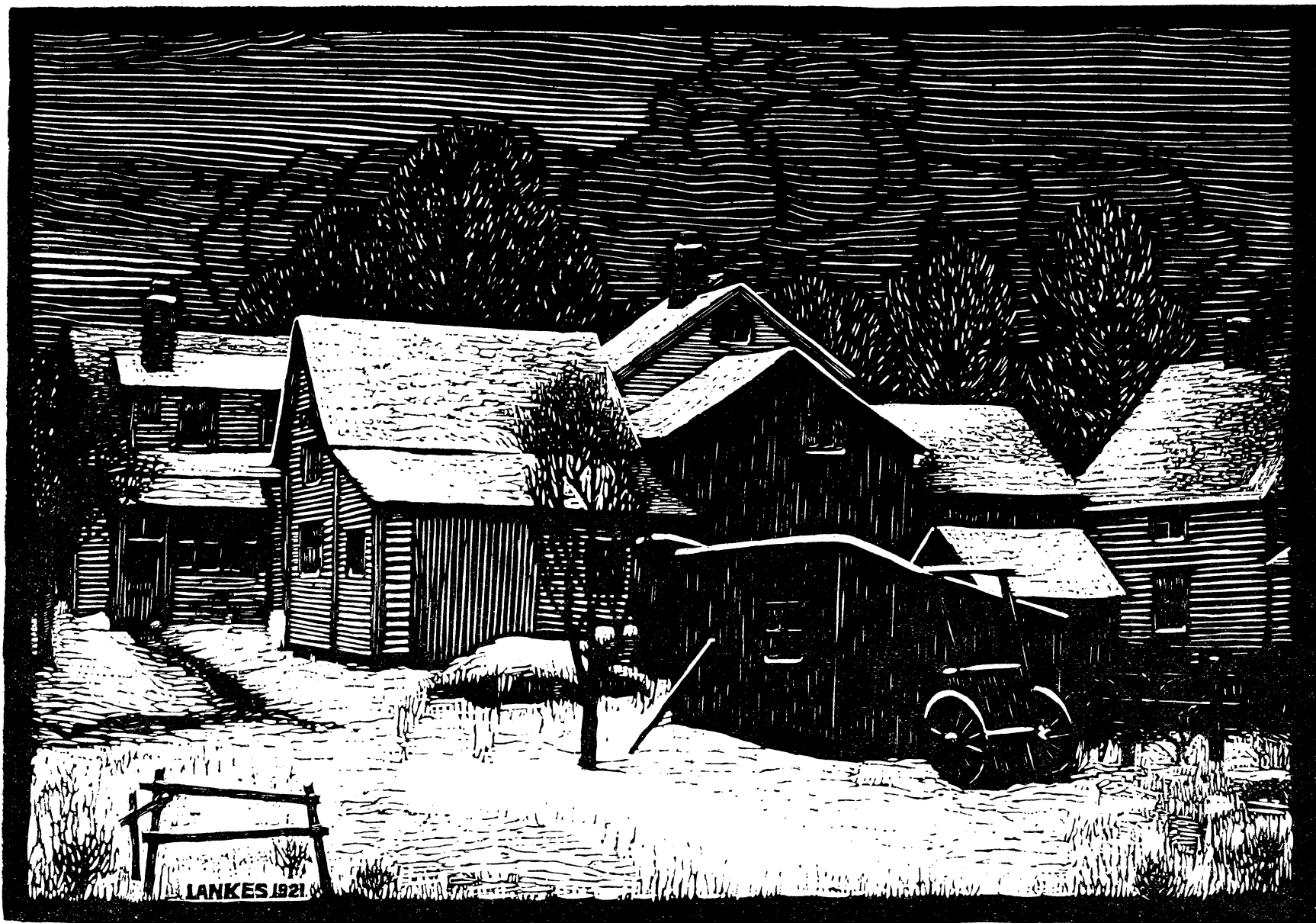
Dornroschen

STAB for me—
lip set intensity—
press to my bower—
my nook—my core
I wait for thee—
numb—breathlessly—
messir
since yore.
Not can I rise alone
thy rush—thy kiss—
thy smile—
thy bended knee
wake—lift—
to that steep castle
beckoning with
bunting—
messir—to us—
a-laughing—high
a-hunting.

E. v F. L.



Hugo Gellert.



Wood-Cut

J. J. Lankes



A Blow At Birth Control

I Own a Slave

ABOUT a week ago I discovered that I was the proprietor of a slave. Theoretically I had always known that I was the proprietor of a good many slaves, and that somebody was more or less the proprietor of me, some misty person in Wall Street, who could foreclose on me whenever the fancy seized him, or the needs of his career.

But last week I actually came face to face with the slave of whom I am proprietor, or at least part proprietor.

His name is George. He is an Italian of about sixty winters. For it is in the winter that I most completely own him and that therefore he exists for me.

