

LIBERATOR

DECEMBER
1923

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“JANET MARCH”

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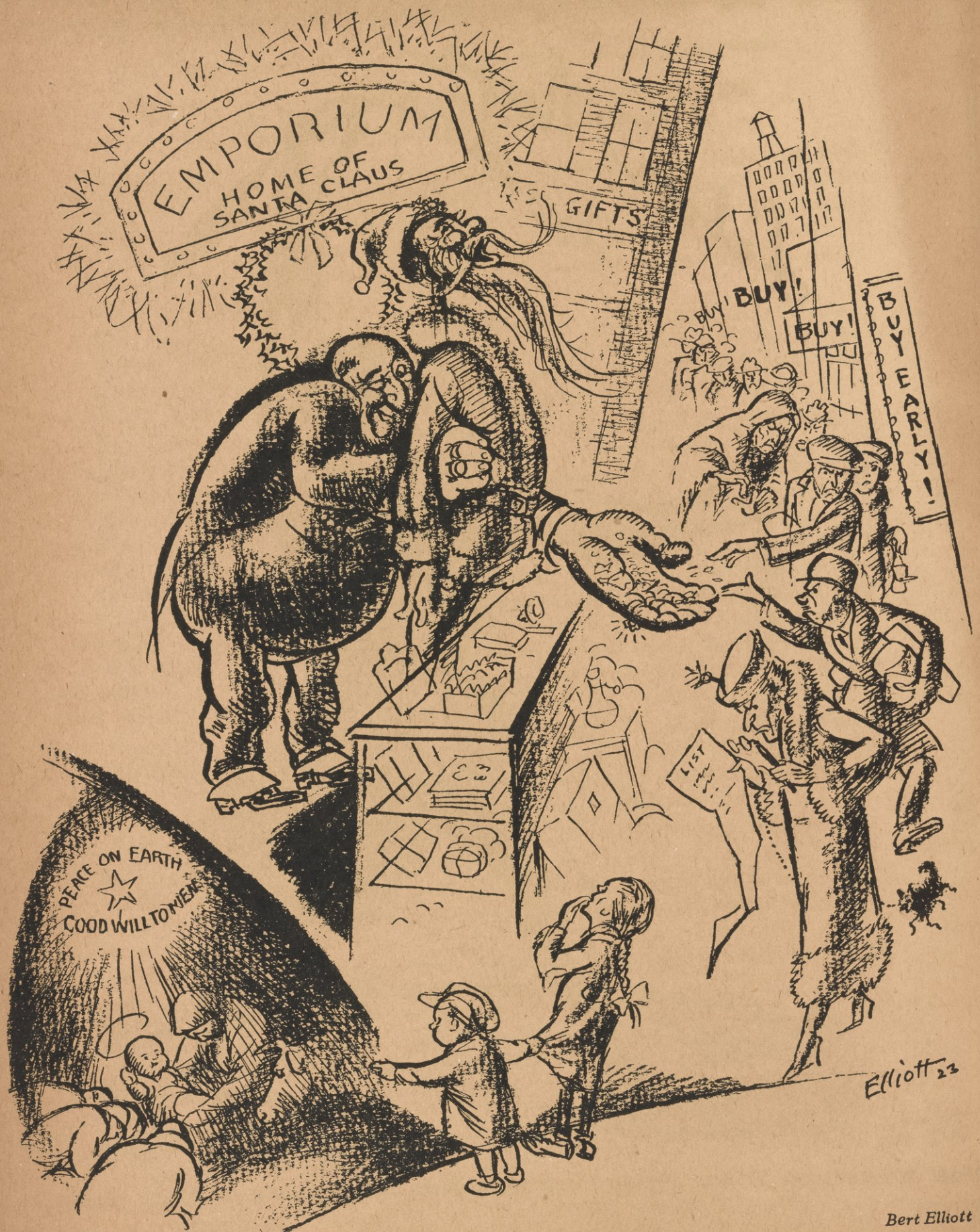
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THE LIBERATOR

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EDITORIALS

THERE'LL BE a Farmer-Labor candidate for the Presidency of the United States in 1924. The conference held in St. Paul in the middle of November on the invitation of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor group has issued a call for a national convention to be held on Decoration Day, May 30, 1924, to nominate a presidential ticket.

Represented at the conference were the Farmer-Labor Party, the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, the Farmer-Labor parties of the states of Minnesota, Montana, South Dakota and Washington, the Nonpartisan League of Wisconsin, the Progressive Party of Idaho and the Committee of 48.

The presidential election campaign will serve to crystallize a great national labor-and-farmer political party, and with heavy substance behind it. There is a strong probability that several states will cast their electoral votes for the Farmer-Labor presidential candidate and will add several new farmer-labor senators to the two now representing Minnesota.

The farmer-labor political party is coming into existence with a suddenness and a substantiality that was hardly dreamed of a few months ago. The big significance of it lies in the fact that the formation of an independent political party of workers and farmers for their own class needs, means the dawn of class consciousness in America. And that is the light on the road to freedom.

SPEARMINT Chewing Gum calls upon Hiram Johnson to be President of the United States. Nay, Doublemint gum demands it! Mr. William Wrigley, Jr., will pay for it.

Hiram Johnson will be a good substitute for Coolidge in case Coolidge's unpopular chores for Wall Street spoil his chances for a second term. Johnson comes with best of recommendations. The California banking and railroad plunderbund will testify to his exquisite discrimination in bank-books. His record of collusion in the attempt to murder Tom Mooney through hired perjury is a distinction in itself, even if a little Wild-Western. All the Best People know where Hiram stands; and if he prosecuted a few corporations to get started in politics, that only makes him the more useful now.

Hiram will attack Coolidge with peals of thunder against the League of Nations-World Court plan. But that will not matter. Wall Street may need a man who can be elected to presidency in the wave of opposition to the League of Nations, as Mr. Harding was. Then Hiram, like Mr. Harding, will undertake to put the United States into the League of Nations—or anything else that Wall Street commands him to do.

A NATIONAL daily newspaper advocating and explaining the Communist cause and participating belligerently in the daily battles of labor and the dirt farmers against capital, is certain to begin publication in the near future—in all probability by the first of January. The postponement from the date originally set for its founding, November 7, is an act of caution intended to obviate the danger of a failure. Experience shows the folly of founding a working-class daily with less than \$100,000 capital. More than half of this sum is already obtained for the "Daily Worker," and success is only a matter of a short time. The surprisingly rapid growth of the Workers Party—it is growing at the average rate of one new branch chartered each day—will be the guaranty of the paper's success.

Experience shows that a working-class daily must have a militant and intensely loyal body behind it, if it is to live. The Socialist Party kept the New York Call alive fifteen years—for a large part of that time on a mere shoestring. Only when the Socialist Party fell into decay did it become impossible to keep the Call going. The New York Leader attempted a different plan; it attempted to compete with the capitalist press by being a "good newspaper" and to win the support of all labor factions by supporting no faction. The result was that it died in six weeks, and was mourned by the New York Times as a loss to the community.

The Communist daily will neither die nor pursue a policy that would win the praise of the capitalist press. It will support a faction—the faction of Communism—and the growing American Communist movement will support it.

EVERYBODY seems to agree that there should be a Congressional investigation of the American Communist movement. The Civic League wants it. The American Legion wants it. The Ku Klux Klan wants it. William J. Burns wants it. And The Liberator wants it. The leaders of the Workers Party (Communist) are rushing out to public meetings to demand it.

The Liberator respectfully puts its claim in early. The Liberator is a Communist paper. It has been a Communist magazine from the very beginning and is surely entitled to be investigated. Mr. John L. Lewis has given the information that three million dollars have been sent to this country from Russia for the Communist movement, and it is proposed that the Congressional investigation will be made the means of locating the money. The Liberator irritably demands that this be done immediately. There are plans to enlarge the paper to fifty-two pages, and to pay back salaries due to editors.

The Noise that Congress Makes

By Jay Lovestone

WITH THE opening of Congress only a matter of days I hurried to Washington to acquaint myself with the plethora of panaceas that had been hatched in the sultry summer nights. I feared that I would have the devil's own time picking scoops from a superabundance of features. Instead, I find everything quiet, with the President setting the pace in silence. No one is excited. No one is anxious. Nobody expects anything to happen. No one takes the Senators and Congressmen seriously. There are too many of them around not to be seen. They are too well known by what they do or don't do. Everybody has given up all hope that Congress will ever do anything worthwhile. Everybody is convinced Congress is beyond redemption.

This is Washington on the eve of the Sixty-Eighth Congress. A prominent newspaperman painted me the scene in this picture: "We who know how the game is played here look upon Congress only as a Punch and Judy show of the Caliphate of Finance and Dynasty of Industry. Congress itself doesn't do anything important. Most important legislation is conceived in the Luncheon-with-a-Purpose clubs gathered around the rich tables of the New Willard. Whatever is not conceived in these fraternities of the big business lobbyists and representatives is born and raised in the high chancelleries of the congressional golf clubs, membership in which is restricted to millionaires and the most powerful senators and congressmen. Congress mostly talks, and talk like morality is only a matter of latitude. The noise that Congress makes is the noise of the oceans of verbiage that accumulate during its sessions.

The Bogey of The Sixty-Eighth Congress.

The Sixty-Eighth Congress has been widely over-advertised as radical. Because a number of standpatters have died or met defeat in recent elections, many have been led to the mistaken belief that the coming Congress will pursue progressive policies.

That no such dangers to Big Business lurk in the darkest Congressional alleys, let alone on the open floor of the House and Senate, is plainly seen from a vivisection of the new Congress.

If one should dissect the new Senate he would find that, though its personnel is stained with more liberal tint than that of the House, it is still the home of the very wealthy. An incomplete division of the Senate personnel in four classes shows plainly that it numbers at least twenty-one millionaires, twenty who are wealthy, worth from \$300,000 to \$1,000,000, eight who are comfortably fixed, or worth \$100,000 to \$300,000, and twenty-five who are poor, the Senate proletariat as it were, worth \$100,000 or less.

In the Millionaire class are such senators as Capper, of the farm bloc, Couzens, Edge, Elkins, Kendrick, Keyes, Lodge, McCormick, McKinley, McClean, Pepper, Phipps, Reed of Pennsylvania, Smoot, one of the Latter-Day Saints of the Mormon Church; Underwood, the anti-union steel and coal magnate of the south; Wadsworth, who plays only blue chips in the New York realty market, and Warren, the

Wyoming cattle king, reputed to be the greatest shepherd since Father Abraham.

In the wealthy class we have Cummins, the loyal lackey of the railroad interests; Curtis, the reactionary Republican whip; Dial, the big employer of child labor in South Carolina's textile mills, and Textile Trust Moses, charged with the mission of leading Coolidge out of the wilderness into the Promised Land of the Presidency and a four year lease on the White House.

Among the comfortably fixed are Jim Reed of Missouri, Shortridge, a corporation lawyer whose clients sell realty by the mile of California atmosphere, and Walsh of Montana.

Finally, in the poor class worth \$100,000 or less, we find Borah, who prosecuted Haywood, Moyer and Pettibone; Johnson of California who is the "angel" of William J. Burns; LaFollette, Brookhardt, Hefflin, King, Lenroot, McKellar, Norris, and Robinson the Democratic leader.

The House has strong representations of steel, coal, oil, banking, railway, insurance, and newspaper interests. To cite a few millionaires, Ogden L. Mills and Robert L. Bacon of New York; Schuyler Merritt of Connecticut Yale Lock fame; Isaac Backrach of New Jersey, millionaire realty owner, first vice president and director of the Second National Bank, director of the Atlantic Safe Deposit Co. at Atlantic City; Allen T. Treadway of Massachusetts, millionaire hotel magnate, and Nicholas Longworth of Ohio, millionaire by inheritance, interested in various banking and industrial enterprises and dye and chemical concerns.

All of these men are on the key committees of the House.

Of course there is no doubt that Senator LaFollette is a renowned slayer of Wall Street dragons. LaFollette's senatorial career is replete with the clang of combat and the smoke of battle. The gentleman from Wisconsin is a two-fisted fighter. But LaFollette, confronted with the best chance in his long political life, has no program. The Wisconsin Senator isn't half as radical as he looks. One who has been associated with LaFollette for many years thus sized up the progressive leader the other day to a well known financial writer: "LaFollette talks ten times as radical as he votes. How many truly radical measures has he introduced or even supported on the floor of the Senate? In fact, LaFollette's radicalism has been evident more in opposition than in support. He has helped to kill conservative bills that probably were good ones, but unless you class the Railroad Valuation Act—one of the best legislative things that has ever happened to the railroads—or the Seaman's Act as radical, his name is identified nationally with scarcely a single law that truly goes to extremes. And most of the legislation he promoted in Wisconsin is no longer classed as radical."

Not only are the progressives programless and their radicalism more apparent than sinister, but the reactionaries are far from being impotent in the next Congress. They will have lots to say and more to do. The big employers

and financiers know this better than anyone else. The Stock Exchange is not in the slightest degree bearish over the Congressional outlook. Recently the United States Chamber of Commerce put its cards on the table face up and said in its magazine: "On the whole it is apparent that the approaching session will be one of agitation rather than legislation. It will be the year of the big talk-fest. Much will be started and little will be finished, for the mills of Congress, like those of God, grind slowly and grind exceedingly small."

And a leading spirit in the progressive camp speaking of the impotency of the coming Congress confessed to me that: "One couldn't hope to win a majority of the next Congress for the Constitution or the Ten Commandments in half a year. It would take longer than that to dispose of proposed amendments. Then you have to count on Senate filibusters. Besides, Coolidge will silently, in his customary Coolidgean fashion, veto most bills that have passed through the House and Senate sieves."

Organizing to Do Nothing

The last word in Coolidge's message will be the signal for the opening of the tug of war in Congress. Due to the greatly increased strength of LaFollette's forces, it is Mellon's dollars against Ebert's marks that Congress won't be able to organize immediately. The balance between the Republicans and the Democrats is so delicate that the progressives can block the election of the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House. Since the Republicans have only fifty-two Senators and forty-nine constitute a majority necessary for organization, the progressives can throw a monkey wrench into the Congressional machinery.

