

LIBERATOR

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RUSSIAN
REVOLUTION

CAPITALIST

CONCESSION

Maurice Becker.

Not Slipping.

THE LIBERATOR

Vol. 4, No. 8 [Serial No. 41]

August, 1921

EDITORIALS

By Max Eastman

ROMANCE received a severe jolt in Jersey City on July second. The world was again reminded that force and not beauty of any kind is what wins in a fight. And if this lesson could be learned by all romantics—including Socialists of the Holy Word, and Communists whose one thought is to rush the American proletariat onto the barricades to be shot—the fight would have been well lost.

A New Jersey local of the Association for the Advancement of the Morals of Other People has asked for an indictment against Jack Dempsey for assaulting Carpentier. It seems that these evicted parsons and Sunday School Superintendents at large—who no doubt contributed their little all to promote the late mutual slaughter of ten millions of our best citizens—are offended in the sensitive point of their virtue at the spectacle of two men agreeing to have a fight for the sake of victory and a swag of money. To my perverse judgment it seems the most clean, moral and inspiring thing in the way of a fight that has been staged on this side of the Bug for several years. If everybody who goes into a fight for the sake of victory and a swag of money would say so, the spectators would so vigorously outnumber the participants, that the whole world might soon take on an aspect of orderly and good-natured brotherhood such as prevailed among ninety thousand of its inhabitants on that memorable July second.

Another Recantation

HENRY W. ALSBERG, the foreign correspondent of The Nation, who "espoused the cause" of the Soviet Government of Russia about three years ago, has turned against it. He liked it then, and now he doesn't like it. He calls it dogmatic, bureaucratic, corrupt, tyrannical, doctrinaire, contemptuous of personality. He says that it is no longer revolutionary nor communist, that the enthusiasm for the "myth of internationalism" is "about pumped out," that the government is willing to sell as much of Russia to foreign concessionaires on pretty much the latter's own terms as these latter can absorb, that Russia is no longer "a center of Marxist infection," that the communists have been beaten by the peasant, and that the idea of Russian communism serving as a model for Germany and England is ridiculous and absurd. As an example of "the trance of belief in their own infallibility" which afflicts the Russian leaders, he quotes the very natural remark of Karl Radek that "Brailsford's articles were about as favorable as a man not one of us could be expected to write." And as an example of

the base methods by which the communist leaders retain their power, he says that Lenin got a laugh on Kollontay by means of a "very funny but scandalous reference to her private life."

In short his journalistic emotionalizing, instead of being for the soviets, is now against them, and the soviets will have to get along the best they can without it. His article adds nothing to what we knew, either about Russia or about human nature in general, except that single fact.

These liberal humanitarians all carry about in their hearts a little ideal of utopia, which has no relation whatever to their practical efforts to pass reform bills and keep working-girls out of jail. It has no more relation to their daily efforts to change this real world, than the idea of heaven had to those of their parents. It is the same idea in a modern form. But occasionally it happens that one of these liberals strays into a revolution, and gets a taste of the purposes of great men in a moment of swift progress, and he is stirred and upturned to the bottom of his soul, and cries out, "My God, it is heaven! I won't have to worry about working girls any more!"

It is thus that he "espouses the cause" of the revolution.

And then if he runs away immediately and stays somewhere else, he may keep that feeling of the celestial blessedness of the thing for a long time. But if he stays around, and finds out that these great men too are only working on the old materials of human nature, that little daily practical efforts are as much the essence of revolution as of reform, that every success contains its failure, that life after all, even under the revolution, is only "one damn thing after another"—then there will come to him a terrible disillusionment. For he has not understood and received into the practical part of his mind the *revolutionary method*—he has merely scrapped that part of his mind, and made a wild grab for the *revolutionary ideal*.

You can always distinguish the emotional reactions of these revolutionary cherubs from the most vigorous criticisms of a thinking revolutionist, by the fact that they disparage the situation under the revolution, not in comparison with the situation at home, but in comparison with the ideal of perfection. Alsberg does not tell us one thing in his whole indictment of the Russian government that does not leave Russia, in all true hopes of popular liberty and culture, leagues in advance of the United States.

How much better to have the dogmatism of communism than the hypocrisy of capitalism enthroned and deified!

How much wiser the "contempt of personality" than the worship of wealth!

What infinite hope in a "bureaucracy" of seven hundred thousand trained and consecrated communists, as compared to a plutocracy of some seven thousand ruthless exploiters of labor!



"Lay off Pittsburgh—stick to the next world!"

How trivial the "corruption" that can at best only help to ward off the horrors of starvation, compared to that which opens the avenue of investment, and enables the corrupt and their heirs and assigns forever to sit comfortably upon the backs of the people!

In America we are preparing to exploit the whole world as an imperial colony—in Russia the "compromise with foreign concessionaires" is an unpardonable sin!

Neither in Russia nor America may one advocate active opposition to the government—but it stirs no interest in Alsberg that in Russia those who do it are detained only as political prisoners, and "when conditions improve . . . will probably be released."

In America the farmers are lynched legally, economically, and in physical fact, for trying to organize a non-partisan league, and beneath these farmers the tenants and hired men have not even the hardihood to think of a right to the land—in Russia "the peasant has the land," but all is failure because "he has beaten Marxism for the present."

In America Eugene V. Debs, who represents the feelings of Jesus, if anybody after him ever did, has been locked in a cell for three years for uttering an ideal, but in Russia

all hope of liberty is lost for Alsberg because "The Patriarch of the Church"—a church which debased Christianity to the most obscene service of despotism known to its foul history—is "under house arrest!"

Mr. Alsberg says that what he has written "will gain him the name of renegade." He says that he will "have the unenviable distinction of being considered an adherent of both sides for discreditable reasons." But I think he is mistaken. His remarks show very plainly that he was never an adherent of anything but the celestial atmosphere of the revolution, a petit-bourgeois liberal who condescended to bestow his blessing on it for a short time and very far from home. We do not consider these people renegades when they come to their senses. They may be received at home with pipes and timbrels, and slaying of the fatted calf by those whose calves are fat. But among the revolutionists their departure is also welcomed with a smile.

FOR my part I have but one real complaint against Alsberg, and that is that, having renounced the opportunity to become a critical historian, and chosen to remain merely an emotional journalist, he should be so dull a journalist. If I had paid his fare all the way to Russia, in order to have him write home

that Lenin made a very funny and scandalous remark about Kollantay's private life, and not quote the remark, he could pay his own fare back.

Sabotaging the Parson

AMID the general gloom and depression of business and the continued rumors of revolution, comes the announcement that our civilization is threatened with a serious shortage of protestant ministers. It seems that the supply of ministers fell off shockingly during the war, and we can no longer hide from our eyes the fact that production in this line is not picking up. All the other institutions of learning are overwhelmed with applicants, but the theological seminaries are still 29 per cent. below the pre-war level, and apparently going down. Says Robert L. Kelley, Secretary of the Council of Church Boards of Education:

"While many people realize that fewer men are going into the ministry these days, a small proportion really understand the situation. Fully five thousand Protestant pulpits are now vacant throughout the country, and another five thousand will need ministers next year and thereafter.

"Although there will also be about the same number of Bible students graduating this term, men and women who have received a short training after high school, these are necessarily far less adequately prepared to meet the problems which progressive ministers must now cope with. Yet were the entire 3,200 graduates available for immediate ministerial duties, they would supply only about one-half of the present need. There are scarcely 5,500 students in all Protestant seminaries to-day. This should represent merely the graduation total, while four times that number should be in undergraduate attendance if the supply were to equal the demand."

I can imagine the anxiety with which these facts must be faced by churchly people, whose hopes of civilization really center upon those few thousand pale young men in black vests who understand theology. I do not know where they will turn, these good Christians, for signs of promise.

I would offer them what consolation there is in the fact that Floyd Dell is defending the institution of matrimony in *The Liberator*. But I cannot honestly promise that he won't be attacking it again next year. When a man starts in defending matrimony you never can tell what is the matter.

Perhaps some comfort may be derived from the fact that the churches have been unnecessarily hampered of late in their function of adapting the teachings of Jesus to the necessities of organized murder and the systematic plunder of the poor. Any one who has ever read those teachings ought to realize that this is an arduous and delicate task, and he ought to give these young graduates sympathy, understanding, encouragement, even a little intellectual, or at least emotional, leeway in the preparation of their sermons.

Imagine an expert young theolog who is doing his best to make Jesus plausible in Pittsburgh, coming across a letter from the Pittsburgh Employers' Association, asking certain influential business men to withhold their support from his church because he is preaching outside of the "neutral zone" on the issue between capital and labor! Now, that is not only indelicate, but also very stupid on the part of the Employers' Association. Those things ought to be worked unconsciously. They are worked unconsciously. The minister lives in respectability; he does not seriously believe in the teachings of Jesus; if he did he would not live in respectability. And he can be mechanically relied on to shave down those teachings enough to meet the essential business requirements of those who put up the money for his living. It is not necessary to write letters about it. It is not advisable to make him think about it. And to make not only him, but his entire congregation and the whole surrounding community, think about it, is a piece of wanton stupidity. It makes Jesus look about six times as foolish in Pittsburgh as he did before, and the task of black-washing him becomes practically impossible.

Inspiration or Leadership

MY friend, Van Wyck Brooks, takes me on for a few rounds on the subject of Literature and the Revolution. He lives a little way down the street here at the office of the Freeman, where rages a bloody and continual struggle between Capital and Labor on the one side, and "Privilege" on the other. I am not sure whether he means the same thing that I do by the revolution, but for the honor of Thirteenth street I will assume that he does.

He seems to agree with me about the futility of an organization like Clarté, but he takes mighty exception to my assertion that literary and artistic people are not as such "intellectual leaders," and that on the contrary they, more than the members of any other trade, need "guidance and careful watching by the practical and theoretical workers of the movement." That hurts his pride of craft, and he proceeds to call my view of literature a number of bad names, including *unrealistic*, *feminine* and—what was the worst, I am sure, he could think of—"American, all-too American."

I said, you may remember, that we are distinguished, we literary and artistic people, not by our ability to think, but by our ability to realize—to feel and express the qualities of things. And this faculty of vivid living—"besides the ultimate and absolute value that it has in itself—contributes something indispensable to the practical movement. It contributes something that we might call *inspiration*. It keeps up a certain warm faith and laughing resolution in those who might weary of learning and laboring in the mere practical terms of the task." Upon the basis of that statement



The Freeman Editors' Weekly Attack.

Van Wyck Brooks says that I conceive of art as a gay little hand-maiden that "delights in trimming the beard and warming the slippers of a certain grim strenuous giant whose name is Science and whose business is Revolution."

"One tries to imagine Maxim Gorki in this ingratiating posture," he says, "but somehow the picture refuses to take form. Gorki as a fount of 'laughing resolution'? That will never do. Nor does Anatole France exactly inspire one with a 'warm faith,' ingratiating as he is in other respects and a true blue militant by Mr. Eastman's own admission."

I blush to point out that if Van Wyck Brooks had put the words "warm faith" after Gorki's name, and the words "laughing resolution" after that of Anatole France, he would have had no irony here at all, and no argument. I mean that I blush for him, because while he was defending the honor of literature, he should never have let anybody catch him in so poor a little literary trick. However, for the sake of new times, as we say on Thirteenth Street, I forgive him.

"Still more unhappily," he goes on to say, "neither of these authors accommodate us by feeling the need of that 'guidance and careful watching by the practical and theoretical workers of the movement' which Mr. Eastman seems to feel on behalf of the artists and writers of the *Liberator*."

It may be that Gorki and Anatole France do not feel this need—I am not at all sure about that—but I am sure that every practical and theoretical worker in the movement *feels it for them*. And in order to show Van Wyck Brooks upon what miserably quaggy ground he is standing when he cites Anatole France as a "true blue militant" who does *not* need watching, I quote this letter which I received from one of those practical and theoretical workers:

DEAR MAX EASTMAN:

In the *Liberator* for June you have as "militant revolutionists," among others, the name of Anatole France.

Now, I don't know much about the old man except that a few months ago he was reported as having joined the Communist Party of France; and the further knowledge I have of him I shall speak of now.

In delivering an "Address to the Fighters of France," he says: "One hundred and twenty-six years ago today the people of Paris, armed with pikes and guns, to the beating of drums . . . attacked the Bastille, and . . . took possession of the hated fortress. . . . The sovereignty of law—therein lies the significance of the Bastille taken by the people and razed to the foundations." Then he proceeds: "These are the memories we recall and the events we celebrate today." He wants to see France "strong." He hates war, but "being compelled to suffer it," resolves to wage it until "justice shall have conquered iniquity, civilization barbarism, . . ." He tells them: "Endure, persevere, dare." ". . . you are fighting for your native land . . . for your fields and meadows . . . for your village belfry, your roofs of slate or tile . . . for your fathers' graves, your children's cradles." They are fighting for their manners, laws, customs, beliefs, traditions, and everything nice. "The Fatherland! Liberty! Beloved children of France these are the sacred treasures committed to your keeping; for their sakes you will conquer."

Max Eastman, it is my right as a steady reader of the *Liberator* to demand of you an explanation of this paradox.