About a week ago my mother called my attention to the fact that our coal supply was being used up too rapidly. (I live in one of those horrible products of the Grant Period known as a private house.) In order to stop this too rapid consumption I was to speak to the furnace man, threaten him with a reduction in his wages and even unemployment if he did not mend the tenor of his ways.

So George was summoned before me and interrogated. I then discovered the following facts:

I. George is an old, prematurely decrepit Italian of fifty, but with the appearance of seventy.

II. He goes staggering from house to house all day long from seven in the morning to nine at night feeding private house furnaces. When there is snow he has to clean the sidewalks as well. He also has to bring up scuttles of coal

from the cellar for the kitchen ranges of irate cooks of the fifteen private houses he is serf to, and carry out heavy barrels full of garbage and ashes.

III. George has been improvident enough to have married twice. He has not attended birth control meetings, and therefore or, at any rate, whether or no, has two sets of children, in all seven (7) still living.

IV. Of these seven children, ranging from two years old to fourteen, two or three are constantly sick, and not infrequently the surviving Mrs. George is sick at the same time. During the course of his two marriages George has buried three children.

V. The family lives in two pretty dark rooms, without the usual sanitary arrangements considered desirable in my class of society. So that if one child gets measles, the rest of the children are apt to get it, too.

VI. When George was summoned before me I went so far out of my class as to shake his hand. I always believe, like Mr. Schwab, in preserving the forms of democracy, especially when I am about to sin against its substance. I was surprised to note that the old man's hand burnt mine like hot iron. I said:

"Are you sick?"

"Doctor," he answered, "tella me I gotta go to bed; I gotta verra high fever. But how I can go to bed when I gotta sick babies home an' my wife sick?"

George, I learned, has about fifteen or so houses to keep heated and snow-clear. He gets ten dollars from each house monthly, but has to pay a helper, who consumes almost half of his earnings.

VII. George dare not be sick, therefore, else the helper will jump in and take all the houses.

VIII. George, therefore, I was pleased to learn, is my serf, in everything but the legal sense. He is chained to my house; he dare not leave for fear of starvation of self and family. He must stagger along from house to house doing serf labor until he drops. And by that time, I hope, there will be a little George to inherit his father's obligations toward our landed property.

IX. Although George is my serf, yet I have none of the obligations toward him I would have were the relation legal. I do not have to see that he and his family are fed and clothed and my women-folk feel no obligation to visit his family when they are sick, or in need. We can simply allow George and his family to rot away. There are always other serfs ready to chain themselves to our three-story-and-basement house.

Moreover, though he is tied to my house, my home is not tied to him. He dare not break the chain that binds him to No. — West — street on pain of death by starvation. But I can kick him out of my house at any moment, paying him the balance of his month's dues. And he has no redress whatsoever. I think if I had sadistic impulses, he would let me beat him or his wife and children in part payment of my feudal perquisites, if only he could continue to be allowed to feed his heart out to my furnace every month.

I finish where I commenced. I am the proprietor of a slave, and the knowledge of that fact has made me proud and happy.

HENRY G. ALSBERG.

A Telegram

ALL day long the sky was a cold gray metal,
Winds blew cold and hardened the lonely roadway,
Froze the ponds and powdered the ice with snowflakes,
Rattled the grasses;

All day long my wandering steps were lonely,
Cold my hopes, and meagre my thoughts, and frozen
All my dreaming memories, all my yearnings,
Youthful and tender.

Such my New Year's day—but the night was tender,
Dark seemed warm, and bed and the covers friendly,
Sleep came soft as breasts to a thirsting baby,
Fed me with dreaming,

All because I found on my desk at sunset
Five sweet words my wonderful friend who loved me
Sent on wings of mystery tenderly beating,
Words that remembered.

Max Eastman.

Don Giovanni

HOW many gentle women, living and dead,
Lovely and foolish, but have felt the glamor
Of his dark eyes; how many women clamor
Dark curses on his beautiful faithless head!

How many a man, who having heard it said
His radiant smile will make a woman stammer
And set her heart clattering like a hammer,
Tosses in envy on his lonely bed!

Yet none of those who love and envy and hate
Have seen beneath the cloak of latest fashion
His body burning with a terrible fire:

How like a man doomed by relentless fate
He sinks under the sea of his passion,
Swept down the darkness of his own desire.

Joseph Freeman.

Cherish My Love

CHERISH my love before it dies at last
A day or so, a month, a fleeting year,
Cherish my body's whiteness and each tear
That falls because all love is overcast.
We talk of this and that, beloved friend,
While shuddering gloom falls lightly on our house
Nor mark the snowdrift on the impatient boughs
Hardly aware that Spring and Summer end.
Cherish my love for soon these eager hands
Will cease to hold you warmly to my heart
And we will learn how quickly flow the sands
And how the hours tear us both apart.
Some chill and quiet morning we will wake—
And weep our hearts out for each other's sake.

Harold Vinal.