In the House the insurgents are especially interested in the Interstate Commerce Committee, the Ways and Means and Rules Committees. The Rules Committee is of strategic import in determining the legislation to be presented for consideration and the order and manner of such presentation.

As an opposition in the Senate LaFollette will be the greatest force in the government next to the President. The Senator from Wisconsin is in second place on the two most important committees, Interstate Commerce and Finance. Smoot who enjoys the back door confidence of the big bankers will not surrender his chairmanship of the Finance Committee. But Cummins has an eye on the Presidency of the Senate and its extra pay. Should he accept this profitable honor LaFollette would step into his place as Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Committee. It must be remembered that nothing could be dearer to the heart of LaFollette, who probably knows more about railways than any man in the country, than to be at the head of the Interstate Commerce Committee in whose hands the transportation problem falls. This would give him the much coveted chance to whoop it up for the farmers of the Northwest and millions of organized workers who are hot on the tracks of the railroad interests.

But the New York Stock Exchange and the Chicago Board patron saints of the Republican Party have already issued a ukase in the New York Times and the Chicago Journal of Commerce to the Administration that Smoot and Cummins must stay in their present chairmanships. To the Western grain gamblers and the Eastern bankers it's

bad enough that LaFollette has the numerous advantages accruing from his position as ranking member in the two most important Senate Committees.

The progressives will spare no powder to blast the standpatters out of their committee entrenchments. Unless the Democrats and Republicans will get together, which appears next to impossible just now, the harmony of the next Congress will remain unruffled only a few hours.

How Will Congress Keep Busy?

From the point of view of the number and variety of the bills to be introduced the sessions will run hog-wild. The show will be a teeter-tetter affair. Even the least vocal of the battalion of talk will yell. The moments of high passion will crowd each other. The departures from the field of chaste diction will be numerous. There will be no dearth of issues. There will be booms and boomlets in the market for quack remedies to relieve the political belly-ache and the economic distress of the farmers. Cooperative marketing, tariff tinkering, reduction of freight rates, export schemes, conferences and commissions will be but a few of the promiscuous offers. It is rumored in Washington that Coolidge may even break his silence and talk to the farmers by radio or telegraph on their "ever improving conditions".

From all present indications the bonus will go over with a bang.

Though much noise has been made about new immigration laws, it is not likely that vital changes in the present status will be made. Like the Soldier Bonus this issue cannot be meddled with, for votes and campaign funds might be lost no matter which way the wind blows. Furthermore, the proposals will be so numerous and so far apart that the various bills will die in the draw on the Congressional chess boards.

Much anti-alien legislation will be proposed, as some of the so-called progressives, even, are closely affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan. Under these circumstances it should occasion no great surprise if some of these anti-foreign-born bills are passed.

In view of the impending national elections, the insurgents, standpatters, and Democrats will bury their hatchets and establish a united front on pork. The recent restoration of patronage rights to the progressives was, to an extent, a manoeuvre by the reactionaries who insured pork for their own field organizers beyond any doubt by getting complete unity on this question. A sweeping public buildings bill will suit the Democrats from the patronage-hungry South; will patch up the tatters of the poverty-stricken insurgents from the Northwest; and will fatten the Administration's political bootleggers the country over.

There will be practically no tinkering with the tariff in the coming sessions. The reactionaries want the present status undisturbed; the progressives think they have more important issues to center their attacks on; the Democrats want the present tariff law intact in order not to lose their perennial issue before the voters. One of the "best minds" of the insurgents in the Senate even told me: "The Democrats really don't want to tinker a damn with tariff legislation. They are afraid it will open up too much for them to stand just now." The only live scrap on the tariff issue is likely to come over the question of a sugar excise tax.

Transportation problems will be in the fore. Vigorous attacks will be launched against Section 15a, the guaranty clause of the Esch-Cummins Act, by LaFollette and his followers. Many amendments will be offered, but Coolidge who never plays a lone hand in politics, can be counted upon to use his mighty pen to veto any measure hostile to the railroad interests.

Taxation will surely be a sore spot. In preparation for Coolidge to break his long silence in his written message, the reactionaries have been throwing out feelers in the past few weeks. First, Congressman William R. Green, ranking member and the most probable next chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, came out with a blast in the magazine of the United States Chamber of Commerce. Several days afterwards Mellon threw out a couple of more feelers. Smoot jumped upon him for tactical reasons, but the bankers and the press from coast to coast, indorsed his proposals with a spontaneity and uniformity that betrayed many months of careful preliminary preparation for applause. The Democrats themselves are divided on some new phases of the taxation problem. The progressives are on guard to strike blow for blow here. They will not major in this issue but will spring forward with counter-proposals to smite the big interests and save the little ones.

Considering the increasing importance of our colonial affairs, the Philippines in particular and the other colonies in general will stir up a good deal of talk. Some officials favor the establishment of a special office for a secretary of Colonial affairs who will be added to the Cabinet.

Russian recognition has won a host of new adherents in the last few months. Such important men in the Republican machine as Will Hays, George Harvey, and ex-Secretary of the Interior Fall are for recognition of the Soviet Government. Coolidge is not as hostile as he was. Also in authoritative circles it is being said repeatedly that Hoover has been coming around steadily for recognition. The reactionaries will probably offer some such measure as sending a commission to Russia in order to avoid an immediate struggle with the advocates of trade and recognition.

Prohibition scandals are oozing out and threatening to break momentarily. Once these break they will involve all groups in Congress. The whole prohibition question is so rotten that no one wants to touch it for fear of messing up his fingers in fly paper. A person can hardly pass a government building in the Capital without holding his nose for fear of smelling bootleg whiskey. What is more no one will want even to smell the prohibition issue, let alone make a spirited attack on it, because of the harmful effect it might have on the political hearts of many voters.

The Ku Klux Klan is another problem from which every group wants to stay away. This is an abyss into which no one dares to tumble. Being primarily interested in getting back to Congress, the Senators and Representatives will not dare to apply the surgeon's knife to this canker on the American body-politic. Bedsheet politics will be avoided; the hooded klan will not be disturbed.

In the debates and fights over all of these issues, the World Court and foreign policy will take a back seat. There is little likelihood that the insurgents will plan, Coolidge will try, or the Democrats dare to make an issue out of it in the next sessions.

Strategy and Stratagems

If it is true that war is only an intensified form of politics, then the next Congress will be a royal battle ground.

The Presidential bee will buzz day and night. Native sons and dark horses will be raised en masse in the next Congress. Now that Hiram Johnson has publicly confessed that he wants to move into the White House, the flood gates of ambition in the Republican Party are wide open.

The progressives have no definite program of action yet. They intend to make their first fight on the organization of Congress. Whatever program they have evolved to date is largely negative. But they are going to fight and fight hard on this point. The insurgents will also make an attempt to expose the big interests by investigations of oil and sugar and an inquiry into the spread between the price received by the farmers for their wheat and the price paid by consumers for bread. The progressives see in this tactic another means for uniting the forces of the farmers, the small owners, and the workers against the big trusts. To what extent the Congressional sessions will precipitate or retard the formation of a third party it is still too early to judge. But one of the aspiring whips of the progressives in the House told the writer that if the Republicans and Democrats nominate such open reactionaries as Coolidge or Underwood then a third party in 1924 is a certainty. Almost all progressives are agreed that it would be useless for them to play with the Democrats. They feel that such a game would not aid their cause a jot or a tittle. LaFollette knows only too well that the Democrats cannot be back-stiffeners to some of his wavering friends.

From one of the field marshals in the high command in the Democratic Party I have learned that the Democrats will be interested only in politics in the coming sessions. They will not play with the progressives whom they sometimes call "revolutionary radicals". The Democrats will sit back and laugh every time a Republican window is broken on the right or the left. Scandal mongering will be a Democratic specialty. The Teapot Oil Dome theft, the Veterans' Bureau exposure, the non-enforcement and violation of the Meat Packing Control Act and the appointment of Ex-Governor Davis as head of the Reclamation Ser-



The War Baby: the Crown Prince returns.

vice are amongst the scandal strings the Democratic fiddles will play on. The Democrats will especially welcome every quarrel and rift in the Republican fold. One of their trusted Washington officials told me that "the Democrats are planning to go before the electorate and point out the utter incompetency of the Republican Congress, its do-nothing character, its being a house divided against itself and the character of its constituency as solely responsible for the defeat of the 'constructive Democratic' measures and that they, the Democrats, are thus the only ones fit to run the greatest business on earth—the United States Government".

At this date it appears that the reactionaries will play a game veering between diplomacy and the mailed fist. The President will persist and Congress will resist, or vice versa. "Stability" will be the Coolidge key-note, the standpatters will seek to discredit the Democrats and progressives alike before the voters by blaming them for the failure of Congress to do anything. Last summer the Administration was planning a thorough-going "red" investigation in order to link up the insurgents with the Communists and thus "discredit" the progressives. In so far as the Communists are concerned this Republican policy was based on the good old motto that in class politics lies go marching on forever like John Brown's body. The findings of the investigation, would, after election, in the case of a reactionary victory, afford an excellent smoke screen behind which there would be unleashed against all militant workers and farmers a horde of government hounds who bark from the sides of their mouths and inhabit wide-toed shoes. But this plan seems to have been dropped. Daugherty and Burns who would have to execute this manoeuvre are lost in a sea of increasing troubles at present. Rumor still has it that Daugherty will soon be displaced. Wm. J. Burns would of course, get the walking papers with his master.

Coolidge has deliberately chosen to play the golden role of the wise man in silence in order to disown all his opponents. The Republican machine will do everything possible to renominate Coolidge. "Silent Cal" has a splendid record in the eyes of the moneyed men. He knows precinct as well as presidential politics and plays both with consummate shrewdness.

Ford's Ghost on the Stage.

The ghost of Henry Ford is stalking the political stage like the ghost of Hamlet's father. The backbone of the Ford movement rests in the support of those who merely want "something different." The Ford backers are not very hopeful over their prospects of capturing the Democratic convention; much less the Republican. Yet, these wiseacres believe that the day of the man on horseback in politics is over. The day of the flivver has arrived. Their program has been summed up for me by one of their Washington agents as follows: "We want honest-to-goodness-men put in charge of the government to administer the good old honest-to-goodness-laws." January has been picked as the month for the Ford boom. This same Ford follower went on to show the tremendous power over public opinion in the hands of the auto king: "Ford has a stronghold on public opinion through his numerous agencies over the country. In the early months of 1923 Ford was flat on his back and needed \$60,000,000 in cash. He broached Wall

Street for a loan. The financiers turned their backs on him. They thought they were putting him out of business. Here was their chance at last! They had already arranged for a receiver for the Ford Company and were planning a gathering to eat him alive. Being balked by Wall Street, Ford immediately issued an order to every one of his agencies to raise a definite quota within a specified time. Ford had overproduced and did not have the ready cash he needed. He then sent out ten cars or multiples of ten, according to the quantity of business done, to every Ford dealer in the country, numbering several thousands, and ordered each dealer to raise his quota with the cars sent as security. This was done in record time and Wall Street was out-manoeuvred. Ford did it once. Ford will do it again. I wouldn't be surprised to see him use this very plan to organize and finance his campaign."

The Democrats are quite disturbed over Ford's influence on their convention. They will do their best in Congress to solidify their forces against such encroachments.

The insurgents are the ones most seriously hurt by the movement. If the territory consisting of the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Montana were to secede and form a sort of independent Rhine or Ruhr republic, LaFollette would be elected its president, hands down today. Yet, it is in these very states that the Ford movement is making the greatest strides.

It is only the reactionary Republicans who have no substantial food for fear in the Ford movement. As a matter of fact many standpatters welcome Ford as a force to disrupt all the forces opposing them.

Congressional Doldrums.

It is in such baffling winds, such political doldrums, that the Sixty-Eighth Congress will sail and develop into a do-nothing Punch and Judy show. The sessions will be long. The Democrats and progressives will use Congress to print and distribute through the frank all their campaign literature. Only the reactionaries will want to get through as soon as possible. Their fences are badly in need of repair, worse than at any time in the last twenty years, all over the country. Very likely Congress will stay in session until the party conventions.

With the winds of depression blowing harder day by day, the next Congress will not give much tonic to the bankers' nerves. But it surely will not hit these money lords in the place where it would hurt them most—the pocketbook. Wall Street will do the doing and Pennsylvania Avenue will do the talking. There is even less chance of getting a formula enabling Congress to work than of getting one to make people happy though married. At best the Sixty-Eighth Congress will only fray the edges of so-called progressive legislation. Coolidge might even talk of child labor laws and release some political prisoners.

In so far as the realm of talk is concerned nothing is unthinkable of the coming Congress. But in so far as the actual meeting of the vital problems confronting the country is concerned, nothing is inevitable in the next sessions.

Whether it suits one's fancy or not to call LaFollette the modern David or Coolidge the Goliath of today, the indisputable fact remains that the Sixty-Eighth Congress will be born unsung and unhonored. It will die unwept.

A Permanent Revolution

By Max Eastman

A LETTER came today telling me that some "enthusiast" about Soviet Russia is discouraged. It reminded me how benighted are the United States, and how long I have neglected my duty to enlighten them. When you have lived a little while in this land where intelligence reigns, and simple human good will—and they reign just as ignorance and wealthy privilege do in the United States, with a rod of iron—you forget all about those elementary duties of agitation. It seems so natural for intelligence to reign, and so altogether easy and proper and automatic, that you can hardly believe it was necessary to explode an empire and abolish a class and conquer the armies of the world in order to bring it to pass. From Coolidge to Lenin—the distance is a revolution. That would not be so hard to remember, seeing what a great distance it is—the thing you can't remember is Coolidge.

The reason why American enthusiasts who are living easy and doing nothing, get discouraged about Soviet Russia, while Russian enthusiasts who are taking every setback straight in the breast, do not, is that the Russian enthusiasts had more common sense to start out with. They never imagined that the revolution was going to produce a millenium. We thought we were getting along so well with our "republican institutions," that there was no use having a revolution unless it was going to accomplish **everything**. And so we told ourselves that it was. To the Russians a revolution presented itself as the first preliminary to the accomplishment of **anything**. And that saved them from putting it in the place of God and his Paradise, and perpetuating in the name of science a theological mode of thought. It saved them from becoming either zealots of faith or priests of theory. It made **revolutionary workmen** out of them. It compelled them to take the ideas of Karl Marx, whether consciously or not, as working hypotheses. And where personal force and intellectual genius united in high proportion, it created that new thing so terrible to this old world—practical engineers of history.

