NEW MASSES

FEBRUARY

25¢

I. KLEIN

We Face Another Crisis!

YEAR AGO, at the end of its first year, the NEW MASSES faced a crisis. It looked as if the magazine would have to stop publication. The financial support that had been expected from liberals did not materialize. The subsidy from the American Fund for Public Service was insufficient to meet our deficit. We were up against it. We put the question to our artists and writers, and to our readers. They said: "The NEW MASSESS must go on!" The artists and writers agreed to donate their drawings and articles. The readers responded by sending us donations—in sums of one dollar, five dollars, ten dollars, one hundred dollars. Thus the magazine was saved by those who were most interested to see it carry on.

ITH the publication of our April issue, the NEW MASSES completes its second year, and now it faces a crisis even more serious than that of a year ago. The subsidy from the American Fund for Public Service, which has been our main support, will be discontinued unless there is a very decided increase in our support from other sources. To come to the point, the NEW MASSES will be forced to suspend publication, unless we can raise $10,000 before March 15th. This is how it might be done. For instance

10,000 NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS

If every present subscriber would pledge to get five subscriptions for us we could make the mark.

Or if 20 people would pledge $500.00 or $50.00 a month
Or if 100 people will pledge $100.00 or $10.00 a month
Or if 200 people will pledge $50.00 or $5.00 a month
Or if 400 people will pledge $25.00 or $2.50 a month

T'S AS EASY AS THAT. Send no money. All we want is your pledge for money or subscriptions. But we must have that immediately. We must know NOW what you, our readers, want done with this magazine. Do you want us to carry on? Will you take part in our adventure of publishing the livest and freest magazine of Art and Letters in America? It depends, now, upon you. Your indifference will wreck our enterprise. Your wholehearted and generous support will save it.

DATE .....

THE NEW MASSES MUST BE KEPT GOING. YOU MAY COUNT ON ME FOR $.....PAYABLE AS FOLLOWS.....FOR THE THIRD YEAR SUSTAINING FUND.

I WILL SECURE ..... SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR NEW MASSES' THIRD YEAR.
(Five or more)

NAME ..... ADDRESS .....

Our Third Year

As we point out on the opposite page, the end of its second year finds the NEW MASSES in a precarious position financially. Unless heroic help comes from those who have adventured with us thus far, the magazine will be forced to suspend publication.

We have learned that the only support we can count on is from the rank and file of our readers, and unless that can be given to us in greatly increased measure, the game is up. The subsidy from the Garland Fund, which decreases almost to the vanishing point this next year, will be insufficient to carry us through, unless we can raise at least $10,000 additional.

Instead of lamenting our passing *after it is too late,* we adjure our friends to consider this a serious crisis, and to jump into the breach now and help us save the magazine.

What we need at this moment is the assurance that your support will be forthcoming. *Send no money*—but if you are going to help us—tell us to what extent we can count on you. Send us a pledge in terms of money or subscriptions or both.

If you love us—do it now!

Our Artists' and Writers' Spring Frolic

March 9th at Webster Hall is the date set for the NEW MASSES Artists' and Writers' Spring Frolic.. There's a very particular reason why everybody who loves the NEW MASSES should be there on that night. The proceeds will go to our Third Year Sustaining Fund. If the ball is a flop there won't be any more NEW MASSSES. But nobody ever heard of a NEW MASSES ball being a flop. They are the most joyous events on the calendar. This year the Artists and Writers have a few surprises in store. Come and see for yourself.

Scott Nearing Lecture

Scott Nearing has just returned from the ends of the earth. He made a tour of investigation in China and Japan, then crossed Siberia into Russia, and from there into Germany. In order to give him an opportunity to tell NEW MASSES readers all about the state of the world revolution in those countries we have arranged with him to lecture for our benefit on March 30th. Keep the date open. Details later.

Lenin Portrait

Send 25c for a portrait of Lenin by Hugo Gellert printed on cream mat paper suitable for framing.

Drawing by Louis Ribak

NEW MASSES

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Subscribers are notified that no change of address can be effected in less than a month. The NEW MASSES is a cooperative venture. It does not pay for contributions.

MARSTIN 438 PRESS

Thank You!

Readers of NEW MASSES will be pleased to know that through an appeal, which we made to our subscribers for relief for the striking miners in Pennsylvania and Colorado, more than $500 has been received so far. Money is still coming in.

One friend sent $100, several $20 and $10 checks.

This hearty response is most gratifying. This is one example of how the NEW MASSES can be of service to the workers.

Bound Copies

We have a few bound copies of the first year of the NEW MASSES in two volumes, beautifully hand bound in bright red boards. They make attractive and interesting gifts. $2.50 a volume. $4.50 for the two volumes.

Volume III, comprising the full second year, from May, 1927, to April, 1928, will be bound in one volume to match at $3.50. We will bind only as many as ordered. Send your order with check now.

Subscribers and How to Get 'em

Now long ago we received a new subscription from Isidore Flanzer, who lives somewhere up in the Bronx. We sent him the usual form letter thanking him and asking him to get others to subscribe. He wrote back and told us he would get us twenty-five subscribers. That was only a month ago. *He has already gotten eleven subscriptions to date!*

We wrote and asked him "How do you do it?" This is his answer.

Dear NEW MASSES:

I get people to subscribe by telling them how much aesthetic joy I get reading NEW MASSES every month. I like NEW MASSES because it has convictions and the courage of same; and is not the mouthpiece of any steam roller organization. . . . For these reasons every person, regardless of class interests and ideas, if intelligent and not afraid to face the truth could be a subscriber to the NEW MASSES. . . . Not all intelligent men and women are spending their time guzzling gin in the village, nor has the radio and bootleg era stifled the human spark still glowing so brightly in some people. You just call them and they will come. They will come to spread the work of creative artists since they know that they cannot create themselves. They will come because they want to make their own lives useful, as the artists made theirs.

Isidore Flanzer.

If we had a few more Isidore Flanzers we wouldn't need a subsidy from the Garland Fund!

Drawing by Hugo Gellert

GOODWILL

HOW SWEET IT SOUNDS IN THE EARS OF THE PAN-AMERICAN DELEGATES IN CUBA—BUT HOW DIFFERENT IT LOOKS TO SANDINO AND THE NICARAGUAN PATRIOTS.

Drawing by Hugo Gellert

GOODWILL

HOW SWEET IT SOUNDS IN THE EARS OF THE PAN-AMERICAN DELEGATES IN CUBA—BUT HOW DIFFERENT IT LOOKS TO SANDINO AND THE NICARAGUAN PATRIOTS.

"FLAMING MILKA'S" STORY

By GRACE LUMPKIN

THE story of Milka Sablich, "flaming Milka" of the Colorado Miners Strike, is the story of two canyons, of the mines and the workers in them.

In my mind the story takes the form of a movie. It begins a long way back, in the sixteenth century when young Hernando Cortez was conquering Mexico. The picture shows the haughty Spanish adventurers who were sent to Colorado by Cortez to find the gold reported to be there in immense quantities. The adventurers have Indians guiding them and the Indians are chained at night to keep them from running away. The Spanish gentlemen are courageous and very young like their leader Cortez. They are romantic and not without a certain appreciation of beauty. When they reach the canyon that was later to be named Delagua, look up its valley, and see at the end two rounded peaks covered with snow, they follow the lines of the ridge and trace in their imaginations the outline of a woman's body. They name the peaks at the end of the canyon *"Pechos de la Virgin"* or "Breasts of the Maiden." Later the picture shows them getting down to more practical matters. They set their Indians tunnelling for gold, using powdered limestone for blowing away the rock.

The Spaniards fade from the picture and many years later comes thin Rockefeller whose pious eyes are not lifted to the beauties of *Pechos de la Virgin.* Instead of a period of contemplation of beauty there is at once much travel through the canyons—bustle and hurry. Machines are brought in, tipples constructed and shacks for the workers built. Then the workers themselves come crowding up the canyons—Slavs, Italians, Mexicans, Americans — negroes and whites. The shacks and tipples come to life.

On the screen the picture of many workers slowly fuses into a conglomerate mass of faces, and out of this emerges a four-year girl standing with her father in front of a shack at Forbes. We watch the child Milka and her family when they move from Forbes to Trinidad and settle in a larger house. The child grows and we see her doing all the things that other girls do. One or two things stand out. One day she looks in the chest her mother had brought from the old country and smiles with a touch of American superiority at the colorful Slavic peasant dresses.

If we are clever we look into the girl's mind and catch the gradual growth of understanding of the fact that when fathers go down into the mine it doesn't always follow that they come up alive. We watch Milka's mother straining her eyes up the canyon if her husband doesn't get back from work on time. There are flashes of miners' wives, cooking, sweeping, sewing, but always with a curious alert expression underneath their stolidity, as if they are forever listening. And one day they hear the sound. We see the steam rise from the whistle at the mine, rise again and again. Then a shriek from a shack (could the instruments in the orchestra do this?)—another shriek, moans, and after that a hopeless droning wail coming from the throats of women as they run from their houses and meet in the center of the canyon to surge up through the valley toward the mine — toward the whistle—because the whistle means there are some dead men up there.

We see Milka going with her mother to the tipple, helping her mother climb up toward the mine with the other women. They wait. The death list is called. Milka sees the relaxation on faces of those women who learn that they have no special case for sorrow—this time—and on others the strained, hideous grief pulling down the lower jaws to let out the sobs.

But in the fortunate women's faces the brief gladness dies down. As they go back to work, or help with the funerals we see that second sharp-eared person, hiding and listening inside the everyday wife or mother or daughter.

After the death of Milka's mother we watch the girl on the screen as she takes on some of her mother's work, keeping house for her father and sisters, because her sisters work outside and somebody has to keep the house going.

There is a short sequence showing Milka on her nineteenth birthday—it's 1927 now—putting some extra touches to her red woolen dress that is in its third year. She wears the dress to a dance and again the next day after the accident in the mine when she goes with other girls to the morgue where the bodies of three boys they had danced with the night before are laid out.

They come out of the morgue and stop down the road to watch the company police taking an I. W. W. organizer off the company property.

Later one of the young miners asks Milka to go to a meeting with him. We see that she is bored with the idea of a meeting. She doesn't like listening to people talk from a platform. But because she likes the boy she goes along. The speakers tell them a strike is going on, and they want the women to volunteer for the picket line. One man asks all the women who will go to raise their hands. Milka's hands lie in her lap. But when she sees her sister, Santa, and some others volunteer she puts up her hand, too.

Then we watch a strenuous life begin for Milka. We see her wearing the red woolen dress, because it is the only warm one she has, serving coffee and bread to pickets at four o'clock on dark mornings in the I. W. W. Hall. She speaks at Walsenburg and other places. She leads the picket line at the Ideal mine. Here the deputies gallop on their horses along the road by the picket line and lasso the pickets. They get their ropes over Milka's head again and again but with her strong hands she tears off the rope each time and goes back to lead the line again. Then the deputies charge the pickets. On the screen we see the horses come rushing down on the strikers, the lines parting. A deputy spurs his horse toward Milka and catching her wrist, drags her along the road by the side of his galloping horse for more than fifty yards. When he drops her on the ground and rides on, we see the pickets lift her up. An automobile comes and they take her to a hospital.

In two days she is out on the picket line again. This time the strikers are going to storm the Delagua mines. The men up there are the only workers who are not striking because the pickets who have tried to get into the canyon before have over and over again been repulsed by the state police and gunmen hired by the company. On this day the pickets are determined to reach Delagua mine Number Three where all the workers gather in the early morning before they are sent to the different mines at the head of the canyon.

The pickets are waiting at the foot of the canyon, not far from Ludlow. We see the boy who will lead the picket line with the American flag in his hands, and beside him, Milka. We can't make out their faces because it is still dark, but we look behind them and feel the gray restless shadows of the pickets waiting for the signal to march.

In the picture we move up the canyon and follow the railroad track to the first bridge across the dry arroyo, and make out a road

Drawing by Don Brown

MILKA SABLICH

Drawing by Don Brown

MILKA SABLICH

Wide World Photos.

THE CLASS WAR IS STILL ON

ROCKEFELLER GUNMEN ARE STILL SHOOTING DOWN STRIKERS IN COLORADO. FAMILIES OF COAL MINERS ARE BEING EVICTED FROM THEIR HOMES BY THE MINE OWNERS IN PENNSYLVANIA, OHIO AND NORTHERN VIRGINIA. PHOTO SHOWS BARRACKS ERECTED AT HARMERVILLE, PA. BY THE UNITED MINE WORKERS.

that runs beside the track. Further up the picture shows us dark mountain peaks lining the sides of the canyon, like rows of huge blackened faces staring at each other curiously.

Down the canyon again a flash across the screen shows us that on that first bridge, scarcely a mile from the pickets, are massed the company guard, waiting for the miners who are coming on, led by Milka and the boy with the flag.

As the pickets get to the bridge Milka and the boy suddenly dive under it, through the arroyo and up the other side with the workers following. When they have gotten safely out of the way, Milka sees that the guards have gone down into the arroyo and cut off half the pickets. She goes back, and calling them to join her on the bridge leads them across, then waits behind to see that all of them are over. She starts to follow them, but she is too slow. The guards surround her and in a moment they have her handcuffed. The steel is so tight on her wrists she faints. But the pickets have seen. They rush back, and force the guards to take the handcuffs off and give Milka up to them. Her comrades carry her up the road, revive her, and she takes her place again at the head of the line.

All the way up the valley we see the mine guards with revolvers and clubs gather to fight the pickets who are armed only with fists —and at every spot the pickets push and fight their way through, forcing the guards to get into their cars and drive ahead to make another stand further up the canyon.

When light begins to sift down into the valley, so the pickets can see their way a little, an engine comes up the track and running evenly with the pickets on the road blows steam continuously into their lines and envelopes them in it so they must walk blindly in a fog, with steamed clothing clinging to their bodies. They sing *Solidarity Forver,* but the engine whistles shrilly. The leaders strike out from the road and climb the side of the mountain a little way, the pickets following. They scramble over rocks, through gulleys and around sharp points of stunted cedars and pines. The gunmen meet them there, too, and handcuff Milka again—they want the leaders—but the pickets run to rescue her, sending down small avalanches of rocks and gravel. They struggle with the guards and take Milka again. With her at their head they make their way along the sides of the mountains getting closer to Delagua Number Three and those workers who are up there waiting to go to work, or if the pickets are successful—to join the strike.

They reach the mine. A car stands there and two strikers lift Milka to its top. She begins speaking and the Delagua miners crowd around. The deputies use their revolvers and clubs, but the pickets close up their ranks and sing *Solidarity Forever.* With the five-mile march behind her and the fighting, Milka is worn out. She sways up there on the car, but keeps on talking, hammering into the men that they must come out—solidarity forever and the union makes us strong.

A gunman grabs the flag from the boy who has led the march. He shakes the flag at Milka, telling her he is an American Legion man and the pickets can't have his flag. Milka turns to the pickets and asks those who are American Legion men to raise their hands. The hands go up. Milka turns to the gunman and says, "It's our flag, too, and we're going to keep it. But even if none of us were American Legion we'd keep it. We're Americans same as you and we've got a right to our flag."

We see that Milka is weak and as she closes her eyes and sways up there on the car we want to reach out our hands and catch her before she falls. But on the screen the strikers around the car are watching her, and many hands reach up to help her down.

The head deputy comes up and orders the pickets to leave. They point to Milka lying on the ground, just opening her eyes. The deputy asks Milka if she will lead the pickets away. She says "Give us our flag and I will." A sullen gunman gives up the flag to the deputy. Milka is standing now, ready to go. She and the boy, with the flag in his hands again, start off, the pickets following. But they do not go alone. The Delagua workers have joined the strike.

In my mind it makes a movie, the story of the strike and Milka. It has the flag, the heroine, fights, many of them, rescues and counter fights. But it's a movie that can't be finished. We might go on and watch Milka in jail for five weeks, refused bail. We might show Columbine and those six workers killed and others wounded while officials of the mine and the company look on. But that wouldn't finish the movie, and it wouldn't finish Milka's story. Because Milka is not only herself—she is a worker and her story is theirs.

So the movie must be cut off, without a proper climax—without a happy ending. Because there are many other reels to be taken before the story is finished.

Wide World Photos.

THE CLASS WAR IS STILL ON

ROCKEFELLER GUNMEN ARE STILL SHOOTING DOWN STRIKERS IN COLORADO. FAMILIES OF COAL MINERS ARE BEING EVICTED FROM THEIR HOMES BY THE MINE OWNERS IN PENNSYLVANIA, OHIO AND NORTHERN VIRGINIA. PHOTO SHOWS BARRACKS ERECTED AT HARMERVILLE, PA. BY THE UNITED MINE WORKERS.

IS THIS AMERICA?

By YOSSEF GAER

Orchard Street is hot!
Orchard Street is busy!
Orchard Street is wide awake!

THE row of pushcarts close to the narrow sidewalks carry their permits, tacked on to the outside, and the varied stocks upon them with a flaunting pride. The passing crowd and prospective customers shuffle along in single file, their ears assailed by the loud calls from vendors shouting the virtues of their wares.

"Now, now, now! Genuine Koptchankas! Two for a nickel!"

"Sweet as sugar! Sweet as honey! A nickel! Five Cents! Melons! Melons! Melons!"

The noise of the vendors and the affluvium of smells rise and mix with the dense heat of the day.

Near one pushcart half-filled with peaches sits an old woman. Her head shakes faintly, and her weak eyes blink in a nervous manner. It is hard to tell whether troubling thoughts make her shake her head and blink that way, or whether it is old age.

"And how much are your peaches, grandmother?" asks a short stubby woman, herself old enough to be a grandmother, who stops to inspect the peaches.

"Two pennies, daughter," the old woman points to the sign tacked on to her cart. She does not move from the box she is sitting on, but watches her customer interestedly. And before the customer has time to put down near the pushcart the large paper bag overflowing with her purchases, the old fruit vendor shakes her head again, and begins in a complaining voice:

"Ai-ai-ai! Is this America? Is this justice? Not a crumb of pity has it in its heart! Not a crumb of justice! Here I go and tell them: Find me Gedalyeh Osher Berel's and he'll already help me. Do I ask any favors from them? God forbid! Only I'm getting old, too old to work. If I could only find Gedalyeh he would help me. Gedalyeh has a golden heart and he would help me! But go and find him in your America! So I ask people: Tell me, Jews, how after all am I to find this Gedalyeh? So they say: Go to the *Forwarts,* he'll find him already. You understand? I should go! Why can't they go? They are younger than I am. But no, I must go! I tell you my soul melts to see how heartless these people are!"

She stopped, breathless with the flow of her talk, then shook her head again, despairingly:

"Ai-ai-ai! Here is your America! Here is your Golden Land! Would they let an old person go like that in Lublin? God forbid! But here they say: If you look for your Gedalyeh then go to the *Forwarts!* Do you think I didn't go? With these sick feet of mine I went there. What are you squeezing the peaches for, daughter? They are fresh peaches. Sweet as sugar. They melt in the mouth like honey. And fresh! Pst! You can see they still have some green leaves on them. Do you think they gain in health if they are squeezed?"

"Who squeezes? I squeeze? I don't squeeze, only for green grass I don't need to pay money in cash! And by the dozen how much are they?

"By the dozen? How many dozen for instance?"

"What's the difference? One dozen. Or maybe I'll take two dozen, if they are cheap."

"Two dozen I'll make it for you twenty-two pennies a dozen."

"And one dozen?"

"Noo, since I said twenty-two let it be twenty-two. But better take two dozen. Sweet as sugar. And fresh! Look, they still have some leaves. Ai-ai-ai! So I came already to the *Forwarts* there and I say to them I say: Find me Gedalyeh Osher Berel's. He has a golden heart. He wouldn't let a poor cousin fall. So he says I have to go upstairs the devil knows where on the ninth floor to find Gedalyeh! Do you hear? The impudence! I with my sick feet should go up! Ai-ai-ai! And where is respect for age? And where is justice? But what could I do? Argue with him? So I went up. So listen on purpose what can happen in your America. They drag me up and then they ask me for Gedalyeh's name. So I tell them: What should his name be? Gedalyeh! But no, they want to know what his second name is. So I tell them that my cousin has, praised be the Lord, only one name: Gedalyeh! Let them find him and ask him and they will see that I tell the truth. What then, I, a woman of praised be God seventy-six would lie to them? But no, they would not listen to me. He must have a second name, they say. And if he has no second name they wouldn't even as much as look for him. So I argue with them: Mr. Forwarts, why am I to blame if Gedalyeh has no second name? Is that why an old woman should be left to fall without help? But talk to them and talk to the wall! Either your Gedalyeh has a second name, or we don't look for him. So what should I do, I ask you? Should I lie to them and say he *has* a second name when he hasn't?"

She stopped to catch her breath again. Now she was deeply stirred with indignation:

"I tell you your America is only for thieves and liars. If you can't lie to them they wouldn't even find your cousin for you. I argue: tell him I, Beila Esther Chaim Milchiger's, your cousin Beila is looking for you—and he'll already know. But no, they say. Either a second name, or no Gedalyeh! Ai-ai-ai-! That is your America!"

By this time the customer had picked over the entire pile of peaches and segregated a heap of choice fruit.

"So you say if I take two dozen you'll let me have them for twenty cents a dozen. I really don't need so many, but to give an old woman a chance—"

"I didn't say twenty. I said that if you take three dozen I'll let you have them at twenty-one pennies a dozen. Just as they come. But not picked over. Picked over like that they are two for a nickel. And believe me they are worth it. I tell them Gedalyeh, and they ask Boybrik! They want a second name! And if I'll give them already a second name they'll want a third name! What can you do when you have to deal with murderers who haven't a crumb of pity in their hearts!"

"Here, here, here, here! Thirty cents a pair! Silk! Pure from silk!" shouts a husky sox vendor.