Yours sincerely,

BORIS POPOVSKY.

My answer to this letter is that in joining the French Communist Party Anatole France has acknowledged his mistake, and recognized the guidance of science, as opposed at

least to his previous phase of inane sentimentality, and for the sake of that "laughing resolution," which he alone can bring with him, he ought to be, and no doubt has been, welcomed again among those whose resolution, although less laughing, is more resolute. It is proper to call him now a real proletarian revolutionist—provided you can add that he "needs guidance and careful watching by the practical and theoretical workers of the movement."

Van Wyck Brooks suggests that perhaps the artists and writers on the *Liberator* have a bad conscience. And so far as I am able to speak for them, it is perfectly true—they have. The *Liberator* took two different positions, under the pressure of two situations not practically different, upon the subject of Wilson's War policy, and one of them was revolutionary and right, and the other was conciliatory and wrong. We did not, thank God, get down and swim in the soup like Anatole France, but in our own place and degree we failed of the hardness of science. We were not tennoned and mortised in granite. It happens, indeed, that in the original draft of my article about Clarté, I cited this fact as a further example of the unreliability of poets as practical guides, but a kind of modesty overcame me in the company of Gorki—the chief of sinners!

So far I do not think that Van Wyck Brooks scores a point in his opposition to my view of literature and the revolution. But in the second round of his article he hands me a jolt before which I am compelled to yield. He reminds me that literature not only adds inspiration, or faith, or resolution to a purpose already formed, but it helps in the formation of a purpose. The secret of the partial success of the Russian revolution, he says, "lies in the Russian people, in their feelings and desires; and the secret of their feelings and desires lies in those who, sharing them, have worked upon them, intensified them, endowed them with motives, objects, purposes, wills. When one has the will one gets the 'science' quickly enough; and if Russia has had the will, who is to be thanked for it if not Pushkin, who taught it not to believe in property, and Dostoevsky, who taught it to believe that its destiny is to reconcile the nations, and Chekhov, who taught it to look upon its actual existence as empty and intolerable, and Gorki, who, in spite of that little error about the two varieties of socialism, taught it to recognize in the most degraded soul a man and a kinsman? . . . 'Desire precedes function,' and it precedes



Oh Happy Day!

the statesmen, the economists and the scientists. If Pushkin had never existed it is absolutely certain that Lenin would never have existed either."

Before this eloquent attack I lower my guard long enough to admit that I did not sufficiently recognize the function of literature and art in arousing, as well as in keeping warm, the revolutionary will. I said that it is the function of poets to make us realize "the revolutionary ideal" as well as "the existing facts" and "the struggle that lies between these two"—I did not ignore altogether the point involved. But I did very inadequately hint at the service of art in imparting great wishes to men, in raising their eyes to the goal. And if this service is at all to be described as "leadership," then to that degree I must ascribe leadership to the poets and prophets of art. But that this is leadership of the will and not of the intellect, is evident in the very words used to describe it. And that in so far as you insist upon separating it from both propaganda and scientific theory, it is more truly described as *revolutionary inspiration* than as *revolutionary education*, remains in my opinion entirely true. I failed a little in praise of the artist, but not in the essential classification of him.

Indeed, having yielded this much to that paragraph of Van Wyck Brooks, I cannot refrain from adding that it is full of sentimental and absurd exaggeration. It is one of those same vacuous protestations of cultural piety, that we used to spout forth in High-School debates on the question, "Whether Poets or Statesmen have had the Greatest Effect Upon History." We lacked the courage to say that poets are greater than statesmen whether they had any effect on history or not. Poetry is life itself lived most utterly, and its intrinsic and absolute value is what we really feel. But because we are incurably and stupidly moral, we think we have to bolster up and support this feeling by lying to ourselves in a mystical way about its practical importance. From the standpoint of practical importance in arousing a revolutionary will among the Russian people, literature has been only a tiny thing compared with conversation. Literature is indeed only a lingering crest or high-point in that mightier process. Even the works of Pushkin are but the topmost sun-perfected fruit upon the tree of Russian conversation. Their perfection is what is unusual—not their nature and effect. It is true that if the stream of feelings and ideas which Pushkin precipitated in crystals of immortal perfection had not existed, Lenin would not have existed either. But it is not true that any such immortal perfections were essential to Lenin's existence.

It is not true, either, that "Behind the corporate consciousness of British labor stand Webb and Shaw, Morris and Ruskin, Huxley and Carlyle, Cobbett and Shelley." Those men no more stand behind the corporate consciousness of British labor than Nina Willcox Putnam stands behind the National Manufacturers' Association—or at least only a little more. Some of them to their glory stand in the midst of it. And their words are a joy and a thrill of reviving wine to their comrades. They are a precious and vital part of that movement, but by no means the part looked to for intellectual guidance.

When Shaw was employed—or at least delegated, for I believe he takes no remuneration for his services to labor—to present the case for the mine-workers in the British press during the strike of a year ago, he did so with great verve and abandon. But with the characteristic fertility of a literary man, he added to it a line of petit-bourgeois argument

entirely alien to the minds of the men whom he represented, untrue to their science and false to their revolutionary purpose. There was, I am told, quite a little criticism among the revolutionary miners, and I can imagine that it took substantially the form of our general observation—namely, that while Shaw's heart is in the right place, he needs "guidance and careful watching by the practical and theoretical workers of the movement." It is certain at least that he does.

And if the miners had turned to Shelley, they would have fared no better.

"Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number—
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few."

That is the cup of *inspiration* Shelley poured for them. Here is an example of his *intellectual leadership*:

"Let the laws of your own land,
Good or ill, between ye stand
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute,

The old laws of England—they
Whose reverend heads with age are gray,
Children of a wiser day."

It was quoted by Palmer, you remember, as the motto of the Department of Justice in the glory-days of the red raids and deportations.

Oh, how foolish it is to try to justify poetry and art on the ground of their service to the revolution! They are but life realizing itself utterly, and only by appeal to the value of life's realization can the revolution be justified. Be a little more pagan, Comrade Brooks, and a little more recklessly proud of your trade. It has a value that no "movement" can justify, no theory dim, no regime and no practical mandate ever create or destroy. It belongs with and replenishes the source of all values—the living of life.

And if in addition it can sometimes in great hands inspire the workers in a practical movement towards a richer and more universal life for all—keep warm their faith, and laughing this resolution—and awaken, if you will, their desire for the goal—is not that enough glory to your trade?

Do you really believe that in the *very act of distinguishing themselves from men like Lenin*, men like Gorki can lay claim to "intellectual leadership" in this the greatest scientific effort of the ages?

When you speak of Gorki's failure to recognize and herald the real revolution as "that little error," you show that you yourself do not really mean leadership when you say it. In the critical moment of its history, Gorki threw the whole weight of the revolutionary literary tradition in Russia *against* the revolution. If that was a "little error" then revolutionary literature is of little practical importance. I do not know which horn of this dilemma you will choose to sit on. But if you take my advice you will admit that it was a momentous error—a tragedy in Gorki's life and the life of Russia—and it was an error of a typical kind, which we can avoid in the future only if all artists and writers who wish to aid in the liberation of mankind will recognize the sovereignty of that "grim, strenuous giant whose name is Science and whose business is Revolution."

POEMS---By Claude McKay

In Bondage

I would be wandering in distant fields
Where man, and bird, and beast, lives leisurely,
And the old earth is kind, and ever yields
Her goodly gifts to all her children free;
Where life is fairer, lighter, less demanding,
And boys and girls have time and space for play
Before they come to years of understanding—
Somewhere I would be singing, far away.
For life is greater than the thousand wars
Men wage for it in their insatiate lust,
And will remain like the eternal stars
When all that is to-day is ashes and dust.
But I am bound with you in your mean graves,
Oh black men, simple slaves of ruthless slaves.



Maurice Sterne

A Memory of June

WHEN June comes dancing o'er the death of May,
With scarlet roses tinting her green breast,
And mating thrushes ushering in her day,
And Earth on tiptoe for her golden guest,

I always see the evening when we met—
The first of June baptised in tender rain—
And walked home through the wide streets, gleaming wet,
Arms locked, our warm flesh pulsing with love's pain.

I always see the cheerful little room,
And in the corner, fresh and white, the bed,
Sweet scented with a delicate perfume,
Wherein for one night only we were wed;

Where in the starlit stillness we lay mute,
And heard the whispering showers all night long,
And your brown burning body was a lute
Whereon my passion played his fevered song.

When June comes dancing o'er the death of May,
With scarlet roses staining her fair feet,
My soul takes leave of me to sing all day
A love so fugitive and so complete.

Subway Wind

FAR down, down through the city's great, gaunt gut
The grey train rushing bears the weary wind;
In the packed cars the fans the crowd's breath cut,
Leaving the sick and heavy air behind.
And pale-cheeked children seek the upper door
To give their summer jackets to the breeze;
Their laugh is swallowed in the deafening roar
Of captive wind that moans for fields and seas;
Seas cooling warm where native schooners drift
Through sleepy waters where gulls wheel and sweep,
Waiting for windy waves their keels to lift
Lightly among the islands of the deep;
Islands of lofty palm trees blooming white
That lend their perfume to the tropic sea,
Where fields lie idle in the dew-drenched night,
And the Trades float above them fresh and free.

Flirtation

UPON thy purple mat thy body bare
Is fine and limber like a tender tree.
The motion of thy supple form is rare,
Like a lithe panther lolling languidly,
Toying and turning slowly in her lair.
Oh, I would never ask for more of thee,
Thou art so clean in passion and so fair.
Enough! if thou wilt ask no more of me!

Africa

THE sun sought thy dim bed and brought forth light,
 The sciences were sucklings at thy breast;
 When all the world was young in pregnant night
 Thy slaves toiled at thy monumental best;
 Thou ancient treasure-land, thou modern prize,
 New peoples marvel at thy pyramids;
 The years roll on, thy sphinx of riddle eyes
 Watches the mad world with immobile lids;
 The Hebrews humbled them at Pharaoh's name;
 Cradle of Power! Yet all things were in vain!
 Honour and Glory, Arrogance and Fame!
 They went. The darkness swallowed thee again.
 Thou art the harlot, now thy time is done,
 Of all the mighty nations of the sun.

To One Coming North

AT first you'll joy to see the playful snow,
 Like white moths trembling on the tropic air,
 Or waters of the hills that softly flow
 Gracefully falling down a shining stair.

And when the fields and streets are covered white
 And the wind-worried void is chilly, raw,
 Or underneath a spell of heat and light
 The cheerless frozen spots begin to thaw,

Like me you'll long for home, where birds' glad song
 Means flower-filled lanes and leas and spaces dry,
 And tender thoughts and feelings fine and strong,
 Beneath a vivid silver-flecked blue sky.

But oh! more than the changeless Southern isles,
 When Spring has shed upon the earth her charm,
 You'll love the Northland wreathed in golden smiles
 By the miraculous sun turned glad and warm.

Jasmines

YOUR scent is in the room.
 Swiftly it overwhelms and conquers me!
 Jasmines, night jasmines, perfect of perfume,
 Heavy with dew before the dawn of day!
 Your face was in the mirror. I could see
 You smile and vanish suddenly away,
 Leaving behind the vestige of a tear.
 Sad suffering face, from parting grown so dear!
 Night jasmines cannot bloom in this cold place;
 Without the street is wet and weird with snow;
 The cold nude trees are tossing to and fro;
 Too stormy is the night for your fond face,
 For your low voice too loud the wind's mad roar.
 But Oh, your scent—jasmines, jasmines that grow
 Luxuriant, clustered round your cottage door!

Morning Joy

AT night the wide and level stretch of wold,
 Which at high noon had basked in quiet gold,
 Far as the eye could see was ghostly white;
 Dark was the night save for the snow's weird light.

I drew the shades far down, crept into bed;
 Hearing the cold wind moaning overhead
 Through the sad pines, my soul, catching its pain,
 Went sorrowing with it across the plain.

At dawn, behold! the pall of night was gone,
 Save where a few shrubs melancholy, lone,
 Detained a fragile shadow. Golden-lipped
 The laughing grasses heaven's sweet wine sipped.

The sun rose smiling o'er the river's breast,
 And my soul, by his happy spirit blest,
 Soared like a bird to greet him in the sky,
 And drew out of his heart Eternity.

The Beginning

I HAD gone to the office of the Children's Society on a matter of business. As I was about to come away a policeman opened the door and brought in a little girl.

"Sit there," he said, pointing to a bench and turned to tell his story to the waiting clerk.

The child had an air of sagacious old age. Her big brown eyes roamed here and there without a turn of her head, as if she looked for lurking menace. Her lips moved. I slipped through the wicker gate and sank down on the bench beside her. The clerk somehow didn't observe me nor did the child either at first. I caught a whisper. "Tough! What?" the small person was saying to herself. When she saw me she edged cautiously away. I sat silent, detached. When the policeman had gone out and the clerk was busy 'phoning to Mrs. Smith, a matron from the rooms where the children were kept, to come and get "another kid," I turned to her.

"Tough!" I said, softly. "What?"

"Gee," she said, moving up. "Don't you belong here neither?" As she moved stealthily toward me the clerk came

back and began to write at his desk. I spoke to the matron who came a moment later to take her up-stairs.