It is going to require a great effort for the American lyrical socialist to grow up into an engineer of history. But it is not impossible, and I ask my reader to begin now by throwing out that wonderful childish idea that revolution is a substitute for reform and putting in its place the simple fact that revolution is what makes fundamental reform possible. Revolution does not produce a system of industry in which there is no exploitation and all the profit goes to the worker; it enables those who want such a system to employ the best engineering brains and all the material and mental apparatus of the national life in the all-glorious act of beginning to try to produce it. Revolution does not produce a race of people educated in science and the poetic love of life; it enables the real idealists to go into the schools and educate the race that way. Revolution does not produce liberty; it takes the bloody and black mockery out of the sound of the word and enables those who love liberty to strive with sincerity and sound reason to produce the conditions which will make it possible. There

is no short-cut to the goal of human culture. It is possible to lay open the road to that goal and hold it open. That is what the proletarian revolution was supposed to do, and that is what it has done.

The best proof of it is the New Economic Policy—exactly the thing that discourages our American enthusiast. It discourages him because he can not imagine a bunch of politicians announcing that they were going to produce a socialist economy, and then retreating right straight down the path away from socialism, without that's meaning that they were really abandoning the path, and giving up any sincere purpose of achieving the goal. And the reason he can not imagine it, is that in a bourgeois government it could not happen. And the reason it could not happen is that in a bourgeois government, whatever the talk may be about social ideals, a concealed desire to amass and defend capital is the big motive, and the one that will ultimately prevail. In a dictatorship of the proletariat there is no concealed motive. The big motive **really** is to produce a socialist economy and therefore it is possible to retreat and manoeuvre and dodge and dig in, and do everything else that a person does who is trying to get somewhere through a mess. It is possible to do this without losing the clear vision of your goal, or the clear force of your purpose.

The retreat before capitalism involved in the New Economic Policy has been executed, the new position occupied exactly as staked out in the plans, the lines held without a flicker of weakness, and the advance toward socialism begun again at a different point in the evolutionary process. I ask no greater political miracle of the revolution than that.

Years ago Trotsky invented the concept of "Permanent Revolution." It was a stroke of genius in which he expressed his temperament, and correctly anticipated the course of events between March and November 1917. But to my mind this concept defines better than the words "transition period" the problem of the proletarian dictatorship in general. All time is a period of transition. There are no end terms. The task of the proletariat, even in the most advanced industrial countries, will be a gradual experimental elimination of private capital, a determination of the possibilities and limits of social production. Capitalism never completed the destruction of feudalism, and communism may never complete the destruction of capitalism. We do not need a blue-print of the society at which the proletarian dictatorship will arrive. What we do need is an assurance that the proletariat can socialize and successfully operate a sufficiently large block of industry, to assure its own sovereignty and the continuance of the process.

The success in Russia has already proven that this will be possible in any developed industrial country. That is beyond the reach of argument. Opponents of the proletarian dictatorship make a fatal mistake when they point to the backwardness of Russia, the "hopeless minority" that



Cornelia Barns

"Last Christmas I spent \$1.98 on her, and all she gimme was a handkerchief."

is ruling it. They do so in a frantic effort to escape from the oncoming certainty of that dictatorship in their own countries, but they only make it more certain. If the proletariat in a "hopeless minority" can accomplish the political and military wonders that have been accomplished in Russia, then the proletariat in western Europe and America can accomplish all that we have expected of it. The dictatorship of the proletariat has ceased to be an article of faith. It has become a form of government, tested and proven more just and more adequate to the conditions of modern industrial life, than others.

Whether it will be possible to make this form of government and this process of experimentation toward liberty

permanent now in Russia, where the conditions of modern industrial life had only begun to develop and where those beginnings have been broken down by seven years of war, is a specific problem and a complex one. It is easy to draw a picture of a sickle and a hammer on a field of red, but it is not easy to unite the self-interest of a hundred million farmers with that of ten million workers in the evolution of a worker's state. Whether this will be achieved or not, depends largely upon the course of events in other parts of the world. There is no ground for an objective decision that it will be achieved. There is absolutely no ground for a decision that it will not. There is ground for a decision in every corner of the world to give all help to the heroic men and women who are determined to achieve it.

Never to Know

NEVER to know that we do not know;
 This it will be if death is the end;
 Never to say "it is over" and so
 Feel our escape and quietly spend
 A motionless moment in conscious peace,
 Knowing the ecstasy of release.

Sara Bard Field.

Not a Single Little One

WE LOVED so much and met
 In a meeting great as love;
 We loved so much and yet
 What have we our love to prove?
 Not a single little one
 To speak when we are gone.

Sara Bard Field.

Pro-Proletarian Art in Mexico

By Frederic W. Leighton

EARLY evening and the movement of many people homeward bound. The Zócalo, that huge square where once rose the buildings of an Aztec city, now surrounded with its heritage from Spain: the calm cathedral with bell-shaped towers, the long straight lines of the national palace, the arched and arabesqued arcades of the Ayuntamiento. Early evening in November. From a street leading to the Zócalo a dark mass rounds the corner, pours into the square, keeps turning the corner, moving swiftly like molten steel flowing from the lips of a convertor. A confused sound hoarsens. It is the shouts of the people crying; "Water, water, we want water!"

In the van, splashed with red and black banners, rattles a Ford truck filled with shouting, gesticulating figures. The mass surging behind follows closely to the Ayuntamiento. "Water, water, down with the Ayuntamiento!" roars the crowd. As the Ford rolls up the old carved wooden gates are swung shut by municipal guards who retire into the courtyard of the building.

"Cowards, traitors, grafters! You have artesian wells while we dip our water from the sewers. Open up, open up!" A large beam used in the daytime for some repair work lies beneath the arcade. Suddenly it is no longer a beam but a battering ram whose every impact echoes with a cheer. The wooden gate bends and strains, one panel gives, a second; hands reach through to slip the bolt, the gate swings wide, swings wide to—crack! crack! A volley from within. Men drop, the crowd falls back; then with inarticulate guttural sounds surges forward and fill the gateway. Revolvers puncture the darkness with light and sound, searching out the hidden forms within. The battle's on! The populace of Mexico City, the workers, organized and unorganized, are storming the municipal palace. Two weeks without water because of the carelessness of a shiftless, grafting city administration—two weeks of filth! The fighting lasts for several hours, the Ayuntamiento is set afire, records burned. Hundreds are wounded and twenty persons lose their lives before troops quell the disorder.

In the thick of the fight within the doorway of the Ayuntamiento, moves a bulky figure dressed in khaki flannel shirt, high boots, and broad-brimmed hat.

The scene shifts to the concert hall of the National Preparatory School of Mexico which for centuries was a Jesuit college until the anti-clerical reform laws of 1857. The hall is large with elaborate stone-carved ornamentation on walls and pillars, a reconstruction that cost the treasury of Porfirio Diaz half a million pesos. The seats mount in precipitate tiers to the roof of opaque glass. Back of the platform the cement wall rises sheer to the arched proscenium. In front of the wall stands a rough high stepladder near the top of which works a man with a brush and a gasoline blowtorch. The wall is no longer grey like the other walls of the auditorium. It is a flaming mass of line and color—long sweeping curves, balanced masses of gold and blue, green, brown, and red. The whole expanse even to the background of the organ alcove is one grand mural



Diego Rivera

Detail of mural decoration, "Creation," National Preparatory School, Mexico City.

decoration. The bulky man on the ladder wears a khaki flannel shirt and high boots.

This is Diego Rivera, member of the central executive committee of the Communist Party of Mexico, and his country's most renowned living painter. The name of Rivera is yet probably better known among Europeans and the followers of cubism and French symbolism than it is among the masses of his native Mexico to which he returned in 1921 after an almost continuous sixteen years in Europe. But the colossal work, "Creation," recently completed in the National Preparatory School, and the work now being painted on the patio walls of the Ministry of Public Education are fast making him known in all parts of Mexico. A certain daily paper of the capital thinking to please bourgeois taste recently advertised Rivera widely by an ill calculated attack on his work, an attack which was quickly hushed up when it was perceived what power Rivera had attained in the thoughts and hearts of serious

minded people and when it was revealed that instead of receiving a fabulous amount for his labor, as charged, he was decorating walls for a sum less than the cost of finishing them in kalsomine—a niggardly eight pesos per square yard! Imagine some public building in Washington being decorated at four dollars a square yard by John Sargent!

Rivera is one of those about whom one feels that, however diverse his characteristics, there is within him a unifying principle which resolves all dilemmas and explains all vagaries. This unity is itself elusive and mystifying, but one is certain of its presence just as one is not puzzled by the different aspects of a tree in winter, spring, and autumn. Life flows through the tree and its process reveals wonderfully changing phenomena. So it is with a human personality that has achieved naturalness of growth, and so one feels about Rivera.

Diego Rivera was born in Guanajuato, a mining town high in the folds of the Sierra Madre. Guanajuato gave the Spaniards countless ingots of gold and silver which bulked large among the twenty-five millions annually that used to enter old Cadiz from the new world. In Guanajuato, Hidalgo, who started the movement of liberation against Spain, was executed by royal troops and his head hung from a nail high up at one corner of the Alhondiga, the massive brick warehouse-fortress where the grain and treasure of the masters of the land was wont to be stored. As a child Rivera saw gold and silver being carried out and away on railroad trains and on the backs of burros, to other masters, those in the United States or England, or native masters who lived in Mexico City, Paris, or Madrid as their fancy dictated. Later he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Mexico City with such success that he was given a scholarship for two years study abroad. That was the beginning of his European life, which, except for one brief interruption, lasted from 1907 to 1921. The interruption, consisting of a trip to Mexico from the autumn of 1910 until the middle of 1911, is significant because at that time Rivera was an active member of the secret revolutionary junta in Mexico City which was working for the overthrow of Diaz. After carrying out an important mission for this group, among the Indians of the sierra of the state of Puebla, Rivera was denounced to the police and escaped by vessel from Veracruz en route to the United States to join Madero who was then entering Mexico from the north. But in Havana news of Madero's triumph determined a return to Europe for the further study of art.

Rivera's poverty and his revolutionary sympathies brought him in contact with many political exiles and radicals, and his inquisitive intellect was forever registering not only the forms and colorings of the people and places he visited, but also their social and economic conditions. From a painter of conventional things in the usual manner he became one who attempted to externalize his feelings and thoughts by means of symbolism and the division of planes, and who eagerly studied every technical process that would aid him. From being a painter on a yard of canvas he came to seek an organic personal relationship to the work-a-day members of society and found release in mural decoration; for mural painting, being an integral part of the finest building, united him with other laborers. From symbolic integrated cubism done with grace and power



Diego Rivera

Native miner being searched by mine boss. Mural decoration in fresco on patio wall, Ministry of Public Education, Mexico City

in "Creation," he has now come to the portrayal of simple human verities of the life of native Mexico with a technique that is synthetic of all his previous experience. One sees the wage-slave miner dragging himself down to work in the morning, crawling up exhausted in the twilight and being searched for high-grade ore by the foreign mine boss; one sees the native sugar industry, the weaving and dyeing of cloth, the work of the fields and smelters, plains and cities.

At the foot of several of these scenes in the great panorama of Mexican life which Diego Rivera is now unrolling on the patio walls of the Ministry of Public Education, he inscribed verses by Gutierrez, a young revolutionary poet. As may be seen on the accompanying photograph of the weary miner emerging into the evening air is the following poem:

Companero minero,
Doblado por el peso de la tierra
Tu mano y erra
Cuando saca metal
Para el dinero.
Haz punales
Con todos los metales
Y asi
Veras que los metales
Despues son para ti.

Translated:

Comrade miner,
Doubled by the weight of the earth,
Your hand errs
When it mines metal
Destined for money.
Make daggers
With all the metals,
And thus you will see
That thereafter
The metals are for you.

But one afternoon not long ago Albert Pani, Minister of Foreign Relations passed by and saw the poem. Pani is known as the most conservative member of the present government. Pani went to Obregon and protested; Obregon spoke to Vasconcelos, the Minister of Education. Vasconcelos spoke to Rivera and next day the verse, together with several others of equal ardor, had disappeared. It is rumored that thereby hangs a tale of mystery which shall not be disclosed until the day of proletarian revolt in Mexico.

Rivera leads a group of young revolutionary painters and sculptors: Jose A. Sequeiros, Amado de la Cueva, Ignacio Asunsolo, Reyes Perez, Xavier Guerrero, Clemente Orozco, Jorge Juan Crespo, German Cueto, Emilio Amero, Fermin Revueltas, Carlos Merida and others. Practically all of them have had training in Europe, South America, or the United States as well as in Mexico. Their work was highly praised at the last exhibition in New York of the Society of Independent Artists. A number of them fought in the Mexican revolution. These men have formed a union called the "Union of Technically Working Painters and Sculptors" which adheres to the Moscow International, conducts a cooperative workshop, has plans for the establishment of a communal theatre in an abandoned convent now occupied by members of the proletarian Tenants' Union, and is generally active in the propagation of its esthetic and social thought. Below is a translation of the fundamental principles of the group:

"Our 'Union of Technically Working Painters and Sculptors' is communist in the sense of the Moscow International to which we declare ourselves adherents with all obligations and rights.



Diego Rivera

Detail of "Creation," mural decoration in concert hall of National Preparatory School of Mexico City.

"We believe indispensable the overthrow of the old social mechanism now in power; we believe that to arrive at this goal the producing and creating classes have the right or rather the obligation to employ whatever means of action necessary for the execution of this end. As the bourgeois world is already opposing with violence the advent of the new order, we should ourselves apply analogous means to ensure its coming.

"We recognize as the only effective means for this the temporary dictatorship of the proletariat, designed to apply the pressure necessary for the adaptation of all that which is called **different social classes** to the new order, a civilization which will not recognize—as actually ours does not recognize—more than one class: the class of **PRODUCERS AND CREATORS**.