La Paloma In London

ABOUT Soho we went before the light;
We went, unresting six, craving new fun,
New scenes, new raptures for the fevered night
Of rollicking laughter, drink and song, was done.
The vault was void, but for the dawn's great star
That shed upon our path its silver flame,
When La Paloma on a low guitar
Abruptly from a darkened casement came.—
Harlem! All else a blank, I saw the hall,
And you in your red shoulder sash come dancing
With Val, against me careless by the wall,
Your burning coffee-colored eyes keen glancing
Aslant at mine, proud in your golden glory!
I loved you, Cuban girl, fond sweet Diory.

Claude McKay.

II.

I SHALL be less than dust when you pass by
A whiff of dust blown whitely down the air,
This body that in April you found fair,
These hands, these lips that love once taught to lie.
Pollen from willow trees could never be
More frail and delicate than what remains
Of my poor flesh, my thin and scattered brains—
Death is a dark and treacherous enemy.
These are the lips you kissed at Summer's close,
These the warm limbs that you loved to embrace,
Now what is left of them, no single trace—
Such was the fate of Omar and his rose.
And now you pass and do not even hear
My careless bones that cry "My dear, my dear!"

Harold Vinal.

Futility

OH I have tried to laugh the pain away,
Let new flames brush my love-springs like a feather,
But the old fever seizes me to-day,
As sickness grips a soul in wretched weather.
I have given up myself to every urge,
With not a care of precious powers spent,
Have bared my body to the strangest scourge,
To soothe and deaden my heart's unhealing rent.
But you have torn a nerve out of my frame,
A gut that no physician can replace,
And reft my life of happiness and aim.
Oh what new purpose shall I now embrace?
What substance hold, what lovely form pursue,
When my thought burns through everything to you?

Claude McKay.

Migratory Workers' Convention

By A Special Correspondent

A REPRESENTATIVE of the Y. M. C. A., with a Christian hymnal under his arm, entered the basement hall in Auto Workers Temple in Detroit, where delegates to the annual convention of the International Brotherhood Welfare Association were giving an entertainment, on the night of Dec. 2. The association is the organization of migratory workers founded fifteen years ago by James Eads How, and the proceeds from the entertainment, which was given entirely by association talent, were to pay a part of the cost of the convention commissary.

"I thought you would like to sing these," the Y. M. C. A. man explained, his eyes blinking at the cigarette smoke and the glaring electric light bulbs in the bare hall. James Eads How, paternalistic "Boss" of the organization, was about to propose a rising vote of thanks for the hymns when M. Simmons, a New York delegate with the light of the seven seas in his dark young eyes, took the Y. M. C. A. man by the arm and dragged him to a seat in the front row. The hymnal Simmons placed on top of the old upright piano in the corner. Marguerite Tucker, of New York, swung round to the piano and opened up on "Solidarity Forever."

There sprang from the crowd a man with Irish blue eyes, who has stoked the boilers of ships and built railroads. He stood in front, a ragged, inspired director with arms out-raised. And thereupon the words and music of the stirring revolutionary song rolled and thundered around the ears of the Y. M. C. A. representative. The director himself sang mightily down upon him. The hall-full of poorly clad, unshaven, hungry migratory workers sang as they had not sung before.

How, the rich man's son, who devoted his inheritance to organizing migratory workers for the purpose of uplift and relief, found out definitely at the convention in Detroit that the world today, even his adopted part of the world, is not waiting for the coming of a second Jesus.

A new institution of learning has been organized in Detroit, for example. The college consists of sixty students and "Capital," by Karl Marx, in three volumes. Classes will be held in a simple hall. The sixty students are charter members of the new Detroit local of the International Brotherhood Welfare Association. The unorganized, hungry, embittered timber wolves, pearl divers, gandy dancers, and others of the migratory workers who are not members of the I. W. W. are about to trail out of the jungles and learn in their turn the reason, strength and method of union for revolution.

At an unemployment conference, organized by Mrs. Tucker under the auspices of the brotherhood association, in Bricklayers' Hall on the last night, the migratory workers were told by Judge Edward J. Jeffries and Dennis A. Batt of Detroit, and Simmons, that there would be no cure for unemployment until a proletarian dictatorship gave the workers control of the government. These three men, in straightforward speeches, said that unemployment crises would follow in closer succession until in a short time there would be millions on millions of men and women out of work perpetually.

"Organize," said Batt to the men in a speech in which he urged a rationing of jobs for temporary relief.

"And don't wait until you have educated every man, woman and child in the country before you start something," said Judge Jeffries. How had wanted Mrs. Tucker to hold her conference in the Y. M. C. A. or in a church and wanted pastors invited as speakers. She refused to consider it. He wanted the convention to seat Francis Shay, of Washington, D. C., as a delegate. But Simmons jumped to the convention floor to say that any worker who would assist Urban Ledoux in the publicity-courting act of degrading hungry men on an auction block could not be seated with self-respecting toilers. And the convention supported Simmons. "We want to stand on our own feet," Simmons added.

