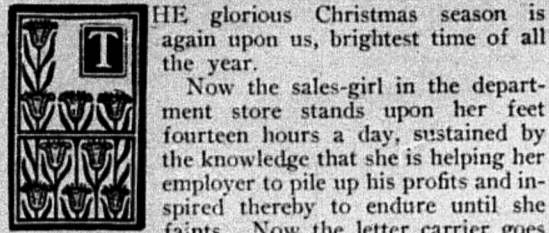


## Comment on Things Doing

BY CHARLES EDWARD RUSSELL

### A Little Sermon for the Season



THE glorious Christmas season is again upon us, brightest time of all the year. Now the sales-girl in the department store stands upon her feet fourteen hours a day, sustained by the knowledge that she is helping her employer to pile up his profits and inspired thereby to endure until she faints. Now the letter carrier goes along the street bowed beneath a load of presents that nobody wants. Now the express drivers work day and night delivering packages. Now in the stores you can daily see the maddest scenes upon this earth as the armies of frantic shoppers charge upon the bargain counters. Now the cars and suburban trains are horrible places because of the women with their arms full of things they have bought in the feverish hope that they are doing their duty in the service of some god of misrule.

I wonder what Christmas is like in Bedlam. It must be a quiet, peaceful, rational sort of thing, so tame, I suppose, that none of the sane people of the world would enjoy it for a moment.

Take the racking, harassing perplexity as you wonder whether the thing you have bought for your sister-in-law is any less stupid and meaningless than the thing she has probably bought for you; take the maddening speculation as to whether you have overlooked anybody that will not be kind enough to overlook you; take the long lunatic forays through the aisles of stores packed with suffering humanity; take the hand-to-hand struggles to find any Christian thing that you can give to anybody without bankrupting yourself; take the mental and moral disgust with the whole insane thing that must arise in every normal mind; and above all, take the huge economic waste involved and nothing seems so strange as that under the existing system of society we should speak of "Merry Christmas."

It is so merry that the whole gang of us heaves a prodigious sigh of relief when it is over; so bouncingly merry that the knowledge of its coming darkens all the rest of the year.

Yes, it is a splendid institution—particularly for the sales-girl and her kind. They sometimes get enough out of it to buy salve for their aching feet.

You can think of a kind of Christmas observance that would be without these horrors. You can think of one, for instance, from which all sordid thoughts would be banished and no one would think of gain or advantage upon such an occasion. You can think of one in which the working population would not be overdriven to provide additional and needless pleasures for the rich. And you can think of one in which an idea of value and importance to the race should be celebrated in a manner becoming rational men and women.

But you cannot think of any of these things as coming to be under the existing system of society.

Any more than you can think of wholesome conditions of work or of the abolition of child labor or of a just division of the products of industry so long as the present system endures.

The crowning curse of the present system is that it practically denies to men the blessing and privilege of service. It puts all things upon the one debased level of personal advantage and smears the holiest of offices with greasy speculations as to the returns therefrom. It nurtures in men every low instinct and suppresses and distorts the true human nature, which is in itself divine.

It makes for every life the motto of a Tammany politician, "What is there in this for me?" It takes away the supremest of all joys, which is the joy of service freely given.

It creates under whatsoever creed or form or name or ceremonial one and the same religion of selfishness of which the inevitable trinity is greed, cruelty and hypocrisy, and of which the worship is essentially fraud.

It makes of the most beautiful moral codes a mere sham and a pretense and transforms the teachings of Christ into excuses for pillage and savagery.

In the light of the knowledge of the world as it really is the modern celebration of Christmas is the most horrible mockery and sacrilege conceivable by the human mind.

All this mad struggle and scramble to pile more upon those that already have much, to heap superfluous wealth upon those already burdened with superfluity, to feast and stuff, and be drunken with wealth, we fortunate few, in the midst of a world filled with misery, insufficiency and preventable pain—how monstrous all this seem! While we feast, the majority of the men, women and children upon this earth live in conditions unfit for human beings and have probably never once known what it is to have enough to eat.