"I'd like to stay with her till she's ready to go with the other children," I said. The matron protested.

"Oh no, you couldn't possibly!" she said.

"Stick by me," broke in the child in a whisper. "Come anyway! Don't mind that old hen."

The matron was evidently very tired and her practised eye saw trouble ahead. Perhaps that was why she gave in. When we got on the elevator the child's alert gaze became frightened.

"For the love of Christ!" she said huddling close to me. "I never heard of a train goin' up in the air before!"

In the reception room up-stairs the matron left us alone a moment. "First time I was ever pinched," the little voice was confidential.

"How did it happen?" I asked.

"In the freight yards," she said briefly.

"Playing around the cars?" I asked in foolish ignorance.

"Say, wot's eatin' yeh?" she scorned. "Playin'? Playin'? Playin'!" She did something unspeakable to the word.

"Don't—you—like—to—play?" I asked feebly.

"I do know," she responded. "But I'm dam sure I don't play in the freight yards. I pick up coal. And that's work! Of course I don't like work. Do you?" She leaned against my tan skirt confidentially. Yes, there was no doubt she had been picking up coal. Before I had a chance to answer her the matron appeared. The child's expression, comradely and frank, changed to one of watchful hostility. The matron began to tear old cotton into strips.

"I'm going to do your head up," the matron's voice was tired and she spoke as one who has said the same words many times before, "and then give you a bath."

"Bath?" said the little girl suspiciously. "What's that for?" The matron opened a door and showed a tub.

"See," she said, "I let the water in so. And then you get in and I wash you clean."

"Not on yer life, ye don't!" said the child. "I ain't no boy! I can't swim."

"There isn't water enough to swim in," I said. "It's only to make you clean."

"God dam yer soul!" said the child with an 'Et tu, Brute' look at me. "I won't let no one put me in water. What d'ye think I am? Water drowns ye. I'd drown'd."

"You mustn't swear!" interrupted Mrs. Smith sharply.

"Why not?" said the girl.

"You—mustn't," reiterated Mrs. Smith.

"Don't give me no 'con' talk about water, then," said the child calmly.

"They're always afraid of a bath," said Mrs. Smith patiently to me. "I always tell them quite a little about it before hand and let them see the water run in so they will get used to the idea."

She began to examine the child's hair. . . . She put on a preparation to kill lice and bound the head with bandages. "It will make you feel good to get into a bath," Mrs. Smith was saying.

"Feel good?" echoed the little girl. "You're a dam old liar. Water don't make ye feel good. It's beer does that."

Mrs. Smith slapped her. "I told you not to swear!"

"Why not?" said the child.

I turned the conversation. "What do you do with the coal you pick up?" I asked.

"Give it to Mrs. Maginnis. She's livin' right over us you know. And she gives me something to eat for it, if I bring her a lot. I had a basket near full today when the cop pinched me. I'd been fightin' the boys away all afternoon. The fat fool couldn't catch the boys, they ran on him."

"You mustn't use such language!" said Mrs. Smith.

"Why not?" asked the child. Then as she saw Mrs. Smith ready with shears to cut off her clothes—they had been sewed on, and there was evidence of more than one sense that it was a long time ago—she began to scream.

"I ain't no boy! I can't take my clothes off. Fer God's sake lemme be!"

We quieted her as best we could. Clean clothes on a chair nearby had some effect but not much. When a vile heap of diminutive ragged garments lay at her feet, curiosity and astonishment at what they uncovered got the best of her for a moment. She looked at her naked body incredulously.

"God blast my soul," she said fervently, "if I ain't just like a boy!"

"Like—a—boy?" I wanted to know.

"She means," said Mrs. Smith, diplomatically ignoring this last oath, "that she's often seen boys in bathing. But she probably doesn't remember ever seeing her own body before. The children are often like that."

"The water's nice and warm," I vouchsafed, my hand paddling. Mrs. Smith made a step in the child's direction.

"I'll kill ye!" said the child, her teeth chattering with the fear she had momentarily forgotten. "I'll kill ye if ye lay a damned rotten old hand on me!"

"I'll spank you if you swear again," said Mrs. Smith, changing her mind about putting the child in the bath just then, and gathering up carefully the corners of the newspaper into which she had dropped the small garments she had cut off. As she carried the bundle out the little girl turned to me.

"Why does she tell me not to swear?" she asked.

"They don't swear here," I said.

"Pooh!" There was the scorn of the learned in the word. "It's easy. I could learn 'em."

Then she glanced at the tub. "She won't really make me swim, will she?" she pleaded.

"It isn't to swim in," I explained. "See, it's not deep at all. It's to make you clean. Your mother will be pleased to see you tomorrow all sweet and clean from a bath."

There was a sound that might have been a laugh. Only there was salt in it.

"Me old woman, you mean?" she said. "Will she be out tomorrow?" I didn't answer.

"She's in the cooler you know. She's done more time than any woman in the whole God dam block." There was a note of pride in the shrill little voice. I found it wise to turn the conversation, as I saw Mrs. Smith approaching.

"It's fun to take a bath," I said. "You'll like it all right once you are in."

Mrs. Smith coming up behind grabbed the gray little creature and deposited her squalling in the tub. There was splashing and there were oaths. She was spanked, scrubbed and finally left to soak. I asked Mrs. Smith what the child had been arrested for.

"Improper guardianship," she told me, going out.

"What's the dope?" asked the child stopping her blubbering instantly we were left alone.

"I don't know what you mean?" I asked.

"What'd the cop pinch me fer?" Wasn't that what you asked her?"

"He said you had no one to take care of you."

"What in hell did he lie like that for?" she protested indignantly. "Mrs. Maginnis always takes care of me when the old woman is doing time. She snitches me out of the cop's way when he comes so he don't see me. But yesterday he got the old man too. They were fightin' like hell let loose—him and the old woman. So now, who'll pay the rent?" She sat in the water meditating and let me wash her scrawny hard little arms. Suddenly light dawned.

"Say!" she said. "I got it! Maginnis got me pinched to get rid of me. She was afraid I'd get turned out of our rooms onto her, come the first, cause the old man being pinched can't pay the rent. The mean old devil, and me bringin' her coal every day!"

When Mrs. Smith reappeared and picked the small person out of the tub shame suddenly struck her. "Put some clothes on me quick," she pleaded. "I ain't no boy!"

GRACE POTTER.

Booze and Gompers Ueber Alles!

By Luigi Antonini, Delegate from the I. L. G. W. U.

"THERE is only one way of getting rid of Gompers," said one of my fellow delegates who was against Gompers on principle and was for him on policy, "and that is to wait till he is dead." Strange enough this is the state of mind of practically every anti-Gompersite in the A. F. of L. They want to get rid of him honestly enough, but they don't know how, and even if they knew they would hardly dare. There is something awe-inspiring in the fact that one man can remain at the head of millions for over forty years, and stand still while everything around him moves and changes; and there must be in whatever takes the place of the mind in the delegates to A. F. of L. conventions, a sort of obscure fear of the occult—perhaps the vague belief that some men have been anointed by the Deity to occupy their offices for life—Gompers among them—like the pope, the kings, and the judges of our Supreme Court. It's perfectly proper to criticize them—but to dislodge them? That would be sacrilege. And so they are willing to wait. Well, if such is the case I am sure we shall have to wait quite a long time, for Mr. Gompers' grandfather died only a few years ago, and he just got married last spring!

In the meantime we might as well get reconciled to the idea that without Gompers there would be no A. F. of L. conventions worth having and talking about. To give the devil his due, the last forty years of the American labor movement, taken as a whole, have been nothing but the history of one man's reign. It was Gompers who led the movement, ruled it, praised it, spanked it, thought, wrote and acted for it, and did everything it was supposed to do. He has been "l'état c'est moi" of the American Federation of Labor, not only a leader, nor even a ruler, but the very word made flesh, the essential "thing in itself," and not only of labor but of the entire life of the nation, viewed in its many facets and aspects.

I am talking seriously. He, and he alone, personifies our American era in its entirety. As a representative of our customs, our ideals, our morals, our aspirations, our politics and our state of mind, he is way above Wilson, Harding, Billy Sunday, Mitchel Palmer, Jack Dempsey, Charley Chaplin and Nicholas Murray Butler. When one mentions America, one thinks at once of Samuel Gompers, exactly as one thinks of Lenin at the mention of Soviet Russia, and of Caruso at the suggestion of Italy. He is the only American quoted throughout the world, the only one whose opinions carry weight everywhere. So how could he be overthrown short of a revolution with cutlasses, cross-bows, and blunderbusses? And do you really think that such an affair could happen here in America? Glory be!

Two great principles, the corner-stones, of our mighty labor movement, stood up, fought and won as ever at the Denver convention of the A. F. of L. These great principles are the inviolability of booze and the infallibility of Samuel Gompers. Booze won very early *de jure* by a unanimous vote (including mine, one of pious aspiration), and it also triumphed *de facto* right along, before, during and after the ceremonies, by a special and mysterious dispensation of fate, of which I was deemed unworthy to be a beneficiary. Gompers, ah! he triumphed all the time, from the moment he

ascended the throne till he walked out over the prostrate body of Lewis. Indeed even those who voted for Lewis did so in order that Gompers should have a majestic Punic battle and a truly Roman triumph. It was Gompers in excelsis, jubiled, beatified, canonized—the apotheosis of his principles, his policies, his politics, his superstitions, his Nepotism, his Gompershood, body, blood and divinity.

And there was nothing else. Everything else perished and was forgotten in the smoke of the battle royal—the fires of oratory, the thunders of the threatened wrath, the sneers and gnashing of teeth of the conquered, everything died out meekly under the thumpings of the Olympian gavel.

Perished Industrial Unionism, the low-browed Caliban, foemen of every patrician distinction between mechanic and laborer, denier of the dignity of skill, savage upholder of the intellectual nullity of mere hired hands as against the in-born nobility of trade caste. Would it do away with bureaucracy, the vested rights and the superior brains of the white overalls, walking delegates, extolled authority and the sanctity of contracts? Would it throw our great and glorious labor movement to the mercy of shop councils, direct action, mass movements, illegal strikes? By the Eternal, would it call for a true revolution by force and violence? To the sewer with it. And so with Industrial Unionism perished the One Big Union, the general strike, the election of officers by referendum, the simultaneous expiration of all agreements, the First of May, and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Came next to the block a quivering and thin-voiced resolution that called upon the government to disband the Ku-Klux-Klan as a lawless organization. The Negro delegates who introduced it had failed to arrange for a midwife, and so the baby was three days late, when no new resolutions could be considered save by unanimous consent. It was refused. William Hutchinson of the carpenters, one of the best parliamentary gunmen of the A. F. of L., said no, and killed it without even a two-minute discussion by way of baptism. Hutchinson is a staunch believer in infant damnation, and the damnation of everything else that would make Negroes and carpenters walk on two legs like men.

The Organization of the Unskilled, all but bled to death by the flebotomists of the committee room, was temporarily revived by the hot breath of the "rank and file" on the floor. D'Alessandro of the excavators, who was knighted by the Italian king for having gotten out of Italy, and who can mangle two languages with unbelievable dexterity, made a really moving plea for the extension of the blessings of *per capita* taxes to the unskilled. But this resolution also was unmercifully put to sleep after it had been sent back for reconsideration to the committee incubator.

The Orientals were then assailed again with unprecedented ferocity, owing perhaps to the fact that most of the delegates had been informed that the Orient is very near to Russia. They were kicked out of the country without even being handed their hats—a repeal being demanded even of the gentlemen's agreement between Washington and Tokio. Which was quite consistent and statesmanlike. Yellow men are a positive menace to the yellowist organization in the world. It was a case of professional jealousy. They would compete

with us in the reduction of everything, save the bosses profits. No, by heck! the enslavement of the American workers must be the task of the American workers themselves!

Disarmament made a good entrance and a good show, but if it was advocated strongly, it was faintly acted upon. The parliament of Labor, the third chamber of the United States government, advised the other two houses to call a conference of the bandits of all nations to the end of determining to what extent they should reduce the number of billies, jimmies, iron knuckles and automatics, in order to reduce the cost of living without endangering their industry. There was no unpatriotic motive underlying this recommendation. At no time was the American second story man to be put in a condition of inferiority to the British hold-up artist, the French cambrioleur and the Italian black-hander. It was simply a profound and scholarly plan to establish solidarity and trade-union conditions among the banditti.

Some of the ladies of the convention, assisted by a few gentlemen—very few—introduced a resolution granting full and unbridged right of citizenship to women in the A. F. of L. But the convention, which apparently was dead against any and all amendments to the Constitution of the United States, whether adopted by the republic or not, rejected the 19th with the same serenity it had rejected the 13th and the 18th. J. Mahlon Barnes of the cigarmakers, growing evidently reminiscent of his former—very much former—socialist days, fought valiantly for the ladies—God bless them—but to no avail. Women, like Negroes, are not wanted in the republic of labor.

With great dispatch, once the machine got well started, the electric guillotine shortened out the heads of every other resolution that had a vestige of liberality in it. It killed the Irish boycott on British goods; it flattened out to very smooth proportions the resolution on government ownership democratically controlled. And it repudiated any and every form of international affiliation, second, second and half, third and so on *ad infinitum*.