"Look 'em over! Over here! Bathing suits a dollar! Slippers a dollar! Dresses a dollar! Look 'em over!"

"CO-nnie IS-land LE-mo-NADE! ICE-cold LE-mo-NADE!"

The noise of the vendors fluctuates like the shimmering heat. Another woman stops to buy some peaches from the old woman.

"Are they good for jam, grandmother?" she asks.

"There are no better, daughter. Sweet as sugar. Ai-ai-ai! You say jam! And I think, ai-ai-ai! That is America for you! Not a crumb of pity has it in its heart! And your Reb *Forwarts* isn't any better! I go to him and tell him: Find me Gedalyeh Osher Berel's and he'll help me already! Do I ask any favors from them? God forbid! Only I'm too old to work, and if I could find my cousin Gedalyeh—"

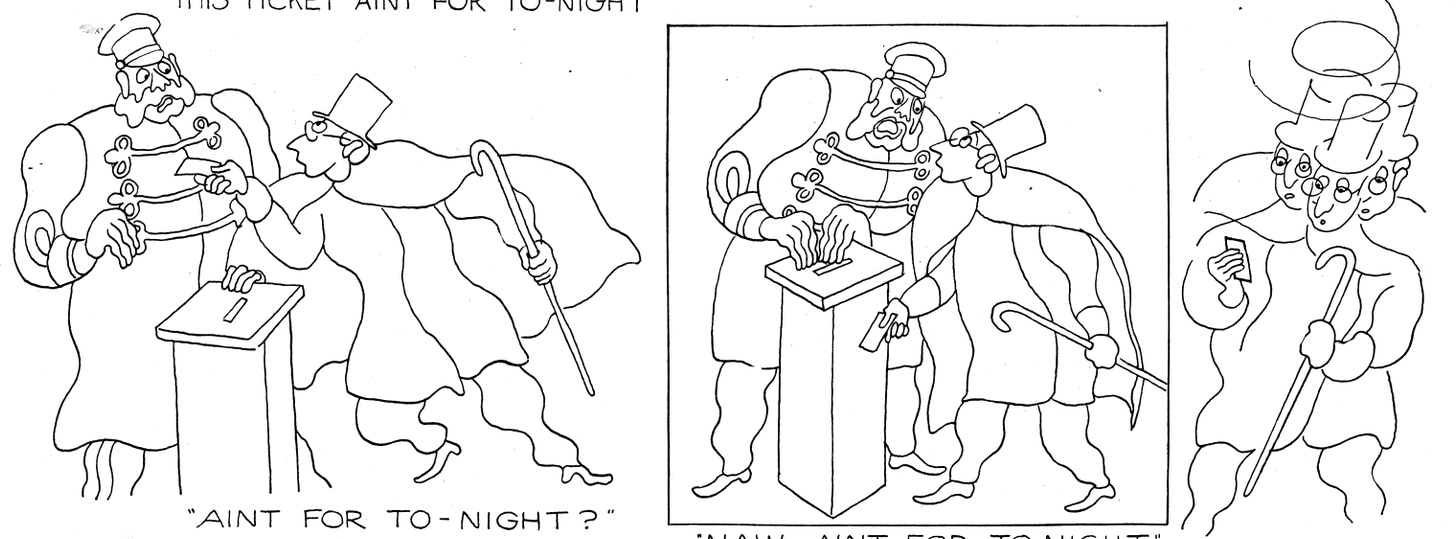
Drawing by Francesca Seulitrinic

"I FEAR I SHALL HAVE TO GIVE UP MY REVOLUTIONARY TECHNIQUE."
"WHY SO?" "I HAVEN'T 'DAS KAPITAL.'"

Drawing by Francesca Seulitrinic

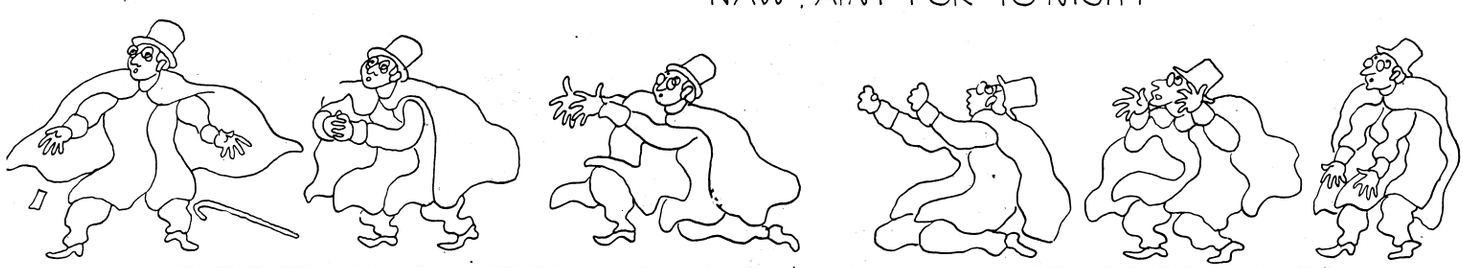
"I FEAR I SHALL HAVE TO GIVE UP MY REVOLUTIONARY TECHNIQUE."
"WHY SO?" "I HAVEN'T 'DAS KAPITAL.'"

"THIS TICKET AINT FOR TO-NIGHT"



"AINT FOR TO-NIGHT?"

"NAW, AINT FOR TO-NIGHT"



"AINT FOR TO-NIGHT? AINT FOR TO-NIGHT? I'LL DIE IF IT AINT FOR TO-NIGHT"

Drawing by I. Klein

THE AESTHETE'S REVENGE*

**cf. "The Sewer Digger's Revenge"—Last Issue.*

FASCISMO—"NOT GUILTY"

MRS. GAETANO PILATI TELLS THE STORY OF HER HUSBAND'S MURDER

TRANSLATED BY BRUTUS BERTIBONI

MRS. AMEDEA PILATI and Bruno, wife and son of Hon. Gaetano Pilati of Florence, Italy, killed by Fascists on the night of October 3, 1925, gave out a signed statement in which Mrs. Pilati narrated a horrible tale.

It was published in Paris by *La Liberta,* a newspaper whose editorial staff is composed of emiment jurists, historians, etc., all refugees who were compelled to leave Italy to save their lives. Amongst them there are Hon. Alabriola, former secretary of Labor in the Bonomi cabinet; Gaetano Salvemini, Professor of History at the University of Florence, who lately was in the United States lecturing on Fascism; Hon. C. Treves; Professor Fernando Schiavetti, editor of *La Voce Repubblicana,* a daily newspaper which was published in Rome, and suppressed by Mussolini; Hon. Fillippo Turati, the renowned Italian socialist, and many others.

The endorsement of this statement by such men is the best guarantee of its veracity. It follows:

One year and a half after the tragedy of the killing of Gaetano Pilati, it happened the murderers were prosecuted. It was a farce —a farce which embittered my sufferings and filled my soul with disgust.

Nothing can keep me in this country any longer, neither the grave of my husband, to which it is forbidden me to bring flowers, nor my relatives, nor my business.

Before I leave I will tell the world how things are going along in Italy; how cruel the Italian regime actually is; how great are the sufferings and the despair.

About the process of the murderers of my husband, made in the court of Chieti, the Italian newspaper published only these few words given out by the official *Agenzia Stefani*: "ALL THE MEN INDICTED WERE FOUND NOT GUILTY." I hope that this denunciation of mine will contribute to make known the moral meaning of such an acquittal.

The Fatal Night

The killing of my husband was elaborately planned in advance. Pietro Serpieri, a man who conducted a coffee shop in front of my house, told me that during the previous month of September, my husband was shadowed by a tall thin blond young man whose name is Senesi.

Senesi ascertained that our bed room was situated on the first floor of the building and that its window was facing the street.

On the evening of October 3, the Fascist Luporini was killed by an unindentified aggressor, while, in company of another Fascist, he was invading the home of an old Mason. The Fascists started at once a reprisal, and after having assassinated a man by name Biancini, as the supposed killer of their pal, they devastated stores, burned buildings, and were looking everywhere for opponents of Fascism, with the purpose of killing them.

It was 11:30 P. M. when many people, who testified it in court, saw a black automobile without

Woodcut by Saul Yalkert

lights stopping about 1,500 feet from our home. Ten men jumped to the street, one of them remaining with revolver in hand near the chauffeur. The others, armed with guns, came toward our house, ordering the passersby to clear the street. We lived at Fratelli Bandolo Street in a house built by my husband (the entire block was of his own construction). Many people were at the windows of their houses looking at a fire produced by Fascists who burned the furniture of Hon. Baldesi in the middle of the street.

The curious people were ordered to withdraw from their windows, and many shots were fired at them. Notwithstanding, the more curious of them remained hidden behind shutters without lights, and they could see the orgies in the street, and some of them saw the crime perpetrated in my room. Many Fascists were seen posted in our back yard. The aggressors, by an estimate of eye witnesses, were about 50.

On that fatal night my husband came home early, because he had to pay his working men, and after supper, feeling tired from long hours of work,went to bed. We were sleeping so soundly that we did not hear anything of the din made in the street. Suddenly we were awakened by a loud noise. I lit the electric light. In front of us was standing a short stocky man, with horrid face and a cap over his eyes, who faced us with a gun in each of his hands. Another man stepping in from the window, came near to my husband, and with a menacing voice told him:

"Dress, and come to the *Fascio* with us."

"All right," said my husband, and sitting on the bed, raised his single arm—the other he had lost in the war—to catch his trousers which were lying on a chair near him.

The man who had spoken was tall, had black hair, and was of a pallid complexion.

He spoke again:

"Be quick. . . . Are you Mr. Pilati?"

"Yes," was the answer of my husband, and at the same time the shots of two guns resounded.

Wounded in his left shoulder, he jumped to his feet and ran toward the door of the room, standing in front of it with his shoulders leaning on its panels. Perhaps he did it to get far away from me, fearing that I would be shot, or to keep the door closed to prevent our son from stepping in. In that position he shielded himself with his arm to make the aim of the gunmen more difficult.

Crazed with terror, I was crying. I saw all the actions of my husband and also of the murderer. I did not pay attention to the man with the cap, who first entered our room.

Over the windowsill peeped the sinister face of a third assassin. He also had a gun in his hand.

I heard the report of another shot, then the man that had spoken before, said: "Now we can go."

As soon they went away, my husband, with my feeble help, lay down, and asked me for some linen to dress his wounds. I ran to a drawer to get it and the last gunman who was yet on the ladder looking from the window into the room, gave me such a terrible look that I will never forget it in all my life. Then he disappeared stepping back down to the street.

A neighbor saw the three assassins going out the window. One of the trio said to the others: "Let us go and have a drink. I croaked him."

I was in a state of paroxism. I called my son. I called Mr. Bersotti who lived on the upper floor, and I gave a drop of cognac to my husband to reanimate him. He was losing blood from his wounds. Notwithstanding he was cool and strong enough to direct us how to dress them. We had lost our heads, and we did not know what to do.

My son went to the ground floor to phone for an ambulance.

The Austrians Mutilated Me— The Italians Have Killed Me

The hospital was in an uproar. The silence of the night was broken by the horns of the ambulances which carried wounded and dead to the hospital. The streets were filled with Fascists.

At the hospital one of the nurses, a young lady who showed on her white apron the Fascist button, was kind enough to encourage my son, but the poor boy was too dejected to appreciate her comfort.

The sergeant of the militia on duty at the hospital, asked my husband what had happened, and he answered: "The Austrians mutilated me; the Italians have killed me!"

Among the wounds of my husband, one bullet in the abdomen had pierced the bowels five times. The case was desparate.

At 4 A. M., escorted by my brothers-in-law, I went to the hospital. My husband was awake and smiled at me. We obtained a private room for him. It was situated in front of the room where lay the corpse of Luporini. The place was crowded by Fascists and we were in fear that they would yet make a new attempt against the life of Mr. Pilati.

After three days of painful agony, he died.

The authorities ordered us to make the funeral in secret the day after his death. Only relatives driven in closed cars were allowed to accompany the body to the cemetery. They feared that the many people who had known and loved my husband, in some way would express their sympathy for the vic-

Woodcut by Saul Yalkert

tim, and their disdain for his assassins.

On account of the death of the Fascist Luporini the residents of our Municipal ward had been compelled to put mourning flags in the windows of their houses. When my husband died they were ordered to take off those flags for fear that it could be interpreted as mourning for him.

Persecution After the Tragedy

The morning of Oct. 4th a Fascist named Senesi, went to my husband's office, took the correspondence that the post carrier brought in, and tore it into small fragments. Judge Gismondi was there. Senesi, after having torn the mail, had the impudence to threaten and insult our employes. The evening of the same day, Senesi, with other Fascists, forced the manager of our firm to enter the coffee shop in front of our office and they tried to get from him a signed statement that he was leaving our firm. Mrs. Serpieri, wife of the proprietor of the place, intervened and saved him from injuries, but he was constrained to leave Florence for his life's safety. That was a disaster to our business, as during the time that my husband was at the hospital, his attendence at the office was needed more than ever.

So mean was Senesi that he himself and one of his brothers were telling everybody that my husband deserved to be killed, and if he was not yet dead, they were pleased that the wounds were fatal and he could not recover.

The day my husband died, Senesi met some of his acquaintances, and he said to them: "I am going to drink some wine to the health of that pig that just died!" All that day Senesi, Ermini, Carcacci were bragging to everybody that they had killed my husband. They knew that their immunity was assured.

To depict the Fascist abjection, I will relate an incident that happened after the death of my husband.

Two friends of ours went to the hospital to pay to the poor dead man their last tribute. They found that his body was kept near four corpses of working men. The room was dim and filthy. Those unindentified workers were killed the same night that my husband was. Why were they? It is yet a mystery. Now in Fascist Italy, people coming home from their jobs can be slaughtered in the streets and the authorities do not try to identify them.

The hatred toward us had no limits. After having killed my beloved husband, they wanted to destroy our business, which Mr. Pilati had built during many years with an intense and intelligent activity. The task was easy for them. Our clients were intimidated with threats. Our banking credit was cut off.

We could obtain a loan from a bank at the high interest of 11 per cent with a first mortgage on our farms. Well the Fascists spread the false news that we had obtained a subvention of 500,000 lire from the government.

"Always The Wrong People"

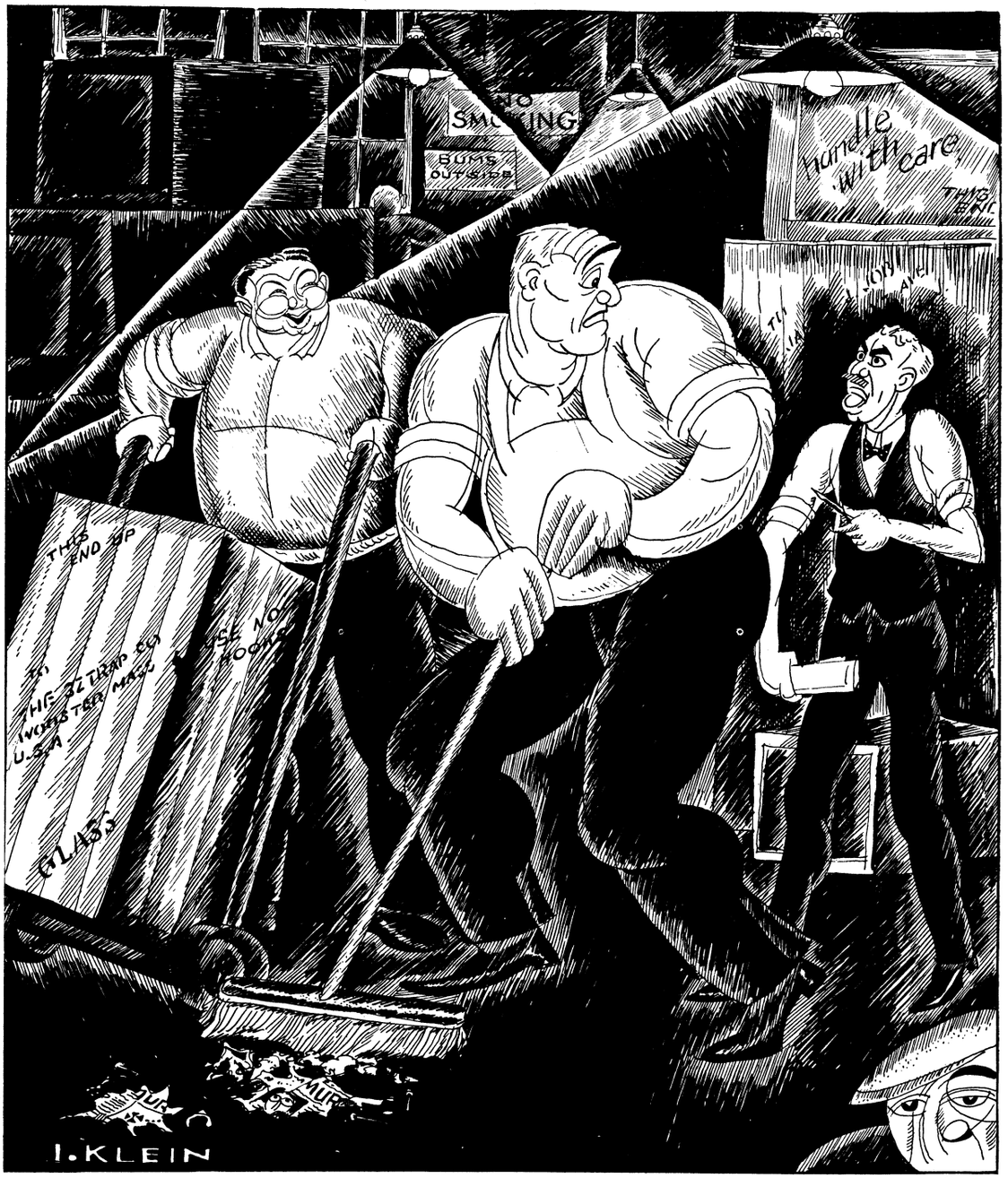
On October 8 I was questioned by the police officers. They insisted that I had to identify as one of the assassins of my husband a man by name Dino Castellani. I refused to do it because he was not among the aggressors. "What do you care?" they said to me "Castellani has already committed 19 assassinations, he can have committed also that of your husband."

Such cynicism filled me with rage, and I could not refrain from telling them: "What's the use of trying to find some scapegoats? You don't want to arrest the guilty men because you are the slaves of Fascism. You obey the orders of Ras Tamburini, who is the boss of Florence."

The following day Judge Gismondo, accompanied by a stenographer, called on me and after having questioned me about the case, he asked me if I was cognizant of the friendship of Mussolini toward my husband. I told him that Mr. Pilati was a friend of his while Mussolini was worthy of esteem. If Mussolini had any friendship toward my husband he would never have ordered him to be killed.

For many days police and court officers called at my home to show me pictures and clothing to be identified. I was often invited to call in court and in the city prisons for the identification of some supposed killers of my husband. They showed me always the wrong people.

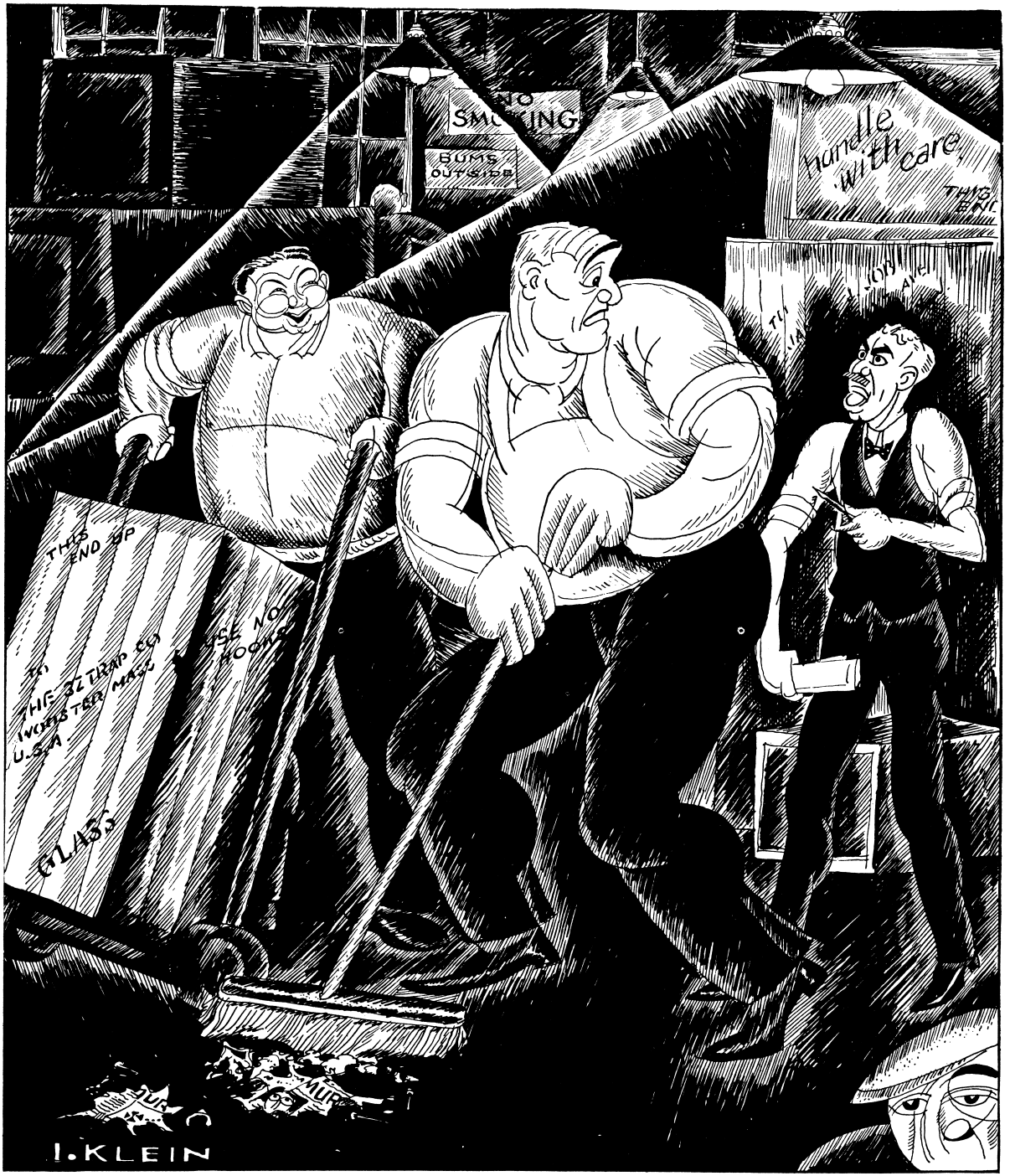
Not until March, 1926, in the prison *Murate* they showed me Ermini Corrado. Without hesi-



Drawing by I. Klein

THE HE-MAN

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT INSTEAD OF WORKING?
OH, I—I—WAS ONLY TELLING HIM HOW I BOSSES MY MISSUS AROUND.