"In short we wish to substitute from the very foundation the **government of the producers** for the **government of the exploiters**.

"By the nature of our craft we are those directly charged with working and looking out for the maintenance and development of the purity of the means of plastic and graphic expression in the Mexican region, a region which we consider of the utmost importance as the nucleus for the development of our tendencies in all America.

"We consider that the solution of the social and material problem of the painters and sculptors of Mexico when identified with that of the other workers of the world will bring with it naturally the solution of their esthetic problem; for in this manner they will form active elements in the collective life to which until now they have not belonged; and whose work will for the same reason be the logical reflection of the popular genius...."

"We call upon the Mexican painters and sculptors who are apart from our movement to abandon their legendary aspect of 'artists' outside the activity of society: who live from the vulgar taste of the new-rich, and by shameful political intrigue in all governments, thereby meriting the disrespect of the common people who call them drones because they feel intuitively that true art, the art collectively necessary and useful, is not that which the bourgeois minority likes."

This document explains Rivera's satisfaction in leaving Europe and a reputation, in refusing even an invitation from the Soviet government to decorate in Moscow, in order to come back to Mexico where he had been until two years ago only a shadowy name. Rivera holds that it is the yet non-industrial countries which today contain the seeds of revolt and revolution: India, China, Russia and Mexico. Mexico is a focal point for social revolution in the Americas; for, combined with Central America, it is the land of the greatest cultural and artistic tradition of the New World. The natives of Mexico are agrarian, unorganized, and conservative—that is to say they wish to revert to their old independent system of small and communal proprietorship. With respect to the capitalist and landlord systems of exploitation they are inherently revolutionary. And their revolt is more than economic. For to them, the pecuniary, as principal object in life, seems ugly. Basically their criteria are not moral but artistic; the Indians of the sierra do not call an object of disfavor "malo" or bad, but "feo, muy feo," ugly, very ugly. Economically, esthetically, native Mexico is a land of protest against the metallic values of capitalist industrialism.

Rivera voices this protest in a paragraph of an article contributed to "Vida Mexicana," organ of a group of Mexican intellectuals:

"And even though to men of false and superficial culture these Indian races and the mujik appear primitive and savage, in reality they are profoundly civilized—that is to say they are capable of harmonious relations between men and men, and between men and the earth. They are people capable of living and producing with beauty and order, and in consequence able to receive the true culture, the newest culture, which may be successfully grafted only upon an already cultivated plant. So it results that the Indian man or woman of Yucatan is civilized, while a bourgeois man and woman, creoles of Mexico City, are absolute barbarians, and the case would be the same were they natives of New York. Indeed the ancient civilizations have enabled their races to persist despite the false bourgeoisologist at Harvard University, Central America and Mexico were the home of one of four independent early civilizations, a civilization based on corn, whose people have left civilization which has just gone bankrupt with a human sacrifice of forty million lives—proof of barbarism greater than the world has ever seen."



Cartoon drawn by the painter Diego Rivera: Jesus telling the peasant to take the land.

Recently Rivera wrote a pamphlet which was published by the Grupo Solidario del Movimiento Obrero, a group of intellectuals which has put its services as teachers, lawyers, artists, etc., at the disposal of organized labor. This pamphlet was addressed directly to the campesino or landworker. One of the obstacles to the carrying out of the Mexican agrarian program has been the opposition of the clergy who, working upon the religious superstitions of the campesinos, have in many instances told them that to accept a piece of land offered by the government was to reserve for themselves a nook in hell. Rivera, estimating that it will take generations to rationalize the Catholic peasantry, gathers in his pamphlet sayings of the Church Fathers (with precise references to book and page) which denounce the wickedness of the landlord system and establish clearly the advocacy by primitive and historical Christianity of the communal owning and working of land. Printed to look like a religious tract, which basically it certainly is, and with a cover drawing by Rivera showing Christ appearing in a vision to a plowman, the title page reads, "the repartition of land to the poor is not opposed to the teachings of Our Savior, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Mother Church. The Mexican people fought and suffered ten years wishing to realize the word of Our Master Jesus Christ."

To Rivera then the culture of the primitive races of Mexico was a higher culture than that of modern industrialism; it was a life of harmony and comparative peace within the social group. It was a life that gave opportunity for the satisfaction of primary human impulses and that released many people from drudgery to the life of art and to the art of human relationship. Revolution is today the slogan of a healthy individual; the healthy artist addresses himself to the discovery of his place in the hierarchy of labor as an adorer of things of common and communal use, as an integral factor in architecture. As a technician the painter is a laborer, as an artist he is a visionary who feels and sees concretely what others appreciate but dimly and vaguely even though with overpowering force. So Rivera as artist does not preach but reveals; he stimulates and beckons to new beauties and new realities. His goal is the mass spirit made articulate.

A Dividend Out of Russia

By Jessica Smith

IT WAS a year ago this month that I met Sidney Hillman here in Moscow. He was occupied with a hundred goings and comings—interviews with Lenin, conferences with the organizers of the Russian needle trades, examinations of factories, trade union meetings. When I asked him how things were going with the "concession" he was working out with Bogdanov of the Supreme Council of Public Economy, he smiled confidently and declared that "negotiations were proceeding satisfactorily."

A few days later returning from Petrograd to Moscow I alighted at the Alexandrovsky Station and found myself, on the day of the great celebration of the Fifth Year, cut off from the town by the coils of a giant workers' parade that wound round the city a half dozen times before it surged through the Red Square. As I was arguing with droshky drivers, there came to my rescue a short man with a black Astrakhan, a black shuba, and a competent and confident smile, who invited me into an automobile and took me to the address I was trying to reach. On the way he spoke of his work. He was reorganizing the clothing industry. He had been at this for some time, in fact, ever since he returned from Baltimore to Petrograd after the October Revolution. After setting the Petrograd factories in better order he had come to Moscow and built up a big shop which was called The Experimental Factory. He invited me to come and see it sometime. As we were leaving he gave me his name on a slip of paper, an address and a telephone number. The name was B. Bograchov.

It was six months before I got back to Moscow again, but my first thought was to get to Bograchov's factory, about which I had by this time heard much from other Americans, relief workers, congressmen and others who had inspected it. So, one day, notebook in hand, I descended on Bograchev and the Moscow Experimental.

It was not the follow-the-leader sort of cursory inspection that American bosses permit one to take through their factories. It was an opportunity to learn as deliberately as I cared to go, and as thoroughly as I cared to listen, about the ups and downs of the clothing trade in Russia over a period of years.

The advances made in the clothing industry in Russia in the last six years are almost unbelievable when one remembers, as I did while Bograchov unfolded his tale, that before the war there were practically no large shops in Russia, the industry being even worse than the East Side of New York before the dawn of the Amalgamated, sweatshop rubbing sweatshop. Petty, primitive, cockroach-boss production, no order or system or control. Take, for example, what is now this Moscow Experimental Factory, of which Bograchev and Hillman are justly proud. It was formerly owned by a certain Alswank, who employed fifty workers. He had other small branches in other cities besides farming out a lot of his work to the villagers to be done as home work in stuffy, disease-breeding huts by tubercular workers at slave rates.

Now more than 200 of the 700 in the Experimental are those very village workers who have come into the city to work in this factory, and there is not one of them who

will not tell you that it is *gorazdo lutche* (very much better) to work under the new conditions than it was when there was no end of their unspeakably miserable day's work.

But not only conditions but real wages have greatly improved since those pre-war days to which the landlords and capitalists long to return, but which will never be again. The effective buying power of the worker has risen and life is something like life ought to be. Compare what the worker in one of these clothing shops got five years ago when the factories were first taken over and what he receives to-day. Then it was one half a pound of bread a day. Now it is sufficient to buy from twenty-five to fifty pounds. That is no inconsiderable increase.

The Moscow Experimental Factory is a veritable laboratory of social and industrial research. This is so, thanks to the fact that it is publicly owned by a Workers' State that provides the plant or the basic capital. It is operated by a State Syndicate working under the rules of the State. Also to the fact that it has men like Bograchov on its staff. Also to the fact that the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and its child, The Russian-American Industrial Corporation, have made possible all sorts of improvements through the credit they have given to the clothing industry of Russia, much of which was used in making this factory a leader in the progressive needle trades.

Looking through the factory one finds the workers in large well-lighted rooms working in an atmosphere that is neither the happy-go-lucky *neechevo* (Russian for "I don't give a damn!") of former days or the strained, competitive race that characterizes Americanization at its worst. Here, for example, are a group of men pressers, some of them old birds who have been in the tailoring industry for forty years, who are singing "Stenka Razin" intermittently as they press vests and pants. And women's high voices rise above the whir of the electric machines (even the machines are Singers). Most of them look happy and many, if you happen to ask, tell you it is better working in the country where workers rule than in western lands where owners hold the whip. Once or twice I did meet workers who complained that it was impossible to live comfortably in Moscow, but as I have heard the same complaint from 150-dollar-a-week American journalists living in the Hotel Savoy, I have come to consider this a decidedly cranky minority opinion! As a matter of fact the workers in the Experimental look well fed and well dressed. Through their factory cooperatives they can buy all their necessities at rates much lower than those charged to the "Nepman," the foreigner and the non-producer.

Once did I think I was seeing the seamy side of the workers' life when, as I was looking through the Experimental with Comrade Tetukov, the assistant manager, we were accosted by an excited little worker with a long tale of woe about his dismissal. Later, in the director's office, the truth came out. The little man came in begging to be taken back. The assistant director turned to the Soviet Labor Laws and pointed to the place where it rules that a worker who stays away from work without permission and a proper excuse from the union should be discharged...

"But you see it was about a girl... I didn't mean to stay away so long", the little man explained, "but I wanted to set up a home. I'm tired of living alone and getting my own meals. But she lives outside of Moscow and it took a long time to persuade her. Now she's going to marry me, but what good will that be if I haven't a job?"

Comrade Tetukov shook his head.

"We have to put up with a lot from this fellow, because he's an old worker—been with us from the start—off and on! This time he's been gone a week without permission. And when he's here he's something of a nuisance, always dissatisfied with his job. If we put him at pressing he wants to try cutting, and when he's been at that for a week he wants to try something else..."

But in the end Comrade Tetukov wrote a note to the Factory Committee recommending that the chap be given one more chance. Having received his paper he beamed all over, and began telling me how fine it was to be a worker under the Soviet Government!

The other shop I happened to visit that day was named the *Comintern* and it seemed to be full of the sort of energetic American workers who would qualify for a militant rank and file position, say, in the Communist International—or the Amalgamated! In this spot I was led around by a beaming-faced young Jewess named Clara Markel who used to work in Boston. Clara is a member of the Workers Committee and the Communist "cell." She had a jolly word for everyone she met as we went through the long bright rooms of workers. Clara was filled with delight over being back in the land of her birth, over the fine clothes they were making, over the responsibility which she, a simple worker, had been given in the big factory of 900 workers. "Oh yes, it's sure fine here," she said. "We're on the committees, we're the managers, we're everything."

Reshakov, the young worker manager of this factory, took me to his office and gave me a lecture on the significance and growth of the tailoring industry under the new economic policy. Then he turned to the system of production in his factory, showing by very illuminating graphic charts on his walls how the textiles are first gathered in the cutting room and then how the cut materials pass through the departments and the 110 different operations necessary for the production of a garment. He told me that production has steadily advanced since the arrival of the American machines and that as the wages were paid in the "goods" rouble, the workers are protected against the evils of inflation and rising prices. He remarked that all the emigrant workers from America and England seem glad to be back where exploitation is limited to the rigid rules of the "Nep" and where the workers through their 100% unions wield an almost unlimited and final power.

I asked Bograchov about the work of the All-Russian Clothing Syndicate Inc., of which the Russian-American Industrial Corporation is a participating unit. He showed me a map covering the whole Soviet Union. There were the factory towns where the industry has concentrated, close to the supplies of raw material in the great textile centers. The names of the clothing Trusts' units in the Syndicate were all there—Petrograd, Moscow, Nizhni-Novgorod, Kazan, Tambov, Egorievsk, Kharkov. Then on another map was shown the rapidly growing list of towns and cities