But the climax was reached when the report of the Executive Council on Russia was read. No resolutions on Russia had been introduced; no union, no delegate was there in

this convention of cadavers and mummies brave enough even to demand that Russia be let alone. So what the "liberals" failed to do, Gompers did. His report is well known. It is the most infamous piece of writing produced by any man since the latest book of John Spargo on Bolshevism.

And here I can remain calm and objective no longer. I must shout, for my flesh quivers and revolts with disgust and anger. I can forgive anything, an unrepenting obstinacy in sin, a serial repetition of wilful mistakes, an opinionated persistence in ignoring facts and denying revealed truth, even wilful wrongdoing, even the deliberate trading of the daily bread of American workers, but I cannot condone or tolerate the ignoble and shameless barter of the very soul of the working class. I may be persuaded by the skillful Satans, who read and write English fluently, if that be the true key to the heart of America as my learned friends assure me—I may be led to believe that the American workers have a different psychology than all other workers of the world. I may be induced to admit that Italians, Frenchmen, Slavs, Turks, Persians, Germans, Kaffirs, Greeks and Japanese and the rest of the world are all alike, all mentally deficient, and therefore equally prone to accept truth for error and submit to wrong. Confronted with the full pail, bath-tub, the New York Times, the 44 hour week, the high wages, the daily Gillette, and such other blessings as the American worker seems to enjoy alone among the privileged of the world, I may be easily led to believe that America is another unit of the cosmos, and not a part of the poor, crawling, miserable human earth. It may be that industrial unionism, race equality, sex-equality, class-antagonism, international affiliations, even the common feeling of neighborliness are meant only for inferior peoples, and not for our American supermen. Perhaps we don't need here the One Big Union, being fully protected by the supreme court and the absolute and inalienable right to choose between the Democratic and the Republican party. Perhaps all we need from a labor convention is a resolution in favor of nationalization and democratic control of the railroads, subsidized in the meantime by additional taxation, and the assurance that the open shop will not be re-established, if we are willing to starve to the very seat of the soul for it. Perhaps we must confess that Socialism is really an infernal invention of the

German ogre, and Bolshevism a pest and infection from Asia. I don't know enough English to judge. I am among strange and superior people. I recite my confiteor and smite my chest with a humble "domine, non sum dignus." But, by whatever is red and warm and universal in the breast of every man, I deny that the American working-class would consciously subscribe to the infamous report of the General Council of the American Federation of Labor on Russia.

I refuse to be convinced that the miner who lost his brother in the bull pen of Idaho, and had his wife violated first and then burned alive in the gullies of Ludlow, really wants the Russian moujik led back in chains to the charnel house of the grand-ducal landlords! I revolt at the notion that the carpenter, the ironworker, the sailor, the excavator, the cigarmaker, the weaver, starved-out, locked-out, brow-beaten, disposed, sold out by the Brindells, betrayed by the Hutchinsons, flim-flammed by the Gompers, really feels that the Rus-



Money Talks

sian Socialist Republic of the Workers and Peasants is a "brutal, despotic and defenseless tyranny." No, by whatever life-force is still left in the rank and file of the toilers, by whatever is still holy, and revered in the traditions of America, this is not the expression of American labor and the American people. It is a lie. It is the testimony of Judas. It may be the viewpoint of the A. F. of L. Convention, but it is not the voice of the five million organized workers that have pilgrimed here from all the corners of the earth.

I wish I had the voice of Marat to be heard now. I would shout with as fierce a passion as his: "Workers, we are betrayed. Workers, we are being sold out by a gang of cut-throats. We are being plundered and despoiled in our pockets and in our souls. Rise up and away with them! Down with the buccanniers! A la lanterne!"

The first official act of Samuel Gompers, upon being re-elected for the fortieth time, and after he made the stupidest, rankest, most asinine speech of self-congratulation ever made by any swineherd who thought himself a leader of men, was to relinquish the gavel to a vice-president and nominate a member of the Executive Council. The man he nominated, the first time, he admitted it himself, that he took such a step—was a certain Thomas Rickert. Thomas Rickert is the present of the United Garment Workers of America. The United Garment Workers of America is the biggest and most brazen labor fraud in the world. It is not a labor organization, having as such been utterly destroyed by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, who blindfolded it, tied it down on a chair, and shot it in the back for high treason against the working-class, but committed the mistake of leaving it unburied to disappear of its own putrefaction. Gompers picked up its carrion, embalmed it, stuffed it with straw, blowed it out with his own afflatus, and set it up as an abiding example of his power and the greatest world symbol of the treason, shamelessness and infamy of craft-divisionism. The United Garment Workers is to American labor what Kolchak was to the Russian revolution. Rickert is to Samuel Gompers what Bakhmeteff is to Harding. That he is still alive, after the wrathful insurrection of the rank and file that launched the Amalgamated eight years ago, is due first to the mild temper of these Jews who do not believe in lynching—and second to the glib tongue of Morris Hillquit, who, by saving him from some other form of summary justice, first made his reputation as a great lawyer. There is no fouler religion of scabbery in the world than that of the United Garment Workers—some 2,000 scabs among 200,000 organized tailors—and Rickert is its Mahomet.

Yes Gompers, for the first time in his entire career, left the chair, to nominate and elect Rickert for his Executive Council. What say my fellow delegates, including the socialist president of my

International, who voted for Samuel Gompers on the ground that Lewis was just as reactionary? I say that no greater insult could be offered by the old chieftain to the misguided sentimentalists and "real-politicians" who abdicated their right to think according to their own conscience, for fear that Gompers might be elected anyhow.

Well, he has been elected again. Perhaps he will be elected again next year, and the next, and the next, until he dies of election. Oh, yes, he will die in the harness. He is made of stern and hard stuff. But he is not eternal. As my fellow delegate said, "We must have patience and trust in nature." Amen! But I am glad that while I trust in nature, I don't have to forget that if she makes sometimes for longevity, and organizes conventions and elects politicians, kills liberty and decency, she also arranges for earthquakes, floods, drastic reforms and revolutions. Somewhere a lot of illiterates, unwashed and unshaved primitives, blasted away an empire, put an elite to work, and set up a soviet republic, and nature either connived with them or tolerated their diabolical conspiracy. They may be brutal, they may be despotic, but they are not "defenseless," as the A. F. of L. resolution states, for they have labor delegates who are not afraid to vote right and a Red Army that can shoot straight.



A Drawing by Maurice Becker



Marriage and Freedom

By Floyd Dell

[In the first article of this series, printed last month, we discussed, as you may remember, the objections to marriage. We came to the conclusion that marriage, in its traditional form, consisted of a mutual and exclusive arrangement between a man and a woman concerning bed, board and babies. We discussed the mutual and exclusive baby at some length, and considered sympathetically the widespread modern revolt against him. In this second article we are going to discuss the growing objection to the other aspects of traditional marriage.]

II. Board and Bed

MY friend Tompkins is an exquisitely neurotic soul. He has never been married. I asked him why. He shuddered, and told me.

"Precisely what I cannot stand about marriage," he said, "is its vulgarity."

"Dear me!" I said. "Just what do you mean—precisely?"

"Take breakfast, for instance," he said. "Breakfast can be one of the most delightful of occasions. But only so long as it remains occasional! So long, that is to say, as it retains the quality of surprise and adventure. How could breakfast remain an adventure if one were married? It would be merely a habit. The philosopher Emerson once complained of the intrusion of others into one's private life. They presume, he said, to remember whether one takes one lump or two—and thus the strangeness which is the essence of beauty in human relations, is lost! I am content to take this remark of a great philosopher for my text. When I breakfast

tête-à-tête with a charming young woman, as I sometimes do, it is only natural that I should for a moment conceive my life in terms of an endless succession of such breakfasts; but the next moment I realize the mad folly of such a dream. It is only while we do not know each other, only while we are so strange to each other that the fact of two lumps of sugar instead of one or three, comes as an interesting revelation of character—only so long is breakfast a delightful adventure."

"But why," I protested, "should marriage—I mean breakfast—remain an adventure?"

"You," he said, "are one of those realists who insist on reminding us that breakfast is, after all, a matter of simple animal economy, the eating of food in order to promote one's physical well-being. It may be so. I am well aware that we are descended from the apes instead of from the angels; I know that we have gross physical appetites that must be assuaged; but I prefer not to think of them in such terms. Breakfast must be an adventure to me. If I had to think of it in realistic terms, I could not face the horror of existence."

Now do not think too harshly of my friend Tompkins. Laugh at him if you will, but note that you are also laughing at yourself. Tompkins is ridiculous; but so are we all of us ridiculous, in precisely the same way. And this neurotic fastidiousness of his goes right to the heart of the problem of marriage.

Tompkins is, as I forgot to mention, but as you have perhaps deduced from his remarks, a most immoral man. He is no less obviously an idealist. He has been described as a

butterfly, flitting lightly from breakfast to breakfast. That may be a correct description. But he has also been called a sensualist—which is utterly untrue, and quite absurd. The trouble with Tompkins is that he is not sensual enough. If he were, he could face the prospect of breakfast with the same companion for the rest of his life with a hearty appetite. But no, he is too physically squeamish for that. And the same temperament which sends other men to a monastery, sends him off on the career of a Don Juan. It is his idealistic horror of the plain facts of life which requires him to escape continually from them into the illusion of a new adventure.

You are not like that, of course. And yet, again, you are. For all mankind is like that—all mankind is cursed in greater or less degrees with a neurotic fastidiousness concerning sex. This fastidiousness ranges from the mild forms with which you and I are afflicted to the severe forms which drive some of our less fortunate brethren to drink, asceticism, social reform, art, insanity and suicide.

The question of the origin of this squeamishness concerning sex is a very interesting one; and so far as I am aware—though it is just possible that I am mistaken—I know the answer better than anybody else in the world, not even excepting Messrs. Freud, Ferenczi and Havelock Ellis. It is an answer which incidentally sheds a new light upon the origin of clothes, table-manners, perfumes, private property, drinking, the plastic arts, religion, and marriage itself!

Naturally, you would like to know about it. And, naturally, I am not going to tell you. For if I did undertake to do so, I would in the process so deeply offend your sexual squeamishness that you would rise up as one man and demand that I be put in jail. It is no use for you to assure me that you are too broad-minded to be shocked. I know better!

Suffice it, then, to say that there is such a squeamishness in the human mind; that it has existed ever since our pre-human ancestors stopped going on all fours; and that since that time, with the assistance of poetry and art and religion, mankind—especially masculine mankind—has been engaged in trying to forget, to deny, escape from, or to gloss over, to poeticise, to idealize, to prettify, the crude facts of our physical nature.

I go as far as I dare when I say that there is in mankind a neurotic disgust of sex; and that a full half of our human energy, for hundreds of thousands of years, has been consumed in an endless elaboration of manners, customs, conventional theories and other social expedients designed for the purpose of repressing that disgust, of keeping it within bounds so that life may go on.

One of these expedients has been the institution of marriage. The institution of marriage, as any student of anthropology knows, was designed for the purpose of keeping men and women as much as possible apart. The husband lived in his own world, from which his wife was strictly excluded. The wife lived in her own world, into which her husband did not enter. They did different kinds of work, they had different interests, they kept all kinds of "trade secrets" from each other. They were afraid of each other. They had no free intimacy with each other, not even of a physical sort; for even here their association was governed and limited by rules, regulations and taboos. Especially was marriage designed to prevent that utterly lawless and anarchic state of affairs, known as "being in love."

But, for a variety of reasons which I cannot stop to enumerate, marriage has changed in the last two thousand five hundred years. It was beginning to change in Euripides'

time; and Christianity only accelerated the change. The old respectable pagan marriage which kept husband and wife apart has been shattered by the wild spirit of individualism which Christianity so recklessly promoted. Man and woman no longer stand securely entrenched behind the barriers of conventional masculinity and femininity. They face each other in modern marriage in a naked spiritual and physical intimacy at which any right-minded savage would have stood appalled.

One word about our savage friend. We sometimes think of savages as being free. That notion is quite erroneous. The savage was never free for a single moment. His life was lived according to the most elaborate rules. His actions were guided by a sense of punctilio, of convention, and of fastidiousness, of which we vulgar civilized folk have no idea. Yes, of fastidiousness! If a savage chieftain's wife should touch his spear, he could never use it again. And if a woman should perchance look upon that sacred masculine plaything, the "bull-roarer," she must die! But we have let women use our guns and our golf-clubs, our cigarettes and our surgical instruments, our law books and paint-brushes, and finally even our sacred vote. And because they do not want to chew tobacco or wear suspenders, we give up complaisantly those last distinguishing features of virile masculinity. We no longer carefully inhabit different worlds. We no longer think and act with a fastidious difference according to our sex. We are apparently so robust as to be able to associate with the other sex without artificial barriers. We even find it agreeable to do so. We are as men and women, no longer afraid of each other.