The convention ended with How a defeated man. He will not withdraw his support from the organization, but his plans and wishes were trampled under the feet of many delegates who are becoming clearly class conscious at last. Day after day he wandered up and down the aisles of the convention hall, speaking and pleading with a soft, anarchistic light in his eyes. His bearded face was patient but sad. His figure is tall and lean, his signs of emaciation seeming a little weak, a little effeminate, a little mystical.

He walks vaguely, sometimes with a swift and aimless flitting motion. He was and is a man with a dreamy kind of sympathy, which sometimes flames into revolutionary expression, subsiding again thereafter into a sweet longing.

Years ago he placed himself in the center of a group of homeless migratory workers; he framed himself with bread-lines of men. But now the frame is walking away with the picture.



Soviet Envoys: For Persia the oily palm, for Russia the gate

The Russian Idea

By Floyd Dell

“**R**EVOLUTIONS have their periods of poetry and their periods of prose. The Russian Revolution has entered now into its prose period. The time of revolutionary glory, tragic and beautiful, has passed; and the time of revolutionary work, sober and stern, has begun. The time of wonderful dreams is over, and the time of dull realities has come.”

So say many of our friends, who shared with us here as dazzled onlookers the poetry and the glory and the dream of that revolutionary dawn, when it was bliss to be alive, and to be young was very heaven. And now, when we ask them to share with us, again as onlookers only, for that as yet is all the part assigned us by destiny, the sober, realistic, everyday triumphs of the revolution in its prose period, they turn to us and ask: “Is this reality enough to satisfy you, after those great dreams? Don’t you feel a little fooled? Was it all worth while? Is this what you wanted? Or—speak candidly now!—is the Revolution, after all, a failure? Inevitably so—nobody’s fault—the best that could be expected—nothing to cry about—but still, different from what we all did expect—in short, pretty small potatoes, after such tremendous hopes! How about it?”

We may fairly ask ourselves that question. Are we disappointed? Is this prose Russia worth all our dreams?

To ask that question is, to begin with, to set a pretty high price on dreams. I do. The bourgeois world to-day is spiritually bankrupt because it paid out too much in dreams, no less than in money, in the late war, and got nothing in return. If it were true that our revolutionary dreams had been betrayed by the realistic facts of Soviet Russia to-day, then that would mean the spiritual bankruptcy of the revolutionary movement for many a long day. But is it true?

This, I think, is true: That all the unfulfilled ideals of the eighteenth century, all the magnificent dreams of Rousseau and Tom Paine and Blake and young Wordsworth, all the large promises of Jefferson and Danton for a new and free and happy social order—all the hopes that culminated in the American and French Revolutions, and were travestied and betrayed so tragically in subsequent history—those beautiful Utopian dreams have somehow, in the minds of some of us onlookers, got entangled with the specific promises of the revolutionary Communists of Russia. I think the dead who died in vain to create a free America and a French Republic and a beautiful and orderly and happy new society have a right to sit up in their graves and laugh sardonically at the America of Rockefeller and Gary and Harding, at the France that plots to restore Czardom in Russia, at the whole modern capitalist world of unemployment, misery and war. They were fooled: it was not so nominated in the land of the Declaration of Independence and the speeches of Robespierre. Nothing was said by the prophets and poets who whooped it up for the bourgeois revolution about strikes and panics and militarism and the twelve-hour day in Pittsburg. But if we blame Lenin because he has not created a Utopia, that is our own mistake. It was not Lenin, it was Rousseau and Jefferson who promised us that. We cannot present the unfulfilled dreams of the last century to Lenin to be paid off. He said nothing

about creating a Utopia in Russia. He knew better.

From the first he said nothing about absolute “freedom” to be ushered in at once. He called it what it is—a bourgeois dream. Instead, he talked of work, of discipline, of machinery, of the factory-system, of electrification.

He said nothing about absolute “happiness” except the happiness that comes in a devoted and unceasing struggle against tragic odds, and the useful and creative happiness that will come to the world of labor when Communism is at last established.

Those who are disappointed in Russia for failing to create the freedom and happiness promised a century and a quarter ago by the deluded prophets of the rising bourgeoisie, are simply a little mixed.

Nevertheless, there is a difference between prose and poetry. In these days of revolutionary prose, it is a good thing to turn back to its poetic period, to remind ourselves of the glory of that dawn, and to try our confidence in the sober realities of to-day by the glorious hopes of yesterday.