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THE HE-MAN

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tation I recognized him as the man who first entered my room with two revolvers in his hands. During this time he had lived undisturbed in Padua. At the identification Ermini was assisted by his lawyer Meschiari. I was not able to find a lawyer that would undertake to assist me. The identification was witnessed by Cav. Grugni and Judge Cosentino. The prisoner started to cry, insisting upon his innocence. His lawyer tried to intimidate me, but without avail. I was sure of what I was affirming, and I insisted on what was the truth.

The Trial

With the approach of the trial I received threats of all kinds from every side. They wanted me to withdraw all accusations against Corrado.

Just then I had asked for passports for myself and my son. I felt that I could not live any longer in Italy. I was notified that the passports had been granted; they offered me also money which I refused with disgust. My refusal irritated the Fascists, and they retaliated against me in the meanest way.

Not a lawyer would dare to assist me in court in defense of my husband's memory. After having called on about all the lawyers in Florence I found a young man who agreed to assist me.

In February, 1927, Ottavio Gavazzi, a former socialist now a Facist, called on me, and asked me in the name of the Fascists of our Municipal ward to recant my identification, threatening me that if this was not done some harm would come to my son.

The following March, lawyer Pacchi and Coronel Lanari came to see me. These two men tried to induce me with all kinds of sweet words to present myself in court without the assistance of a lawyer, and there to speak of peace and love, asking the acquittal of the killers of my husband. Of course I reminded these gentlemen of the dignity of a woman true to the memory of her assassinated husband.

In April 25th, 1927, I went to see my lawyer, who told me that he had been summoned to call on the *Fascio's* and police's headquarters where he was told that if I was going to testify in court, they would not give us our passports. If on the other hand I remained quiet, as they wanted, twenty-four hours after the trial they would hand them to me.

I was depressed. I decided to stay at home. I was feverish, and at the point of a nervous breakdown. Doctor Bargellini certified that for five days I could not leave my bed.

The passports were given to me at once.

The case was going to be discussed in the court at Chieti. On April 30th of the current year I received a summons from the court of Chieti, in which I was ordered to be present at the trial.

That summons was drawn *pro forma,* but it was intended that it should never reach me. It was delivered to me by mistake.

I decided to leave Florence and go to the court of Chieti. As soon the Commissair of police knew it, he went to see me and threatened again to withdraw our passports.

I decided. The night of May 2nd I started for the trip to Chieti.

Fascist Justice

We—myself, my son and my brothers-in-law — spend fourteen hours trying to reach Chieti. I was physically a wreck.

The court was filled with black shirts. From the presiding Judge to the last jurors all wore in their lapels the Fascist button. The public was composed of a crowd of black shirts, many of them from Florence.

My arrival had the effect of a bomb shell in court. Nobody expected to see me there.

On the witness stand I told all the details of the terrible tragedy which happened in my room the night of October 3rd, 1925. To all the questions I answered exactly as I had answered to the authorities in Florence.

For about an hour I was harshly cross-examined by the lawyers of the defense, who with their skill tried to make me contradict myself. Exasperated by the unfair cross-questioning of the lawyers and the passivity of the presiding Judge, I uttered: "You try to exploit the weakness of a poor sick woman who confronts you without the assistance of a lawyer." After that I started to leave the witness stand. My words threw the court room into a turmoil. Every one spoke at the same time. When silence was obtained, the president ordered me to identify among a row of men, the guilty one.

I pointed my finger at Ermini, and I yelled: "There he is: the fourth man in the second row!"

The president asked me if I had anything else to say. I started to describe the cruelties to which I was subjected, but the accused men and the crowd of black shirts silenced my voice with yells. After a while I could speak again. I gave the history of the life of my dear husband. I said he was a mutilated veteran of war and decorated for military valor on the battle field. I recalled his works as a civilian, his inventions for which he obtained nine prizes in many European exhibitions, his humanitarian exploits, his business which gave the means of a living to more than 300 families. I pointed out what he had been as a father and as a citizen, and addressing myself to Ermini I apostrophized him: "You see? Such a man was my husband. He worked to make a great Italy, while you do your best to drag her into the mire. How could you kill him? Did you not know that killing him, you were killing me and my son? Did you not think that you were destroying what to me was the most sacred thing? Now I am living in anguish and I don't find peace in any place. I wish that the divine justice will punish you as you deserve."

I left the court. My son and my brothers-in-law were also called on the witness stand. . . .

All the accused were found not guilty by the jury.

In Florence our house was patrolled by the carabinieri, who allowed the assassins of my husband to come from time to time under our windows to howl threats and insults at us.

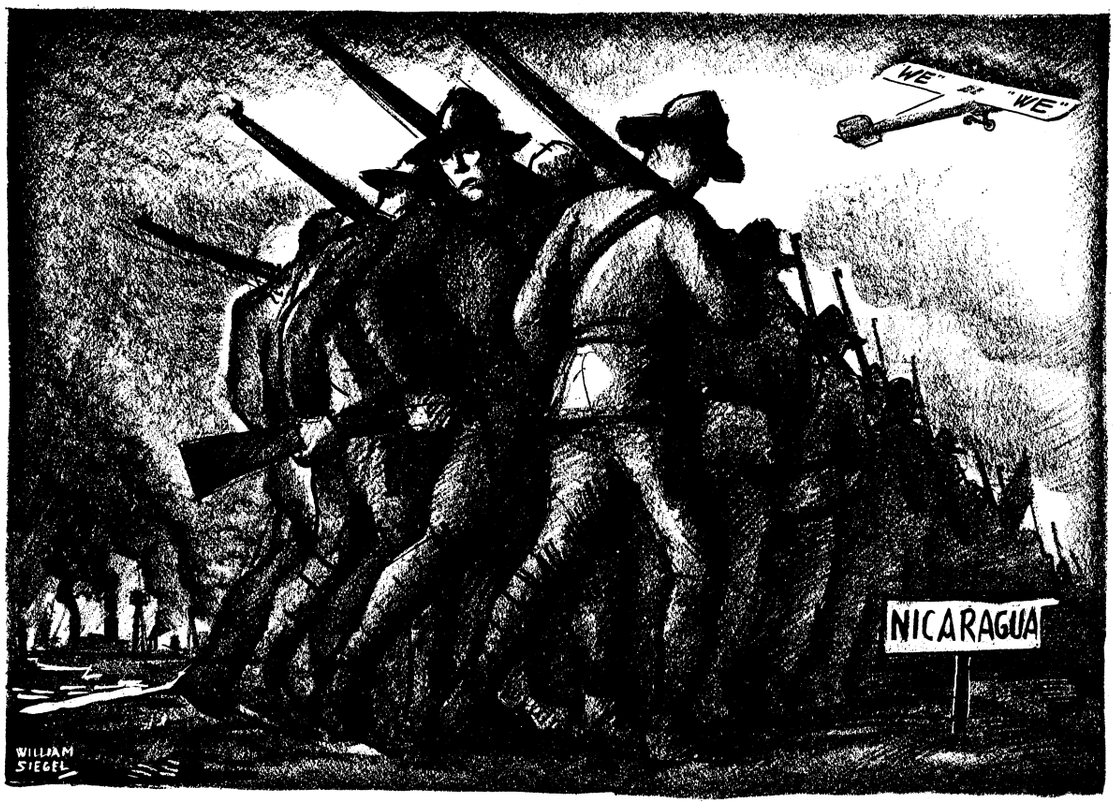
The steamship company Lloyd Sabaudo wrote me that they could not give me any more the steamer tickets that I had reserved because the authorities had withdrawn our passports.

My son went to the commissar of police and after many difficulties obtained the restitution of our passports.

And now we leave this land of shame, and I and my son we go far, far away. . . ."

Mrs. Amedea Pilati,
Bruno Pilati.

Florence, Italy, July, 1927.



Drawing by William Siegel

WE—US & CO.

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THE VICE PRESIDENT

By EDWIN SEAVER

THE night the vice president's wife died he was up quite late and so he did not get started for the office the next morning until ten-thirty. As he sank back into his seat behind the chauffeur he fumbled at his watch and shook his head gravely. He had had to neglect his office during the last days of his wife's illness. A big executive like himself had a corps of men and women to assist him in the work of the company but if the boss were absent what good were they. They were like an army without a general. The thought gave him courage. People would understand how it was with a man of affairs like him. He could not allow personal matters to stand in the way of duty.

The vice president adjusted his glasses solemnly on his nose. Then he cleared his throat and turned to the *Times*. It was already opened to the page of births and engagements and marriages and deaths.

Mrs. Irving G. Townsend. Wife of Gas Company official dies of pneumonia. New York, Oct. 30. Mrs. Irving G. Townsend, wife of Irving G. Townsend, vice president-general manager of the Universal Gas Company, died late last night of pneumonia at the Townsend residence in this city. . . .

She had been dying for three weeks and now she was dead. Five physicians were in constant attendance upon her during the last days of her illness. Her dying had been quite expensive. But then it was no time to think of costs. Such things were in God's hands.

It will be lonely without Mrs. Townsend, sir, the chauffeur said studying the speedometer carefully.

The vice president looked up startled. It was as if some one had suddenly struck his paper from behind. Did you say something, John? he said.

I said it would be very lonely without Mrs. Townsend, sir, the chauffeur repeated.

Ummm.

The vice president lowered his paper and glared over the rims of his glasses at the chauffeur's back. What was the point of saying that now out of a clear sky? The vice president was a little afraid of his chauffeur. The man had blue eyes and when he looked at you out of them slowly it was necessary to tell him to do something, anything at all to make him stop looking at you that way. The vice president crinkled his paper sharply and turned to the financial page.

Railroad profits by competitive bid. Result of order by I. C. C. Net earnings of $52,626,826 reported by the United States Steel Corporation for the third quarter yesterday were surprisingly favorable. Railway shares perk up. 25 railroads –|– .43. 25 industrials –|–. General Motors –|–. . . .

The plus signs stood up stiffly from the page. The vice president's eyes hopped nervously about the tall columns and returned to the plus signs. They were like the little crucifix his wife had clutched in her hands when the pneumonia was choking her. She smiled past him and her head dropped away from him on the white pillow when she died. They folded her hands over the little crucifix. It lay between her quiet breasts. The vice president looked furtively at the rigid head of his chauffeur. He felt ashamed that he should think of his wife's breasts now. It did not seem to him to be in keeping with the solemnity of the occasion. He coughed and threw his paper beside him on the seat. Then he lit himself a cigar.

The vice president stared out of the window as he puffed slowly at

Woodcut by Saul Yalkert

his cigar. The taste of his morning coffee was still in his mouth and he felt himself looking sadly out on the bustling life that streamed past him up the avenue. Some time he too would be lying dead in the great room. People would be looking in store windows, the automobiles would come and go. His colleagues would deliver orations about his death and his name would be in the newspapers. The vice president's fingers trembled as he removed the cigar from his mouth. He did not like to think of such things. It was too morbid. Omnipresent Christ substance quicken and prosper me, he whispered to himself. He had read the line somewhere in a Christian business man's magazine and it came back to him now full of meaning.

The vice president had three married daughters and his one son was married too. They all stood on the other side of their mother's bed while she was dying. The girls were crying quietly with their little handkerchiefs crumpled tightly to their noses. The boy stared gloomily through the room. Not one of them looked at their father through the whole evening. A lot they cared what he was feeling then.

A young woman passed by leaning against the wind. The vice president followed her curving body slowly with his eyes until another car cut in and he could not see her any more.

His youngest daughter laughed at him right to his face one day. You ought to divorce your wife, she said. You've got your office, what do you want a wife for? By God, where would they be now if he hadn't slaved his life away for them, he'd like to know. All they knew how to do was to turn their mother against him.

The vice president wanted to feel resentful but it was no use. His resentment dissolved in self-pity and he felt the heavy pouches under his eyes filling with tears. He shook the ashes from his cigar carefully into the little brass tray by the window. Not since the first year of his marriage, and once later when she had borne him a son, had such a sudden wave of affection for his wife swept over him. At that moment he could have laid his head deep in her lap. So many times he had wanted to do that but somehow he had forgotten the way such things were done.

The vice president felt embarrassed when he visited his wife the third day of her illness. They had been occupying separate rooms for so many years he had almost forgotten what his wife looked like lying in bed. She looked young again. Her hair was undone. It flowed like a winter stream about her head and across the white pillow. Her eyes were bright with fever and she smiled up at him almost gaily when he entered the room. He did not know what to do. He stood in the doorway with his eyes lowered and fumbled with the watch chain that spanned his generous belly. John, she said softly, I wanted to speak to you. I'm so happy. I'm going to die.

It was just like his wife to say that just as if it were the natural thing to say. She always made him feel afraid of something. He felt irritated but he came over to her bed and took the hand she held out between both of his. There, there, he said patting her warm hand, don't worry. You'll be all right in another day or two. He raised his eyes to hers and lowered them almost at once. Why was she looking that way at him again? She made him feel suddenly awkward as if his body were too big for him. He dropped her hand carefully on the coverlet and took out his watch. I must be going now, he said. I have to be at the office at ten. I'll be back early this evening. Then he bent over her and put his lips to her cheek.

He visited his wife many times after that but always in the presence of the nurse or the doctor. It was much easier that way. And now she was dead. The vice president felt a chill creep up the back of his neck and under his scalp.

What's the matter, John? he said. We're unusually long getting to the office this morning.

Sorry sir, but the traffic seems to be heavier than usual this morning, the chauffeur said.

The green eye of the traffic tower turned blood red, the whistles blew and the car came to a halt. The vice president fidgeted in his seat. It was necessary to get to the office. Once he was seated behind his desk the day would take care of itself. The vice president always felt powerful in the office. Nobody laughed at him there and nobody questioned him. It was only when he was home with his wife or with his children that he felt insecure. He belonged to ten clubs. It would be better to close up the house for the winter now that his wife was not with him any longer and live at the club, he reflected. He felt relieved at the thought.

The whistles blew again and the car rolled on with the quickening current. The vice president sank back into his seat and sighed. He picked up the *Times* and turned to the front page.

When he reached the office everybody was very thoughtful to him. Everybody said good morning sir extra solemnly and lowered their eyes. They had placed a bouquet of American beauties on his big mahogany desk.

Woodcut by Saul Yalkert

DILEMMA ON TWENTY THIRD STREET

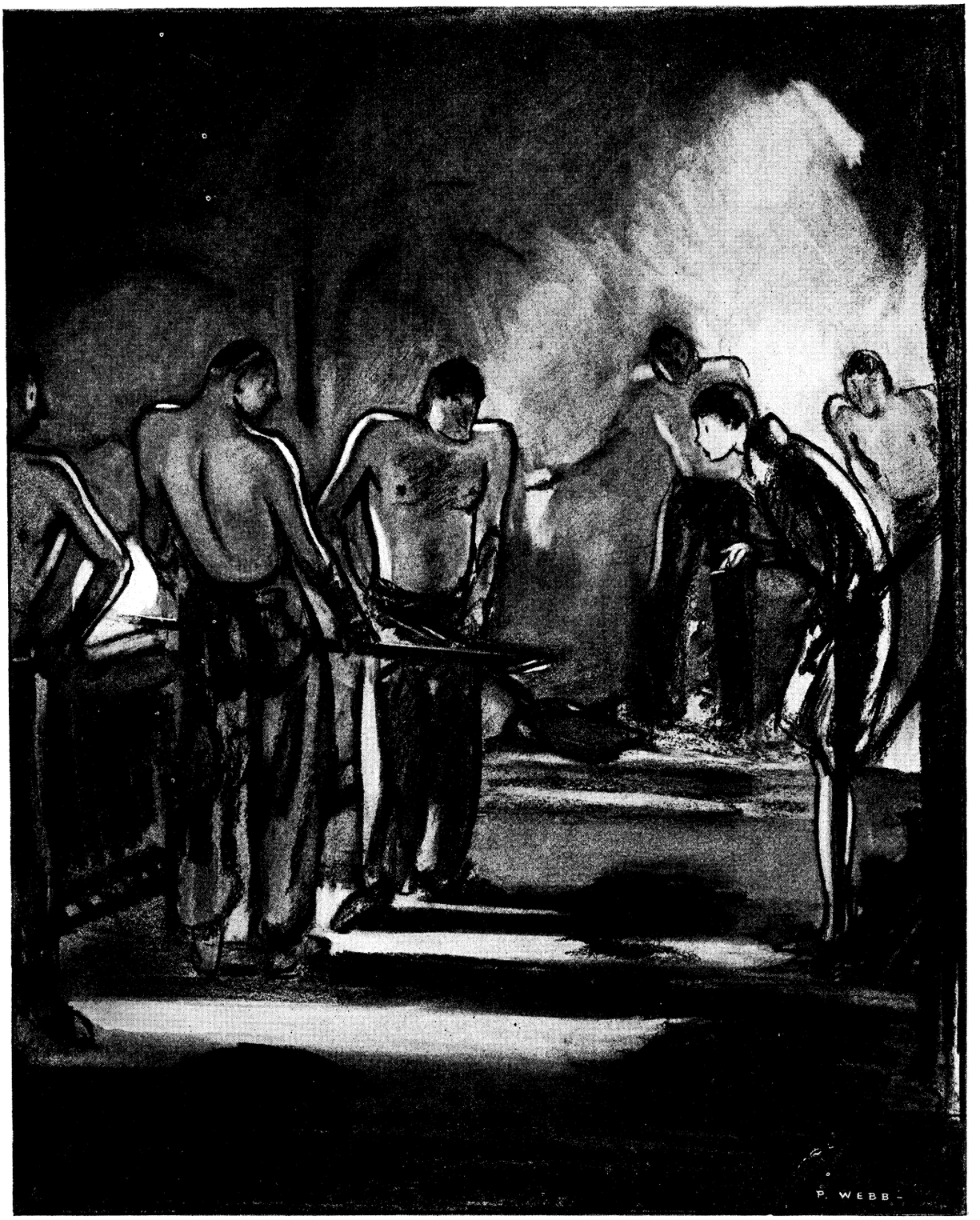
"Why should I leave him;
he's good to me.
God, but he's beautiful
with ice-gold hair:
look at his eyes now,—
blue from the sea,
cut by the wind
to a short, bright stare.

He says I can't go—
can't leave his blood
that runs through my
thighs and
I can't walk away . . .
He gives me power
to move as I should,
and, all too soon,
I'll be still someday.

He stands above me
and over my head
just as the trees rise
out of the ground
into the wet clouds
that mingle and spread,
falling in rain and
in one deep sound.

Maybe my legs won't
walk; my hip, knee,
foot are his mind
with his thoughts inside,—
why should I leave him;
he's good to me . . .
Maybe the world
isn't new and wide."

HORACE GREGORY.



Courtesy Life Pub. Co.