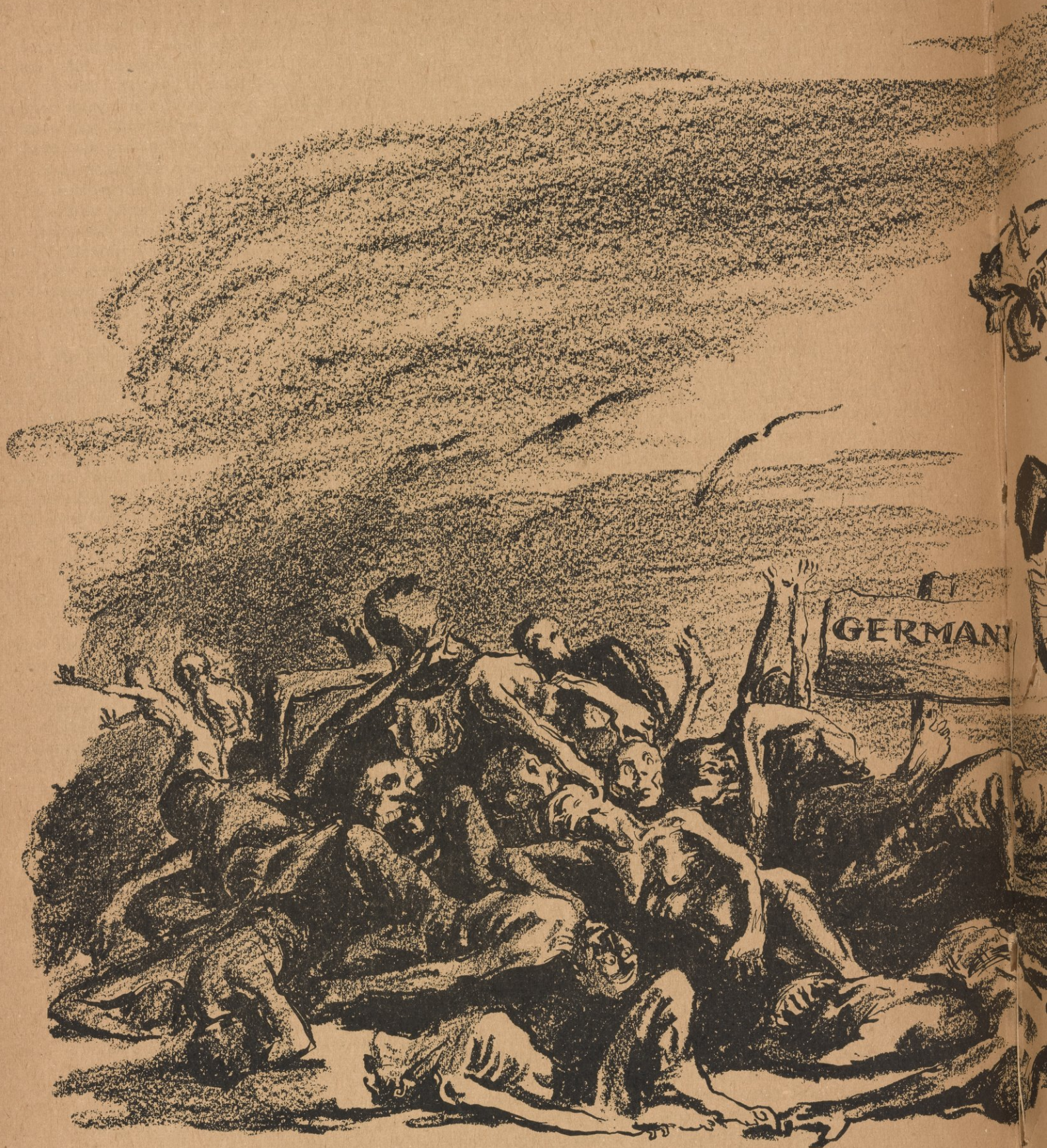
where the fingers of the Syndicate's sales agencies are reaching—into the Far Eastern Republic, into the Ukraine, the Caucasus, and the distant trading centers on the very outposts of Siberian civilization. The names only suggested the possibilities of growth. Besides, I learned that also through the channels of the regular co-operative stores and the governmental retail and wholesale agencies the goods of the Syndicate's shops are marketed.

Bograchov's maps also refreshed in my mind the extraordinary service the American workers who have shared in RAIC have been to the Russian workers. Without the capital advanced to the Clothing Syndicate last February these production figures, these widening circles of distribution would have been impossible. There would have been progress, no doubt. But the substantial bag of capital RAIC sent the Russian organizers helped wonderfully to quicken it.

But I understand the Americans are being well paid for their "faith" in Russia, their dreams of a stabilized industrial order there, and their "venture", which, in actuality, had very little risk in it, considering the ironclad guarantee of the Soviet Government both as to the capital and the dividend to the American corporation. Bograchov told me that not only would the Russian Syndicate be able to pay its American partners that guaranteed 8 percent, but that for the period of operations since the Americans sent over their first lump of capital they would pay at the rate of ten percent per annum on five percent for these six months. That ought to make the business men and the financial journals rub their eyes and pitch their voices closer to the tune of recognition.

I remember when RAIC was launched how a few who talked and professed and idealized a good deal about Russia refused to participate on the grounds that their money would not be as safe in Russia as it would in the Pennsylvania Railroad or in Consolidated Gas. It is quite possible that the same shifting group of sentimentalists and safety-first socialists will now oppose the RAIC because it is taking money out of Russia. But whatever the attacks of those few well-to-do American parlor reds, it is safe to predict that the first dividend to be paid by the Russian workers to the American workers will bring joy to the heart of the real friends of Russia—those in the ranks who fully appreciate the struggles and suffering of the Russian workers. They will rejoice, not because they are to receive a dividend—something most of them have never experienced before—but because this dividend demonstrates the fact that the Russians are making good at their big task of production. That is the heartening lesson of the first dividend from Russia—the workers there can produce goods and distribute them, and clothe their own people. They do it in their government-owned factories, with their own elected committee and managers working out production problems together. They are producing goods without capitalistic exploitation. That is the one simple truth that comes out of this story of Communist achievement in the Workers' Republic.

And those workers in America who believe in what the Russians are doing will help RAIC again. They will want to become still more thoroughgoing partners in Russian industry, in the most promising, prospering and hopeful industry that functions today on the continent of Europe.



Look Out! Some More D



Fred Ellis

More Democracy is Coming!

The Man With One Hand

By Emma Corstvet

I SAW him three times that day; but only after the shock of the third meeting did I realize why I had noticed him at all. For many men tramp up the steps to the great white doors of our Berlin apartment these days, begging. About nine the first ring, sometimes timid and light so that the bell scarcely stirs at all but merely whirrs; sometimes as determined and important as the postman himself, bringing money. A pause, then the opening and shutting of an inner door and the passage of Anna across the hall. Another pause. One hears Anna return through the passage with more opening and shutting of doors and knows that through the narrowly opened door she is handing out a thick slab of black bread, thinly spread with margarine or entirely naked except for the old newspaper in which it is wrapped.

Many men tramp up these Berlin stairs, wretched, broken scraps of a conquered nation.

I had to stop in the midst of my work to answer the ring, because Anna was out and the little old lady never opens doors. It was an annoying disturbance. I shut the door in the midst of the man's muttered formula and left him behind it while I looked for some small money. Only after I returned to the door with a fifty mark note in my hand did I become aware, with a sort of shock, of the man himself.

His arm was responsible, of course, the grotesque shaft of his arm hanging limp out of his sleeve and terminating in the scarred stump which had been his hand.

I hate scars, I cannot bear sores or wounds. Even though I assure myself that it is a matter for sympathy and not blame, I cannot avoid a certain sense of resentment at the sight of unclean or unhealthy people. They injure my aesthetic sense. When my friends are ill I send them flowers and notes; but I never visit them.

This man with the ragged stick of his arm thrust out of his sleeve aroused a fascinated resentment. I felt compelled to turn my eyes back to the arm. It was neither clean nor healthy, dark streaks ran down to the wrist and the puckered skin looked red and soft as though from infection.

I jerked my sight upward. Above the formless mass of old green uniform that he wore, his head seemed to stand out with startling gauntness, an unexpected reminder that there was a body beneath the rags. Face unshaven and half dirty, lines converging towards two muddy caverns which startled me into an unconscious movement of defense when I met them. Enraged eyes, wolfish and defiant. I felt he was waving his arm in my face with a snarling bravado.

An angry look between us, from me because he hurt me, from him because he recognized my mood. He took the fifty marks, crushing it into his fingers without looking at it and his "danke schoen" was more insulting than had he flung his arm across my face.

Anna, hurrying up the steps with a basket of food. "How much did you give him?"

"Fifty marks."

"Ach. Fifty. You must be more careful. All the beg-

gars in the neighborhood will be around. They tell each other."

"But fifty marks! Half the price of a roll, one-fifth of a bowl of soup. And the poor devil looked half starved."

He followed me into my room; but my work soon drove him away.

Afternoon, a glorious, gold afternoon, one of the first of the year. Who can pound a typewriter in a bed-sitting-room on an afternoon like this? A stroll, across the bridge to the Tier-garten and on to Unter-den-Linden. The black barges move slowly along the Spree, scarcely wriggling their white-painted noses, so calm is the river. Small boys fling stones from the Ufer, one leg swung back to give greater speed, one arm following the flight of the stone in its curved journey to the water.

I turned from the river to the broad asphalt of Charlottenburger Chaussee which stretches in a glittering white strip to Sieges Allee and the ancestors of "Denkmal Willy," planted in neat white stone-stated rows like a German forest. It is a joy to walk down the Charlottenburger Chaussee to Unter-den-Linden. Automobiles, driven by uniformed chauffeurs, purr their way up and down. Not so many as in Michigan Boulevard, of course, but nearly as many as in Hyde Park or the Bois de Boulogne. Stocky Berliners, with funny round hats set upon neckless fat, whirl their canes and open their overcoats, displaying protuberant stomachs. Dogs are out on leash, dachshunds, mysteriously manipulating their never-ending lengths on tiny legs, young police-dogs, bonelessly lithe. Here is comfort, at least; who speaks of poverty here, who sentimentalizes about misery? Blue and white striped nurses wheel their baby carriages, gorgeously submerged in lace. Soldiers stroll by on their way to the barracks. Little, scrubby chaps, unevenly clothed but gallantly grimacing at the nursemaids and at the two young girls who pass me, arms entwined, shoulders touching.

Down a side path, beyond Sieges Allee and in view of the heavy grey mass of the Reichstag, a little group had gathered. Why should such a group have wandered up here? A ragged circle, fringed by a ring of better dressed promenaders, mildly interested spectators. I pushed on to see what it was; after all, one had time enough this afternoon and it might be somewhat interesting. A hoarse voice was shouting something, an arm was flung up in the direction of the Reichstag, a whitish shaft of an arm. Could it be? It seemed uncanny that it should be the man who had disturbed me this morning. And yet, after all, he was the sort of person who would demand conspicuousness at all costs.

He was speaking, shouting, rather, to the little group of ragamuffins and beggars who had gathered from nowhere and who were half jeering him and half encouraging his unsteady violence.

"There. There's where we want to go. Right on to the Reichstag. We've had enough of government speeches and demonstrations and God knows what. Action is what we want now. Action."



Fear

William Gropper

A man near me shouted some scoffing remark in Berliner slang. I looked at him annoyed, trying to understand. When my attention returned to the man without a hand he was shouting in maudlin fashion:

"Nine years of this, and every year worse. In 1914 I left for the army to fight for my country..."

"Don't try to make yourself out a hero," sneered the man near me, "You'd have been shot if you hadn't left."

"Ain't I a hero, you fathead? Ain't I got an iron cross?" Touching the black medal on his chest.

"Sell you one for two hundred marks."

But the man without a hand had more important things on his tongue at the moment. He wanted to complain, to shout aloud; to bite, not one person but the entire world at once.

"Four years in the trenches, starving. A prisoner in Poland. And a hand gone..."

"You're not the only one." This from a tall young fellow, bowed over a crutch.

"Then out of the army and back here. Have I had all that I want to eat once in these nine years? And it's getting worse, I tell you, every year it's worse."

The tall young fellow with the crutch seemed to have found a special grievance of his own and kept murmuring, "What does he think he is? Is he any worse off than anyone else? He's drunk or he's crazy." The first speaker began suddenly to cry. He ran his arm over his face, it was irritating the way in which he was always flaunting his arm. He rubbed his eyes, sniffed loudly and spat on the ground. "I want my hand back again from Poland. Let 'em sell all the automobiles, let 'em sell all the new banks and march off to Poland for my hand. What business have they got with automobiles and banks, when I've only got part of me

and the other part's gone? Sell them, build an army again and go on to Poland. The Ruhr, too. We were never defeated. We were tricked into signing the treaty and look what it's brought us."

"You're mad," remarked a mild-looking man with a brief-case in his hand. "It was war that brought us all this. Do you want more war?"

"I want something. Something's got to be done, I don't care what. I want to smash up Cuno and the Reichstag building."

A whoop from the edge of the crowd. A young workman projecting the familiar slogan. "Come on. Into the Communist Party!"

The armless man shook with greater fury than ever. "Yes, the Communists," he sputtered. "What do you do? You wait. You are always saying: 'Wait. The time's not ripe.' Do you think I can live on waiting? Nine years since the war began. I enlisted in 1914, mind you, two years in Roumania, one in Russia—and Poland—" he seemed on the point of going into his plaint once more when suddenly he stiffened. "Come. Come to the Reichstag. Action's what we want. Not tomorrow, but today, this afternoon!"

It was pathetic enough, this little damaged group of perhaps fifteen men menacing with their frail fists the solid mass of the great grey building. Two policemen in bright green uniforms and shiny black helmets approached. Marionettes, drawn by strings. Rigid.

The man without a hand dropped into a snarling whine. "All right. Good, protect your little government, it pays you, you've got all your fingers, it wouldn't hire you if you didn't have them, would it?" he demanded with a hate so hot that the policemen involuntarily recoiled. "Arrest me. Shove me in. I don't care."

"We've got enough in our jails with such as you. They're full now. Get a move on."

"Action. Something's got to be done. And I'll do it, too. Blow up the Reichstag and the Landtag and every government building here, if I have to do it alone."

"Go sleep off your booze." The policeman was getting angry. "I know what you want. You want me to run you in so that you can room and board on the country. We've got enough free boarders already. The jail's overcrowded."

"Yes, nice clean apartment with bath. Beefsteak for breakfast. No fleas. I've been there before."

"If you want me to, I'll make a hole in your brain for you," the policeman threatened.

The man suddenly lost his courage. "All right," he whined, "I'll go along. After losing half of myself in Poland, I'm not fit..."

"You're not the only one that fought in the war," the man with the crutch announced abruptly, "We all did."

"Yes, but he didn't lose anything. If he had, he wouldn't be wearing a nice green Social-democratic uniform. He'd be starving..."

The policeman had had enough of this, he began shoving his way through the crowd.

"All right. Don't shove me, I'm going. But you" (he was suddenly shouting at the crowd) "wake up! Tonight at Alexander Platz. You be there. You'll see something big. Real action's what we need." And he submitted to the policeman's hand.

*

Alexander Platz at night. Frankfurter Allee. Here the German genius for concealing its poverty droops a little. Here live the poor and the lost and the hunted; those who dare not let the police know them, and those who are already too well known to the police. Polish Jews, flooding unhealthy cellars with their large families. Beggars, slipping into the shadow of some dark court yard to find shelter for the night before the porter closes the door. Furtive young men with swift hands. Women whom age and disease have driven from the prosperous haunts of Kurfuersten Damm and even of Friedrich Strasse to snatch a wretched and filthy existence where they can. Old men and women, once fairly comfortable, shuffling their lonely way to the grave without hope, sleeping anywhere, eating anything. Have they no children to care for them? It sometimes seems, here in Europe, that only the very old have survived the war and they have been thrown on the streets to starve. An old woman sits at the curb with a basket of flowers. Her face is partly covered by a shawl, but one sees the open sores. She has no nose. So one can live, even without a nose. How marvelously persistent is the life force! But hurry past; who wants to buy such flowers?