Albert Rhys Williams has written a book which recovers for us, in all its tragic and immortal loveliness, the poetry of that yesterday. It is called “Through the Russian Revolution.” As everyone knows, Albert Rhys Williams went through the revolution not only as an onlooker, but as an active participant. He actually saw more of its central and critical events than anyone else, Russian or foreigner. And he has, not hastily, but as a devoted and deliberate labor of love, made a record of these events that will stand as an enduring memorial of them to other generations than ours. He has captured, in his ringing prose, the dramatic soul of that revolutionary time—its hopes, its tragedies, its triumphs, are all here, set down with love and faith and tenderness. It is bright with all the fires that burned in the revolutionary heart of Russia. It is, for all, the sad and terrible things it tells of, a happy book—all the happier in that among its pages are many bright-colored revolutionary posters in which one can see the hope and daring and creative faith of Russia pouring itself out in magnificent defiance of the disasters by which it is hemmed in on every side. It is the book of the Russian Revolution—the book of its achievement and its promise.*

I turn in this book to one of the pages of retrospect in which Albert Rhys Williams, in this day of the prose of revolution, casts a glance backward over the whole course of events, and I find this passage:

“Nearly everyone in this book is now in his grave. Here is the way some of them died:

“Volodarsky—Assassinated in the general plot to kill all Soviet leaders.

“Neibus—Executed on the Kolchak front.

“Yanishév—Bayonnetted by a White Guard on the Wrangel front.

“Woskov—Died of typhus on the Denikin front.

“Tunganogi—Shot at his desk by White Guards.

“Utkin—Dragged from motor car and shot.

* Through the Russian Revolution, by Albert Rhys Williams. Illustrated with photographs and Russian posters in colors. Boni and Liveright.

Our Bookkeeper

THE *New York Times* published a letter from E. F. Mylius, our former bookkeeper and advertising manager, answering our statement that he stole \$4,000 from the *Liberator*. The letter declared that he had not stolen but "borrowed" the money, and that it was customary for officers of the company to borrow from its funds. The letter also contained an implication that some of the funds advanced to its editors had not been duly accounted for.

It is true that on several occasions the *Liberator* made advances to its editors, and also to its contributing editors, and even, occasionally, to other workers in the revolutionary movement who were in temporary financial straits. These advances were always properly recorded in the books, and punctually repaid.

What Mylius did was to go to our safety-deposit box in the Guaranty Trust Company, with the key which had temporarily been placed in his keeping, remove all our remaining funds—\$4,500 in United States Treasury Certificates—sell them to a broker and spend the money trying to get rich on the Stock Exchange.

The best evidence of this is his own letter to me, dated October 19th. As our good name is involved, the reader will excuse me for quoting this letter in full:

"Dear Max:

"I have been hoping against hope that I would not have to write you this letter, but now I realize I cannot keep the truth from you any longer.

"When you asked me to resign I had very little money of my own, but I had the Treasury Certificates belonging to the *Liberator*, and in a moment of weakness, thinking I could make some money by using them as security, I had a fling in Wall Street. Unfortunately I lost and, trying to make up my loss, I plunged heavily—only to make matters still worse and I have been keeping it up hoping that a turn would come, but nothing I did came right, and now everything has gone. The wreck is complete.

"This is a dreadful thing. I can hardly believe it has come about. I feel unfitted for anything useful. Nothing that you may think of me can be half so bad as what I think of myself.

"My only hope now is that I can make eventual restitution. All I ask is a little time. Give me time and I will scrape up money by hook or by crook to send you for the *Liberator*. I have several personal friends who might help, even if I have to tell them all the facts, and I am going to use my time for the next week or two calling on them and asking them to help out the magazine now.

"I have never taken a penny of the *Liberator* before that was not my own, as the books will easily testify.

"Please keep this to yourself, and I promise faithfully that if I live I will make restitution. Give me time and I will pay all.

"I know how generous you were in your trust of others and it hurts me terribly to have to tell you this. I never believed it was possible for me to do such a thing. But it is done and I thought it best to make a clean breast of the whole miserable business. I am almost in despair.

"I sent a \$500 Certificate on October 1st to the bank, so I owe \$4,000 in Treasury Certificates now.

If you cut down on the number of copies printed per month, and dispense with a business manager and get a cheaper printer, such economies will help out. If there is money owing in many directions, the *Liberator* is entitled to some credit now, seeing that it always paid its bills so promptly.

Regretting more than words will express my deep sorrow for what I have done, and assuring you again that I will do the *utmost* in my power, if you will give me time, to make reparation,

"Yours remorsefully,

"E. F. MYLIUS.

"Please address, care of E. Boskin, 505 Washington St., Newark, N. J."

If the treachery of Mr. Mylius had ended with the composition of this letter, we should have said nothing about it in the magazine. That was only the beginning. As soon as I received the letter, I sought an interview with Mylius. I secured it only after employing a detective, identifying him with an Edward Boskin who had just left the address given in Newark, and threatening him through the girl living there as Mrs. Boskin, with arrest and exposure if he did not grant it.

At that interview which occurred in the office where the girl works, he confirmed the confession contained in his letter, but further acknowledged that he still had something over \$1,000 due him from two brokers through whom he had been speculating. He gave me letters to these brokers authorizing me to liquidate these accounts and directing them to pay over to me the balance due.

His attitude was contrite and abject, and as he looked sick and badly shaken up, I assured him that the past was past so far as I was concerned, and he need fear no hostile action from me.