Afraid of Women

But what of my friend Tompkins, that exquisitely neurotic soul? He is evidently not so robust. He is afraid of the other sex. He can endure only the slightest intimacy with it. That is why he is afraid of modern marriage. A respectable pagan marriage would suit him exactly. He need have no fear of vulgar intrusions into his spiritual privacy then. After a lifetime of conventional pagan marriage, he would still know as little of his wife as he knows of the charming creature with whom he breakfasts for the first—and, like the Caliph in the Arabian Nights, for the last—time.

But what, it may reasonably be asked, has the spiritual intimacy characteristic of modern marriage to do with the squeamishness upon which this discussion is predicated? Just this: a spiritual intimacy between the sexes is bound to reveal to each the truth about the other; and this truth is, to men at least, almost unbearably shocking. They will go to infinite pains to keep from facing the truth about women. Let us take, as a simple and printable illustration, the fact of childbirth. It has become more and more the custom, encouraged by women and doctors, for husbands to be coerced into witnessing some of the stages of this process, instead of, as was formerly the case, going off and getting drunk. Now a baby is born every minute of every day; and yet of this so familiar event, only one truthful description has, to my knowledge, ever appeared in the world's fiction; and that was in a novel by Upton Sinclair. It is a description so truthful that strong men faint when they try to read it, and upon recovering consciousness demand that the book be burned up and the author put in jail! They say—and I believe it—that the description sickens them. And so, when they are compelled to witness it, does the event itself sicken



"You can't do it in those se

...ING CIVILIZATION



those clothes, you know."

them. . . . But observe the husband next day, after he has recovered; observe him, all smiles, handing around cigars, and receiving congratulations from his fellow-males! Does a word of what he has passed through escape his lips? No—not a syllable. That dreadful knowledge shall die with him. He will behave as if he were a conventional savage husband from whom that particular truth was jealously guarded by women as a sort of trade-secret. He behaves precisely as if he thought babies were found in cabbage-patches—which is a literal statement of the conventional belief of savage husbands. If they knew better, they thought it polite not to let on. And so does the ordinary civilized male to-day. Woman's manner of bringing children into the world is one of the things about her which men do not like to think about.

Well, there are, first and last, quite a lot of things about women which men do not like to think about. In the Victorian era they did not like to think that women had legs. It made them sick to think of it. They hid the legs up. Now it is perfectly respectable for women to have legs, up to, at least, as far as the knees. But in other respects women are so offensive to the delicate masculine imagination that I cannot allude in print to their peculiarities. No, not in a respectable family magazine like this! Why, as the saying goes, discuss such things? It is bad enough that they should exist—it is intolerable that they should be talked about.



Groppe

Nevertheless, one must live with them. No wonder our exquisite friend Tompkins balks at the intimacy of modern marriage!

But let me here introduce to you my friend Simpkins. Do not get him confused with Tompkins, please. He is quite different, though he also is a most immoral man. So many of one's friends are, is it not so? Yes. Well, Simpkins believes in free love. He is, you will observe, much more immoral than Tompkins, who merely practices it. Simpkins, you will not be surprised to learn, is also an idealist. He disapproves of marriage on idealistic and theoretical grounds. He is himself married, it is true. But who among us lives up to his ideals? If such a one there be, let him cast the first stone. Yes, poor Simpkins is married. Aside from his theories, he is perfectly respectable and well behaved. He loves his wife. He is, in fact, madly in love with her. But it irks him that the common herd—meaning you and me—should suppose that the reason he continues to love her is that he once promised a justice of the peace that he would.

Now you and I suppose nothing of the sort. It is only Simpkins who supposes that we suppose so. That promise irks him. He believes that love cannot be constrained by any promise. Well, most of us agree with him there. Sometimes we wish it could be, but we know better. Only, where we are rather sad about that fact, Simpkins is defiant. He is glad that love cannot be outwardly constrained. And the reason for this is that he believes quite outrageously in the inner constraint of love itself. He believes that love can do what justices of the peace cannot. He believes that love is enough to hold a man and woman together. Perhaps it is. But what I wish to point out is that it horrified my friend Simpkins to conceive of a man and woman living together under any other constraint than that of the sacred madness of love.

And the secret of my friend Simpkins' defiance to society might be to put into these words: "Why, you poor idiots, don't you know that the intimacy of marriage is utterly intolerable from the very start, unless mitigated by a very great deal of love! This intimacy of bed and board is no bond whatever—and what I object to is the folly of the social pretense that it is. People remain in love in spite of being married!"

Strong words, these! You will perceive that he shares that distaste for what my friend Tompkins calls the vulgarity of marriage; only he has found in the mystic impulses of love an anodyne for the pain of intimacy. But, despite this difference, you will conclude that Simpkins is, like Tompkins, a delicate soul.

There are, happily, you will say, few of these delicate souls in our coarse world. On the contrary. If I had the latest statistics of divorce at hand I could prove it. People who could continue to have the greatest regard for each other if they did not have to live together, find each other intolerable as intimate companions. They flee from each other's society into business, social work, clubs, lodges, etc.—seeking, you will observe, to re-create the savage arrangements whereby husband and wife saw as little of each other as possible. But even so they see too much of one another for them to stand—and when they cannot stand it any longer, they behave in whatever way the law requires as an excuse for their separation.

The fact is, modern marriage is too intimate and exclusive an arrangement for conventional-minded savages to endure. And that, if I may be permitted to say so, is what we still are. You cannot keep men and women apart as much as modern life still does, and then thrust them into the terrific



and unrelieved intimacy of modern marriage, and expect them not to suffer. One of two things must happen. And, as is usually the case, both are happening.

On the one hand, the old savage barriers between the sexes are being broken down before marriage. Men and women are learning to play together and work together. On the other hand, the old savage barriers are being built up again in marriage itself. We are educating people for marriage by making them less romantically ignorant of each other. And we are easing up the demands of marriage upon its victims.

We think we are being very modern when we let our wives go into law, business, and the arts, when we let them "have careers" of their own. But even the poor savage women of Darkest Africa have secret organizations which serve the same purpose—i. e., give them something to think about besides their homes. In so far as these activities merely take them out of the home, they are no great advance after all. In so far as such activities take them into the great world of human activity, they are something different. For in the great world of human activity a husband and wife may meet and rediscover each other as human beings; and from that world they may bring back into the warm intimacy of the home some of the cool human impersonality which we all crave.

We are accustomed to use the word "freedom" in connection with the symptoms of revolt against the emotional bondage of the home. A woman is supposed to be "free" when she continues to use her own name after marriage, instead of being known as "Mrs." Free from what? From the social advertisement of the fact that she has entered into mutual and exclusive arrangements concerning bed and board with some man. So far, so good. For that fact is of no great importance to anybody but herself and the man. But free to what, as Nietzsche would ask? To nothing in particular, except perhaps some embarrassing attentions from men who aspire to such an arrangement with her, not knowing that she has made previous commitments. It is a very limited freedom which only enables her to shake off the bondage of domestic emotions as she leaves home for her office. A much more real freedom would be one which enabled her to bring back into the home the impersonality of her outside career. Is such a freedom possible? Perhaps I will tell you in my next article.

The Prima Donna

SHE ceases. Midst the thunderous applause
That greets her smiling exit, ushers come
Flower-laden to the stage, and she must pause,
Renew her bow, and graciously succumb
To this, the final tribute . . . Then she turns
And chooses from her wealth a quaint bouquet
Of yellow jonquils: in her eyes there burns
One moment sudden fire that seems to say,
"He called them golden goblets, long ago,
Upheld to catch the sunlight and the rain—
'Joy-cups,' he said. I wonder, does he know?"
She holds them to her heart, and bows again.
Oh, does she dream a face, a last caress—
Or is it merely, jonquils match her dress?

Sea-Gulls

THE gray clouds lean with mist-wet eyes
Above a quiet sea;
Across the night the white gulls drift
And circle endlessly.
So might those spirits lost to love
Turn hungry eyes to sea
And beat their wings against the night,
As sea-gulls, hopelessly.

Roads

BROWN roads there are that walk with stones,
Green roads that walk with grass,
And long gray boulevards there are
Where men and women pass;
A high-road journeys with the hills,
A cool road with the trees,
And by the stream a still road runs;
But I'll have none of these.
I want a road that walks with waves
Where sand and sea-foam are,
A road that whispers of the deep,
And gray mist and a star.
There let me walk when night comes down
And faint the far lights gleam;
Alone upon a white sea road,
With silence and a dream.

Helen Frazee-Bower.

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The Socialist Pin-Wheel

By Our Special Correspondent

THE Socialist National Convention, June 25-29, had moved from the auditorium of Detroit's new and immaculate Northeastern High School to the Auto Workers' Temple, where men and women not undergoing the process of being educated for respectability could feel more at home, though it is not certain that many of the Socialist delegates were conscious of moving toward their natural element.

It was Monday noon, the third day of the convention. Odors of corn beef and cabbage came up into the temple auditorium from the workingmen's kitchen in the basement, where two free meals a day have been served since mid-winter to men with cards and gnawing hungers but no jobs. The odor, however, was faint enough to be inoffensive. It was rather a stimulating altar incense, unholy, perhaps, but commanding its own kind of reverence. The auto workers, who are outlawed from the A. F. of L. because they refused to split and settle themselves into the slot machine of craft organization, maintain a temple that stands with the House of the Masses as a place historic, stern, yet friendly. It is a bare temple, without flags or frescoes. Its ceiling is the roof, an ill-sheltering rude sky of hard-felled and hard-hewn timber.

While the thirty-nine assorted delegates were trying here to define the policy and course of the Socialist Party for another year, there was noticeable suddenly a stir in the hallway leading in from the street. A dozen Detroit Socialists in the hallway had become suddenly enlivened. For in the midst of this group stood a towering policeman in a blue uniform.

"Is there a Socialist here?" the policeman asked. A few of those surrounding him bristled a little.

"What do you want?" one of the Socialists demanded.

The policeman, notwithstanding his great size, was embarrassed. He took off his cap.

"Well," he said, "I heard yesterday that 75 per cent of labor in this country is exploited. And I saw the convention sign outside and I thought maybe I could find a Socialist in here. I thought maybe I could find out just how it is that 75 per cent of labor is exploited."

"Why, we write books about it," said one of the Socialists.

"It's not 75 per cent; it's 82 per cent," said another member of the Detroit local.

"I'll tell you how to find out how that is," said the first. "Read 'Value Price and Profit,' by Karl Marx. He was a Socialist like us."

The policeman, fumbling in his pocket, found a pencil. He wrote down the name and title and went away, expressing his thanks. There were smiles in the hallway.

It must have been, however, that the burly policeman found "Value, Price and Profit" a bewildering introductory primer. There was an evening session that night and the bluecoat came back. A different group of hangers-on stood in the hallway and the policeman again explained his purpose in coming. Someone went to find Algernon Lee, thinking that Lee could answer the policeman's question. But Lee was reported to be outside somewhere smoking a cigarette. Then Otto Branstetter, national secretary of the party, came along and was conducted to the visitor in quest of knowledge.

Branstetter said, "I'm sorry, brother, but I am too busy to talk to you just now. If you will write to headquarters we will send you some literature."

Branstetter had been busily trying to introduce a resolution.

Once more the policeman expressed his thanks and went away. Branstetter had been so courteous that the policeman may have gone a whole block before realizing that he had not learned anything. But perhaps he is a determined soul and secretly vowed to himself, "I'll find out the truth of this matter in spite of these Socialists!"

All of this time, and for two previous days, and for two days and evenings thereafter, the debate in the convention continued unceasingly on the question of what the party's 1921 attitude was to be toward the dictatorship of the proletariat, the general strike, mass action, sabotage, the soviet system, and other phases and definitions of phases of the revolution. And when the convention adjourned, with an oratorical round-robin in which the convention unanimously congratulated itself on having been a successful convention, the party's attitude was far from being formed.

To be temporarily Newtonian, weather vanes and pin-wheels do not act alike when the wind blows. The one finds the direction of an inevitable, unalterable driving force and holds to that course, pointing the way. The other, a far weaker vessel and nothing of a prophet, merely spins and spins, primarily for the amusement of the young. The Socialist Party of the United States is now spinning.

The question of affiliation with the Third International was the first to be considered, after the delegates had been seated and after Morris Hillquit had been made chairman for the forenoon. Engdahl, arguing valiantly in the face of an almost solidly hostile convention, could muster only three votes besides his own for affiliation. Voting with him on the roll call were Otto Newman, of Portland, Ore.; H. F. Flanagan, of Atlanta, and C. W. Kirkendall, West Virginia's delegate.

William F. Kruse held out for affiliation with reservations and his results equalled those of Engdahl—three votes besides his own. The motion which carried, and carried in a way which characterized the convention, was the one for which Hillquit was sponsor, the motion for no affiliation of any kind with any European group, not even with the Two and a Half.

"We can't swallow the twenty-one points but we can petition again for admission to the Communist International on a better basis," Kruse pleaded.

"The Third International doesn't want us, and, besides, what have we to give?" Hillquit asked in response. It was the obvious answer and it had a weariness about it.

Nevertheless, it began to look as if the convention would be volcanic. Flanagan's matter-of-fact explanation of why he was going to vote for affiliation greatly excited the gallery. There was tumultuous whistling and clapping of hands. Hillquit was still chairman. And Hillquit, at all other times amiable and self-contained, silenced the gallery's applause of Flanagan with thunderous strokes of his gavel. He then announced in angry, autocratic tones that a formal con-

clave of Socialist delegates was 'in convention assembled' and that no enthusiasm (of that kind) would be tolerated. Quiet reigned thereafter. It reigned until Kruse called Branstetter a liar.