"A LITTLE LESS STEAM, PLEASE!" *Drawing by P. Webb*

SUNSET—CONEY ISLAND

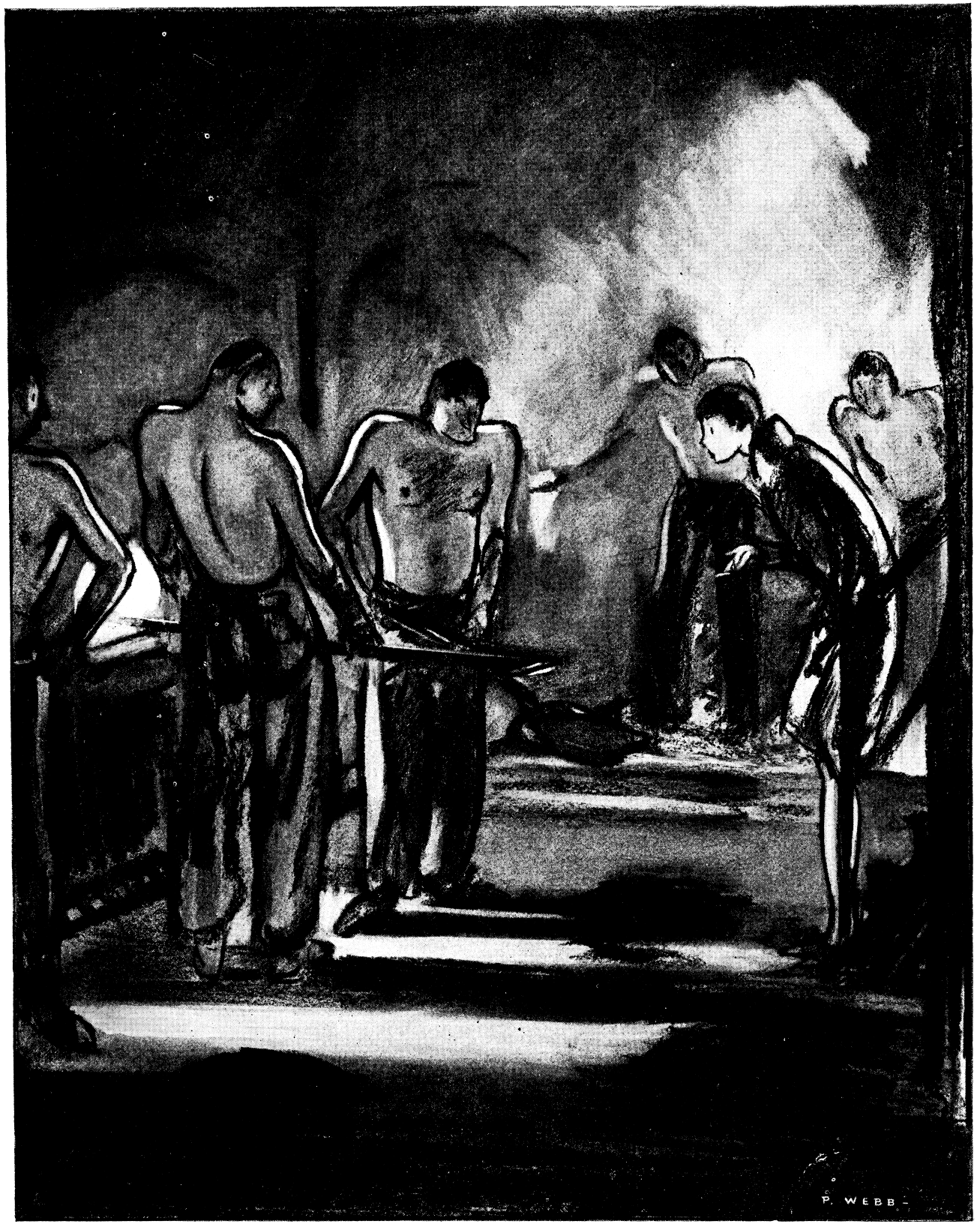
The sun,
Like the red yolk of a rotten egg,
Falls behind the roller-coaster
And the horizon stinks
With a putrid odor of colors.
Down on the beach
A little Jewish tailor from the Bronx,
With a bad stomach,
Throws up the hot-dog sandwiches
He ate in the afternoon
While life
To him
Is like a sick tomato
In a garbage can.

LANGSTON HUGHES.

MUSEUM

To-day must be elderly ladies day at this museum,
Or is everyday elderly ladies day?
They are everywhere,
These elderly ladies
They are whispering and chirping before this excellent example Giorgione,
Before this fine iron work, tapestry and wood carving.
Before the rugs, jugs and terra cotta madonnas.
The old masters, looking down from the walls of this rather remarkable house of art, might say —
"So this is immortality."

I. KLEIN.



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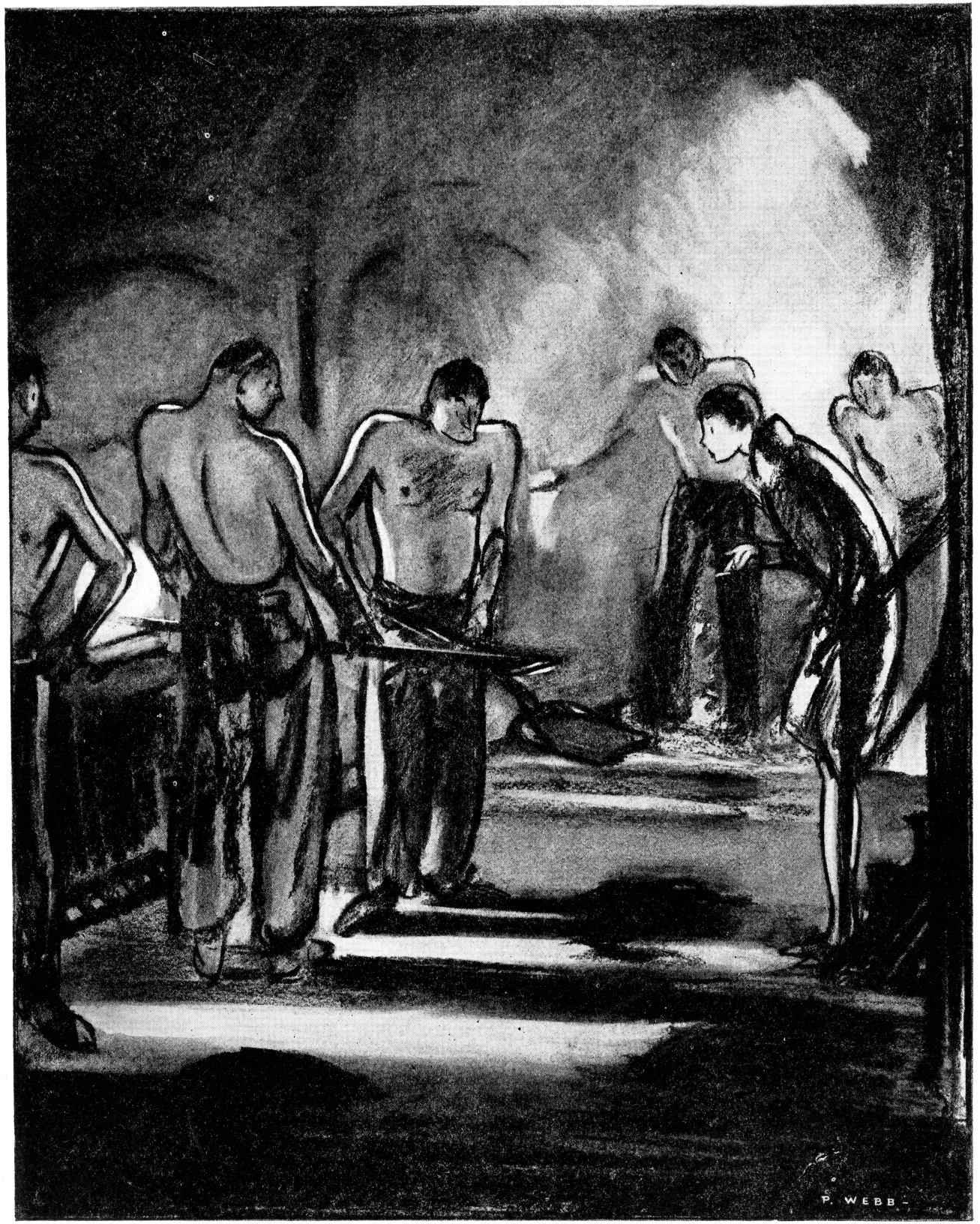

Courtesy Life Pub. Co.

"A LITTLE LESS STEAM, PLEASE!"

Drawing by P. Webb

DARROW—DYNAMIC PESSIMIST

By LEONARD D. ABBOTT

PESSIMISM, it is often assumed, leads to inactivity and disintegration; but in Clarence Darrow's case exactly the opposite is true. Here is a man who for half a century has never lost an opportunity to press home his conviction that life is not worth living and that humanity is not getting anywhere, and who yet is a dynamo of energy, a militant champion of labor and the under-dog, and a fearless pioneer of unpopular truth. From the time when he spoke on labor and taxation in Chicago in 1888 on the same platform with Henry George, until his defense of the anti-Fascist workers, Greco and Carillo, in a Bronx court-room in New York City a few weeks ago, there has been a superb consistency in his career. It is true that he took a pro-War attitude in 1917; but even this failing—if failing it was—he helped to cancel by defending a group of anti-War Communists in 1920. He visited Eugene V. Debs while the latter was imprisoned for anti-War utterances, and more recently he has characterized Debs as "one of the truest, most lovable, kindly men who ever lived." Paraphrasing Voltaire, whom he has always admired, it may accurately be said of Clarence Darrow that he would not only "defend to the death" an opponent's right to express opinions the opposite of his own, but has actually done this very thing, In this respect he shows himself to be a great libertarian, as well as a great radical. His opposition to Prohibition is rooted in his libertarian passion. In one of his debates with the late Wayne B. Wheeler, of the Anti-Saloon League, he declared: "I would rather see a free society, even if it involved mistakes, than a cut-and-dried machine-made society where every individual was intent on seeking to rule some one else."

What a record he has—this battle-scarred veteran who last year celebrated his seventieth birthday, who told reporters after the Greco-Carillo trial that he was "through," but who cannot be imagined as retiring from life's struggle so long as a single victim in all the world needs him!

One of his earliest and best friends was John P. Altgeld. These two were associated for years in law practice; and the influence of the man who was later to become Governor of Illinois and to sacrifice his political career by pardoning three of the Anarchist survivors of the Haymarket tragedy of 1887, has been outstanding in Darrow's life.

One of his early antagonists was Senator (then *State* Senator) William E. Borah, who in 1907 prosecuted Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone in Boise, Idaho. The specific crime with which these men were charged was the murder of Governor Steunenberg, of Idaho, but their real crime was their fighting leadership of the Colorado miners in a struggle which goes on up to this very day with unabated fury. Many newspaper readers can still remember the trial which first bought "Bill" Haywood into national prominence. Every radical knows how Haywood, after his acquittal, helped to found the Industrial Workers of the World, and later cross the ocean to help in the upbuilding of Soviet Russia.

In 1896 Darrow supported William Jennings Bryan for the Presidency. Thirty years after, he and Bryan were locked in a terrific theological debate in Dayton, Tennessee. In that debate, revolving about the dismissal of school-teacher John Scopes because he had taught his students the Darwinian theory of evolution, Clarence Darrow completely demolished the position of his evangelical and Fundamentalist opponent, and struck a blow for free thought that will go ringing down the centuries.

There was a time when Darrow seriously thought of going into politics. He was even, in 1902, elected to the Illinois State Legislature on the Democratic ticket. Some of his friends were anxious to nominate him for Mayor of Chicago. But he balked. "The people don't want me in the mayor's chair," he told them; "I am too radical."

His deeper interest was in the labor struggle and in the men whom Edgar Lee Masters has so well described as—

> Prometheans
> Who tried to carry candles or lamps for the world,
> And found their light snuffed by Envy or Greed
> And themselves left in darkness, bleeding.

The first "Promethean" whom Darrow defended in a court of law was Eugene Debs, and he, Debs and Governor Altgeld all made labor history at the time of the Pullman strike on the Great Northern Railroad in Chicago in 1894. For weeks the entire country felt the vibrations of that struggle. President Cleveland, it will be remembered, was so incensed by the pro-labor sympathies of Altgeld that he sent national troops into the affected area against the Governor's wishes. Debs, who was sentenced to six months in prison for violating an injunction in connection with this strike, entered jail a "pure and simple" trade-unionist, but came out a convinced Socialist.

Three years later, Darrow defended Thomas I. Kidd and two striking woodworkers, charged with "having conspired," through their union, "to injure the business" of a lumber magnate in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Darrow's argument, which resulted in the acquittal of the defendants, was printed in pamphlet form, and was pronounced by the novelist William Dean Howells "as interesting as a novel."

In 1902 Darrow was associated with John Mitchell and Henry Demarest Lloyd as chief counsel for the anthracite coal miners of Pennsylvania in hearings that took place in Scranton and Philadelphia before a commission appointed by Roosevelt. The mine-owner, Baer, who claimed that the coal of the State had been entrusted to him and his colleagues to administer by Divine Right, spoke at one session; but child laborers and maimed and blind workers, in his mines, introduced earlier in the proceedings, had thrown a lurid light on way in which this "Divine Right" had been exercised.

Then, in 1911, came the sensational Macnamara case in Los Angeles, culminating in the confession of the two Macnamara brothers that they had blown up the *Times* building of the stubborn labor-baiter, General Harrison Gray Otis. Darrow was temporarily under a cloud. His enemies tried to "frame" him on a charge of jury-bribing. Lincoln Steffens discussed the issues at stake in a series of notable articles written for the New York *Globe*.

Drawing by Hugo Gellert

CLARENCE DARROW

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CLARENCE DARROW

From a Lithograph by George Biddle

BERMUDA LANDSCAPE

This succession of labor cases found a sequel, after the World War, in the trials of the Communist, Arthur Person, indicted in Rockford, Illinois, and of William Bross Lloyd and nineteen others arrested in Chicago as members of the Communist Labor Party. The charges against all of these was that they advocated the overthrow of the Government by force; and Darrow's defending arguments were masterly orations in behalf of the social heretic, the right to fight for a new kind of world, the right of revolution.

No client of Clarance Darrow has ever been executed, and he counts forty-two lives that he has saved from the gallows and the electric chair. Among these are the negroes, Dr. Ossian Sweet and his brother, in Detroit, Michigan, and, of course, the notorious Leopold and Loeb, convicted of murder in Chicago in 1924. The Leopold-Loeb case, the most difficult that Darrow ever handled, was, in a sense, a test of his most extreme theories. He has always asserted that he was against jails and against punishment—that punishment brutalizes the one punished and the State which punishes, and that jails should be turned into hospitals—but even his most devoted admirers were skeptical as to whether he would be able to make any impression on a jury sitting in a case involving the brutal murder of a little boy by two rich degenerates. Yet, in this as in all his cases, Darrow managed somehow to create an atmosphere in which his arguments reached their mark, and in which it was felt that a new and revolutionary ethic was coming to birth.

Clarence Darrow has been called a Tolstoyan. It is true that he knows portions of *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection* almost by heart, and that one of his books is entitled *Resist Not Evil*. On his latest visits to New York City he lectured in two churches on Tolstoy. There was something poignant and haunting in his utterance, as always. There was also something a little pathetic in the way in which he deliberately toned down the almost idolatrous appreciation of his earlier years. He is disillusioned, and no longer ready to call any man master. But his very disillusion, backed as it is by a spirit of sympathy with all who suffer and by intense activity in behalf of sufferers, has its own potency. *He sees the worst in order that he may do the best.*

Dr. Will Durant, with whom Darrow recently debated the "mechanistic" conception of life, has written an essay on Schopenhauer in his *Story of Philosophy* in which he states that a man is likely to outlive his pessimism at the age of three score and ten. One of Darrow's oldest friends, Fay Lewis, of Rockford, Illinois, makes the comment: "Let us hope that Darrow will never outlive *his* pessimism, for then his greatest charm would be gone, and he would cease to be Darrow."

THE BUM

"Ya needn't be afraid to stare at me. I seen ya. But I don't mind. Hell, if stares wuz killin', I'd bin dead long ago. You're wondrin' if it's worthwhile to stop and talk to me; I kin spot you writin' birds right off the bat. I suppose you've been tradin' short drinks for long stories all day? Well, a good story's damn rare, but so's a good drink. Sit down. Just wink at that guy there. It's all the same stuff with different labels. I guess you've bin gettin' stories from bums what wuz great painters and doctors, eh? Bums what once held proud names and what's bin turned down by dames? Ah, here they are! Have one? Well, here's how! . . . Mister, I wuz never a famous guy. I ain't no descendant of an old family and I don't know no wimmin. I never done nothin'. I allus wuz a bum! Thanks fer the spot o' gin."

Alexander Gottlieb.

COMPLAINT

Workmen, smut-smeared, sweat-marked, toil to rear a steel drome for basket-ball players on the campus.

Aloft swing beams punctured for crimson hot rivets; gloved hands, below tight muscles bulged from hairy arms, guide steel to steel with elemental strength.

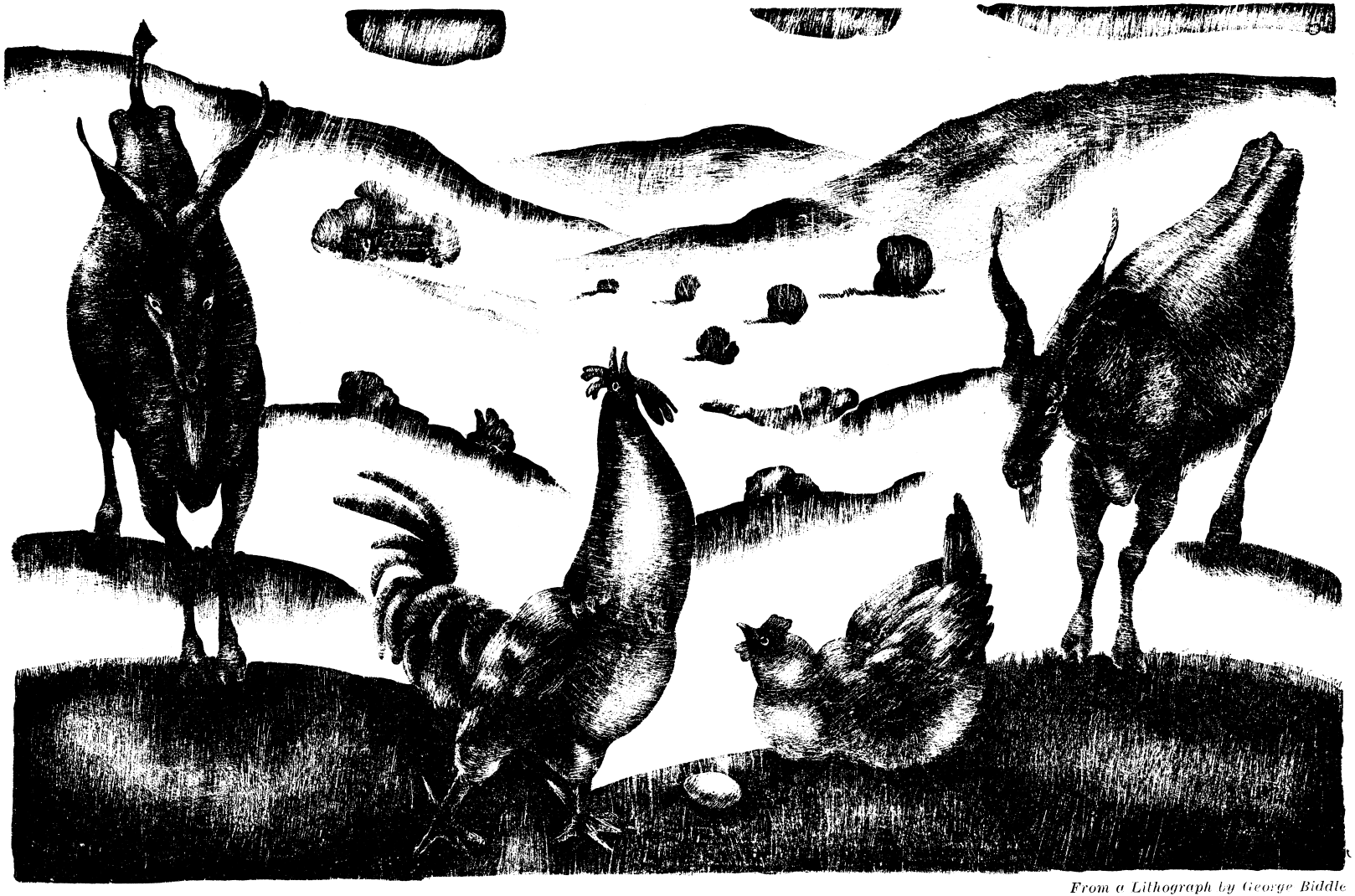
"Look out below!"

Ring of hammers, throb of pistons, straining figures making lines of gray against the sky in place of white lines on blue-print paper.

In houses on the campus engineering students play *Hot Lips* and *Baby Face* on victrolas, tapping their feet on rugs.

"Those damned workmen won't get the field-house ready in time,—lay off at 4:30 nowadays, all ride to work in automobiles. My God, what are we coming to!"

Clarence E. Cason.