He said he did not know how he could earn a living, and I offered to try to secure him some sort of a job. I remember that I returned two blocks after I had left him, in order to inquire as to what he felt able to do, and how small a wage he thought he could live on.

That was on a Saturday afternoon, too late to reach either of those brokers immediately. On Monday morning when we called on them we found that one of them had a balance of \$325 due to E. F. Mylius, and that sum we eventually secured. The other one, with whom he had told us he had an account of about \$1,000, had never heard of him. We asked if they had ever heard of Edward Boskin of 505 Washington Street, Newark, New Jersey. They said that he had come in that morning, as soon as the office opened, and had drawn out a balance approximating \$1,000.

So our authorization signed "E. F. Mylius" was nothing but a criminal hoax. Mr. Mylius had "borrowed" this money a second time, was "borrowing" it, in fact, at the very same moment when he was accepting our forgiveness for having stolen it the first time, and our solicitude and offer of helpfulness in the effort to recover his self-respect.

It is needless to say that we have made every effort since then to apprehend him, and we shall continue to do so.

MAX EASTMAN.

Sukhanov—Led into the woods in the early morning and clubbed to death with rifle butts.

“Melnikov—Taken out of prison, shot and bludgeoned.

“ . . . They went to their death in order that the Revolution might live.”

And he asks: “Is the Revolution worth these sacrifices?”

He gives an answer to the question, an answer in honest revolutionary prose, mentioning such everyday things as farms, factories, schools and libraries; and one thing which is not familiar and everyday—the breaking of the spell of past over a great people. But the whole book is the answer to that question. In its pages we see these men not only die for the Revolution, but live for the Revolution—and their lives are a testimony that if they could look from their graves at the sober triumph of the Revolution today they would not feel that they had died in vain.

For in their lives there was no such distinction as, for the purpose of this argument, we have permitted our idealistic friends to make, between the poetry and the prose, the dreams and the realities, of revolution—not even such a distinction as appears to the most sympathetic of us at a distance. “They were,” says Comrade

Williams, “at once dreamers and hard workers, idealists and stern realists—the flower of the Revolution. The incarnation of its dynamic spirit.” They had then the same sober, practical tasks as these in which Soviet Russia is engaged to-day—the manifold problem of bringing Communist order out of the chaos of Czardom. And over that work to-day there broods the same dream, the same hope, as yesterday. Blockade, war, pestilence and famine have not broken the Russian spirit. Abandoned by the workers of other lands, Russia fights alone. Factories may be nationalized or de-nationalized; there may be government monopoly, or free trading; these are incidents of the day’s work—experiments, resolutely tried, candidly abandoned, to be used again to-morrow, or not, as circumstances may dictate. Our idealistic friends see in these incidents a forsaking of the ideal, a relapse into the accustomed ways of the world. But we do not see Russia as yet welcomed into the comity of capitalist nations—they can tell the difference between Lenin and Judge Gary, even if our idealistic friends cannot.

There are, I am sorry to note, idealists in Russia who evince their disappointment in the un-Utopian character of the Soviet State by throwing bombs at its officials, by blow-



Maurice Becker

Close Harmony

ing up bridges, by plotting with emigres and foreign adventurers, by spreading lies about Russian affairs among credulous foreign visitors. But they are not called idealists in Russia—they are called counter-revolutionists.

These belated idealists among us onlookers deserve no such opprobrious term. There must be revolutionists before there can be counter-revolutionists. I certainly have no right to throw the first stone—or even the first mud—at them. But I think they might be quietly reminded that this is not their revolution. Their revolution happened back at the end of the eighteenth century. Their glorious dreams of freedom and happiness—not ours—have been mocked by history. Our dreams are coming true in Russia, day by day. . . . And when, some day, they come true in America, they will come by the same hard, idealistic road—and they will be made to come true by those who want something more definite, something better, something more real, than the eighteenth-century bourgeois dream of “freedom and happiness.”

Perhaps, when that day comes, our idealistic friends will not like it—at all! But I must confess that I, for one, don’t really very much care whether they do or not.



Maurice Becker

Close Harmony

BOOKS

The Briary Bush

"The Briary Bush," by Floyd Dell. Alfred A. Knopf.

WHEN a man writes a sequel to a novel he invites two reviews. The new book will inevitably be judged not by itself alone, but in comparison with the first one. I don't think that Floyd Dell's "The Briary Bush" is as good a novel as "Moon-Calf," but then I happen to think that the first story of Felix Fay is one of the permanently fine novels of our period.

Dell made me know Felix better as a boy than I have ever known him since. Often "The Briary Bush" puzzles me. Perhaps it should. The problem which it takes up is complex, and Felix is too much in doubt as to many of the situations which confront him to make it possible for all his speculations to be crystal clear. What I am trying to say is that after reading "Moon Calf" I felt that I knew a little more about children than I ever had before. It gave me a new confidence in my relations with little people. But marriage remains as tricky and as puzzling to me as ever in spite of "The Briary Bush." Probably it is a little easier to generalize from particular cases in regard to children than in regard to marriage. Children come before marriage and are more fundamental. Very possibly the reason for my being less enthusiastic about Felix married than Felix single is that I was more heartily in agreement with the theories of the younger man. The hero of "The Briary Bush" finds that while freedom in marriage may sound very well as a theory it won't work. I don't believe that.