Branstetter had introduced his favorite resolution. It provided for the expulsion from the Socialist Party of all Communists and of all who advocated affiliation with the Third International. Rose Coleman, third alternate from Pittsburg, the only woman seated, exclaimed after Branstetter's resolution was read: "This certainly does not look like a Socialist convention to me. This resolution is carrying intolerance to the extent practiced in the Fifteenth Century, when the Church burned heretics at the stake."

Branstetter then explained, smilingly, that his resolution was just a joke anyhow. He said affiliation with the Third International would have resulted in the expulsion of all members of the Socialist Party who did not support the twenty-one points, and that his resolution was merely intended as a disciplinary taste of that kind of medicine, for the advocates of affiliation. "Advocates of affiliation did not protest against the expulsion of members which would have been required by the twenty-one points," Branstetter added. "But now that the tables are turned there is a great cry of horror and the charge of intolerance is made."

"Anyone who says that the advocates of affiliation did not protest against the twenty-one points is a liar!" Kruse cried out, pointing his long forefinger at Branstetter, who stood grinning down at him from the platform. Kruse had had difficulty in getting the floor and was angry. Furthermore, neither he nor Engdahl believed that Branstetter's resolution had even the suggestion of a jest in it. Both resented the manner of its introduction as hypocritical and cowardly.

Lee was chairman. And the term "liar" applied in debate to the national secretary was too much for him to excuse. He banged his gavel and ordered Kruse to sit down. Kruse obtained an appeal, however, and was sustained by a convention vote of 16 to 15. Whereupon he resumed his denunciation of the resolution, which, if it had carried, would have lost him and Engdahl, at least, their party memberships.

"I am not a party wrecker," Kruse continued, replying to a charge that had frequently been made indirectly against himself and Engdahl. "But I want the kind of party that will be an inspiration to the working calss. If that is a crime before this convention, then I am guilty of that crime. If, as Comrade Hillquit says, the motion for affiliation with the Third International is suicidal, because of the expulsion of many members which would follow affiliation, it is also suicidal to join the capitalist anvil chorus condemning the Third



"Didn't we give you the vote? What more do you want?"

International. The working class is leaning toward Moscow, whether you like it or not. Be at least as much of a Socialist organization as you were two years ago!"

And Engdahl, after calling Victor Berger "a dictator carrying the Milwaukee organization in his pocket," said, "The Third International is not the greatest destroyer but is the greatest uniting force in the world today. The party which will overthrow capitalism in the United States will be the American section of the Third International."

But nothing could be done about it. Delegates from California, Ohio and Wisconsin warned the convention that affiliation with the Third International would cause the formation of a new party in at least those three states.

"Stick to the middle of the road," counselled Hillquit. "We must pay no attention to the denunciations of the capitalists on the Right or the Communists on the Left."

"Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Volleyed and thundered;

Thiers not to make reply,
Thiers not to reason why . . ."

One resolution was tabled which would have given many of the delegates a feeling of robust ruthlessness. It would have been for them a beginning toward twenty-one points of their own. This resolution would have forbidden any member of the Socialist Party to be a member of a Chamber of Commerce or of the American Legion.

The delegates then voted to table two motions which would have committed them as to why, when, and how mass action should be resorted to. They tabled one motion defining direct action, and another which expressed scorn for sabotage as an "anti-social" method. Two motions outlining the party's attitude toward the soviet system were voted down, Kruse having described one of them as a "back-handed slap at the Russian Soviet Government." Two motions and three amendments, even an amendment proposed by Hillquit, intended to define an approved and certified dictatorship of the proletariat, were voted down. Neither could the delegates agree on just what should be meant by political action. Two motions on this question were spurned. The second motion was worded, "Political action, as advocated by the Socialist Party of the United States, is any organized, concerted endeavor on the part of the working class to influence the process of government, particularly the participation in elections for public offices and the utilization of such positions when won for the enlightenment, betterment and emancipation of the workers."

"Syndicalism!" cried Dan Hoan, mayor of Milwaukee. He argued that this motion did not specify voting on election day. Perhaps he wanted election day specified because that is the time when mayors are elected.

"This motion could be construed as including bomb-throwing in our party program," cried Charles Solomon.

And Kruse, though he argued, "I want the Socialist Party's definition of political action to include Mooney parades and amnesty demonstrations as already practised by the Socialist Party," could muster only 11 votes with the help of Engdahl.

Engdahl and Kruse were unable to convince the other delegates that they ought to adopt a concise platform as a starting point for building anew, for raising the party mem-

bership from 17,000. But even if the motions under the agenda had carried, they would not have signified much after all. The wording of the motions, which were drafted by the national executive committee, was invariably vague and trite. The convention, therefore, in almost every instance, merely marked time, contemplating its traditions. Such a party will attract as many adherents as a man shaking hands with himself.

Much ado was made by many delegates over the proposal to call a unity conference next year with "other militant" working class organizations, for the purpose, apparently, of conferring. Dan Hoan, who proposed the plan, said he would not object to conferring even with the farmers' organizations of the Middle West. It was said that this was to be the most momentous step the Socialist Party had ever taken, it was carrying the party's message to the workers. But Hillquit and others saw in the original resolution a chance for political trading between Berger and his political opponents in Wisconsin. And the amendment, which was carried to forestall such a partition of Wisconsin, leaves it to the executive committee to "hand-pick" the conferees, if, in addition, the executive committee believes after a survey that a unity conference is after all what the country needs.

Excitement threatened to interrupt the convention on the last day. Fifty representatives from a convention of disabled veterans of the war entered Auto Workers' Temple and demanded that their leader be allowed to speak. The former soldiers objected to a remark by Engdahl about the red flag, which had been published in a morning newspaper and, humorously enough, attributed to Victor Berger. Their speaker, a former opponent of a former mayor of Seattle, went through the procedure customary on such occasions. Of his quite threatening speech the phrases "meet force with force," "settle the argument in the street," and "machine guns" are all that linger in the memory." Cameron King, of California, chairman of this session, then responded with a few calm and judicious words, the last of which were, "There was only one movement throughout the world which tried to preserve world peace; that was the Socialist movement. And if we had been successful your sacrifices, which have caused you to meet in convention, would not have been necessary."

That was all there was to it. King and the gentleman from Seattle shook hands and the soldiers went away. The soldiers seemed a little disgruntled. They probably felt they had made a tactical blunder inasmuch as there was no riot.

There was one problem before the Socialist National Convention on which all delegates were agreed: Eugene Debs, Tom Mooney and all their political prisoners must be got out of penitentiaries. An appeal was sent to all who belong to the revolutionary working class movement to join in a renewal of the amnesty drive. And a communication was addressed to President Harding.

The last official act of the convention was to elect a new national executive committee. This election shows more briefly than anything else the temper of the Socialist Party of the United States and its place in the international movement. The seven members of the committee were elected from the Right Wing of the party. Then six of the seven alternates were elected from the Right Wing. And then, last of the last, Kruse was elected seventh alternate. Kruse takes a position farther to the Right than Engdahl. The party, therefore, is fourteen digits away even from hallooing distance with the Third International, for the executive committee of the Third International has refused to recognize even Kruse and Engdahl as definite revolutionists.



"I do so want you to meet my husband—I always say the world would not be the same if everybody were compelled to read his book, *The Respect Due To Wealth!*"

A Black Star

"WHERE do I go from here?" is the question that will trouble Charles Gilpin, after his sensational run in "The Emperor Jones" on Broadway. It is said that the play may be taken to London, and there, if nothing is amiss with the theatre world, Gilpin will receive another great welcome. But when his London nights are over, he will still have the question where he can go from here. One might hope that he will find a place in Europe. But for all its twilight charm, old Europe is no haven for a young, striving American Negro. After a while he will tire even of kindly, but unrelieved pale-pink faces, and his heart will turn with sad longing to the dark limited areas of his own country. He will see through a mist, soft and indefinable, their colorful loveliness, and yield to the irresistible call to return to his own, to laugh and struggle and hope with them.

It is not strange that in spite of his outstanding ability, there is no legitimate place for Gilpin in the American theatre. His picture tells the story. He delighted thousands of white citizens, respectable and otherwise; he earned their generous applause. But he was not of them! Gilpin had won publicity, honor and fame. What more should he crave? Many white players would exchange places with him—perhaps color, too, if they could wear it with Caucasian pride and effrontery.

For Gilpin did not only play the part, but he made a play. If in the dialogues and monologues of the play there are no altitudes, and no depths lower than street corner brawls; if it is arid of the poetry and philosophy of a Problem, barren of humor and strangely lacking in the finer emotions that are shared by all types of peoples; Gilpin unstintedly throws his big human personality into it, and saves the play from becoming a mere comic grotesque.

CLAUDE MCKAY.



John Barber

Charles Gilpin

A Day As a Wage

JUST the clanking of switch engines down by the station,
Just the quivering hum of a truck far away,
Just the murmur of fall and the soft respiration
Of the breezes this Sunday, this indolent day,
Just the branches above me caressing and kissing,
(And a lad out in front of me batting up flies
While two others are running to catch them and missing,
Then are smoothing their hair and arranging their ties)
Just a cloud or a twist of white smoke that is drifting
Past the squares of brick houses mapped out on the hills,
Just the lid of black smoke hanging low, never lifting
From that valley of tracks and disconsolate mills,
Just the blue cigarette smoke perfuming my fingers
That is gray when it floats from my nostrils or lips,
Just a fancy or longing or something that lingers
In my thoughts into which a regretfulness slips:
Nothing else; nothing busy; no people come scorning
One who loves to stretch out with the sun on his cheek
In a world all his own on his own Sunday morning
Which is his in return for the rest of his week.

Keene Wallis.

A Ballad of Jealousy

CAN you remember John's great boast
Of how true Jane, his girl wife, was?
Can you imagine our John's ghost
Seeping up through the year-old grass?

Can you imagine young John Macy's
Heart-starved ghost from a year-old grave
Come striding forth with John's great paces—
Most handsome essence, joyous, brave!

Forgetting death, so alive was John,
For joy in the moon and cool low stars? . . .
Through tombs and wall dissolving, on,
Out to the street, where nothing bars,

An air-pale-wraith, John, whistling fares
On to the house Ben Fox now keeps;
Through latched gate, locked doors, up still stairs,
Into the bedroom where Jane sleeps. . . .

Leland Davis.

Knockouts

IN New York the prohibition law is such a failure that even the wet parade was a fizzle.

OUR latest national superstition is that General Dawes can cure governmental extravagance by swearing at it.

PERHAPS they can convict that well-known lady of running an illicit Stillman.

SHOULD Negroes who are not allowed to vote be compelled to pay a poll tax? This question was recently debated in the good old Georgia manner and was decided in the negative: two Negroes killed to three whites.

THE New Haven police were called in to quell a drunken riot at the Yale Senior Prom. Hereafter they should hold this party in the Bowl.

PROTESTS against the Lusk report continue to roll in. It is already clear that this work will be one of the six worst smellers.

"TWENTY-FIVE best minds in America" were recently determined by various intelligence tests, and the best mind of them all came from Washington. Unfortunately it was the state, not the seat of Mr. Harding's government.

ATTORNEY GENERAL NEWTON is a director in a Buffalo concern which exacted a bonus of twenty per cent. on second mortgages in addition to interest. Hundred and twenty per cent Newton—100 per cent Americanism and 20 per cent bonus.

BORAH objected to Taft as Chief Justice because he is within seven years of the age of incompetence. Bless

the Senator's innocent heart, Judge Taft will never have to reach the age of incompetence.

A FOREIGN correspondent, Charles H. Grasty, fears that the Allies are returning to their former policy of diplomatic bargaining and dickering. Here they are back again, and we never knew they had been away!

A NEW YORK magistrate, alarmed by a "baby crime wave," urges a revival of woodshed conferences. Too late, your honor. New York is out of woodsheds.

MR. STRATON recently preached a sermon using the headlines of a newspaper to show what a bad fix we are in. Shocked by current events.

THE "Sell New League," organized by manufacturers and merchants, has launched a vigorous campaign to revive industry, and is splendidly equipped with headquarters and everything except buyers.

TWENTY steamers have mysteriously disappeared from our eastern waters, and they were naturally believed to have been captured by Bolshevik pirates. This theory was promptly endorsed by Capt. Hugh S. Martin—America's Riga—and consequently had to be abandoned.

A NOTHER nefarious activity has been uncovered by the head of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The I. W. W.'s have been caught red-handed trying to find work for ex-service men.

WE are warned almost daily of the alarming spread of radicalism in colleges, churches and labor unions. Anybody knowing the whereabouts of any radicals might direct them to the Socialist Party, which is short of radicals—also of members.