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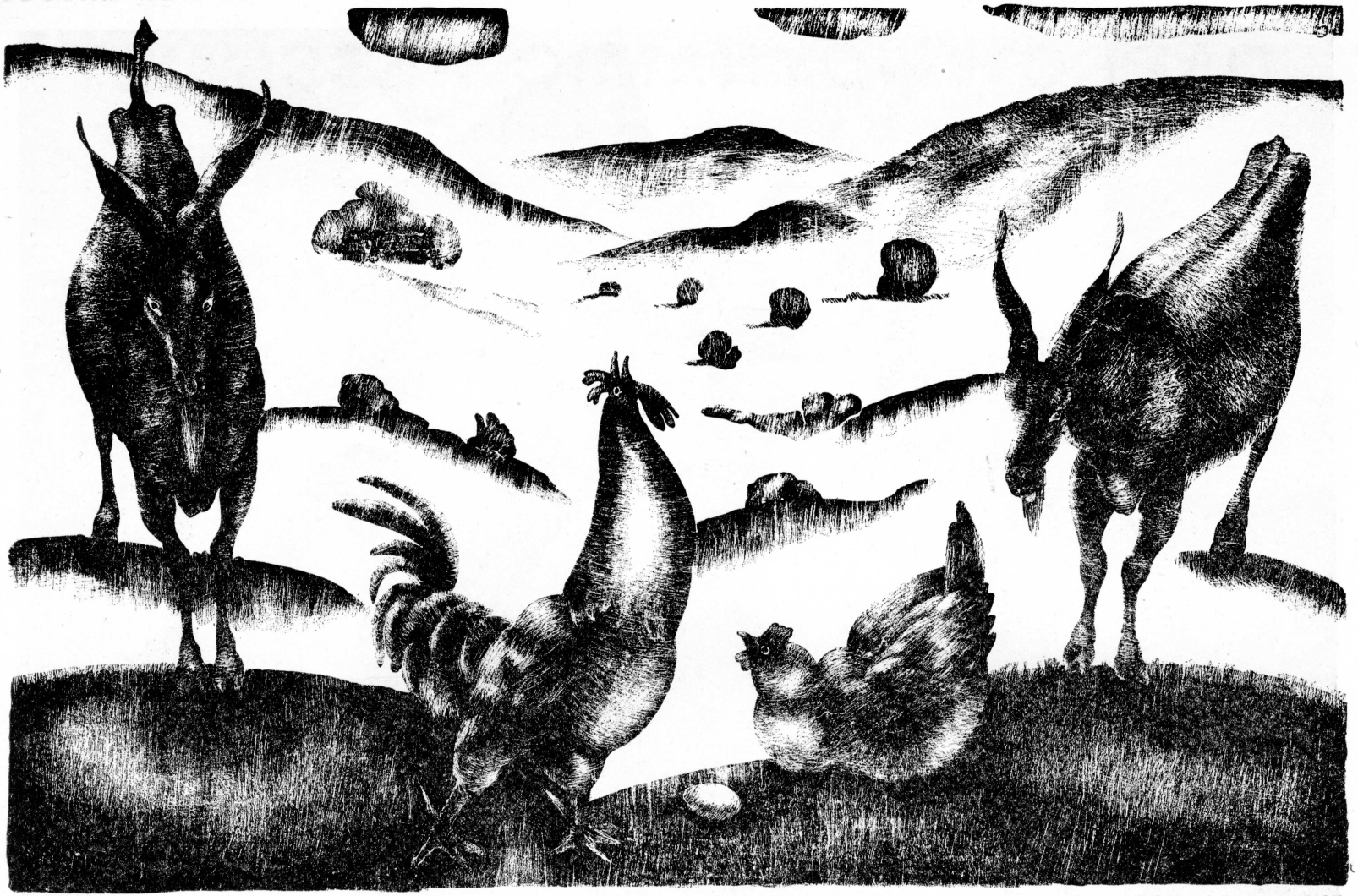
BERMUDA LANDSCAPE



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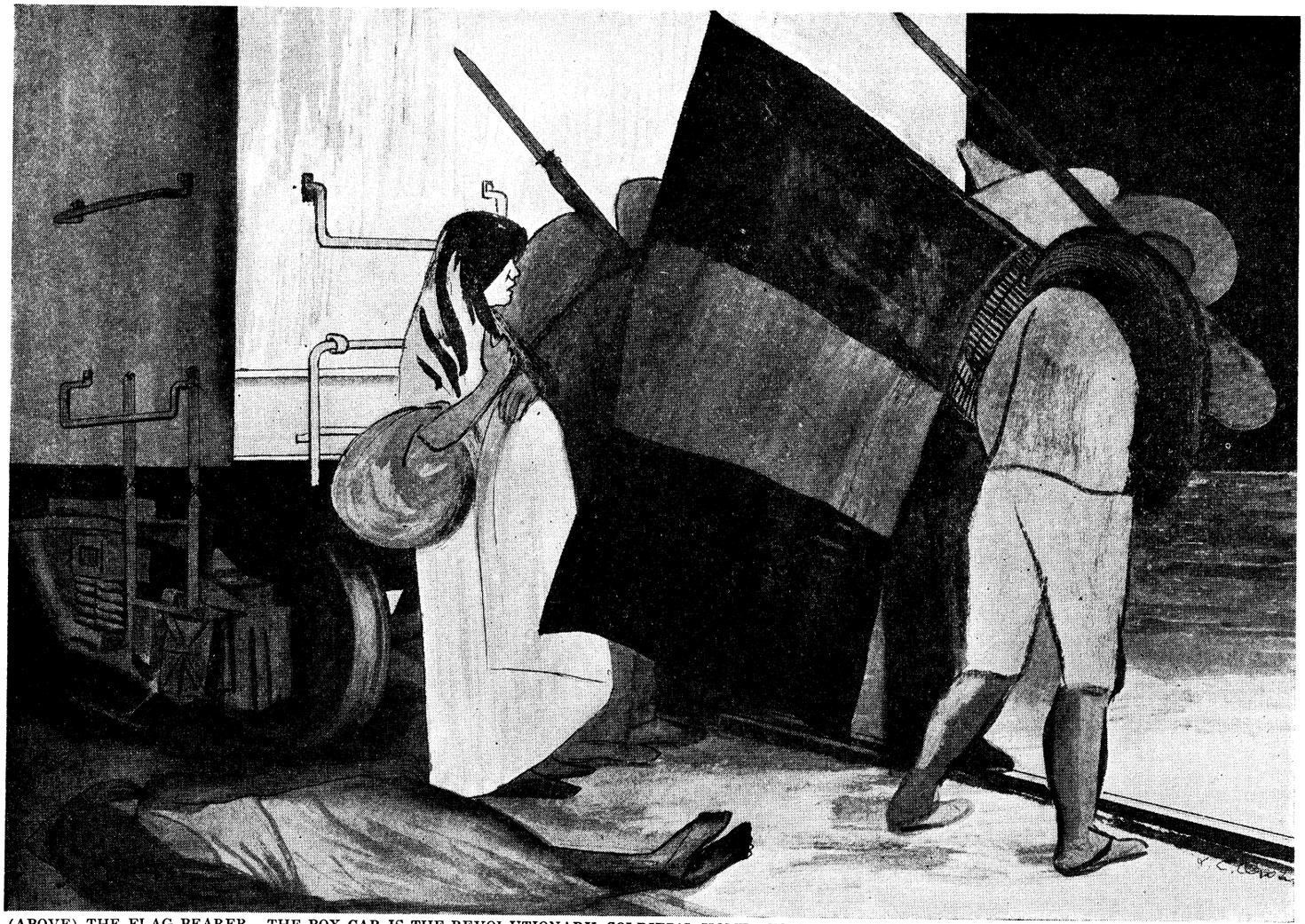


(ABOVE) THE FLAG BEARER. THE BOX CAR IS THE REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER'S HOME: TO BE ENDLESSLY MOVING, THAT IS HIS TRAGEDY. ON TRAINS, OFF AGAIN AND TO HORSE. THE WOMEN GO TOO—HANGING BOXES OF FLOWERS IN THE BOX CARS. PATTING TORTILLAS OVER HEARTH FIRES INEVITABLY ABANDONED.
(BELOW) THE PROTECTOR OF THE LOWLY.

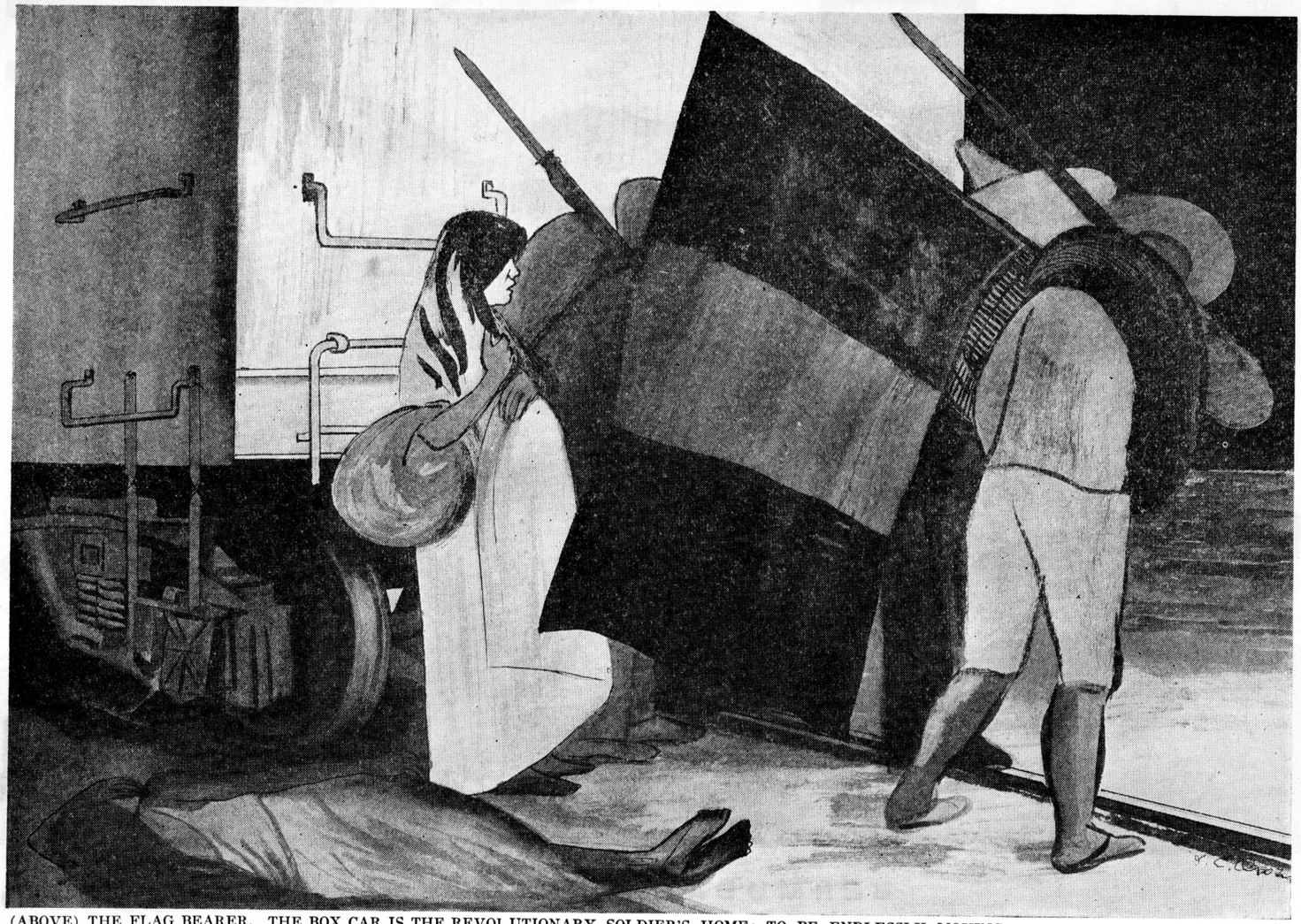
OROZCO
THE REBEL

By ANITA BRENNER

Having personally partaken in the great destruction which marks one culmination in Mexico's long struggle to be itself, Jose Clemente Orozco made his own and the national mirroring of Mexican revolution in his frescos at the National Preparatory School, in Mexico City, and in the series of black and white sketches, parallel to the frescos now on exhibition at Weyhe's Gallery, from which these reproductions were selected.

Some of the murals were stoned; an evidence that the artists who initated revolution, (understanding it as an effort to go to Mexican subjects and rendering derived from native elements), touched a vital point. Art as a social factor is still an active function in Mexico. The purity of art is based on other grounds than those of pleasure. The need, and the ability, to make the rendering, the purely plastic side of it, as strong as the subject, indicates an artist's, and a Mexican's, comprehension of revolution: destruction and creation.

Jose Clemente Orozco has all his life gone from black to white, asserting and denying, destroying, and creating, pain and mockery



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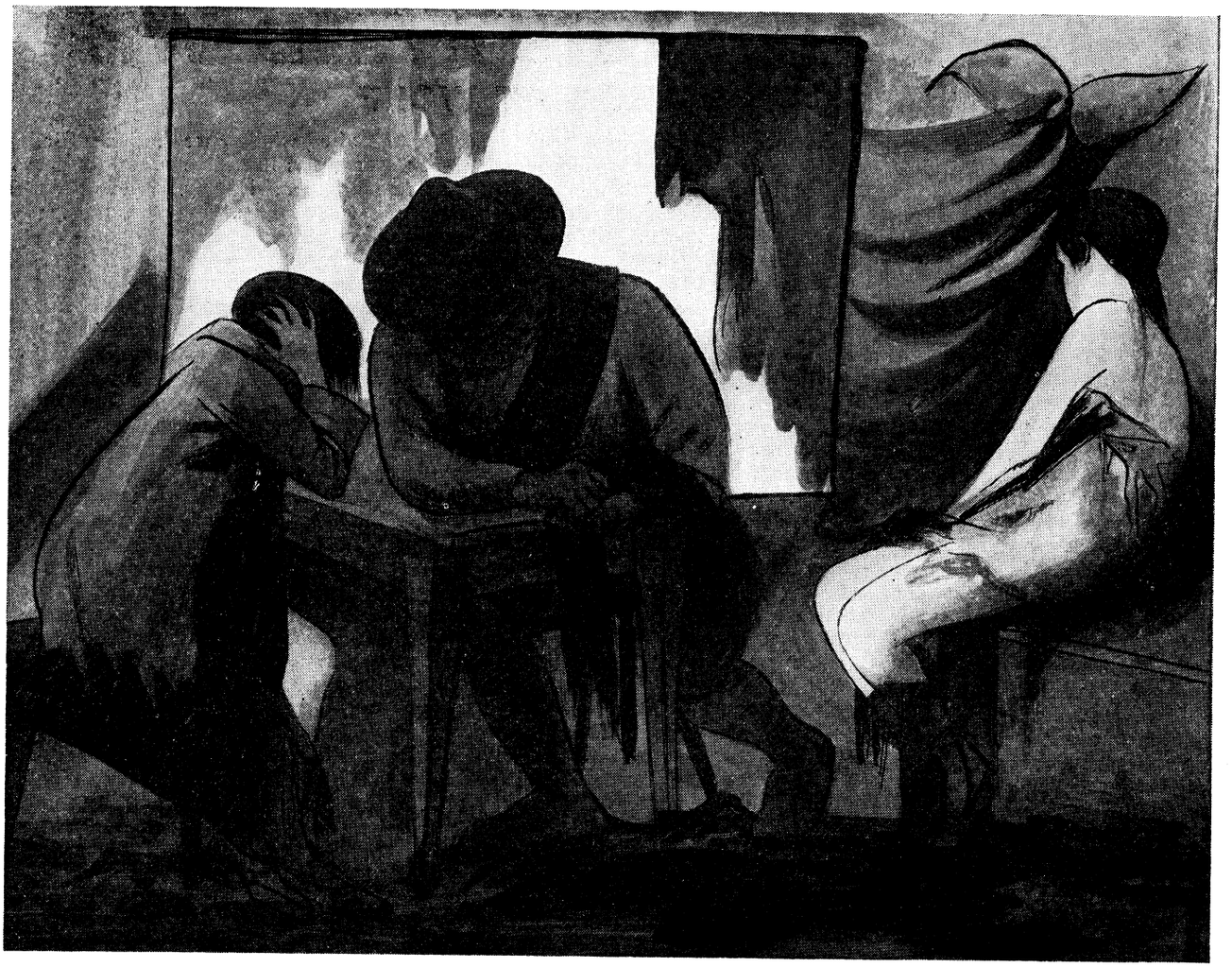
fused in passion. To divide his personal, national, emotional, ideological contribution from his vehicle, the purely plastic manner of his search, is a confusion, and false. He himself has struck the balance.

(ABOVE)
TWO WOMEN AND A SOLDIER

Helpless, the women violated in the rippings of fine houses; as helpless, the women bearing children in their improvised camps and freight-car homes. Sorrow the portion of both, and of the men, fighting because of a passionate need.

(BELOW)
THE OPPRESSOR MUST GO!

Turning bayonettes against priests, rifling the churches that their own money had built, a significantly repeated scene. But the man with the bayonette carries a rosary and wears an image of the Lady of Guadalupe on his hat.



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WHAT THERE ISN'T AND WHY NOT

By ROBERT WOLF

Robert Wolf, Contributing Editor of the NEW MASSES, *who has been in Russia for several months, delivered the following lecture at the Communist Academy in Moscow on December 15th.*

WHEN Comrade Dinamov asked me to tell you about American proletarian poetry, I said I would have to say there wasn't any. "Very well," said Comrade Dinamov, "tell us that there isn't, and why not."

Having been set free to say exactly what the situation seemed to me, I immediately changed my mind and discovered there was a good deal, although the proletarian elements in American poetry are neither very high-grade nor very widespread.

It may be news to some of you to learn that America, the land of the sky-scraper, of the radio, of the Ford car, of bath-tubs, hot and cold water, a material development so far unparalleled, Edison, Coolidge, and the jazz-band, has in the last fifteen years become a land of poetry as well. From a Marxian point of view this is perfectly comprehensible. American capitalism, for all its glaring and monstrous contradictions, is still in a healthy and developing stage. It is just before the point of the decline. It is in much the same situation as Periclean Greece, or Renaissance Italy. America is the metropolis of the world—New York and Moscow are the two poles of the earth. There are enormous sums of money, leisure and energy to be spent on art—there is a whole new civilization of which to become conscious. And American literature, which with a few notable exceptions was until about the first decade of this century a weak and imitative sub-department of English literature, has vigorously set out on the trail of Columbus to discover America itself.

This is especially true in the field of poetry. There are still no novelists in America who have written with the depth, profundity and social background of the two or three best English and Irish contemporary novelists, but in poetry any observer will tell you that America is producing much more first-rate work than is coming out of England today. Minor poets exist in America in a profusion unknown in English literature since the Elizabethans—there are half a dozen just under the very first rank—there are probably a hundred persons in America who have written at least one really good poem. Every newspaper in America—and corresponding with the general intensity of our material development, one number of one New York newspaper weighs more than all the issues of all the papers of Moscow for a week—every newspaper in America carries its column of poetry, or reprints poetry from other papers or magazines that carry columns of their own. Every publication, every magazine, political, literary, even in some cases scientific, gives its little allotment of space to poetry. I think it can safely be said that Americans at present are consuming more poetry to the square brain than any other people on earth.

Now this poetry is becoming explosively aware of capitalist civilization in America. In form it ranges from the most irregular and chaotic metres to the most severely classical verse, but all of it employs the words, the thoughts, the problems of the man on the subway, in the office, or in the field. I myself happen to belong to that wing that finds the patterns of the Machine Age more expressible in regular and almost geometrical rhythms, but all of us, whether we write sonnets, or poems like those of E. E. Cummings more violently irregular than Mayakovsky, use the same modern thoughts, and feelings, and words.

Modern, and restless, but not proletarian, perhaps not even revolutionary. And this is for one very simple reason. There is no revolutionary situation to speak of in America. Factory girls in America wear silk stockings but have no class consciousness—capitalism is in blacker and more complete control than anywhere else on earth. Mellon, the oil millionaire, sits in the White House as Secretary of the Treasury; Dwight Morrow, the partner of J. P. Morgan, is openly appointed ambassador to Mexico. These two things would not have happened ten years ago. For capitalism in America, though so completely in control, is aware of its own contradictions and is a somewhat nervous capitalism—it is deliberately closing its eyes and sitting as far as possible to the right.

Moreover, whatever revolutionary movement there is is almost entirely foreign speaking. The Communist Party in America has from ten to twenty thousand members out of a population of 120 million—of these less than 3,000 speak English. For generations this has been the most important fact for historians of the revolutionary movement in the United States. America has a reasonably vigorous and active revolutionary past, but it has almost no continuous revolutionary tradition. Successive waves of immigration have washed it entirely out. The revolutionary German proletarians of the last century were obliterated and lifted into a petty bourgeois position by the Irish, the Irish by the Italians, the Italians by the Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, and Russian-Jews—these by streams of negroes coming factory-ward from the South. These latest recruits to the proletariat were English-speaking, and it is significant that some of the most nearly revolutionary poetry being produced today in America is negro. But the same problem that has been hitherto the despair of the revolutionary organizer in America has prevented the growth of a proletarian literature. It has been quite simple—there was no one to write it for, and so it didn't get written at all.

But the situation is changing. Partly as a concession to the aristocracy of labor organized in the two and a half million members of the American Federation of Labor, and partly from its own fear of revolutionary foreign agitators, American capitalism has now prohibited immigration. The American Federation of Labor is reactionary to a degree that is almost inconceivable to a European. In the eyes of its leaders, Ramsay Macdonald and Kerensky are dangerous Bolsheviks—the American socialists, who are far to the right of the German Social-Democrats, are regarded with distrust. American imperialism, the mistress of two continents and the exploiter of the earth, has bribed its skilled workmen like ancient Rome, with bread and circuses—only this time the bread and circuses are radios and Ford cars—and for all practical purposes, these workers, the only American-speaking workers in the heavy industries, are at present ideologically a part of the bourgeois class. What they read is so incredibly awful that on this ground, if on no other, any decent writer in America finds his own trade union interests on the side of revolution. For American capitalism, in line with its general technical progress, has developed

Drawing by William Gropper

AUCTION

Drawing by William Gropper

AUCTION

Drawing by Otto Soglow

"YOU'LL BE POOR TILL YOUR THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR."
"YES, AND THEN?" "THEN YOU'LL BE USED TO IT."

the slickest methods even seen for corrupting its working class.

I stand appalled at the prospect of explaining to a foreigner the present state of popular literature in America, if by popular literature be meant what the people are actually given to read. Books play the smallest part in it—it is almost wholly a periodical literature. This means that it is entirely subsidized by advertising—the Saturday Evening Post, for instance, as I remember the figures, costs something like sixty cents a copy to produce, and sells for five cents. Thus big American capitalism, the national advertisers, organized into the National Manufacturers Association, controls more directly than any other department of national life what the workers are given to read. Under its guidance has developed the commercial short story, courses on the writing of which are now supplied at several of the larger universities, a product so false, so formularized, so devoid of genuine content, that even writers, those most ancient and venerable of prostitutes, rebel at the use of their spirits for traffic so sordid as this.

The lack of class consciousness on the part of the English-speaking workers, and its presence among the foreign-born has another curious consequence—the situation that is so bad with regard to literature is not quite so bad with regard to art. Everybody that has followed the revolutionary movement in America knows that radical cartoons, drawings, and paintings are much in advance of poetry or fiction. Bellows, Sterne, Sloane, Young, Minor, Robinson, Barnes, Gropper, Lozowick, Dehn, Gellert and Gág, to mention only those I think of at this distance, are a list of names that neither for originality, for artistic achievement nor for proletarian and revolutionary style and content can be matched in the working-class literary world. *The Masses,* which developed into the *Liberator,* which in turn developed into the NEW MASSES, and which more than any other organ has been associated with the history of American revolutionary art, started as a picture paper. Its audience always consisted partly of bourgeois radicals not so very close to the labor movement, and partly of proletarian Marxists not so very familiar with the English language. Neither group supplied a very satisfactory public for a writer—for a writer needs not only an outlet—he needs a critical audience to respond to his finest work. But taken together they were an excellent public for an artist, and in the *Masses* and its successors the cartoon developed to a high degree. In addition there has always been our revolutionary foreign-language press to supply a place, and often a very well-paid place, for the plastic artist's work.