On the other hand, I do believe that the novel contains a singularly searching and sympathetic study of that type of mind which has been labelled somewhat crudely as "the artistic temperament." Even such manifestations of it as lie without my own experience seem to me interesting and important testimony from a sincere and truthful witness. Dell has succeeded in recreating more than an individual in "The Briary Bush." The book is enormously successful in presenting to us, young, radical and artistic Chicago as a whole. There is a much more substantial feeling for physical background than in "Moon-Calf." One did not see places and things then as vividly as in the present novel.

Yet there are a good many things concerning the life of Fay, the dramatic critic, which I wish Dell had gone into more extensively. We get only the briefest snatches of the work which Fay was doing for *The Chronicle*. It seems to be Dell's notion that his hero lived all his real and important life out of office hours. Perhaps; and yet we were left with a poignant and unsatisfied curiosity as to just what plays Fay saw and what he thought about them and what he wrote. But then I am hopelessly romantic about newspapers. I would much rather follow Fay into the city room and see and hear him there than be permitted to eavesdrop upon him at any of the studio parties which he attended. The book is not completely satisfactory to me because it is a novel about a newspaper man with the newspaper all but left out. It is only fair to the author to say that he has taken pains to impress upon us that his hero never was captured by any deep realistic or even romantic interest in his paper. That was not his real life.

Still even in the more actual existence outside the shop there are hiatuses which bother me. For instance:

"No," she said, "there's our train coming! Besides, I can change my mind several times more on the way up——"

"You do make good coffee, Felix!" she said the next morning.

There is in this a haste and an ellipsis rather beyond a reader as plodding as myself. Indeed, my whole deficiency as a reviewer for "The Briary Bush" lies in the fact that Felix is a little outside my comprehension. I am convinced that he is real, but he is, for the most part, not only in the moon but round about on that far edge of it to which I cannot see.

HEYWOOD BROWN.

"Dreams Out of Darkness," by Jean Starr Untermeyer; B. W. Huebsch, New York.

MRS. UNTERMEYER'S poetry is distinguished not only by the clear qualities of chiselled marble, not only by a music so melodious that some of her free-verse pieces have to be read two or three times before their lack of rhyme becomes noticeable; but also by the fluidity of her thinking. She has mastered her emotions without deadening them; and her ideas are living organisms. They do not stand still; they have been going forward. From the strained rebellion of her first book, from its restless groping in the dark, its muffled complaints and tight gestures made with chained hands, she has moved on to a maturity and a peace in which she begins to perceive in the chaos of her world a kind of equilibrium, in its follies a kind of wisdom. Instead of accepting her destiny "with a wry pride," she has shaken it off "like the garments of our childhood," and has grown to the conception of her personal destiny as a universal one. She has moved from "Resignation" to "Rebirth":

"You have revealed my godhead to me
And by reverence have given me my heritage.
Now I can bear with you and for you,
Since you have found me.
Woman—and Holy."

This subduing of passion and intensifying of mystical intelligence is the leitmotif of her new book. It is played like a concertmeister's solo in the delicate lines of "Anti-Erotic":

Hold me so and press my head
Close to your shoulder with a gentle hand;
And do not wonder that this mild caress
Dearer to me than all your passion is.

For passion one can have from many men.
When a woman flames to the new life of Spring,
Men read the ardor and the dreaming in her eyes
As tributes to themselves—and burn to her.

But to be cherished as a child is cherished,
To be held as something incredibly dear,
This is like the delicate hopes of childhood,
Like waking from December into a sun-sweet May.

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brought out with full orchestral power in "Eve Before the Tree"; where the mother of men, facing the fruit of knowledge in a bewildered conflict of desires, is warned on one hand by the voices of angels: "a curse is on that human who seeks to learn too much," and on the other hand beseeched by the voices of growing things, "courage, courage in your fervent seeking, lift up your hand and rend the darkness, Eve." And the first of women makes the choice for all her race; she will take the agony with the knowledge, but she must have the knowledge,

"Not for myself alone,

But for my children that shall follow me."

These are the accents of release. If women are, as Mrs. Untermyer says, princesses locked in towers, she at least has begun to unbolt the heavy doors of her prison with her imagination. Some day she will walk out free, because she is using the right key; for whatever liberties we may gain through political and economic changes, there are certain Bastilles erected by life for all of us which only the imagination can batter down—perhaps because these prisons are themselves built out of imagination.

JOSEPH FREEMAN.