There is youth, too, in the crowded street. Little boys in clattering wooden shoes pick up old bits of paper and cigarette stubs from the street and stuff them into burlap bags. Young men and girls, cheaply gaudy, walking arm in arm through the dark, cold strip of the street under the high walls of the buildings. Hucksters' carts, anchored against the curb with the dogs unharnessed and lying beneath the carts resting before they must pull home the load. What things they sell, these carts! Hot sausages, sniffed at wistfully by a score of passerby, till some more prosperous stroller yields to high prices and buys. Soles and heels,

"every bit as good as rubber and wears just as well" (it doesn't) with a man behind the cart ready to put them on while you wait, provided you are brazen or your stockings whole. Suspenders; the man selling them has collected a whole crowd by the simple method of trying them on to show how they work, (he never sells the pairs he uses for demonstration) stamping on his broad box and talking rapidly the while. Another crowd round a little cart piled high with soap. A woman, her red hands deep in a kettle of hot water displays the beauties of this laundry aid while the man bawls, "Every bit as good." (Is everything a substitute?) The woman waves her red hands triumphantly, they are covered with foam. "As good and better..." shouts the man, growing bolder.

I had brought a friend along to see what was going to happen. "You were fooled," he said, as we wandered up and down the street for half an hour. "Of course the man didn't intend to do anything. He was probably drunk and had no idea of what he said. Probably forgotten all about it by this time."

But a few minutes later, we came upon the man with one hand, who had entered the street and was leaning against a house wall, crumpled up against it as though thoroughly exhausted. No doubt my friend was right about him. He seemed to remember nothing at all of his shoutings of the afternoon and was only there because some sub-conscious memory had said to him "Alexander Platz." Perhaps he was a regular habitue of the street. At any rate, he looked weary and ill and purposeless. A rag, set with two burning eyes.

"There. There he is." I shoved my companion with an elbow to direct his attention.

"Queer looking duck," he commented with a quick glance. "Don't like his looks."

The man stirred listlessly and we saw that he had an old knife in his hand. He was scratching the stone wall of the building with the carelessness of someone who has nothing better to do and is passing the time.

"Bet he stole that thing," said my companion.

Yes, the handless man was an old habitue of the place for he was evidently well known.

"Hello," snickered two or three young fellows, passing. "Hoch the revolution. Action." "Where'd you get that knife? Better not let the cop see it." Older men, chaffing him:

"What about this afternoon, eh? Hear you are going to tear down the Reichstag. Save the fatherland."

"Yes, build up an army. Reconquer the world." The little round man who said this seemed familiar. Ah yes, he had been there this afternoon.

The man with one hand looked dazed at all this. Somewhat sulky, too, as though he had heard such teasing before. "Something to drink." He tossed his arm across his forehead. "Wish I had something to drink?" It was a question rather than a statement, but no one answered except the little round fellow who remarked, "A drink? It would take a barrel of drinks to satisfy you."

"In the good old days when your old woman lived, you got more booze, didn't you? She knew where to pick up the cash." The man speaking grinned from one side of his mouth. "Was a heavy drinker, herself."

"No, she was not," contradicted a sharp woman's voice.

"Least not till later. When I knew her, she never drank."

"Shut up," the man with one hand was beginning to wake up. He was walking nervously up and down before the group. A wolf, pacing his cage...

"Well, I never saw her sober."

"You didn't know her, I tell you. As a young girl, before the war..." The woman stopped abruptly and there was a sudden lessening of the sharpness of her voice. "What you need is a good rest and a sleep. Go sleep."

"Yes, where?" he asked sardonically.

"Action! What we want's action," shouted the boys, repassing, with their heads bent back from their shoulders.

"Want a drink," repeated the man angrily.

"Better sell something," suggested someone. "Got anything to sell?"

The man fumbled his knife. "This," he offered it.

"That old thing."

"It's a good knife, I tell you. Sharp. Works as well as a new one."

"Look at the handle, all rusty." The depreciating speaker must have been interested in the knife in spite of his remarks, he eyed it so sharply.

"Want a drink," repeated the man sullenly.

My companion, from his corner of the crowd, shrugged his shoulders pityingly. "If it weren't so conspicuous a thing to do—I'd give him a couple of thousand marks," he murmured.

"The knife's worth five drinks," insisted the one-handed man, waving it in the air. "Five."

"One," bid the man who had been criticizing the knife.

His knife shut with a snap and the man turned with a snarl on the bidder. "Thief. Swindler. Damned idiot." He made ready to spring at his throat.

"What's the matter with you?" "He hasn't done any thing to you." "For Heaven's sake..." Half a dozen arms held him back.

The man became calmer. "Let me go," he said quietly, almost laughing. Then, with another of his quick movements he turned to the curb.

"Off with you." He had ousted the soap man and his wife from their boxes. The kettle of suds went flying. He was up on the box. His teeth opened the knife and he waved it in his hands.

"Ladies and gentlemen. Here you have a knife. What do you bid for it? A good knife."

"Action!" shouted the boys.

"A knife made for action. Sharp. Cuts well. Could cut the heart out of a Reichs president or out of a Frenchman. See. Here is what used to be a hand. Tough. It was healed in Poland, let me tell you, it was healed without salve and without bandages." He held out his arm, deliberately jerked up his coat-sleeve, as a magician does to show that he is concealing nothing. The stump of his hand wandered vaguely through the air. "Tough, I tell you. But see what the knife can do to this."

Before anyone knew what he was about, he had drawn the knife deeply across the puckered skin into the flesh, so that a red stream spurted out and dropped in bright patches on the half empty kettle at his feet. The sight seemed to please him. He tried another stroke and watched the new stream with impersonal interest. Then he aroused himself

and waved his arm, evidently this seemed a good occasion for a speech.

"Comrades. The Fatherland..." he began. His eyes suddenly caught the sight of his arm, a red stick before him. His eyes widened, he shrank together, threw up his head and then crumpled to the ground like a marionette whose strings have been suddenly cut.

An excited movement of the crowd, a rising clamor of voices and the shrill whistle of the policemen as the green uniforms pushed their way between unwilling bodies.

The soap merchant collected his wares and his boxes, awakened his dog and prepared to move. His wife picked up the kettle and washed it carefully with the soapy suds before she returned it to the cart. Then they moved slowly down the street, with bowed heads. The suspender merchant moved, too, but not so far as to lose the benefit of the crowd. One could still hear his voice on its edge droning, "Meine Herrschaften. I have here a pair of suspenders which will last... forever... or as long..."

San Francisco Ad Man

*Between the desert and the sea,
I stand, and cast my measure of dust in the sun.*

The sea will be the last to die:

The sea paws at the cliffs; the sea licks at the sand;

The sea roars, and slaps the shining snout of the old sea lion, lifted through the spume;

The sea lies quiet and looks through narrow green eyes at the land;

The sea cradles the great ships and croons, while the sun smiles and the little waves roll on the back of the tides;

The sea washes white on hidden sands, whispering to the moon;

The sea paws at the cliffs; the sea licks at the sand; the sea desires endlessly;

The sea will be the last to die.

The desert died long since; the desert hills are old bones bleaching.

The desert is deaf; time is a far clamor of bells the desert cannot hear;

Death came once in a forgotten age; he will not come again.

The desert died long since; the desert stares with salt-rimmed eyes at the moon.

Between the desert and the sea

I stand and cast my measure of dust in the sun.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I commend:

"Success, a face cream, power of will, an automobile tire, an insurance company, a motion picture, a phonograph, a religion, a breakfast food, a chewing gum wherewith to chew and chew, and a fountain pen wherewith to write and write—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I commend them all."

Between the desert and the sea—

The sea that licks at the sand,

The desert that stares at the moon—

I stand, and cast my measure of dust in the sun.

James Rorty.

The United-Front-in-Spite-of-Yourself

By Upton Sinclair

I HAVE grown accustomed to getting the first news about myself and my doings from the capitalist press. Once when I was in Bermuda, they told me how I was in Nevada chasing a runaway boy on horseback, with nothing but peanuts and canned beans for food. On innumerable occasions they tell me how I narrated a funny story at some banquet, and whether the story is good or whether it is bad, it is always a new one to me. Now from the Chicago Tribune I learn that I have been issuing manifestoes in Dresden, calling upon the German workers to rise against the Reichswehr; and this brings forth an affectionate editorial in the Tribune, describing me as "our own Upton Sinclair."

I can only say that my imaginary conduct in far-off Dresden moves me to no admiration. I agree that the German workers have a grievance against the Reichswehr, but just what they ought to do about it is a matter I don't feel competent to decide from Pasadena. It seems to me unseemly for a man to sit at ease in the sunshine of Southern California and advise starving workmen to go to their death six thousand miles away. If a man thinks that fighting is to be done, he ought to do his share; he ought to go to Chicago and seize the Tribune; at the very least he ought to capture the Los Angeles Times, and start a propaganda battle against the real estate speculators of this "Roof-garden of the World." I wonder, if the time comes and I do actually rise in insurrection against the Times and the Tribune, will they still call me "their own?" Will they appreciate my sterling honesty in practicing what I preach?

Enough of jesting. The editor of The Liberator takes this occasion to tempt me into discussing the situation in Germany. I have tried to find a name for it, and will call it "the United-Front-in-Spite-of-Yourself." The German workers have tried their very best to keep up factional disputes; they have not merely been calling each other bad names for six or eight years, they have been tearing each other to pieces, shooting each other down; nevertheless, they are going to have a united front in spite of themselves! The capitalists of Germany have insisted upon it;

Santa Claus

I THINK you're honored most of all
When you pass down the crowded street
Where little children's glances fall
Upon you and a sudden, sweet
Illuminating smile is shot
From them to you; then quick is caught
The mother's skirt—a whispered word—a pause;
She looks, smiles, too, and nods "Yes, dear, he's Santa
Claus."

Sara Bard Field.

they are determined to be the real enemies of the German working-class—all factions in the German working-class—and to make all factions realize this fact!

The Social-Democrats have tried their very Sunday-school best to be good boys. They would not have anything to do with disorder or impoliteness; they went into the cabinet—the bourgeois cabinet—several times, in an effort to save the bourgeois republic; and now they have been kicked out of the cabinet, and their Reichstag has been dissolved, and there is a dictatorship of the Stinnes in Germany.

I can sympathize with these Social-Democratic leaders. I am trying hard to be good myself. I don't know anything about fighting, and I should be most embarrassed if I had to learn. I sit and watch developments from my "Roof-garden of the World," and feel symptomatic and premonitory shivers. Are the workers of all the rest of the capitalist countries going to be forced into the United-Front-in-Spite-of-Ourselves? Are we going to see, for example, our beautiful British Labor Party face to face with a dictatorship of the British lords of coal and steel? Are we going to see His Majesty's opposition trying to form a bourgeois cabinet, and being kicked out, and to see a Labor parliament dissolved? To come closer home—are we going to see a Dictatorship of Judge Gary and J. P. Morgan and Company in the United States? Are we going to have to abandon our pathetic faith in the Constitution, and in all legal political parties?

That is the meaning of what has happened in Germany, as I read it. I am still clinging to my hopes; but meantime I continue ardently my policy of urging the various wings and factions of the working-class movement to be as mild as possible, as patient and considerate as possible, in carrying on the internal disputes of the movement. I beg us all to remember that the real enemy of the working-class is organized Big Business, and that the time may come when Brother Gompers and Comrade Foster and Fellow-worker Wobbly will find themselves compelled to sit down in council, to work out a common program against the Dictatorship of Morgan and Gary.

The Boss

HE keeps pounding things back into his heart,
They flutter against his lips like little wings,
And with his mighty hand,
Mighty from wedging workmen into coal pits,
He pushes them back.

Sometime—he will leave his lips open,
Sometime he will forget,
And out of him gay ribald songs will come prancing!

Lourene Aber.

Elmer Graham

By Miriam Allen de Ford

ELMER Graham is a native son of the Golden West. To be specific, he was born in the Potrero District of San Francisco. One of his great-grandfathers was a forty-niner. His mother was descended from a soldier in the American Revolution. He is of English and Scotch blood. None of these attributes, however, is a guarantee of sufficiency of income.

Elmer's father was a carpenter who fell off a building in course of construction and was killed instantly. There was no workmen's compensation in those days, and any ambulance-chasing lawyer could see that a widow with three babies and no money was not worth taking on a contingent fee in a damage suit. Graham's insurance money from the union just paid for his funeral and the next month's rent and the last month's grocery bill. Then, in lieu of a widow's pension, Mrs. Graham went out by the day to do cleaning. Fortunately, Elmer was eight years old, so he could look after his little brother and sister out of school-hours. The rest of the time the neighbors kept an eye on them, or presumably God did, for they survived somehow. That was sixteen years ago.

Like many city-bred boys, Elmer romanticized the country and longed for a life out of doors. When he was through school, at fourteen, he had to find a job immediately; and that summer he went to the district around Sacramento and picked fruit. For eight years he followed the crops from one part of California to another—figs near Fresno, hops in the Valley of the Moon, sometimes lemons and oranges in Southern California. He joined the Industrial Workers of the World in 1916, when he was seventeen. The next year he started organizing on the job, and America entered the World War.

The next years were strenuous ones for Elmer. The secretary of the recruiting union didn't give any advice about registering for the draft—told them to do it or not, as their consciences dictated. Elmer didn't. He was prepared to stand the gaff as a conscientious objector, but he moved around so much that he never had any trouble on that score. Times were pretty good but only Japanese workers were being hired for fruit-picking. Elmer was on the bum a good part of the time; but he was a good organizer: in the jungle or on the skid-road he was always talking industrial unionism, and many a red card was taken out on his persuasion.

When the Sacramento indictments were returned in 1919 all the men with whom Elmer had been on closest terms were on the list. Only luck saved him from going with them, and perhaps dying of the flu in the Sacramento jail, or getting t. b. like Quigley and Tabib, or going out of his mind like Fred Esmond. Instead he was in the can in Stockton; he had started talking solidarity to a fellow who turned out to be a snitch, and he was vagged for six months.