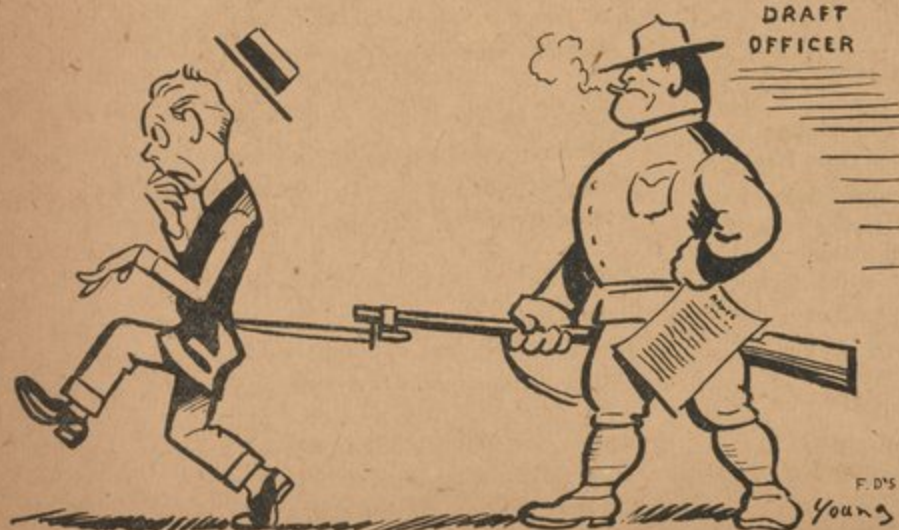
THE newspaper men in these parts condemned Jack Dempsey for his slackerdice during the war—and no wonder! The brave spirits who stood ankle-deep in ink throughout the war, from Park Row to Times Square, wielding their wicked adjectives, could have no use for riveters.

BESIDES, recent revelations in shipping board circles cast grave doubt upon American wartime riveting.

"CARPENTIER was the soul of the fray, Dempsey the body," wrote Irvin S. Cobb. Unfortunately there are still traces of the corporeal in these contests.

HOWARD BRUBAKER.

Modern Patriotism



"Something tells me I am needed
At the front to fight the foe!"



I
You lazy good-for-nothing!



II
When I was your age I worked
eighteen hours a day —



III
And ate pompernickle, bread
and water!



IV
Young man, I supported a
whole family!



V
The boss was proud of me—I
did all the work in the place!



VI
And now, I've saved up enough
money to —



VII
— Rest up —



VIII
— ! —

A Sermon

By

William Groppe

To My Husband

YOU looked at the horizon
And you raved of reds and blues,
But when we started westward
And we had our path to choose,
You took the cement highway
Lest the grass should wet your shoes.

You talked so well of Romance—
Like gypsies we would ride
In covered wagon through the woods
And camp at eveningtide.
But you could never let yourself
Be so undignified.

And so I went without you,
And out of sight of men;

I've wet my feet in meadowgrass,
And camped in hidden glen.

And I've been very lonely, too,
But not so much as then.

Regna Laik.

Comprehension

WE do not need the aid of words
Nor touch of hands
To waken in our eyes a light
That understands.

Only full silence flows between
Us when we meet;
We feel a change, and somehow know
That change is sweet.

Earl Daniels.

Declaration

I AM a seed in the dust,
A live root bedded in night,
And I am filled with a lust
For something the worms call light.

From what seed-pod I was blown
Matters little to me;
Why and by whom I was sown,
Or what the reaping will be.

I only wait for my hour,
When I shall be done with night,
When I shall thrill into flower,
And drink till I die of light.

Elsa Gidlow.

To Abolish Justice

By Charles W. Wood

I'M strong for the abolition of justice. I admit that there isn't any such thing, but I want it abolished anyway. Most of the things that need to be abolished don't exist. Private ownership, for instance, of railroads and things like that. A railroad can't really be owned, any more than you can own a thunderstorm, but the superstition that it does belong to somebody raises havoc with railroading. It makes you forget what a railroad is for. The only conceivable purpose of a railroad is to transport people and things, but no matter how thoroughly we can prove that we need transportation, a railroad which we imagine somebody owns is of no use to us until we first propitiate the imaginary owners.

Think of it. We Americans, who laugh at the heathen for giving expensive feasts to deities that are supposed to own the weather, still stand in line for hours at a time performing the ceremony of purchasing a railroad ticket!

Then there's profit. It was proved by scientists 2,000 years ago that it didn't profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul; but so long as we imagine that there is profit in such transactions, we'll go on playing the losing game.

But of all the superstitions that have cursed humanity, the one that has caused most agony is justice.

God, we have all been taught, is just: and look at the God-damned human race! Of course God damned it. That is one of the first things a just God would think of doing. No merry god, like Bacchus, would ever have entertained the notion. No voluptuous deity like Venus, whose plagues have been sufficiently widespread to cause incalculable horror, ever devised such general hell. No, it took a God who set out to be just, to wind up by damning everybody.

There's a reason. Gods are human. They were ever made in the image of man. And petulant, selfish, even cruel and degenerate gods, like petulant, selfish, cruel and degenerate men, would limit their punishments to those who happened to get in the way. A just God, however, would recognize no limitations, and would torture those he loved the most as well as those who irritated him. To each he would give exact measure, according to his deserts.

Just men do this right along. They give only to the worthy poor. They kiss their wives precisely as often as they deserve to be kissed. They stroke the cat—but no, come to think of it, you can't come any justice on a cat. You'll stroke a cat when she wants to be stroked or you won't stroke her at all. There is no such thing as justice, and cats know it.

Unfortunately, human beings seldom understand this fact. So they go on seeking justice when what they want is life. But because they seek justice, they never get a chance to live. No one can enjoy himself when he's got a law-suit on; and life with most of us is one grand law-suit—a petition for rights here or hereafter. The moralists, therefore, devise their codes of discomfort, not because any human being wants to act that way, but because such conduct entitles us to consideration when Mr. Justice Jehovah gets ready to distribute his patronage.

But the "materialist" revolutionary is often under the same obsession. He may do away with God, but he can't get this idea of justice out of his dome. So he talks of "equitable distribution," or of the grand day when the worker will receive "the full product of his toil." The workers with whom I happen to be acquainted don't want anything of the sort. They may think they do, but they don't. They want to blow themselves. They want a particular kind of girl, whether they have earned her or not. The farther they can get away, in fact, from the very thought of price, the happier they are.

Justice and life simply do not mix. Justice is the exact determination of one's deserts, and life is something which just wants to be. No one deserves life. It's just here and that's all there is to it. It begins before there is anything to deserve or any personality to deserve it. I strongly suspect that it might turn out to be interesting, if we could once separate it from these ideas which keep it from enjoying itself.

Babies are frequently interesting before they get old enough to distinguish right from wrong. Lovers are very often interesting until they begin to present each other with their bills. Artists are interesting so long as they avoid morals. But moralists and judges and tax-appraisers are uniformly dull.

The reason is easy to find. Life is concerned primarily with being—with expressing whatever it feels like expressing, not with any such dull process as the accumulation of money or goods. It happens, however, that we've got to eat. We've got to have things, not because having things is living, but because life can not go on—it can't even begin—until we get them. Since we are all born fools, arguing the other fellow out of these things was a most natural scheme to hit upon. But the minute we hit upon it, we committed ourselves to this life-long law-suit.

The law-suit itself is pure drudgery. Life must be suspended until it is over. Not only that, but if we win, we lose. For the possession of things does not mean life. The things that can be distributed, equitable or otherwise, are not the things which life aspires to; and if life spends much time or energy in getting them, it loses its capacity for aspiration. And this statement is true whether the things in question be palaces or potatoes, the approbation of the neighbors or a heavenly harp. *Life is not interested in what it deserves.*

This by way of letting you know why you liked "Liliom," Franz Molnar's sensational play at the Fulton Theater.

Of course you liked it, or you will like it when you see it. Everybody does, but nobody but me seems to know why. "The greatest acting of the season," was the commonest comment. Joseph Schildkraut doubtless deserves the compliment, but he could have acted his head off in a moral play without making such an impression as this. "Liliom" is delightful to everyone who is struggling hard with a sense of duty and has about reached the point where he considers "justice" an infernal nuisance.

"Liliom" is an artist. That is, he runs a merry-go-round



"My God! what's the matter?"
 "A cat's got some catnip!"

rather than go to work. He wants to live, but he doesn't know anything and doesn't make a rational statement in the whole seven scenes. Naturally, the police get after him, here and hereafter, but they don't do him any good. Policing the unconscious proves, in fact, too big a task for even the Second Assistant God in the Heavenly Police Court, and no one gets the idea that his chief could do much better.

No one can be as care-free as "Liliom" and expect to get away with it. He goes to hell eventually for his lack of convictions, and the audience is inclined to think that this is about the best disposition of the case that could be made. And yet the audience has a sneaking sympathy with him. To be sure, he didn't deserve any better fate; but it would be fairly easy to invent a world in which even he could get along. Naturally, you will not permit yourselves to arrive definitely at any unorthodox conclusions; and if "Liliom" had intentionally set out to teach this lesson, you would re-

ject it in holy horror. But the play is so playful—so altogether damn-careless and nonchalant—that you let your sympathies roam. And you will be quite apt to sympathize with "Liliom"—not because he didn't deserve all he got, but because such an irresponsible beggar, who didn't make any demands on God or man, should have been doomed, like you and me and the rest of us, to "answer" for every gesture that life brought forth.

There is, however, this consolation. While no one can be as care-free as "Liliom" and get away with it, no one can continue to ignore life to the extent that this God of ours does and expect forever to get away with that. God did everything in his power, but he couldn't make "Liliom" act contrary to his nature. Thank the Lord, there are a lot of other artists who also can not be reclaimed.

Thank the Lord, I said. That is, thank the next Lord. The Lord of Justice is beginning to wear out. One of these days we are going to invent a new God.



A Gaslight Sonata

By Michael Gold

IT is a stifling summer night in our city of Babylon, and shiny as a seal with sweat I sit in my undershirt at the window and try to read through the stack of literature the dastardly and conspiritacious editors of the *Liberator* have plotted to have me review.

I have begun with George Santayana's *Character and Opinion in the United States*,* and the effort is addling my brain.

The gaslight wavers weirdly like a torch in a hollow tomb. The heat washes in like poison through the window, sickening, and my liver throbs and complains. I have had my dinner at a Bohemian restaurant in Greenwich Village, and wish I had stuck to the more sober-minded Mr. Childs. Dull noises come from the sordid courtyard of the tenement where I live. An old woman is peeling potatoes in the back-door of a restaurant. She does this fifteen hours every day.

"George Santayana is one of the great intellectuals of America," I lash myself grimly. "He taught philosophy for more or less than forty years at Harvard; he has written a monumental work called *The Life of Reason*; he is an esoteric and revered Rabbi of the modern wisdom to the editors of the *New Republic* and all the younger academic groups in America. A new book by Santayana is as important an event in those circles as a general strike or regional revolt in certain other circles.

"Besides, he is somewhat of a philosopher after your own heart, *mon petit*. This powerful, trained, masculine mind, cold and calm as a mummy to the warm-minor human things, yet great in its fashion, has grappled with Kant and Spinoza and Hegel, all the giants who overawe you so terribly, and has reached many of the same conclusions as your own untutored and more reckless mind: namely, that the real world is the only world worth having, that the longing for the Absolute is a trap spread for human feet, and that reason and science are gospels of freedom and splendor and joy. Read on; and see what the gentleman has to say about your native land. It must be something new and worth knowing."

Alas, alas, it is not that! I read on manfully in the sweat of my brow, and find nothing. This wise, profound man, with a mind beautiful as an immense steel-framed skyscraper against the sky, is a man who has lived within

the quiet cloister walls of the Harvard campus all his mature days, and has learned nothing from Life.

What has he to say about this raw great America of one hundred million wild, ambitious, troubled human beings? Nothing real; for he has known nothing real. Harvard is America for him still, and he writes beautifully of Harvard and of his department there. He writes marvellously of William James and Josiah Royce and their wrestlings with the Infinite; he discusses New Thought and the other crazy transcendentalisms that flourish in the native soil; he criticizes the method of teaching philosophy in American universities; he moralizes on the English tradition of freedom in America, which he thinks wonderful, so wonderful.

But all he knows of where the great millions of America are moving to, is what any nice old maiden lady in Cambridge can tell us over the afternoon tea. He knows everything about Life—and nothing.

"It would be well if people in England and America woke up to the fact that it is in the name of natural liberty and direct democracy that enemies both within and without are already rising against their democracy and liberty. Just as the Papacy once threatened English liberties, because it would maintain one inflexible international religion over all men, so now an international democracy of the disinherited many, led by the disinherited few, threatens English liberties again, since it would abolish those private interests which are the factors in any co-operation, and would reduce everybody to forced service in one universal flock, without property, family, country or religion."

"Bah!" I spit in mournful disappointment. "What a world! Human reason and human science are presumably the sole lights in the dark mystery of Man's life. They alone will finally lead us to happiness, and here is one at the crest of the science of his age, and when he leaves his province of philosophy to discuss politics he can reason only as effectively as any spaghetti-bloated Italian shopkeeper whose receipts have been threatened by the rise of Communism. What is the use, Comrade Gold? *A bas les intellectuales!*"

Thus, impatiently, not remembering that most intellectuals are middle class, and can therefore only reason as the influences of their childhood environment dictate, (it is but the law of all humanity), I put the book carefully aside, (for we reviewers buy many of our scarce meals with the proceeds of these review copies sold to friends), and continue to muse pessimistically by the window.