Soft-Pedalling for Peace

"The Folly of Nations," by Frederick Palmer. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

THE war-drums throb no longer, though the battle flags are not yet furled. Their martial music has been "changed by request" to the soft cadence of a funeral dirge, and all the world prays sniffingly at present for deliverance from the sins of patriotism and vainglory. That veteran war-correspondent, Mr. Frederick Palmer, has given us his

"If we were earnestly advising a young man to take a wife and he should earnestly reply "Whose?" that would give us a feeling of pleasure out of all proportion to the proper value of such nonsense."

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When Max Eastman told Bernard Shaw that he was writing this book, Shaw advised him to go to a sanitarium. "There is no more dangerous literary symptom," he said, "than a temptation to write about wit and humor. It indicates the total loss of both."

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It isn't that friend Palmer's argument is wrong; it is that it is so weak. He uses the soft-pedal when he needs the full diapason. It is as though the old man's fires have burnt low. He sees the evils of war, but he sees them through a haze of patriotic optimism and futile sentimentality. And he lacks the courage to probe to its hidden causes and tell us how to remove them.

HUBERT HARRISON.

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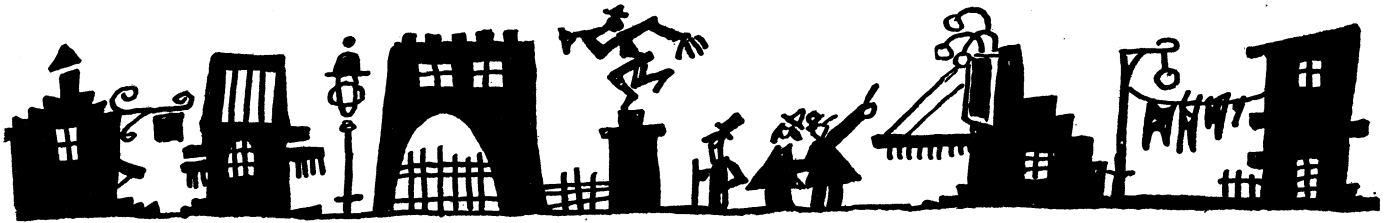
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(Quoted by Arno Dosch Fleuret, New York World, January 31, 1918.)

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Of The Liberator, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1921.

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Margaret Lane, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the Business Manager of The Liberator and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulation, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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Publisher, The Liberator Publishing Co., Inc., 138 W. 13th St., New York; Editor, Max Eastman, 138 W. 13th St., New York; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, Margaret Lane, 138 W. 13th St., New York.

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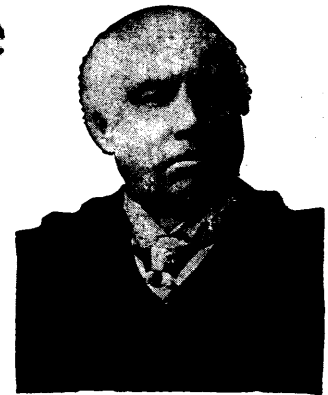
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They Hated Him Because He Cried "Prove It"

Is there a God? Is there a Hell? Is there a Heaven? Are we better than the Savage who worships an Idol? "Prove it and I'll believe you," cried Col. Robert G. Ingersoll. But they couldn't --or wouldn't. So they cast him out. They hated him. They fought him. But for fifty years he fought back. Never could they batter down his logic. Never could they answer with reason.



Col. Robert G. Ingersoll

We sympathize with the savage whose God is a monstrous Idol. We pity him for the glory he places upon the ring in his nose. But are we better than he?

Is it true that much of our goodness is mothered by cowardly fear? Is it true that our God is created by a mind too lazy to do its own thinking? If you believe in God, why? Is there a God, Are you afraid to say "No"? Is there a Hell? Why don't you paint your face and your body and wear a nose ring? Why don't you worship a snake? Others do!

Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, for fifty years, preached the gospel of truth. He sympathized with people who feared what he believed did not exist—a God. He felt that the world was being swallowed up by a phantom—a shadow—a "bogeyman." He challenged every sect, every creed. He dared them to prove to him that they knew what they were talking about. He defied them to answer him. Instead, they held him to scorn. They mentally burned him at the stake. But they couldn't find a flaw in his logic. And that's what hurt.

Ingersoll toppled over a brittle Belief and it broke into thousands of pieces. He said, in effect, that the bible was a fake. Of course that was a bad thing to say, especially if you really believed it and could make thousands of others believe it.

Ingersoll was a power. In olden days he would have been tarred and feathered, imprisoned, "done away with." He could have been governor of Illinois—some say he could have had the Presidency. But he wouldn't stop talking against a blind acceptance of a man-made God. No one could find a "motive" for his belief, save the true motive he had—to shake people from the mental prison into which they had been thrown by "blindly following the blind." He wanted to break the shackles of fear. He wanted to bring people into the light. And for fifty years Ingersoll spoke to packed houses up and down and across the continent. Even after his death he was fought—for they tried to prove that he recanted. But under oath his family has sworn that Ingersoll died as he had lived—an agnostic—an unbeliever.

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