When Elmer got out of the can in Stockton, he came back to the city to look up his mother. He hadn't seen her for four years, and wasn't surprised that no one in the old neighborhood knew where she had gone. His little brother, he found, had made a mess of things. He had been working in a garage and one night he had borrowed a car to take a

girl on a ride down the Peninsula, and had been caught and convicted. Ira was only eighteen, so they sent him to the Preston School of Industry at Ione, where he was to remain three years, learning from real experts how to be a second-story man or a dope-peddler. Elmer felt pretty sick. His mother and his sister had left the district after this happened, and up to date Elmer has never been able to locate them. Of course every good American knows that a Wobly organizer has whiskers, carries a knife in his teeth, and breathes fire; but aside from his regular occupation Elmer was only a homesick boy of not quite twenty. The crummy pillow at the place where he flopped that night was quite wet by the time they turned the lodgers out at six o'clock in the morning.

Elmer drifted up north, and one way or another got a job in a saw mill. He transferred his card from the Agricultural Workers' Union to the timber workers, and set to work keeping alive by hard labor while he talked the new industrial gospel to the boneheads and Mr. Blocks of the mountains back of Eureka.

By 1920 Elmer was at work in the woods. One day he had an accident; somebody got in the way of his hatchet and Elmer sacrificed three fingers on his left hand to the capitalist system. Of course there was some permanent disability payment under the compensation act, but it was the minor hand and Elmer was just twenty-one and presumably not much harmed as a worker. The insurance doctor wasn't so very careful, but the infection stopped before the hand had to be amputated; and Elmer was discharged from the doctor's care and all ready to get another job and have another accident.

It's kind of hard to get a decent job in timber work with three fingers gone, especially when every lumber company has you marked as an agitator and trouble-maker. The camp where Elmer finally landed was pretty rotten. There was a good crowd working there, however; and in



Don Brown

Me for the Rewards of Thrift!

three weeks Elmer had them out on strike for idiotic things like clean blankets and shower baths and pay for the hour spent morning and evening getting to and from the place where they were working. The strike didn't last long, but Elmer wasn't there to see its ignominious end. Instead he was suddenly grabbed from behind one morning, trussed and blindfolded, hustled into an auto and escorted to the county line. There he was set free, a pistol was shoved against his back, and he was ordered to get to hell out of there and never show his God-damned rotten red Bolshevik face in Humboldt County again.

Elmer went south. The Marine Transport Workers at San Pedro were talking strike and meanwhile strengthening themselves to fight unfair working conditions; and though Elmer had never been on a ship larger than a ferry-boat in his life, it was all the same organization and he thought he might be of use. He turned up in San Pedro on a Tuesday night, and reported at headquarters. As he sat smoking and talking things over with a few fellows who were there, three dicks entered and started to clean the place out. The secretary asked for their warrant, and the chief bull showed his fist and said that was all the warrant they needed. It was a pretty thorough job; they broke the typewriter, chopped the desk up, and took every bit of literature they could find, including the dictionary. Then Elmer and all the men there were nabbed on vagrancy charges.

Elmer spent two months in jail waiting for trial; then his case was dismissed. He went back on the job that very evening. Standing on a box by a lamp-post, he started speaking to a crowd of Marine Transport Workers who had collected around him. "Fellow-workers and friends," he began; then a hand descended on his shoulder, and he was told he was under arrest.

But Elmer had thought all that out beforehand. He had got hold of a pair of handcuffs, and now quickly and quietly he handcuffed himself to the lamp-post, and handed the key to a fellow-worker who instantly disappeared. Elmer talked for a full hour before the exasperated police found a key and released him. This stunt showed that Elmer was a very dangerous character, and so when he was arraigned for criminal syndicalism his bail was set at \$25,000. He must have been an extreme menace to the public peace, for Walter Higginbotham, who beat Martin Tabert to death in a Florida convict camp, was obliged to put up only \$10,000 on appeal.

Elmer stayed in the Los Angeles County Jail for six months before enough suspected criminal syndicalists were collected to afford a cheap joint trial. They were all tried together—twenty of them—and the fact that they had all been arrested at different times and places made no difference, for none of them was charged with any crime except that of being a member of a radical labor union and distributing its literature. The trial dragged on for seven weeks, and then all twenty were convicted and sentenced to serve one to fourteen years at San Quentin—all but Elmer, who was indicted on two counts, and therefore sentenced to two to twenty-eight years. He was just twenty-three years old, a slender boy with direct blue eyes and a most remarkably innocent appearance for such a wicked creature. The judge asked him if he had anything to say. "Not a word, Pontius Pilate," answered Elmer, cheerily.

So the dangerous criminals, handcuffed together, were despatched north to San Quentin. They were put to work in the jute-mill, where all new prisoners are supposed to go if they are able-bodied. Criminal syndicalists are always presumed to be able-bodied.

One of the boys, Howard Leeds, was coughing rather badly; the Los Angeles jail hadn't done him any good. The lint in the air in the jute-mill got into his lungs, and he began spitting blood; but the doctor said there was nothing wrong with him. Finally he couldn't make the task, and had to say so. He was ordered into the dungeon in punishment. Elmer and all the other Wobblies in the jute-mill, old and new prisoners, immediately refused to work until Leeds was out. As soon as the news spread all the other criminal syndicalism prisoners joined them, though some of them had quite easy jobs, compared to the jute-mill. The only men who couldn't strike were feeble old men over seventy, and a fellow-worker who had already lost one eye in the dungeon and was in danger of losing the other. All the strikers were condemned to solitary confinement on bread and water.

At this writing Elmer is still there. He is a very ungrateful son of the Golden West, and it is too bad that a forty-niner should have a descendant like that.

This is a semi-fictional composite of a number of I. W. W. members, making up the typical Western Wobbly as a whole. Every incident in it is true of someone, but not all of the same person. A new protest strike has just started in San Quentin, which should give timeliness to this story of "the land of orange-groves and jails."—M. A. deF.

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Literature and the Machine Age

By Floyd Dell

III.

BUT IF Napoleon was the most romantically impressive consequence of the French Revolution, he was not the most discouraging one. The consequence which was by far the most saddening was the very consequence which, as we know, the Revolution had been fought to achieve—that is to say, Capitalism.

Men had hoped for universal happiness. What they actually faced was a continually increasing misery. The great discoveries of the eighteenth century in the realm of physical science, which had been intended to make man the master of things, were being supplemented by new discoveries and inventions which tended more and more to make him their slave. And the young enterprise of capitalism expressed itself in the most merciless exploitation of its human victims, particularly in England, where it also earliest began to justify itself in its mercilessness by a new theory of economics. "All men are created free and equal" became more frankly: "Each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost."

The Poets Leave England

It was the reaction of imaginative literature to this consequence of the Revolution that determined the main character of English literature for many years.

Byron, in whom the various aspects of that period of shock and disappointment are vividly and personally dramatized, left England. And with him, English poetry left England and the contemporary world, and returned to the middle ages. In giving his "Childe Harold" a medieval name, Byron had begun the first of a long series of Pilgrimages back to that lost paradise from which the previous generation had been so eager to escape.

When Byron left England, he set something more than a fashion in English poetry; his practice was followed by Shelley, Keats, Landor and Browning. To leave England became the typically English thing for English poets to do. They left England because they could not live in England; and they could not live in England because England was the foremost capitalist country on earth. That is why they went to Italy, and in particular to Florence, which was simply a lovely relic of medieval antiquity. They had, in fact, left England in the effort to escape from capitalism; and they had turned—not to the future, for they were without hope—but to the past.

But were they indeed without hope? Shelley, the bold-est utopian of them all, hardly dared to look forward—the thought of the fatal cycle into which the glorious French revolution had inevitably swung, was too deadly a constraint.

"The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return;
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn;
Earth smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream."

So it begins. But how will it end, this visioned Utopia? Alas, after the pattern furnished too clearly by the French Revolution.

"O cease! must hate and death return?

Cease! must men kill and die?

O drain not to its dregs the urn

Of bitter prophecy.

The world is weary of the past.

O might it die, or rest at last!"

The cloud of that despair is over all his thoughts; and he turns to find in Italy some "green isle" in "the wide deep sea of misery." Keats, too, turned away from the trampling of the "hungry generations," from "the weariness, the fever and the fret," from this modern world "where but to think is to be full of sorrow and leaden-eyed despairs," to a fairyland colored with all the hues of medieval romance. And Byron, though he scorned the conformers, though he mocked at the renegades "Mouthey" and "Words-words," as he called them, though his gesture was defiance and his creed rebellion, he too ran away.

Byron could not fight hypocrisy—which was the aspect of capitalism that, being most English, was most hateful to him—in its citadel; but he could, and he did, go to some remote corner of Europe to fight and die in a vain attempt to restore an antique freedom. That was courageous; but it was not far-sighted—for under cover of its nationalistic idealism, Greece was struggling to become as much as possible like the very England which Byron hated. The happier he, that he did not live to carry his Balkan adventure to success!

In this act, too, Byron was echoed, at least in words, by a generation of his successors, who hailed with enthusiasm the aspirations to freedom of each oppressed nationality in turn. It was as if they hoped that these new nations would be something new in our dull and hateful world. A free Poland, surely, they thought, would be a spectacle to revive the hearts of mankind... The Southern Confederacy, a sufficiently gallant and romantic adventure in nationality, fell heir to these same enthusiasms, and the intelligentsia of London quivered with rage and horror at the brutality of "that monster," Lincoln,—the servant, as they accurately designated him, of Northern capitalism—in crushing this revival of feudal aristocratic pretensions.

In truth, the utopian faith which had been dimmed by the consequences of the French Revolution, found a new outlet in these naive and uncritical enthusiasms, which bulked large in the idealism of the whole century. The idealists of Europe had ceased to hope for a better day, except as it were by stealth, in some manner so preposterous and romantic as to disguise the nature of their hopes even from themselves.

Two Victorian Poets

In view of this tendency in nineteenth century literature, it will not surprise us to find the two chief poets of the Victorian period in some kind of revolt against the machine-ruled age in which they lived.

Tennyson and Browning had the centers of their spiritual orbits set in the medieval world; and though they swung out occasionally into sight of the realities of their own time, yet they were always drawn back into times of King Arthur and Count Gismond, where they instinctively preferred to dwell. But their reasons for preferring to dwell there were characteristically different, and show two of the main reasons why the intelligentsia of their time disliked capitalism.

Tennyson yearned after beauty—as Keats had yearned, but more feebly. His was not, like Keats', the tragic pathos of "a sick eagle looking on the sky." His was rather the more mundane anguish of a young man who had to wait on customers in a shop all through a lovely summer's day. Tennyson never actually had to wait on customers in a shop, but he always seemed to conceive the modern world in such terms; it was an affair of cheating or being cheated—a dreary or a dirty business, and painful to think about either way. It would be much better to go off to war—"to leap from his counter and till, and strike, were it but his cheating yard-wand, home!"

But Tennyson was not the sort of boy who runs away to war or off to sea; he was the sort that runs away to join a travelling company of actors. There was always something theatrical about him; his imagination revelled in the tinsel trappings of the stage, the swords and crowns and robes and thrones, and the showy heroics and juvenile morality that went along with them. He built his medieval world out of these trappings, and glorified them by the magic of his verse. In this world he was happy; and he helped to make the Victorian world happy, by enabling people to forget the sordid realities of their own lives.

He disliked the modern world because it was no place for a dreamer to live; and even though he was made Poet Laureate as a reward for his dreaming, it gave him no better opinion of the world that lay outside the enchanted circle of his dreams. But it is important to note that he was a popular poet not because he celebrated the achievements of his age, but because he questioned them. He did sometimes indulge in a cautious parliamentary hope concerning the future peace and progress of mankind under some sort of very British "Federation of the World"; but what one most vividly remembers of his remarks on contemporary progress is the ironic "I, the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time"—an echo, thinned and weak, of Byron's wilder mockery.

Browning was not a dreamer; he was a man of action. He did not find the modern world too chaotic; he found it—just as he found the orderly and accustomed ways of writing verse—too dull, too regular. His enthusiasm was intrigued only by the more questionable and adventurous aspects of contemporary life, its Sludges and Warings and Bishop Bloughrams, people with a touch of romantic charlatanism in them; but mostly his imagination overflowed into the middle ages, where it found wild impossibilists and intransigents sufficiently to his taste, the Count Gismonds and Childe Rolands, and the death-dedicated lovers of gondola and balcony.

He was a modernist, in the sense that he was very much interested in the ideas of his time; but he was impatient of his time, because it did not put those ideas into



B. Elliott '21

Promenade

action. There was a reason; those ideas were tame ideas; they could not flame up into causes worth dying for—nor even, as it seemed to him, into passions strong enough to lead to interesting crimes:

"And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
Is the unlit lamp, and the ungirt loin—
Though the end in sight was a vice, I say."

It was the deadly machine-made and machine-ruled regularity of life under capitalism that he could not tolerate; and he too fled to Italy, and to medieval romance, leaving the largest part of contemporary reality untouched by his pen.

Literary Grand Opera

Contemporary reality was left to the writers of fiction. And to illustrate what happened in fiction, the case of one of the least known of these fictionists is the most instructive for our purposes. Charles Reade was at the outset a writer of the greatest promise; he had an imagination which responded heartily to the impact of contemporary reality, and he had the power to dramatize such reality in vivid and

impressive narrative. He hated contemporary England; and one can gain from his novels, more easily than from any other of the imaginative productions of the time, an idea of what that England was really like, in shop and business, law and medicine and daily life.

But a literary standard had already been established, against which his realism collided with catastrophic results. People did not want to hear what contemporary life was like. The critics called him a liar; and he amassed bulky files of newspaper clippings to prove his theses, and neglected the proper business of the story-teller for that of the historian. They also called him a "reformer,"—and grimly accepting the charge, he continued to indict the age in which he lived, and to make the dose go down he seasoned and garnished it with a preposterous assortment of the most wildly romantic blood-and-thunder incident. These incidents ruin his novels; but they are no more absurd than those which fill the pages of his more famous contemporaries; they are only more hastily invented, and more shockingly incongruous with their context.