In regard to proletarian literature, and especially proletarian poetry, there has been a great deal of talk of which this is just one more sample, and very little of it produced. To those of my American comrades who have been for years proclaiming that they were creating proletarian poetry, these remarks might sound like defeatism, but I think they are only a frank confession. I also would like to have written proletarian poetry if I could. George M. Cohan, the American musical comedy king, once said, when he addressed his chorus up in star-spangled tights, "The American flag can always save a rotten show." As a poet, and a revolutionist, I violently object to having the red flag used for any similar purpose. The truth is that the poetry of those who in America call themselves proletarian poets is usually slight, often sentimental, still more often imitative in manner and substance of the abler work of contemporary American bourgeois poets, and even at best it is far less apt to be Communist, or opposed to the profit system, than Anarchist, or opposed to the Machine.

And now I come to the ungracious task of classifying individual poets, most of whom are, or at least have been up to the present moment, my friends.

Drawing by Otto Soglow

"YOU'LL BE POOR TILL YOUR THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR."
"YES, AND THEN?" "THEN YOU'LL BE USED TO IT."

Drawing by Otto Soglow

"YOU'LL BE POOR TILL YOUR THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR."
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Swedish Americans

If proletarian poetry is poetry written for the proletariat, and not merely about the proletariat, there is only one American poet who has succeeded in accomplishing that achievement. This is the executed I. W. W. poet and organizer, Joe Hill. His *Long-Haired Preachers* and *Hallelujah, I'm a Bum* are known wherever the American language is spoken. Although the latter of these has recently been excluded from both the I. W. W. and the Communist song books on the ground that it is a hobo rather than a revolutionary song, it is far more pointed, clever, and working-class in thought and diction than many of the more literary products that have replaced it.

Joe Hill's work is of course what a professional literary critic would call light verse, but it is excellent light verse which could have been composed only by a poet of genuine talent. Almost alone among the poets I shall discuss here today Hill was and remained a proletarian. He never left his class for a literary life among intellectuals, as most of our poets of proletarian extraction inevitably do. In a country ruled by a proletarian dictatorship this is a natural and perhaps not regrettable process—after all, there is no more reason for a proletarian not specializing in his craft than for anyone else—but in a bourgeois country like the United States it has its dangers. Joe Hill avoided the bourgeoisie. Swedish by birth, a harvest-hand, a lumber-jack, and a longshoreman, he composed his songs in the most authentic American tradition, that of the camp-meeting hymn tune, and when he was executed in 1915 in the State of Utah on a murder charge, he left them in the memories of millions of workers that had never heard his name.

Another Swede, also in his days a migratory worker, has given us poetry of more serious literary quality. Carl Sandburg could hardly be called a Communist poet, but among American poets he is the only one of absolutely first rank whose work is pervaded, even though vaguely, by the breath of a revolutionary and working-class point of view. Sandburg's hero comes closer to being Lincoln than Lenin or Marx, but it is the Lincoln who freed the slaves, rather than the one who destroyed Southern feudalism and laid the foundations for the modern industrial state. A good revolutionist is a good revolutionist, whatever revolution he fought for—Robespierre does not need to be excluded from the category of Communist saints and Whitman and Sandburg, though they express the expanding vigor of American democracy, rather than the awakened consciousness of the working-class, can take their place among the predecessors of proletarian poetry.

The Liars is a poem in Sandburg's most vigorous polemic manner.

The Party Poets

More or less a follower of Sandburg—though not nearly so able a writer—and more or less the official poet of the Communist movement in America, is Michael Gold. Controversies about Mike Gold are dangerous, and difficult to avoid—I shall only say that in my opinion he is a vigorous, robust, and often far too verbose and sentimental writer, and that his ideology is far more Anarchist than Communist. His best poem, *A Strange Funeral in Braddock,* is very fine. Mike hates the industrial system, which hurt him cruelly in his youth, as it hurts many slum-proletarians, and when he tries rather self-consciously to love it, he loves it for all the wrong things—for its dirt, noise, smoke, disorder—rather than for its efficiency, speed, abundance, cleanliness, ease. Mike's ideal is a green pasture in the midst of rivers, and when his conscience tells him that this is incorrect, he returns only to take refuge in the mouths of smokestacks that belch smoke but turn no wheels.

The other semi-official poet of the movement is Joseph Freeman, of Russian-Jewish birth, and of petty-bourgeois rather than proletarian origin. Joe is unquestionably a genuine poet, though how robust his talent is remains to be seen. His work is slight, graceful, intelligent, and rather more literary than that of many bourgeois poets.

Verse has also been written by several other members of the Party, among them Ralph Chaplin, Charles Ashleigh, Simon Felshin, and Rose Pastor Stokes. All of these are interesting more for their attempt to create proletarian poetry, than for the degree to which the attempt has met success. Chaplin's best known poem is the I. W. W. song *Solidarity Forever* —another is his *Mourn Not the Dead,* which was written from Leavenworth Prison.

Ashleigh's poetry, what I have seen of it, if it had not also been written from prison, would to me be indistinguishable from the work of any minor bourgeois poet.

The Masses Group

Arturo Giovanitti's poetry is highly thought of by many persons. For me it usually errs a little too much on the side of eloquence and verbosity. This perhaps does not apply to some of the shorter passages, like *May Day in Moscow,* which seems to me one of the most vivid and effective he has done.

Two other poets were identified with the development of the *Masses,* and for a long time connected with the revolutionary movement: Max Eastman and Jack Reed. Eastman is a very good poet, as well as an excellent critic of poetry, but as would perhaps be expected from his political activity, his poetry is best when it is most remote from the revolutionary cause.

Reed is more difficult to classify. He was one of the most talented writers ever connected with the revolutionary movement in America, but the quantity of his production was slight. I have not seen all his work, which has been collected into a book since I left the country. So far as I know he never wrote a poem which could properly be called a proletarian poem. He was an excellent short story writer who confined himself to not much more than one short story, which appeared in the very first number of the *Masses,* and was one of the ablest I have ever read. He was a fine poet who wrote exactly one first-rate poem, *Fog,* whose form and subject were the purely personal ones of death. Reed gave his life rather than his poetry to the workers' movement, but only a poet of vivid and intense emotions could have written the book *Ten Days That Shook the World.*

Above the Battle

Poets less closely connected organizationally with the workers' movement have often produced excellent agitational poems. The best known American poem about political prisoners—*Tom Mooney*—was written by William Ellery Leonard, a professor of English at the University of Wisconsin.

James Rorty, a poet who can in no sense be called proletarian, author of *Children of the Sun,* has written a very fine poem in mem-

PROSPERITY, LTD.

After consuming the output of our leading Wall Street bulls, political bull-throwers, bankers, bunkers and applesauce dealers, I am convinced that we are launched upon another year of boundless prosperity. It is now agreed that the successor to Coolidge, if he chooses to whittle, will be Hoover, Dawes, or Lowden, all friends and relations of prosperity.

As the new year opens, evidences of wealth are on every hand and silk stockings on every leg. When cigarette-lighters and hooch-shakers sell for a thousand dollars apiece, who can doubt that our prosperity is on a firm basis? Stock exchange, theatre and Senate seats are quoted at the highest prices in all history. Three thousand millionaires live on Park Avenue and fresh ones are added every hour. There are few vacant places in those regal apartment houses but many vacant faces.

Nothing is more convincing than the magnificent new motor cars with their bigger and better ash trays, vanity cases and gin closets. It is estimated that five million cars will be sold in 1928 and some of them paid for.

The infant bootleg industry, with its allied trades, hijacking, night clubbing and prohibition agenting, will have the most glorious year in its history. It is certain that 1928 will show new high records for baseball, prize-fighting, politics and crime —the life blood of the newspaper business.

The price of shoes is going higher and we may all look forward with optimism to the day when it will not be possible to buy them at all. The textile industry has found a happy solution to its troubles. It is moving south where the people are simple and kindly and not used to getting paid for working.

Public service corporations are doing splendidly and are investing their surplus in sound, dependable Senators. The oil business is showing good profits and it is certain that nobody of any importance will go to jail.

Statistics show that fully twenty per cent of our people are making enough to live on. The other four-fifths are merely artists, bookkeepers, child laborers, coal miners, college professors, carwashers, cotton pickers, ditch diggers, farmers, fishermen, hello girls, lumberjacks, longshoremen, laundry workers, Pullman porters, salesgirls, steel makers, scrubwomen, slaugherhouse hands, street cleaners, textile workers, truck drivers, woodchoppers and writers. They are not very pleasant people, anyhow.

HOWARD BRUBAKER.

ory of Sacco and Vanzetti, *Gentlemen of Massachusetts,* which was printed in the NEW MASSES.

Stanley Boone, who works on an American newspaper under another name, has written one or two sonnets with a first-rate revolutionary ideology.

Babette Deutsch expresses what might perhaps be called Soviet nationalism rather than a proletarian point of view—one of her best poems is *Petrograd.*

And finally James Oppenheim, Louis Untermeyer, and Lola Ridge, who belong to a rather older generation of poets, who enjoyed quite a reputation as revolutionists in their day, but whom we now see to be nothing but bourgeois radicals. Untermeyer's *Caliban in the Coal Mines* is still, however, probably as well known as any poem of its kind.

Finally I want to call attention to a long poem by Keene Wallis—*A Harvest Stiff Comes Back to Town*—not because I think it is a great poem—I think it is not—but because it comes as close to giving in native and authentic idioms the reactions of a normal revolutionary American worker as any work of the sort I have seen.

Negro Poetry

Two other subjects remain to be discussed — revolutionary negro poetry, and the reflection in the work of two or three of the most important bourgeois poets — none of them proletarian, one of them definitely counter-revolutionary — of the epoch in which we live.

Out of every ten persons in the United States, one is a negro, and negro culture, especially since the great nortnward migration, has come to occupy a very important place in American life. Music and the dance, in which whites and blacks have collaborated to produce the most striking of all American art forms, are of course its chief expression, but lately a great deal of poetry has also been written, some of it based on a kind of negro nationalism, some of it from a proletarian class-conscious point of view. There are a number of interesting negro writers, Jean Toomer, Countee Cullen, Eric Walrond, and Walter White, but so far as I know only two, Claude McKay and Langston Hughes, have produced poetry that could be called proletarian.

It has remained for a white man, however, to write the most terrible poetic indictment of negro lynching. Merrill Root's poetry is usually uniformly good, quiet and unassuming, with a farmer rather than a working-class background, but in *A Southern Holiday* he has left an unforgetable record of the most frightful feature of capitalist civilization in America.

I want to close by referring to the effect of changing social conditions upon the work of the most important contemporary American bourgeois poets.

Aside from Sandburg there are perhaps ten or twelve poets in America today with firmly established reputations of almost classic rank. Of these, Lindsay, Frost and Masters give most attention to social rather than to personal themes. It is difficult to put Sandburg into any classification without putting at least some of the work of Lindsay, Frost and Masters along with him—they are all alike poets of egalitarian democracy, essentially petty-bourgeois in their outlook, but all alike concerned with the common man. Yet for me personally all their work leads up a blind alley—it is perhaps a statement of my tastes rather than a criticism of them to say that for me their work has never had more than lukewarm interest.

A Good Hater

Another poet appeals to me much more. If poets were ranked politically T. S. Sliot would be called a Fascist rather than a Communist poet—he has in fact fled from America to England, where he wears spats and a cane and calls himself a British Tory. But he hates capitalist civilization for exactly the same things for which a good Communist poet should hate it, and in hating it he has bitten in with acid such precise and modern pictures as no other poet has etched. I have been interested to see that his work is beginning to have a large influence upon poets with proletarian revolutionary sympathies—Freeman is greatly influenced by it, and in a recent number of the NEW MASSES there was a long poem by Charles Recht that echoed Eliot for line. Eliot is a literary snob—I could not give you a sample of his poetry if I would—it is so full of obscurities as to be almost untranslatable, and even in English it is difficult enough to read. But has a sharpness, a precision, and a modernity that makes even Sandburg look like a whiskered Victorian, and it is perhaps on some path parallel but in the opposite direction to this that the American proletarian poetry of the future may be found.

Drawing by Jan Matulka

OFF PROVINCETOWN LIGHT

Drawing by Jan Matulka

OFF PROVINCETOWN LIGHT

A LETTER FROM BILL GROPPER

Moscow, U.S.S.R.,
January, 1928.

Dear Bunch:

This is a great country but I can't get used to their strange ways. Look at these two fellows, for instance,

what they are doing, and why, is more than I can dope out. Maybe they are nature lovers, or just exercising. The Russian question is not as simple as our economists thinks it is.

But the biggest problem over here is not the opposition, or the peasants. Nothing as simple as that. It's the traffic problem. The above shows why.

This boy is a water-carrier. It's no pipe. (Do you get me?) He loves his work and his own wife. Incidentally, he is the reason for the shortage of bathtubs. He never carries Vodka—in the pails. . . .

Payday, a phenomenon unknown to NEW MASSES *artists and writers, is a regular event over here. Good rubles for work, and none for shirk, is the rule.*

Yours,

BILL.

THIS CREATIVE MAN

By Maxim Gorky

(This greeting was sent by Maxim Gorky, through the Pravda, to the Russian workers and peasants on the Tenth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution. It is particularly interesting in view of Gorky's originally unfriendly attitude toward the Soviet Government. In this greeting he drastically attacks the emigré journalists among whom he could at one time have been counted. The Soviet Government, in its anxiety to improve conditions of life in the Soviet Union, unreservedly prints the facts of the darker side of its social life, the left-over from the old regime. The emigrés pounce on each revelation as it is printed and reprint it in their hostile press as examples of the terrible conditions of life under the Soviets. Gorky, in this greeting, scathingly denounces these distorters of the truth, and, in an intelligent analysis, explains the reasons for the evident delight with which this "back-wash" of the revolution indulges in this sport.)

TEN years have gone by, but the Soviet power still exists, becomes stronger and stronger, and by its vitality it is vexing all its enemies.

It is strengthening itself and really creating in the Soviet Union the basis for the building up of a new world. Such a basis I see in the fact that it is giving freedom to the will to live, which was formerly so suppressed; that is, the will to create, since to live means to create. Free activity of man is everywhere defiled and violated by senseless and cynical exploitation; the capitalist order destroyed the joy of creating, and made labor a curse, not a free expression of the creative force of man.

It seems to me that in the Soviet Union men are beginning to work with the consciousness that only labor offers a direct and straight path to freedom and culture. The Russian worker no longer ekes out a beggardly existence, as was formerly the case; he is building a State for himself. He feels that gradually he is becoming the master of the whole country and the leader of the peasantry on the road to freedom. He is beginning to understand that the whole world belongs to the toiler; that science offers him this world as the raw material out of which to create all necessary things; that science conquers the forces of nature in order to lighten the arduous labor of man. Soon he will have to realize that labor not only creates material values, but something incomparably higher: the consciousness of the power of human reason and of its function of overcoming every resistance by its will.

The Russian worker is learning the testament of his leader, Vladimir Lenin, to rule his State successfully—that is a fact the importance of which cannot be exaggerated.

The creation of a splendid press must be regarded as one of the tremendous services of the Soviet Union, a press which so intelligently and on such a grand scale, acquaints the population of the Union with the life of the whole world.

The Russian people are living under the constant influence of outspoken and stern words of truth about everything which happens in the world, the horrible shamelessness and unbridled will of the master class; how, in the process of its degeneration, this class is going into a frenzy, and how the robust will of the oppressed is developing to take its place. That is the most important thing that one must know, and the Soviet Press understands how to teach it.

When one has become sixty years old, one is surfeited by the "negative" attributes of man and feels the need of dealing with his positive sides. This urge does not come from weariness—no! It develops because one begins to realize what the modern Russian lacked in order to overcome "the old Adam" in himself—the heritage of centuries of the past. It is known and unchallenged that the capitalist order has nowhere brought forth "good" men, and can not by its very nature do so. And when one thinks of the conditions under which the Russian, who is now 35 to 45 years old grew up,—then one does not wonder that he has retained certain weaknesses, but rather that he is not worse than he actually is, and that he is constantly perfecting himself. I am not inclined to belittle anything bad, but I am equally disinclined to make demands upon a person which he is not yet in a position to fulfill. In my opinion the man of whom I speak is sufficiently good just as he is.

The creator of present Russian life I knew from his youth on. At first he was a "scapegoat", a stepson of that terrible Russian life; then he wandered on the path of revolutionary illegality into prison, into exile, into convict life; then he accomplished a tremendous revolution, which actually "shook the world", and which will continue to shake it until it is destroyed. Then for three years he conducted a victorious civil war, and after it had ended, he tackled his most difficult task: the reconstruction of the shattered economy of Russia—a task for which he was just as unprepared as he had been for the war against experienced generals.

He had no time to cultivate in himself those attributes of which the refined Russian intellectuals were so proud, and of which they are still so proud—those intellectuals who sprang so lightly into the camp of his enemies.

Not a fine talker and not a "seeker after Perfection", but a splendid and honest creator of this world, he resolutely forsook all falseness and courageously went his own path to freedom, the only path which leads direct to freedom.

This man was a man such as the world had never before seen; and this man undertook the tremendous task of creating the mass of toilers "in his own image". This task he accomplished with extraordinary success. In the final analysis, he is the indisputable proof of how much creative force and talent there exists in the masses.

One should think that he unquestionably deserves the admiration and respect of all those who abhor the repulsive cynical chaos of life, and that he especially deserves the respect of the former "lovers of the people", who so readily and so gracefully lamented over the sufferings of "our younger brother".

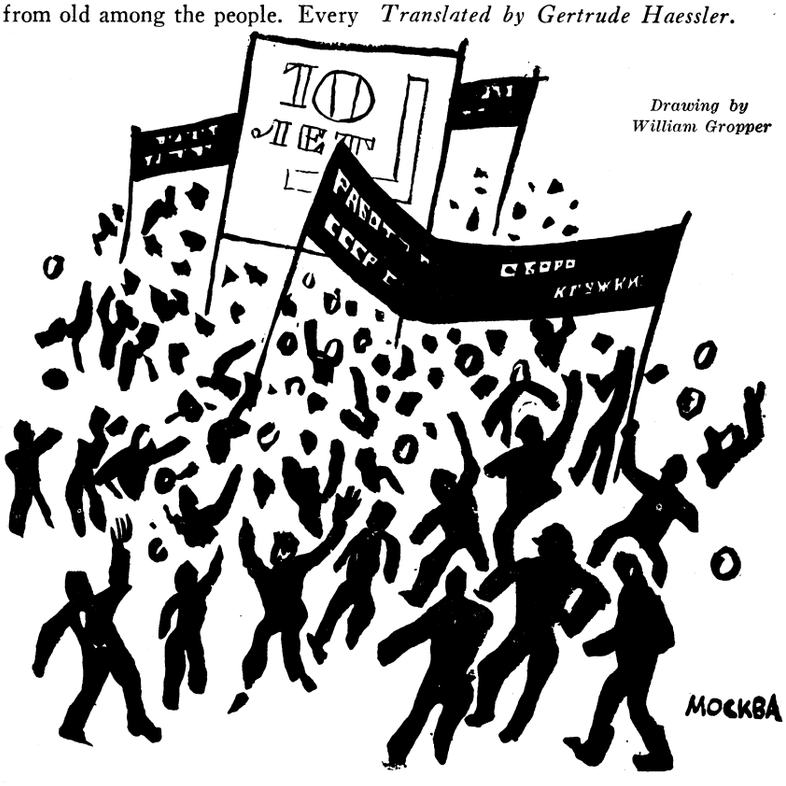
These former lovers of the people made of this creator of the new life a target at which they untiringly fired filth and slander. The ammunition for this fruitless sport is furnished by the Soviet press, which unsparingly exposes and discusses the disease bacilli still left from old among the people. Every day the Soviet press publishes a formidable mass of material which depicts the filthiness of the work-a-day life. That is a worthy and necessary procedure. But this "filthiness" forms the most delicious nourishment for people who have already become useless in life. The emigré publicists and journalists pour the spittle of their malice over this filthiness, greedily chew it all over again, and give it off anew. Nature and custom are taking their course. These are people who, in order to enjoy life at all, find it necessary to look upon it as a filthy thing; only under these conditions do they see themselves as pure. During the days of reaction they were fond of saying:

"The darker the night, the brighter shine the stars", considering themselves to be among the stars. But they are simply people whom history has discarded and condemned to a miserable existence. They scream and spit merely because they can't do anything else. But history has already given them its powerful signal to cease.

My joy and my pride is the new Russian, the creator of a new State. To this obscure yet great man, found in all corners of the country, in the factories and villages, buried in the steppes and in the Siberian forests, in the Caucasian hills and the tundras of the north—this sometimes very lonely man, who must work among people who find it very difficult to understand him — this creator of his own State, who modestly carries on his apparently petty work, which is, however, of tremendous historical significance—to this man I send my sincere greetings.

I firmly grip your hand, Comrade!

Translated by Gertrude Haessler.



Drawing by William Gropper

Drawing by
William Gropper

INTRODUCING MR. HSU

By SCOTT NEARING

T. N. Hsu, born twenty years ago in a Chinese village. Son of a scholar. Second year student in one of the Peking Universities. Member of the Kuo Min Tang. Ardent revolutionist. Tall. Broad-shouldered. There is an eager question in his dark brown eyes. His face is mobile, keen, sensitive.

"How long it is since you were at home, Comrade?"

"Three years."