What a world! The houses that hem in my court-yard are ugly and square as barracks; stolid and ungracious as a brick, and steaming in the heat like horrible drudges at toil. A child is screaming. A man is quarrelling with his wife; he is telling her she is extravagant and flings away in riotous living the thirty dollars he earns every week so painfully. A girl is singing in a high nasal voice. The stars are stifling in a green, muggy sky. The city roars outside, sharp, squawky, staccato voices that torture the night with a thousand wounds. And it is fearfully, achingly hot; and my digestive apparatus is the scene of a civil war.

"What a world!" I sigh for the third time. "This modern world: all ugliness and pain and meanness and confusion, Santayana and indigestion!"

Then I dream backward for 50,000 years in time, and think of my simple ancestor, the Neanderthal man. He had a muzzle like a dog; a forehead like a fish; he was hairy and unintellectual; he lived in caves, and fought the woolly mammoth, the aurochs, the sabre-toothed tiger and the elephant.

**Character and Opinion in the United States*, by George Santayana, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

He slit the steaming flesh from his prey with a piece of chipped stone that was his proudest scientific invention. Was he happy, I ask myself? Probably not, I dream, though his digestion was undoubtedly sound.

The Sumerians, who studied the stars and built a mighty tower at Nippur to their God, El-Lil; the Assyrians, the Carthaginians, who sold Negro slaves, ivory, metals, precious stones to all the Mediterranean peoples at the dawn of history; the Greeks, the Romans, the stiff-necked Hebrews, the proud Persians and Medes, whose law altered not but disappeared; Buddha, who came from his village in the Himalayas to teach all India to despise the world; Jesus on his cross, and the little he has accomplished for one so much in favor; the Mongol empires under Kulai Khan and Tamerlane; the medieval world of Heloise and Abelard; Napoleon and the Europe he established—

Has the world ever been happy?

No, I decide, and pick up a pamphlet by Scott Nearing.*

It is also about America, and Scott Nearing has also been a professor, but the difference! He is writing for the man in the street, not for the gallery of philosophers Sophocles wanted for his plays; and he is telling the American man about the rocks looming ahead for the republic.

It is dreadful! In simple, strong language Nearing shows my receptively shadowed mind how America, starting with her conquest of the Philippines, and ending with her latest note to Mexico, is drifting into imperialism as dangerous as that of Persia and Rome. History is repeating itself in its silly unoriginal fashion. How dismal! I suddenly feel like the "sour-souled Savonarola" in Beerbohm's great tragedy.

Another pamphlet: The Open Shop Drive, By Savel Zimland,** adds an accumulation to my gloom as I glance through its pages.

The American trade union movement, (poor, stupid, Neanderthal giant, slowly groping from its stone hatchet way of fighting to the Bronze Age of syndicalism) is being threatened with extinction by a bit of interesting strategy.

The capitalists are organizing a monopoly of the American flag. In every city of the nation, as Zimland shows, they have formed their powerful locals to fight for the "American" plan, as opposed to the red, revolutionary Gompers plan.

The open shop is being advertised as American, the closed shop, the shop where only workers demanding a living wage can be employed, is to be called unAmerican, Bolshevik, autocratic. How simple, how effective, how true! This country does belong to the employers, and the American flag is their flag, as I have long known. It makes me gloomy to be reminded of it again, however. A policeman once beat the information into me with a club.

On to the next pamphlet: Civil War in West Virginia, by Winthrop D. Lane.†

Deeper gloom. A well-written, solemnly accurate story of how thousands of Americans of ancient stock, miners, honest family men with hard hands who go every day into hellish, dangerous pits to dig coal for the rest of us, are being shot down, and their children starved, that Back Bay share-

holders may not suffer from a diminution of dividends, (some of them Santayana's friends, probably).

What a world!

Next: the Deportation Cases of 1919-1920, a study by Constantine Panunzio,* an innocent scholar employed for this research by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

He finds that many of these hundreds of immigrants who were beaten up and dragged from their homes and booted out of our free country, were men who actually did not know what it was all about. They were being punished for their "Anarchism," and no one had yet instructed them as to what even Jeffersonian democracy was. Maybe they have learned by now.

Others of the immigrants knew.

Nick Saloff, (Warrant 54861) said to the investigator, "I wanted to belong for the purpose of enlightenment and discussion."

Demetri Zosko, (Warrant 54809) said, of his membership in the Communist Party, "This organization represented the workers to give them a better chance to make a better living, and me, being a family man, naturally I joined them."

Pamphlets on the Negro pogroms, pamphlets on white slavery, pamphlets on the German indemnities, pamphlets on prohibition, birth control, free speech, the banking problem, farm tenantry, the high cost of living—what a world! Everything seems to have gone wrong with it—its circulation is poor, its heart valves leak, its stomach does not work, its lungs do not pump, its nerves are in atrocious shape—it is losing its hair and teeth, I muse! It is a mess, I say morbidly to myself!

And the courtyard becomes gloomier. The girl is singing for the third time in her voice like a flat car-wheel, a little gem by America's sweetest swan, Irving Berlin. A clothes line is screeching. A cat is mourning for the snows of yesteryear. The man is still shouting at his wife. The city is still roaring in its hellish procession to doom.

I long, as I sit there, like Huxley in a similar mood of despair, for the kindly comet that will sweep away this back-yard world of garbage, humanity, ugly brick and ugly, endless problems.

And then, behold, reaching for the book pile with the languid instinct of the driven book-reviewer, who reviews in fair weather and foul, in affliction and joy, I find an amazing source of comfort. It is a little work called, The Next War, by Will Irwin,** and it brings me glad, great tidings. I do not need to bother my head over the shortcomings of the bourgeois intellectuals, the open shop, indigestion and my pennilessness. Soon it will all be over! The human race is preparing to commit suicide! Soon we will all be free!

Now close your eyes, gentle reader, relax, fix your mind on the thought that God Is Love, hold it, smile, and listen while I pour the beautiful message into your ear:

It seems, according to the able and worthy journalist, Will Irwin, that the World War, besides having killed off about 10 million soldiers and 30 million civilians, and having ushered in the Russian Revolution, is remarkable for

*The American Empire, by Scott Nearing, published by the Rand School of Social Science, 7 East 15th Street, New York.

**The Open Shop Drive, Who Is Behind It And Where Is It Going? by Savel Zimland, published by the Bureau of Industrial Research, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York.

†Civil War in West Virginia, by Winthrop D. Lane, published by B. W. Huebsch, New York.

*The Deportation Cases of 1919-1920, a study by Constantine Panunzio, M.A., published by the Commission on the Church and Social Service of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 105 East 22d Street, New York.

**The Next War, An Appeal To Common Sense, by Will Irwin, published by E. P. Dutton and Co., New York.

another stupendous fact. For the first time in the history of man war was put on a scientific basis. "That exact scientific method of research which has wrought all of our miracles of industry was at the service of the warriors." Poison gas, liquid flame, tanks and other wholesale methods of killing the human race, made a great step forward toward the final bliss with these discoveries.

Cannons, rifles, swords, these were seen to be as trivial as the bows and arrows of former generations. The human imagination, now turned with full power on the business of killing, has discovered gas.

"At the time of the Armistice we were manufacturing for the campaign of 1919 our Lewisite gas. It was invisible; it was a sinking gas, which would search out the refugees of dugouts and cellars; if breathed, it killed at once—and it killed not only through the lungs. Wherever it settled on the skin, it produced a poison which penetrated the system and brought almost certain death. It was inimical to all cell-life, animal or vegetable. Masks alone of no use against it. Further it had *fifty-five* times the spread of any poison gas used in the war. An expert has said that a dozen Lewisite bombs of the greatest size in use during 1918 might with a favorable wind have eliminated the population of Berlin. Possibly he exaggerated, but probably not greatly. The Armistice came; but gas research went on. Now we have more than a hint of a gas beyond Lewisite. It cannot be much more deadly; but in proportion to the amount of chemical which generates it, the spread is far greater. A mere capsule of this gas in a small grenade can generate square rods and even acres of death in the absolute."

There, friend, while you and I imagined that there would not be another great war, and that the human race might have to drag on its meaningless dreary progress for a few hundred more milleniums, the scientists were kindly going on with their "research." We will not have to live, after all.

The next war will not be fought between the armies, says Will Irwin. It will be a battle of peoples. "In this next war the gas-bombardment of capitals and great towns is not only a possibility, but a strong probability—almost a certainty. Military staffs have had time to think, to carry out the changes and discoveries of the Great War to their logical conclusions. They see that even with the known gases, the existing aeroplanes, Paris, Rome or London could in one night be changed from a metropolis to a necropolis."

Why not? Says Major-General Swinten of the British army, in a discussion of the new warfare:

"It has been rather our tendency up to the present moment to look upon warfare from the retail point of view—of killing men by fifties or hundreds or thousands. But when you speak of gas, you are discussing a weapon which must be considered from the wholesale point of view, and if you use it—and I do not know of any reason why you should not—you may kill hundreds of thousands of men, or at any rate disable them."

He is a little conservative about gas, you see. But then the General goes on:

"I imagine from the progress that has been made in the past that in the future we will not have recourse to gas alone, but will employ every force of nature that we can; and there is a tendency at present for progress in the development of different forms of rays that can be turned to lethal purposes.

"We have X-rays, we have light rays, we have heat rays.

We may not be so far from the development of some kinds of lethal ray which will shrivel up or paralyze or poison human beings.

"The final form of human strife, as I regard it, is germ warfare. I think it will come to that; and so far as I can see there is no reason why it should not, if you mean to fight . . . prepare now . . . we must envisage these new forms of warfare, and as far as possible expend energy, time and money in encouraging our inventors and scientists to study the waging of war on a wholesale scale, instead of thinking so much about methods which will kill a few individuals only at a time."

Among the possibilities of the next war, then, is a general blighting epidemic, like the Black Plagues of the Middle Ages, "a sudden, mysterious indiscriminating rush of death from which a man can save himself only by fleeing his fellow man."

"Then—there are easily cultivated, easily spread, diseases of plants. What about a rust which will ruin your enemy's crop and starve him out? That method of warfare has been suggested, and is now being investigated."

There is much more in the book. It is a small volume, but appalling in its vistas. It is founded on facts; Will Irwin, with his keen reporter's skill, has gathered numbers of them, and composed a summary that makes the heart quail.

Will there be this next war that he pictures? Are we rushing to this suicide?

Ah, poor, blind, stupid, well-meaning, "wholesale" human race that I hate so passionately and love so passionately, it is not for a mere book-reviewer to say. Your moods are inscrutable, and the world is a strange drama whose last act not even the eagerest can guess. But some of us, I know as I sit here in the gaslight, will not submit to the destiny the war-makers are casting for us. Some of us will step out of our roles and amaze again the plutocrats who are bringing on this war; some of us will offer the horrible surprise that came to Kolchak to the soldiers and scientists who are planning its massacres.

To-night I am satisfied with things as they are, however. All is well. I need not lift a finger against those two extremes of social decay, Santayana and the man who is abusing his wife in the flat below me. I need not rebel at this monotonous, hideous poverty all around me. These pamphlets under my hand need not trouble me. Pale scientists, their hearts bursting with pity for our lot, are "continuing their researches in gas."



Hugo Gellert

About Time

I.

THE sun and the moon, a stag and hind,
Shying the world like an old bush,
Leap over. On their traces grind
And rush
The yelping days. The beetles busily
Crawl up the twigs, nor hear the hunt go by.

II.

Mother, I've a penny,
What is there to buy?
Toys there are, many—
Simply go and try.

It is a small thing,
Mother, and old—
It has a brave ring,
A penny may be gold.

If it's a rich one,
How much shall I keep?
Go spend it all, son—
Then come home and sleep.

III.

His varlets, Luck and Wisdom, brew
His magic in the town—
He leaves the young kids in the dew
And brings the eagle down.

Morris Gilbert.

Climax

I HAD thought that I could sleep
After I had kissed his mouth
With its sharply haunting corners
And its red.

But now that he has kissed me
A stir is in my blood,
And I want to be awake
Instead.

Interval

I PRAY he may not speak of love
But lie quite still
So that I feel each movement
Of his life, until
His straying hairs upon my cheek
Like sparks unfurled,
His breath, his smell, his radiance,
Become my world.
My love is tremulous as mist
Which drapes a dream,
As quiet as before a storm
A brooding stream.

Gladys Gershon.



Gropper

Eugene O'Neill--Playwright

The Gordian Knot

THE straining hands of Charity
Are bound with dark and cruel cord
Knotted throughout the centuries
By ruler and by over-lord.

"A portion in this worthy place,
And here a crumb, as you pass by,
But nothing for this festured den
That hides its foulness from the sky—

"And nothing for this teeming sink
Where evils of the dark earth hide—"
Too long the fumbling fingers pick
At knots the centuries have tied—
O Love, O blade of fire and snow!
Gather the lightning of your blow!
Cut through quick flesh, if need be,
To loose the hands of Charity!

Charlotte Hardin.

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