The literary standard with which his realism had collided had been imperceptibly created by the poets of the Romantic period, in their disheartened turning away from present ugliness to ideal beauty; it had been reinforced by the timidity induced by the violence of the French Revolution, which had made ideas seem dangerous (or at least "bad form"); and this tradition was now being made sacred by the practice of Reade's great contemporaries, Dickens and Thackeray. It was now an accepted view that to have anything resembling a connected and intelligible set of critical ideas put you at once outside the bounds of "pure literature," into the category of incendiaries or pulp-teers.

Dickens and Thackeray preached against preaching. The people in their pages who have theories are either hypocrites or fools. "Kindliness and tolerance are worth all the creeds in the world." Such is the substance of their criticism. They had taken the precaution to put the public off its guard. They too hated contemporary England; but they criticised it emotionally, not intellectually. Instead of theories, they provided floods of comedy and pathos. They made people laugh and cry who did not want to think.

Both Dickens and Thackeray had begun their literary careers as humorists—they had learned the art of giving the public what it wanted. And what it wanted most of all was to forget its own troubles. Their writings must have first of all the quality of an anodyne. That was the secret of those emotional effects which in their work came to take the place of honest thinking, honest statement, and even honest story-telling. They created a literary Grand Opera.

Their influence afforded an impressive and disastrous example to English fiction. It served to counteract the oldest, honest example of Fielding, and to obliterate utterly the memory of the simple candor of Defoe. Fiction ceased to tell the truth. People could not bear to have the truth told.

A Victorian Prophet

De Quincy had invented a new species of prose, a prose which approached poetry in its effects, and which represented a reaction against eighteenth century precision and

coldness, and a return to the loose eloquence of the seventeenth century. This new development had found its greatest exponent in Dickens, a marvellous improvisator of verbal effects, who seemed to twist words to his fancy, juggle with them, pile them one on another in perilous architectonic feats, mix them like colors on canvas, play tunes with them, creating atmospheric and emotional effects of well-nigh irresistible power. Carlyle had a power over words as stupendous as Dickens, though not as unconstrained. The reason for the popularity of these eccentric verbal tricks is perhaps to be found in the need, at such a time, for giving a protective coloration of emotion to ideas.

In this kind of emotionally intoxicating prose, Carlyle analyzed the decadence of contemporary society, and proposed a means for its salvation. He, like the poets, was disgusted with the modern world; and like them he had turned back to the medieval world for solace. He saw there a social scheme which satisfied him, in its contrast to the chaos of modern industrialism—a system of class duties and class privileges so beautiful in its perfection that he solemnly proposed it, in all seriousness, as a solution of latter-day problems.

It would indeed have been a simple remedy, if the mad conflict of capitalist competition and exploitation could have been resolved into a mutually beneficent and dutiful relation of leaders and followers, of heroes and henchmen! And, in Carlyle's scheme, the motivation of this simple change, the means of inculcating these notions of duty among disorganized mankind, was the appearance of the Hero.

The origin of both heroes and hero-worship in a primarily militaristic condition of society made it inevitable that he should conceive his ideal society in rather rigorously militaristic terms. But his militarism was only metaphorical. He would have been surprised to learn that his blood-and-iron maxims were capable of being acted upon by a coming generation in the very Germany which he so admired*, and that the rejuvenation of feudalism would not solve, but would only complicate, the terrible problems of capitalism.

* "The literary world then agreed that truth survived in Germany alone, and Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, Renan, Emerson, with scores of popular followers, taught the German faith. The literary world had revolted against the yoke of coming capitalism—its money-lenders, its bank-directors, and its railway magnates. Thackeray and Dickens followed Balzac in scratching and biting the unfortunate middle class with savage ill-temper, much as the middle class had scratched and bitten the Church and Court for a hundred years before. The middle class had the power, and held its coal and iron well in hand, but the satirists and idealists seized the press, and as they were agreed that the Second Empire was a disgrace to France and a danger to England, they turned to Germany because at that moment Germany was neither economical nor military, and a hundred years behind western Europe in the simplicity of its standards. German thought, method, honesty, and even taste, became the standards of scholarship. Goethe was raised to the rank of Shakespeare—Kant raised as a lawgiver above Plato. All serious scholars were obliged to become German."

—The Education of Henry Adams.

(Continued in *January Liberator*)

Xmas Time

A LITTLE lonely girl
Went calmly off to bed
And all the Xmas that she had
Was in her little head.

Walta Karsner

(Nine years old).

REVIEWS

"Regularly Gay"

"Bunk" By W. E. Woodward, Harper & Brothers.

IN THIS most puzzling book, W. E. Woodward evidently thinks that authors are too much in evidence in their creations, and finds a most ingenious way of getting around this. At the very beginning, he creates a fictitious author, as a sort of middleman, who in turn creates the chief character, which turns on him after allowing him to remain for seventy-one pages on the scene and puts him out of the book. By the time this is done, the author, real and fictitious, is very much disposed of. You think of neither one nor the other, but only of Michael Webb, the hero. Which is probably what W. E. Woodward intended you to do.

"There are only two subjects on which it is possible to write a novel," said the hero, after he is created. "One is the job and the other is sex."

But the fictitious author wanted an "intellectual story, without either money or love, in which the interest is carried on by the interplay of abstract ideas." That was because the author was opposed to plots, and he was relieved when he talked it over with his hero to find that he agreed with him although for another reason—and that was that plots allowed too little leeway for the main character.

The reason the author decided to become one was because everybody else was doing it. "Commuters wrote novels while travelling back and forth between Tuckahoe and the Grand Central Station. Plumbers, street car motormen and fourteen year old girls were entering literature in droves." He wanted to be somebody. Knowing no other way to go about it, he decided to take a group of characters, let them talk themselves into a mess of some kind and there would be his novel. But on the advice of a great author, he decided to create his principal character and send him out into the world to gain texture and reality.

So it was that Michael Webb appeared on the scene. The author created him, aged twenty, and sent him to wander in the world, giving him fourteen years before he had to come back into the book. Occasionally Michael dropped a line to his author, "Stockholm, Sweden. Have been here six weeks. Have a good job. This is a fine place. Am having a grand time. Lots of pretty girls here. My next address is Algiers." Or, "This is a grand place. The saloons keep open on Sunday." And the author would reply with choice bits from Poor Richard's Almanac, thinking them suitable for a young man trying to make his way in the world. "Eat few suppers and you'll need few medicines." "He that falls in love with himself will have few rivals." These on postal cards also, I suppose.

Then the author lost track of his character, and when he found Michael, the latter was famous. He had beat his author to it and had written a book on "The Importance of Being Second Rate", and then was engaged in "thinking by day or week" for anybody who had the money to pay for it. Noticing that the author looked rather worn and tired, he offered to do his thinking for him,—that is, take care of the rest of the novel by himself. Much as the author hated to give up his work to his hero, he finally

agreed to get out of the book, and let his chief character gather together the other characters by himself.

There's Richard Ellerman, the motor car magnate, at whose country home the rest of the action takes place; Bingo, his son, with an income of \$30,000 a year, who is called the Chorus Ladies' Pension Fund by the newspapers; the elder Ellerman's wife, an ex-actress, who goes around smiling like La Gioconda; a lily-handed poet, who by means of sonnets, "made cuckolds as quietly and gently as a silk-worm spins cocoons"—and then being thrifty, sold the sonnets; Fanny Thornton, the motion picture actress who registers emotions by numbers; Captain Dixon, old seaman, keeper of a hardware store with both a persecution complex and delusion of grandeur; B. M., Mr. Ellerman's private secretary; and other characters, who, though stupid or intelligent, are interesting.

And among these characters there are conversations on writing novels, advertising, the suppression of vice in literature, the Saturday Evening Post, art, newspapers and moving picture scenarios. There is a chapter on Kant, and a chapter on buried treasures. There is a chapter on how to settle libel suits without publicity, and a chapter which contains at least a half dozen ways of swindling your fellow men and gaining a fortune. There is a chapter on modern verse, and how to write a story for a popular magazine by rewriting an advertisement. (We shall make use of this in a desperate moment.)

The book is not consistently satirical, however, and perhaps it gains power for that very reason. Too often we read and read between the lines the story of poor boys' rise to fame and fortune (Mr. Bok, for instance) to take Mr. Ellerman's methods of gaining wealth altogether lightly. His secretary, "an intellectual robot—a mechanism of big business, without heart, hate, passion, love or fear," adds a touch of the grotesque, almost of the horrible to the picture. And Mr. Hunter, who is trying so hard to make good, along straight, clean business lines, is not altogether ridiculous in his stupidity. There is no tragedy here, but there are touches of pathos which remind you of Charlie Chaplin's, in "Shoulder Arms."

W. E. Woodward is poking fun at his readers, perhaps, by using this method of writing a novel, but it makes the jibes of Sinclair Lewis seem heavy in comparison. Many will compare this book, we are thinking, to the work of Anatole France. But maybe he won't like that since his own character, Michael Webb, has already accused him of always thinking of Tolstoi and Anatole France instead of studying the advertising in the Saturday Evening Post. And anyway Anatole France couldn't have written anything like this. He doesn't know about such things as Wrigley's chewing gum, Ford cars and Frank Crane, because he doesn't live in God's own country.

Dorothy Day.

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"Cane" By Jean Toomer. Boni and Liveright.

THIS BOOK has neither the tragedy of "The Emperor Jones" nor the flamboyant gayety of Bert Williams. But it is filled with simple crude joys and sorrows, stories of the life of the Negroes, expressed in folk songs, little poems and sketches. Perhaps the most interesting parts of the book are those sketches laid in Washington where jazz rhythm supplants the slower melodies of the plantation. Two of the stories included first appeared in the *Liberator*.

"Body of This Death" by Louise Bogan. Robert M. McBride & Co.

A REFRESHING volume is this first book of poetry by a *Liberator* contributor. There is none of the brusque hardness which characterizes so much of the work of the younger poets. There is no pose in the verses, but a strength and dignity of emotion.

"Selected Poems" by George Sterling. Henry Holt and Company.

THIS POET of the Pacific Coast—and of the entire English-speaking world—is another contributor to the *Liberator*. The book contains selections from all his volumes, chosen by himself. They have none of the esoteric quality which strives toward super-sophistication, but are purely beautiful.

D. D.

Rouge and Redskins

THE IDEALS of the movie industry in America are still those of a refined apartment-house prostitute. It is a waste of one's time and anger to spend an evening in almost any moving picture house. It is the equivalent of listening to the sentimental, mercenary chatter of one of those whores I have alluded to.

And yet I find myself drifting into movie houses of an evening, and sitting through reels and reels of the most dreary hogwash. I imagine many people, who like myself, ought to know better, do this too. Why should this be? Why do we not stay at home and read a book? Why do books become so stale, occasionally, and the movies so stimulating?

I am almost afraid to venture an answer. I am afraid to suggest a notion that is creeping upon me, to the effect that the movies may eventually supersede all written fiction.

Fiction tries to reproduce Life. Joseph Conrad uses all the powers of a literary master to suggest the horror of an African jungle. Sherwood Anderson writes books to convey the dreariness of an Ohio town, and the constricted souls who live in it. Eugene O'Neill writes of the sea. They try to make words suggest the spirit and drama of those places. They only partially succeed; for who can know what a certain dish will taste like by reading the recipe for it? The movie can give one the actual flavor of the food. It does not suggest the horror of the jungle; it is it. A movie director can show one the skyscrapers of New York; but a writer, even the greatest writer, can only suggest it.

The movies are nearer to Life than literature, and that is why, when one needs the stimulus of Life, one sometimes

finds it in even the cheapest movies, and not in the greatest books.

Occasionally, in the mass of sewerage that pours from Hollywood over America's mind, one finds floating something, like "The Covered Wagon," that is not altogether putrid and unsound.

"The Covered Wagon" is a film that has moments of rare quality. It is worth seeing for these moments, these hints of the universal and thrilling new art that will flower some day out of all this sour soil.

It is the story of the Oregon Trail, and of the pilgrimage of an army of pioneers who crossed desert and mountain to settle the Northwest. Despite the effeminate matinee idol who pretends to be the hero, and the Hollywood doll with shaved eyebrows who poses as the pioneer girl of the story, the film is almost an epic.

For there are the rivers, the plains, and the sky in it; the bronze, strange Indian fighters; the cattle, the horses, the long lines of covered wagons moving to the horizon. One cannot forget these great sights. No writer has ever suggested them with the vividness with which they strike one from the screen. It is like an experience; most books seem like art.

When movie producers will discharge all their lip stick heroines and heroes, they may find they have made a step forward. Two men appear in "The Covered Wagon" who shame by their reality the silly effeminate with whom they are cast. These are the rugged, simple scout, with his Indian sense of humor and lustiness, and the little trapper who is his friend. These characters win the audiences. The trapper with his two squaws can never be forgotten. And the tall, hulking scout, with his realistic methods of disposing of villainy, is one of the most honest and unadorned conceptions of humanity I have ever seen in a movie. It is amazing how he ever got in.

This picture is worth seeing. For radicals it is inspiring. We are pioneers, and it is good for us to be reminded that pioneers must embrace hardship gladly. When one sees what men and women dared and suffered to settle a virgin country, one does not grudge the cost of building up this virgin wilderness of a world.

The books of the modern intelligentsia are becoming more and more morbid. They are the writing of introspective monks, lacerating themselves in solitude to the point of madness. They mark the end of an epoch; they are, what one of their own creators has termed them, a waste land.

If the movies can create the kind of epics "The Covered Wagon" hints at, it will be a good thing for humanity if written fiction dies out. The writer of a book is always an egotist; but movies are created by many men working together. Next to pageantry, parades, and the kind of people's drama Romain Rolland has tried to create, the movies are one of the most social of arts.

Some day, we hope, they will be taken from the hands of the morons of Hollywood, even as government will be taken from the hands of the wolves of Wall Street.

And we shall see what we shall see.

Michael Gold.

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I cannot lose the thought of you,
It haunts me like a little song,
It blends with all I see or do
Each day, the whole day long.

The train, the lights, the engine's throb,
And that one stinging memory:
Your brave smile broken with a sob,
Your face pressed close to me.

Lips trembling far too much to speak;
The arms that would not come undone;
The kiss so salty on your cheek;
The long, long trip begun.

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