"You cannot understand. Let me tell you this. Two years ago I met a girl student here in Peking. I wrote to her, she wrote to me. Two letters. My father found it out and was going to disinherit me. Even if I walk with a girl or speak with her, I am guilty in his eyes.

"In America you have parties and social gatherings where you can meet girls as friends. I am

Book Bargains .... *Drawing by William Siegel*

"Three years! You live very far from Peking then?"

"Not so far from Peking as from my family," he explains. "It does not take many hours to reach home, but when I get there I cannot talk to my parents."

"Do your parents oppose your ideas?"

"Oppose them? No. They do not know about them. They cannot understand. They still live in old China—the China of a thousand years ago."

"But your father is a scholar."

"Yes, of Chinese Classics!"

He looked, inquiringly.

"Do you know what that means? You have heard of foot-binding? Well, I have two little sisters. Like my mother, both of them have their feet bound. I protested. It was useless."

"What? Foot-binding under the Republic?"

"Of course. Some of the people in our village have not yet heard of the Republic."

He started again.

"If I go home, I must marry."

"Yes?"

"My father picked a wife for me—when I was ten. We were betrothed. If I do not marry her when I go home, her family will make trouble for my family, maybe go to law."

"Really?"

"Yes, certainly, it has always been that way in our village. You see, our family founded the village. One third of all the people who live there have our name. We are patriarchs. My father cannot violate village tradition."

"But surely your father will not force you to marry against your will?"

He smiled but he was a bit impatient.

twenty. In all my life I have never been to such an affair. If I should go, only once, my family would believe I have disgraced them."

"But you are not like them. You are a radical. Where did you get your ideas?"

"By reading books at high school and by hearing people talk. I was already a revolutionist when I came here to the university. What else can I be when I come from a home like that—and read books? I cannot go back. For me there is only one direction—forward!"

"Forward to what?"

"To the revolution. Through the revolution. To a new China—a China of labor unions and farm organizations."

"What do you intend to do for the revolution?"

"Organize farmers! We failed last time because we trusted military leaders and had no organization. Next time we shall be ready. I am taking the course in agriculture. When I get through I shall go to a village—not our village, of course. I shall get a piece of land, farm it scientifically; start a credit society; buy machinery; organize a local of the Kuo Min Tang; begin a farm union; establish a Communist nucleus. . . ."

From a Book Jacket—Sexton Press

"Are you a Communist?"

"Of course. There are more than a hundred in our university alone."

"But is there no danger in such activities?"

He stopped, surprised.

"Danger? You mean to ask whether we shall be shot if we are found out?"

"Yes."

"Of course. What of it?"

"You take it coolly?"

"What difference does it make? If we let things alone we shall be ruined by bandits and shot in a civil war. It is better to die for the revolution. But we have no intention of dying. We are very careful—as careful as we know how to be. Still we must work. The tasks are there to be done."

This will introduce Mr. T. N. Hsu to American college sophomores. Only a Chinese? Yes, but he comes to grips with life and does not know what it is to be bored or cynical or disillusioned.

WHAT'S 1000 CHINAMEN?

It was such a situation as Mr. Poe would have handled beautifully—or Mr. Conrad.

The new railroad in Africa needed laborers.

There they were, caged like rats in the hole of the boat. They had been easy to get hold of, these coolies. Some volunteered for the tempting money, some because they were starving, some because they didn't understand, and some because they were lounging along the road down to the wharf and were pressed into the herd with the flat of the swords across their rumps. They stepped lively, these who were impressed, because the sword might easily be turned with the sharp edge in, and then too, who knew, on the spur of the moment, whether they were not to unload the boat, and to whom could one protest? If one left one's wife and babies for a few days' drafted work, after all what was the loss except in dignity before insolence? If one's skin is yellow and one's eyes slant, one learns that to be dignified in the face of insolence is to be doubly abused.

So they scrambled down into the empty hole, willing and unwilling alike. It seems that some one counted them off as they went down, and there was a consultation because too many were impressed on the way through the streets. But how was a white man to know which Chinaman volunteered and which was drafted? This one, that stood in the doorway of the shop—did he come from the inside to look on, or did he step up there out of the crowd and try to look on as if mystified and full of curiosity? The heat and the stifling air would compel all to rescind their obligations to work in the black forests of Africa. If it were explained that a fourth were to be dismissed, three-fourths would claim freedom, and the labor supply would be inadequate. And was it not true that if you released a single man the horrors of the boat would be spread far and wide, and where then would you obtain laborers? Therefore, the only solution lay in hoisting on a few more casks of water, a few more bales of dried fish, another ton of rice. You washed your hands of the affair, hoped for the best, and whistled *Jolly Rover*. What's a Chinaman more or less out of four hundred million?

They suffered the heat of the Indian Ocean. They drank stale water. They fought for the rice and fish let down in a tub by ropes. Mr. Conrad should have done this part of the tale. They fought each other to live, and lurched about in their excrement, and swarmed with vermin in the dark putrid hole.

Decoration by William Siegel

They went mad tumbled about in the storm. If you leaned over the hole and looked down, you couldn't make out the individuals—there were just swarming legs and arms, topped here and there by heads, and the stench nauseated you until you couldn't stand it.

But if you were on the deck, you admired the sky and the excellent time you were making, and you checked off the miles and called it a good trip.

And then the plague broke out in the hole, and the horrors increased. They slid around in their own vomit. They slashed their own throats. Mr. Poe should have done this part of the tale. They cried piteously for the release of death, or awaited it with stoic indifference.

But if you were on deck, you said the hole was in a hell of a mess, and you thanked your God you were born white.

Why should you worry anyway? Weren't you opening up the Dark Continent? What's the lesser breed without the law good for if it can't help progress? Aren't the cablegram lines strictly censored?

What's a thousand Chinamen more or less out of four hundred million? *Victor Solberg.*

FROM RAGS TO RICHES

By ROBERT W. DUNN

These labor leaders are not as slow as they are commonly pictured. Who said they were indolent, unenterprising, sluggish creatures? That man should read William Z. Foster's latest book.* He will find the labor leaders running over with the go-gettem energy of Babbitdom, the restless all-conquering spirit that has made this continent a marvel of business success. Let him consider these leaders of labor:

They Got Theirs

Grable pulled down a $10,000 job with the War Labor Board. Skinny Madden had himself elected for life like a Supreme Court judge. Henry Hilfters accepted $100,000 in ads from open shop corporations for the N. J. State Federation Year Book. Mike Boyle, of the yawning umbrella on the bar rail fame, is now worth an estimated million, the product of thrift and savings on a salary of $50 or so a week. Tim Murphy of the Chicago Garbage Handlers, an ex-Hearst gunman, took his sabbaticals in Leavenworth not for violating injunctions but for cool mail train hold-ups. Tom Kearney was worth at least $200,000. Quesse left that much from his pickings as head of the Janitors Union, and Michael Artery's realty holdings are worth at least $500,000. Peter Shaughnessy of the Bricklayers ran a contracting company and struck the jobs of rival firms. Frank Feeney took Mulhall's graft money and fought union drives of rival unions. Joe Bannon owns a news company and slugs them out of the hall if they protest against his autocracy in the Mailers Union. Tom L. Lewis and other mine leaders became high-salaried secretaries of Coal Operators Associations. Frank Farrington stuffed his expenses account and pulled down $25,000 from the Peabody Coal Company. Simon O'Donnel, Gompers lieutenant in Chicago, very seldom let a graft item run under $10,000. He had at least a half million when he croaked. W. G. Lee of the Trainmen is head of a large manufacturing company. George Berry owns newspapers and a number of land and power companies, built at union expense.

Multiply this picture by about 1,000 and you will get the picture. You will understand, too, that these labor leaders are no pikers. They think in large, wholesale terms. They are men with broad financial vision. The only speculation their exploits suggest is — would they have made more or less had they gone straight into business instead of into business plus guerilla unionism? Some of them who have made only a half a million contend that they could have made a million if they had gone into Wall Street. They tell the rank and file that they have sacrificed that other half million—for the Cause. On such sacrifices is our peerless union movement builded and our magnificent 17 percent of wage workers organized. Some of these men have had memorials and monuments erected to them—just like their moral contemporary Warren Gamaliel Harding. Only, I contend these labor fellows have, by and large, exhibited more push, pep, and daring even than Harry M. Daugherty, Albert B. Fall or Brother Doheny. Perhaps not as much as Jessie James. But still they have done some hold-up work that James would have envied.

Pretty Spotty

Strange as it may seem this is a book about the labor movement, a movement that doesn't move much even though headed by such flaming spirits as we have just mentioned. It is a book the purpose of which is to show that large numbers of the present leaders of American labor are not only reactionary — anti-progressive, anti-militant, anti-Red, social patriotic expulsionists to their finger tips—but actually corrupt and crooked. It attempts to give some substance to the frequent vague and usually unsubstantiated charges that the labor officialdom is rotten at the core and pretty spotty all over the skin.

By stacking up the evidence mountain high, by citing cases until one is dizzy with wonder at the audacity of these labor yeggmen, by reference to the documents involved, Foster largely achieves his purpose. And with such material at his elbow he does not weary the reader with his narrative. He simply trots on the stage for a brief moment before the spotlight some of the calculating and crafty figures who, for the last quarter of a century or so, have made the American trade union movement their large and juicy oyster. The roll is unbelievably long stretching all the way from the Chicago building labor gambling and bootleg kings to some of the present high mucky mucks of the A. F. of L. And there are, we notice, large gaps where other examples could have been dropped in. Why, for example, do we fail to see the name of the portly Dominick D'Allesandro late of the Hod Carriers. His house and holdings were valued at $155,000 and his wife and steno-mistress, at last accounts were scrapping over the results of his enormous accumulative instinct. I happened to be talking with this Chevalier, annointed of the King of Italy himself, the day Sam Gompers passed out in Mexico. "We'll never forget old Sam," roared the Prince of the Hod Carriers. "There was no one like Sam. When we went into the war he called all the union heads together and said: Forget the wages and conditions stuff, boys. All for the service of the country and patriotism. And say, he used to make them socialists sit right down when they'd get up to speak in the conventions. He fixed 'em right."

Neither has Foster mentioned the road house king—Paul Vacarelli, head of the New York Scow Trimmers and a power in bootlegging and underworld circles. He has not dealt with William Wepner of the Newark Street Carmen's union who holds a majority interest in a bus company that plays the game of the Public Service Corporation. He has left out a dozen gangsters (including Little Augie himself) who used to operate for the Kauffman administration in the Fur Workers Union and who nearly turned Ben Gold into a corpse when Ben asked for free speech back in the good old days when union cards sold for an extra $50 or more—for the Business Agent.

He fails to mention Harry Jeffery of the Railroad Shop Crafts who flimflammed the Philadelphia labor boys into all sorts of labor banks, crooked investment schemes and insurance companies in 1920-21. And he omitted the story of the Florida land deals of President Hutchinson of the Carpenters and his sluggers' attack on Cornelius Mulcahy, an opponent from Providence who differed with him on the union's pensioning scheme. He says nothing of the expulsion of F. W. Burgess and other intelligent and very mild progressives from the same union.

A Rogues' Gallery

In a word—although Foster will overwhelm the lay reader with facts, date, figures and details—he has really only scratched the surface of labor leader corruptionism. Most of what he discusses comes out of his own experience in the movement. He knew many of this rogues gallery by sight and had tried to work with them in organizing the unorganized for the benefit of the workers rather than for the expense accounts of the "fat boys". He had worked with Bob Beattie the 300 pound labor spy in the Steel Strike. In fact if you look on page 38 of Foster's excellent story of the *The Great Steel Strike* there is Beattie with his hand on the back of Foster's chair. Foster knows his subjects in the flesh. *Misleaders of Labor* is no mere piece of library research.

School For Scandal

Perhaps the only way to bring out the other 80 per cent of the story would be for the several hundred labor skates mentioned to bring a libel suit against Foster. Then a skillful defense lawyer could certainly write another book that might startle the countryside. Assuming the countryside can be startled. A labor public that fails to react to the scandals of a Harding-Coolidge regime is not likely to be stirred by the less featured and tabloided revelations of the labor crooks. Besides, the rank and file in the skilled trades is likely to say: "Mike Boyle gets me mine. My wages ain't so bad. What do I care if Mike does pick up a little on the side." There is the psychology of most organized labor in America today. That is the tide Foster is trying to swim against. It's a man-sized swim.

Ninety-nine out of every 100 who review this book in the capitalist and liberal press (it will be ignored in the labor press or Foster will be called a "Moscow agent" and his facts will be labelled inventions of the Gay Pay U.) will blame all these "excesses" on the Reds, on Foster himself, no doubt. He will be accused of being responsible for the Jim Cronins, the Brindells, the Con Sheas and the Frenchy Maders. Why? The reasoning is familiar. These men all "went wrong", said farewell to democracy in their unions, capitulated to graft, because the Reds forced them to do this. The Reds criticized them, you see. This was a mistake. They should have treated them with reverence and approached their presence with bowed heads and lowered voices. Then the bad boys would not have been so bad. They only did these naughty things to "save the unions" from Russian influence.

All of which, it may be asserted, is so many cubic meters of rational-

**Misleaders of Labor,* Wm. Z. Foster, Trade Union Educational League, $1.75 cloth, $1.25 paper.

ization nonsense. The reasons for the corruption in the American labor movement are explained correctly and in detail by Foster in his first two chapters. No amount of buck-passing can gainsay his analysis or dull the edge of his indictment.

All sorts of more or less superficial remedies have been proposed for cutting down the high percentage of labor grafters in a civilization where the speculative, get-rich-quick, "cop the money" psychology is flourishing. Better bookkeeping methods, the bonding of all officials, "removing temptations" from them as far as possible, creating a stronger "labor morale", "education", are all calculated within limits to reduce the sell-out tendency on the part of union leaders. But the more fundamental solution is grasped and stated repeatedly by Foster thoughout this book. Briefly it consists of a series of more or less categorical "musts". What "must" the rank and file—and Foster's book is unmistakably addressed to them rather than to the "better instincts" of the leaders—do about it? They must—

(1) Fight against American imperialism—or American capitalism in its final stage. (Arouse the masses to the dangers of new wars —"Hands off China." "Hands off the Soviet Union.") (2) Build a left wing of labor that can unite with the progressives and sweep the reactionaries and treasury-looters off the map. (3) Organize the unorganized with special emphasis on the semi-skilled and unskilled. The "powerful labor movement of the future" must be built on them. (4) Amalgamate the craft unions into industrial unions. The unions, as at present constituted, are quite unfit to make a real fight against capitalism. What is more "from the standpoint of concentration, they have hardly improved at all in the last 15 years." (5) Democratize the unions — the unions in the world's greatest "political democracy" are the most undemocratic in the world. Stay in the old unions, bore from within, he tells the lefts and the progressives. (6) Fight against class collaboration, one of the first ways being to struggle for a Labor Party and against company unions and the company unionizing of the regular labor organizations.

This is the program. It is substantially the same program advocated by Foster and his group for ten or more years. It will not be accomplished in a day. But a wide distribution of this book among rank and file workers would be at least a first step in bringing it about.

The book needs an index. Then

M. Reznickoff

the labor skate who picks it up could see at a glance how many times he has been mentioned by name, crime and estimated income. The footnotes might be a little more frequent for a book dealing with such fascinating dynamite. But doubtless Bill is reserving his references for the libel suits.

One chapter of this book, called the "Trade Union Capitalism Swindle," has been issued in more detail as a separate pamphlet called "Wrecking the Labor Banks."* It deals exclusively with the recently collapsed financial institutions of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. The chapters of this pamphlet read like those of a moral novel of the mauve decade — A Golden Dream, Through Rose-Colored Glasses, A Rude Awakening, The Morning After, Extravagance, Punishing the Guilty, A Few Useful Lessons. The tale is no less tragic-comic than that of the shattered romance of the wildest melodrama. Except there are no heroes in sight. But the woods are full of villains. One has to read it twice to make sure it is not pure fiction. But as in the *Misleaders of Labor* we find paragraphs and page numbers—in this instance from the confidential record of the brotherhood convention that surveyed the wreckage of Warren Stone—the celebrated labor Ponzi—and his fling at finance. Here are the various bubbles of Brotherhood "new unionism", heralded by the *Saturday Evening Post* and Thomas Nixon Carver, bursting before your very eyes—Venice, the $20,000,000 Florida real estate plunge, Park Lane Villa, the sumptuous apartment hotel where Stone lived modestly in an apartment renting at $1,100 a month, investment companies, banks with piles of frozen assets. It comprises one of the most sensational swindles in all labor history.

The delegates to the convention where this was all revealed shrieked and groaned and cursed when the curtain was rolled back on the remains of their scab coal companies, realty enterprises, fake cooperatives, office buildings, holding corporations. Foster quotes from the record some typical comments as the "full force of the disaster hit the delegates":

Delegate McIlvenny: "Some years ago a man came out here on this platform (Stone) and said that banking was just as easy as running a peanut stand and, by God boys, that's the way she has been run."

Delegate Myers: "Here you have every asset that we have frozen as tight as the North Pole. They have shuffled the loans from one thing to another in the Investment Co. and back from the Investment Co. into the Realty Co. Why talk about Kellar, the juggler? They have got him beat 100 per cent."

Delegate Henry: "We have to clean these people out if we expect to live. We have to do it right. We have to put them where they belong. They have robbed the widows and orphans. They have robbed the poor old men of my division."

The evidence shows the esteemed leaders of the Brotherhood accepting "bonuses" and other little items of personal reward which made near millionaires out of some of them. In addition to their regular salaries (Stone's for example, was $25,000) many of them pulled down salaries of $1,000 a month from the investment companies. Padded expense accounts were a small sideline to these premier labor grafters, who during the period of their inflation were the darlings of the liberal journals and were even blessed by countless preachers who in Labor Day sermons referred to them as "constructive labor leaders." Actually they were unlimited despots in their unions. They paid little attention to the mandates of their union conventions. Stone is revealed as a tsar who betrayed his union brothers into a wilderness of debts, mortgages and—for many of them—personal bankruptcy. But as one delegate put it he "died just in time to save his reputation with the outside world. He didn't save it with us."

It is interesting to note that Mr. Mitten, the company union wizard of Philadelphia, appeared on the scene during the convention proposing to take over the enterprises of the brotherhood but he was beaten to it by a group of Cleveland capitalists who were voted control. Although a resolution was passed at the convention ordering the officers to liquidate many of the ventures most of them are being continued with a group of men in charge who Foster believes, are about as crooked as those turned out by the convention.

The philosophy of all the birds described in Foster's two books might be summed up in the words of an old timer in the Boston labor movement with whom I talked a few weeks ago: "I went into the movement to help labor. I found they were a crowd of damned fools. Now I'm out for myself."

Most of Foster's villains are out for themselves, all right. But they are still in the unions and drawing mighty comfortable salaries for their services.

*Trade Union Education League, 25 cents.

"I WILL BE PURE!"

Journal of Katherine Mansfield. Edited by J. Middleton Murry. Alfred Knopf, $3.50.

Supposing you grow up in a gentle world, clever with your senses, restless, fond of words; and you belong to an intellectual group that takes itself seriously, that seems really superior; and then, suddenly, just when you are engaged in stringing concrete details, like clear beads, into artful pretty-fine stories that have a hinted significance, the war comes along — your superior group changes over-night into a ring of scared children, your young brother is promptly and efficiently killed in action, and you wander around southern France with a cold on your chest.

With more than a cold. A profound shock, at finding that life is much more horrible than you said, in the stories you flattered yourself were marvelously brave, strong and harsh—cruel, they called you —; life, then, simply has no room for the enumeration of little facts. Despair, because all the dainty mystic, feminine superfine wisdom of your young girl life, is by all life around you, ignored. Despair, because you cannot any longer use a craft that promised to succeed so well. Despair because having the ideas of one small worm-eaten class, there is no structure to life whatsoever when they bend and spill like tooth-picks in a torrent.

Katherine Mansfield died having lost the cosmology she had lived by. She was a fine writer... a *fine* writer. . . . Her work has only to its credit a lust for surface precision in detail; greed for the poetry of the senses, refined, and stated in detail. It never has a conception, or a strong feeling worth submitting to for three minutes. Everything in the end is sacrificed to a neat little feminine cajolery—conclusions smaller than the material, an easy and artificially important last detail. This —to do her justice—she herself announced before she died.

In an agony she tears at these journal pages saying:

"I *will* write, (she was ill),— I *will* be *pure,* (too many underlinings,) I *will,* I *will*. . . ."

Helpless, forlorn, honest, childlike, lost. . . .

Genevieve Taggard.

M. Reznickoff

WHOM LIFE HURTS

Celibate Lives, by George Moore. Boni & Liveright. $2.50.

ONE does not deny George Moore's importance for our own generation when one places him among the writers of a dying past. He does not, and perhaps cannot, write of the turbulent, cinematic upheavals of the contemporary scene, but his is a deep, ironical understanding of a moldy society that still lingers with us. He knows well the self-suppressions, the vague pride and petty yearnings of small souls. Middle-class life and middle-class respectability, of late the objects of literary scorn, are treated by him with tempered contempt. His modulated, Anglo-Saxon irony often condemns where loud hoots of derision only antagonize.

In *Celibate Lives* he republishes stories that first appeared several years ago. While far from sensational, these stories are nevertheless of interest. They penetrate into those obscure corners of life that are usually overlooked by story-tellers who can only see the big parades and can hear only the fanfare of the obvious. Celibacy, spiritual as well as physical, is not always voluntary asceticism. There are people to whom the strife, the very effort of living is painful. Nature has cheated them of some vital element in their psychic composition.