Hang that on your Christmas trees and engrave it upon your Christmas presents and see how merry it will make you feel. You sit at your meat this day, abundantly provided for, complacent and comfortable. It is warm and bright in your dining room; the plum pudding comes in steaming. And outside destitution comes and presses a face against the window pane. How happy that makes you feel! And yet the happy group around your dinner table represents the small minority of the children of earth and the gaunt face at the window represents the majority.

In a world supplied with every good thing and running over with all the materials for the physical happiness and welfare of the race.

Merry Christmas? Well, not so long as that face is at the window pane. The laugh sounds hollow

and the mirth is assumed so long as that shadow is there.

What then? One of two things, my brethren. Call the police and have it chased away with the knowledge that more and more it will come back until it haunts every moment of life, or open the door and bid it come in and be no more miserable, but happy like the rest of us.

Which shall it be? For there is nothing between, and the first is Social Reform, so-called, and the other is Socialism.

And if you believe in Jesus Christ, one other question on this the festival in His honor.

Which do you think he would have preferred?

If I have read aright there is no place in his life where he summoned a policeman.

The sixty days of grace allowed to Fred Warren are slipping away. The time left for effective protest against the hideous outrage of his punishment is short. Every friend of justice and of the integrity of our courts should lose no time. Let it be clearly shown that these things cannot be carried through in our country without the emphatic protest of all genuine Americans.

### The Time for Protest Grows Short

Mr. Warren is to be punished to gratify the personal malice of Theodore Roosevelt. That is the exact situation. If Roosevelt had not been determined that Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone should hang, Fred Warren would be today as free as the freest man in the country.

The one issue, therefore, is whether a man that happens to be president of the United States is to use his high office to gratify his spite against one that has become personally obnoxious to him. In times gone by, the liberty of the individual against the oppression of the sovereign power has been repeatedly the occasion of the uprising of the people. That liberty, we have supposed, was secured and well-defined. Roosevelt undertook to ride over it. A united protest is needed to show that we do not purpose to surrender rights that have been so dearly won.

To see how absolutely true is the foregoing statement of the case we need only to refer to its simplest facts. The charge on which Warren was indicted was that he had sent through the mails matter that defamed the character of former Governor Taylor. Governor Taylor never complained of this matter. The only complainant was the United States government at the instigation of Theodore Roosevelt.

Matter much more defamatory of Governor Taylor had been sent through the mails by other persons and none of them has ever been prosecuted.

It was most obviously and patently not Warren's purpose to defame the character of Governor Taylor nor to say anything about it, but to call attention to what had been done in the case of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone and to learn if what the supreme court declared to be legal in their case would be legal in another case where the man involved was not a member of a labor union and was not being hounded by rich union haters.

If you know of anyone that has any doubts about the Warren case let him study over these facts and then get his honest opinion of them.

Also discover if he believes in allowing the courts to be turned into engines of personal spite by the officers of this government. Also what in his judgment will be the security of any critic of the administration if this precedent be once established?

By no possibility could there be a plainer case. All through Mr. Roosevelt's administration it was evidently his idea that the president of the United States was a kind of czar to whose will all other departments of government must bow and whose decree must be obeyed by the courts. While the Warren prosecution is the most conspicuous it is not the only instance of his autocratic and insolent interference with the course of justice. If we are willing to have an order from the president supercede laws and trials, there will be no sure way to that end than to allow Mr. Roosevelt's vengeance to be executed upon Fred Warren without our most earnest protest.

### Government by Presidential Ukase

Some of us have from time to time asserted that no other people in the world would endure a tithe of what the Americans patiently accept from the corporations that oppress them. Occasionally this statement calls forth expressions of incredulity, sometimes hot denials and sometimes the powerful and effective refutation that the person making it is a muck-raker and a liar.