They shrink from the actual, cannot bear to face the truths of existence. There are others whom chance has lost in the shuffle of being and becoming. Bewildered, unaware of defeat, they drift like rudderless boats in the sea of reality. Sometimes, when ours is a happier, better world, there will be fewer misfits, less of these queer, rabbit-like, grown-up children, but I fear that their kind will never disappear entirely. And although they touch us hardly at all, except to be despised by us, we cannot help sympathizing with them, condemning the fate that made them pitiful creatures, so comprehendingly, so delicately has Moore described their life of celibacy. Perhaps ordinarily we would not deign to attend the passing of these sexless beings, hopelessly fondling their weak, wan dreams. But Moore's artistry is compelling. His smooth, even, rhythmically monotonous prose fits admirably the tone of the stories—a grey, subdued mood. Nothing startling or revolutionary, the stories yet have their place, no matter how inconspicuous, in literature.

Bernard Smith.

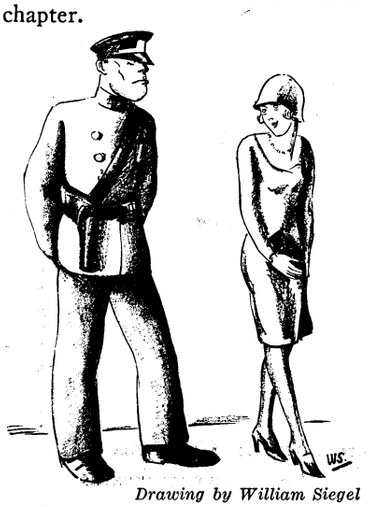
BROTHER WORKERS

Negro Labor in the United States, by Charles H. Wesley. The Vanguard Press. 50 cents.

IN his monumental work *The State,* Franz Oppenheimer points out very clearly how the dominant, conquering group in a state, having a subjugated group under its heel, forces that group to produce all of the wealth, deprives it of all rights and privileges, uses the women of the oppressed class to satisfy the carnal desires of the males of the upper class, glorifies this bastard class it has brought into being at the expense of the underdogs of unmixed parentage, and then adds insult to injury by labeling this toiling group as disreputable, lazy, thieving, brutal, mentally and morally incompetent and incapable of rising to the alleged intellectual and moral heights of the dominant group. This generalization of Oppenheimer's is quite applicable to the case of the Negro in the United States, and without a single exception.

Here we have ten million Negroes. About 95 per cent of them are workers. The wealth of the nation has been erected on their backs. They tilled the soil and reaped the crops of the South; the South exchanged its cotton for the machinery of the North. They built the railroads, constructed the levees, made the roads, cut down the forests, loaded the ships, erected the buildings, slaved in the stone quarries, toiled in the cotton and sawmills, and sweated in the steel hells of Birmingham. Their women have cooked millions of meals in the white man's kitchen, scrubbed miles and miles of floors, washed enough clothes to reach from here to Betelgeuse and nursed countless thousands of white babies. And yet we are told that these people are lazy and good-for-nothing! More, we are told that they are capable of performing only the simplest and most menial forms of labor; that they cannot perform skilled labor and operate machines; that they make poor union men—are difficult to organize and will not, when organized, fight as tenaciously for their rights as white workers are supposed to fight.

Of course no intelligent person believed any such rot, but the evidence to disprove those absurd beliefs of knaves and half-wits, was scattered in the works of Commons and other such writers, and in newspapers, magazines and pamphlets. Mr. Wesley has rendered a distinct service to the Negro worker and Labor generally, by marshaling and compiling all the available facts about Negro labor in this country from the earliest times to the present day, for the first time between the covers of one volume. The work is excellently done. There is an appendix, an exhaustive bibliography, an index, and a list of references at the end of each chapter.



Drawing by William Siegel

And what do we learn from this book? We find here the truth about the Negro worker's amazing contribution to the economic eminence of the United States. We find that he has always been and is today in almost every skilled trade practiced in the country. In the South before the Civil War he had given very satisfactory service in cotton mills, many of which were almost entirely manned by slaves. We learn that upon emancipation the Negro went to work readily, yes eagerly, saved his money, strove to better his condition and educate his children, and employers generally testified that he was a far more productive worker after emancipation from chattel slavery than he was before.

We find that far from being poor union men, the Negroes, even before the Civil War (the free Negroes) attempted to join the regular unions but were repulsed. The same thing happened after emancipation, with a few exceptions here and there. It is only within the last few years that organized labor has made any real overtures to the black worker, and then the gesture was often hypocritical. It is true that Negro workers have, at times, been used as strike breakers, but so also have white workers. Very often the previous attitude of the white workers in a shop or industry, justified the Negroes scabbing upon them during strikes.

But aside from the efforts to get into the regular labor unions, the Negroes, right after the Civil War, organized their own national labor union, held conventions, discussed the problems of the working class and their own status, and sought by every means to better their economic condition. Many of these Negroes, as Mr. Wesley points out, were acquainted with the various socialistic, communistic and anarchistic theories of the day. In short, the great value of the book lies in the fact that it makes us realize that the Negro worker is first of all a worker and only incidentally a Negro. He is, by virtue of education and ambition, becoming a more and more important factor in the world of labor, and the necessity of enlisting him in greater numbers in the ranks of the advanced workers' army is more apparent than ever. This book will prove of immeasurable value in creating and increasing the respect of the white worker for the ability and importance of the black worker, without which the advent of industrial democracy in the United States will be indefinitely postponed.

George S. Schuyler.

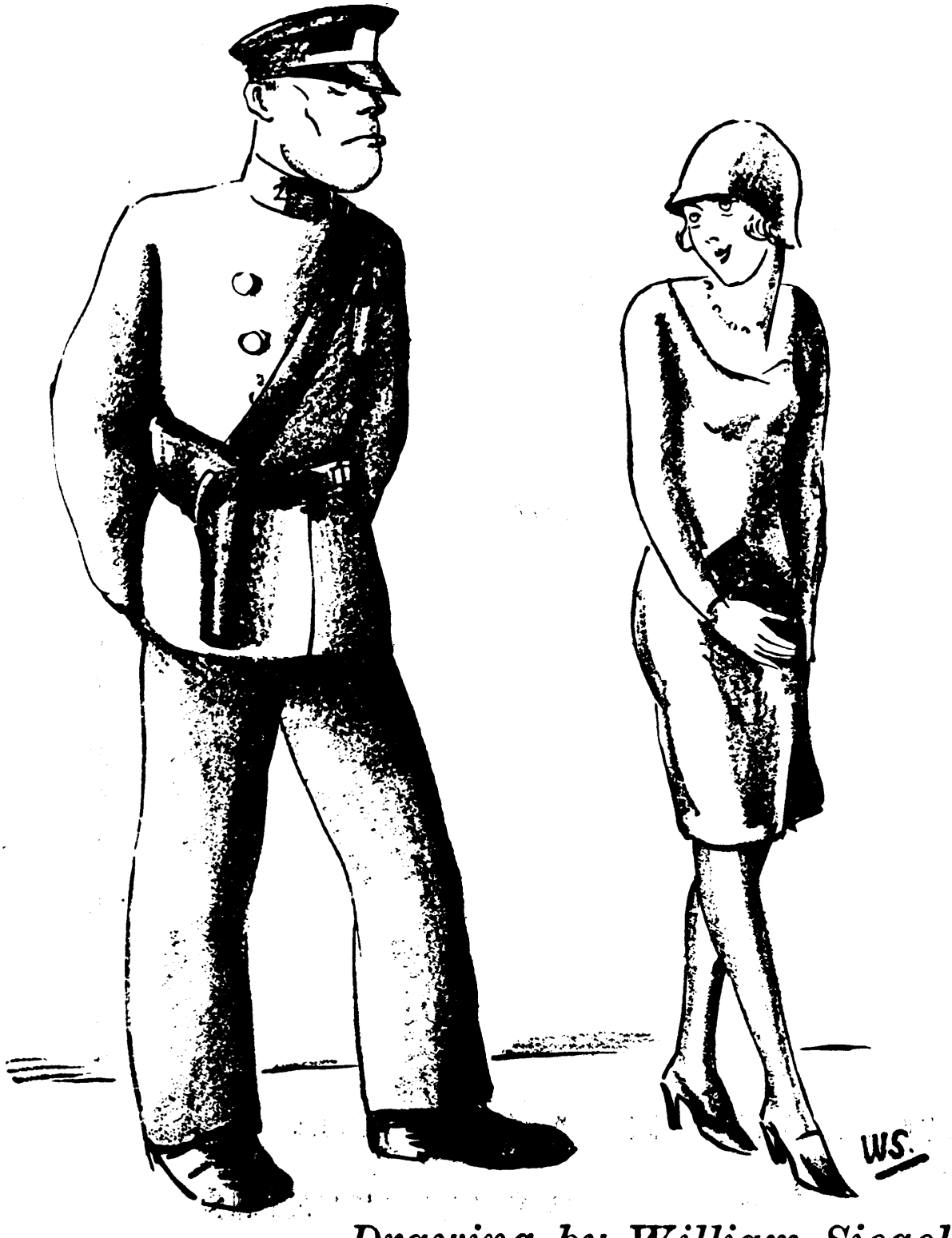
ROTTEN CULTURE

Count Ten, by Mildred Evans Gilman. Boni & Liveright. $2.50.

Count Ten comes close to eminence. It deals with the deterioration of the older New England, the New England of "culture and refinement", elms, ancient houses, dignity, and cherished traditions. This New England is breaking up as the machine-age penetrates to its fastnesses. Puritanism, as the Anglo-Saxon descendants of the early settlers know it, cannot exist coincidentally with factories, crowded cities, tenements, all the phenomena of the industrial civilization. Viewpoints and manners must change, morals must undergo a transformation, ways of thinking metamorphose. And all this is happening in New England, while the heirs of the puritan culture struggle desperately to stem the tide that can never be stemmed. Many of the incongruities of Massachusetts are, in that light, comprehensible. The conflict between the new and the old is cruel, but if cruelty is necessary to destroy the rotten soul of that culture, so be it. Mrs. Gilman does not hesitate to bare its poverty and decadence. When we come to understand Hester Clenaberry and Stella Godwin, the sterile creatures who are its representatives, we are not sorry that the inchoate, crude matter of modern life has supplanted the orderly, polished nothingness of puritan New England.

Bernard Smith.

chapter.



Drawing by William Siegel

SCOOP-SHOVEL SINGERS

Songe and Ballads of the Anthracite, by George Korson. Frederick H. Hitchcock, $2.50.

I.

BALLADS not only spring out of traditions, but indicate largely the spiritual and physical margin on which people live. Reviewing the anthracite ballads which once were poured out of throats of sentimental miners, we feel the rugged narrowness of the life that enclosed them. Ballads of scoop-shovels, songs of long hours, dripping melodies about unlucky driver-boys, and touching masterpieces of beloved mules. The songs revolved about the daily work of the miner. What he had in his can, what his wife said, what his neighbor said—these fittingly provided rich theme for Irish imaginations which wove them into simple patterns appealing to the patch-folk whose long winter nights, empty of recreation, cried out for new contributions, welcomed these ballads whose intimacy established them at once in their memories.

Since the blare of saxophones is now mingled with the scream of the whistles whose metallic shrieks still tear the morning silences to crying fragments of sound, one may have to listen more keenly to hear the miners' songs of today. The margin between the primitive life which was stretched out thinly over a sparing number of slices of bread and butter with salted pig in winter, and the full-pailed career of the coal digger today is echoed in the songs he sings.

Impoverished folk who feed their stoves with wood, and guard their crumbs for uncertain meals to come are filled with the dark misery that surrounds their bare existence. Life peels itself down to the naked problem of survival. Emptiness shrieks out in the ballads, and sore bones avenge themselves in the blustering fullness of a rollicking song in which they laugh at the boss and the hours and the scoops that torture them, and the asthma that grips them by their throat—their despair compels them to roar their challenges to mute culm banks or at the dying flask of amber liquid that grins at them from the table.

II.

Minstrels, wandering poets, blind singers groping through the world are always sad. Ed. Foley and Pat Johnson and "Giant" O'Neal and John Curtis—rude Homers wandering from tavern to tavern. Staggering audiences lined up along the bar and the wick on the kerosene lamp was trimmed to give better light as these worn singers voiced the sorrows and joys in the wobbly houses that stood feebly at the foot of culm banks, or grew in a cluster of wooden boxes lit up at night with dim-sputtering oil lamps: these were called towns.

Hard times gripped the anthracite by its belly. Wives spent long hours mending old clothes. Shoe-leather thinned and no other leather replaced it. The meals became sparing, eyes darkened as weeks rolled on with patient waiting for breakers to start up. Nothing happened. The prosperity that had come blowing tin trumpets and swimming in ale as the Civil war guns blew southern toilers to bloody smears and banners of flesh dangling from withered trees, had collapsed, and the rolling chanteys that had accompanied oceanic quantities of beer, had become now funeral moans for the departure of the fat days.

Breaker whistles became mute. Their frozen throats were outlined against a stiff clear sky, bleak winds howled and raged, pounding at thin walls whose cracks were stuffed with old burlap and paper to hold in the warmth. Great sacrifices of local live stock were required to keep miners alive. Pigs, cows, geese, chickens, were slaughtered by groups of neighbors who visited one family after another, and upon promise of drinks and eats, would clean up the live-stock and provide the family with a barrel of meat.

When spring-suns thawed away the snows, rusty whistles would crash the strained quiet of these cold months with immense summons to work, and the familiar squeak and thud of boots would once more be heard of mornings long before the east was more than a red fever of promise, and the white mists curled and hung in branches of trees. Joy once again —such joy as there is—leapt into song, and put a kick into beer, and the meals grew richer in proteins, and all was well again.

This rhythm of fat and lean has always been the miner's existence, painting itself against the background of sombre hills. But the miner felt in himself something of the strength of these hills. Organizations never begged for a miner's support. From the first Bates Union of 1849 down to this day history marks the rise and collapse of union after union, and every union full of muscle and bone, resisting to the last the efforts of invisible masters to crush them against the wall, and struggling to release themselves from the pressure of long hours and short wages. His songs bubble with enthusiasms over organizations. The W.B.A. —the Knights of Labor—these had their day with him, and he fought to retain them with strikes and

sabotage until he could fight no more. Beaten, he bit his lips, and bent his back a bit. But not long after he was found again fighting his masters who have always thirsted to squeeze an extra dollar out of his sweated hide.

III.

Gray red-faced men who pioneered into this once-wilderness recall the shuddering period of Molly Maguires of which they delight to talk for endless hours, caught in a dream of heroism.

History has recorded in its terse manner the fact that the Mollys existed, pestered the anthracite country, and were hounded and tortured into wavering memories in the minds of old settlers.

Hungry men who found themselves discriminated against at the mines, driven from place to place to seek work and not finding it only because their faces looked too Irish certainly could not stomach the abuse forever, and quietly perish without more than a snort of protest. That would be a terribly un-Irish way of succumbing to a fact. The Irish always challenge facts with fists, and succeed frequently in changing them.

The Welsh had, with the English, occupied the strategic positions at the mines. Experience in the old country fitted them for the tasks here, so that when the Irish landed, they found themselves crowded out and marked for the lowest class of unskilled work, if any. Time after time, violent discriminations were practiced, and with no organization to appeal to at the time, no redress procurable any known where, they preferred to remedy matters in their own fashion and formed the gang which for nearly eight years kept bosses dancing ballets of terror, and sent the owners up in panicky shudders as old man Gowan fished for a cur dirty enough at bottom to undertake a task which has since heroized him in the eyes of law-abiding citizens whose loaded guns stood always beside their beds as they slept.

Gruesome stories give a bloody complexion to this chapter of history. But the remedy worked, and the Irish have since enjoyed a decent amount of favorable discrimination, and, it might be added, they welcomed the opportunity a few years later to practice hardships on the Slavs whose dumb wonder singled them out for ridiculous persecution. Polacks and Lithuanians were safe only in large gangs. Walking alone through the dark street was always exciting and sometimes fatal.

But life on the whole was still rugged, and the throats that liked their ballads and beer quivered with hard times and favorite mules, and bread supply. Civilization had only smiled from a great distance; it passed through anthracite on fast passenger trains; it rolled curious eyes at its ramshackle houses and bleary saloons. But it was a far off din whose enlightening tumult could not be heard by these dust choked ears which heard only the stern voice of the breaker and the sharp silence of the mines.

IV.

We come then through the breathless adventures of a sliding scale that threatened to slip the miners into the pockets of operators; and the uphill of the Spanish war, followed by more oppression till John Mitchell came into the region from the soft coal fields, and the miners laid down their tools and made history.

Since then prosperity's hymns ooze out of churches on the official day of thanksgiving. The old generation has crept through the breakers to its tiny pits in the hill outside of town where tiny stone slabs hold their meaningless legends to the stare of an indifferent moon.

Formidable churches raise proud steeples against the sky; breweries hiss and churn; poolrooms click and bustle; the street is jammed with impatient traffic which the street swallows in tiny nibbles to the rhythm of a red and green traffic light. Broadway clothes and plug hats and latest music swell the night's dazzle of commotion. Theatres hurl their streaming banners of light against the sky, and the crowds sink their hard hands into their pockets, groping for the coin of admission. Love and death dance up and down these noisy little streets rippling with a mighty vitality between the brooding quiet of the culm banks whose shadows fall upon the town, and the questioning dark of the mines where these men drip their sweat for this tossed-away money. "Hard come-easy go!" is the miner's view of finance.

Civilization has come. Its frontiers of gas stations and clumsy taxis which waddle like greasy ducks, and civic clubs that spill weekly quantities of talk over their expensive platters, and hordes of agents and undesirables, and advertising of the "Wow" school whose psychology has all the insight of a fog-horn are all concentrated within towns whose square mile shall never grow bigger.

But beneath this flare and fuss is a grimy miner whose sweat still pours down his underwear, and whose cusswords are as cosmic and primitive as before. He does not take to this shell of fury which revolves about him, but like the center pole of a flying-horse circus

sees things moving madly about him, and asks himself what can they mean. He walks the crowded streets with a yearning for ancient quiet. He disdains this senseless rumpus that annoys his hours of leisure.

Yet when he finds his favorite saloon he breaks into a volume of noise which would be strange to the merely civilized person. He will yell and spatter round, sound oaths and give lung to a tremendous song of a juicy courtesan whose nakedness blinded him with mad desire. And hearing him through the heavy fog of tobacco smoke curling on the air one knows that the ballad-spirit of the anthracite is not dead. Only Korson has not been able yet to find the secret soul that tears and gropes and kicks up dust at the stars—the living soul of the hard coal digger!

Ed Falkowski.

WEAK WINE

Power, by Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking Press. $2.50.

IT is not difficult to understand the continued popularity of *Power*. Technically, it is loose, unwieldly, and verbose. It contains about 40,000 words too many. The writing itself is quite commonplace. Feuchtwanger requires two paragraphs to say what a more skillful writer could say in a phrase. Nor are his words the inevitable and unchangeable expressions of the thought or mood. But the plot is extravagant and romantic, beaded with powerfully stirring moments. Sexual escapades, luxurious debauches, melodramatic conflicts abound. With contents of that nature, it is impossible for a novel to be unsuccessful.

Aside, however, from the causes of its appeal to the subscribers to circulating libraries, the novel is not without its values. The fable about lust for power is dreary, but the glimpses into the corruption and viciousness of the states that once composed the Holy Roman Empire are interesting. Feuchtwanger has a genius for character portrayal, and although his major creations are those of the Duke and the three Jews, Landaauer, Suss, and Gabriel, even the innumerable minor characters are brilliantly drawn. Jewish life in the ghetto is treated in a powerful chapter, as is the story of a rumored ritual murder. And yet *Power* depends mainly upon its intricate plot. And since the only plot that can provide red meat and strong wine to an intelligent and healthy reader is life, the novel cannot be considered important—or even exciting.

Bernard Smith.

DELIRIUM

The Sorcerer's Apprentice, by Hanns Heinz Ewers. John Day Co. $5.

Let me introduce to you the Citoyen Hanns Heinz Ewers. He began to write in 1903 and has published about thirty volumes of novels, plays, short stories and books of travel. His writings reach an unheard of number of editions—of the latest of his novels, *Alraune*, the 250th edition appeared a few weeks ago! He must be a millionaire in gold marks by this time, and would be one in dollars if a kinder fate had dumped him into a Chicago nursery in 1871, instead of a cradle rocked in Duesseldorf-on-the-Rhine. He is as bright as a new penny, quite obviously *not* Edwin Markham's brother to the ox, but rather a brother to Ben Hecht and a grandson of Edgar Allan Poe, with a goodly vein of Elbert Hubbard in his make-up, if you get my meaning. He knows more about astrology, voodooism, sylphs, salamanders, fiends, wizards, alchemists and abominations of sexual perversion than any other two men living—or if he doesn't writes about them just as well as if he did, and makes more money by being gruesome in a single month than Poe did in a lifetime. The fault is Poe's—why didn't he postpone his birth to a time when bourgeois society began to show signs of softening of the brain? Herr Hanns is a smart yarn spinner, but there was perhaps no very pressing need for an English translation of one of his early works—unless it be a pressing need of the translators. Mr. Lewisohn has done the job well and earned his fee. If you are paying court to a Sonia in MacDougal street, with a mystical chord in her soul, make her a present of the volume. She will appreciate the fact that it costs five dollars, and she will probably be facile enough to think it art.

James Fuchs.

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EXPLANATION

The picture shows an artist and writer from the New Masses staff interviewing Spring in order to get inspiration for the SPRING FROLIC. Spring has just emerged from her bed of brown forest leaves, and as you may see by the expression on her face, she hasn't had time to use her cosmetics and her lip stick. As the poet has said, she hasn't put on her summer face.

"You will excuse me, I am sure," she is telling the boys, "for my negligee. It's a bit early yet for my little dress of crocuses and violets. But soon I'll be decked in verdure, boys, then tra-la!"

It is fitting for this modern age that Spring should be wakened from her long slumber, not by the old-fashioned nightingale, but by Vernon Andrade's Dusky Jazzbirds. Nothing like syncopation to shake off the winter's chill.

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