I observe that the other day the street railroad company in Toronto undertook to introduce one of the money-gouging devices that exist to the annoyance of almost all the principal cities of the United States and the Toronto people rioted and threw the cars into the street.

Heaven forbid that I should seem to excuse rioting, but there is the fact. The Toronto people resorted to violence rather than endure something that a hundred American communities have long endured in silence.

About three years ago the great Traction Trust swindle in New York City blew up and to save the wreckage the receivers abolished transfers.

To do this they violated both laws and court orders, but they did it anyway.

The abolition of the transfers cost the people of

New York City \$25,000 a day in additional fares and practically all of this tribute came from the pockets of the working class.

In the city of Paris there is a system of "correspondences" or transfers from one omnibus line to another covering the greater part of the municipal region.

As in New York these transfers are used almost exclusively by the working people.

What do you think would happen in Paris if the omnibus companies should undertake to abolish those transfers—either to pay the interest on watered bonds grabbed off by the fortunate insiders or for any other purpose?

The next day relic hunters would be searching the gutters for fragments of the omnibuses.

It would be a violent and deplorable remedy. But it would work, and the transfers would be restored and the working class would not be robbed in exactly that way, at least.

Yes, it would be violent and deplorable. But strictly speaking I do not know that it would be any more violent than the process by which the insiders looted the New York traction system and left the wreck as a burden upon the working classes.

M. R. WHITELAW REID, American Ambassador to Great Britain, has been delivering there a eulogy on Abraham Lincoln.

I do not know anybody outside of the knee pants brigade that cares a hoot for Whitelaw Reid's opinion of Lincoln, but I would give a lot for a concise and adequate characterization of Whitelaw Reid by a mind like Lincoln's.

Mr. George W. Perkins has retired from the firm of J. P. Morgan & Co. and the dispatches that convey these momentous tidings assure us further that Mr. Perkins intends to devote his time henceforth to "solving the difficulties that exist between capital and labor."

### Welcome to the Vaudeville Stage

Welcome to the national vaudeville stage, George. It is a great turn that you will do. This profit-sharing stunt of yours is great; it fetches them every time in Yaphook and Baiting Hollow. You just keep on telling them how you solved "the difficulties between capital and labor" by introducing profit-sharing in the Steel Trust and the Harvester Trust and there isn't a social reformer in the Podunk district that will not cheer to the echo. Of course you need not tell them how you succeeded so well in "solving the difficulties" that half of the Steel Trust employes are now out of work and threatened with starvation. And you need not tell how many hours the men work that have managed to retain their jobs. And you need not tell about conditions in the Steel Trust towns. And you need not tell about the trick by which Steel Trust employes were induced to buy steel common at 48 and were shaken out at 26, nor how much money the insiders made by this process. All you need do, George, my son, is to stick to your nice little monologue about profit-sharing and industrial democracy and Lyman Abbott will cackle loud enough to lead the applause every time.

Yes, welcome to the stage, George. You'll be a bang-up performer, if you steer clear of the life insurance companies' campaign subscriptions and what you know about Morgan & Co. and the Milk Trust and the babies it kills and a few things like that. Between you and your profit-sharing fake on one side of the street and August Belmont with his Civic Federation fake on the other this promises to be a good season—for gabies.

By the way, if Fred Warren goes to prison how would it do for someone to discover who opened Senator Tillman's mail and why, how the Secret Service detectives were employed in investigating the private lives of obnoxious senators and congressmen and the inside history of the Burton case. All of these incidents might furnish interesting reading matter if Warren is to be punished for trying to vindicate the rights guaranteed by the constitution.

### The Corner Grocer Did It All

We are by instinct and training a people much given to scientific thinking about our affairs; we take naturally to political economy and don't hardly do a thing to it. Here, for instance, is Prof. James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture, and he has been thinking about this increase in the cost of living until he has found out all about it. So now he has told us and we can all know the heart of the mystery and think just as he thinks.

What makes the cost of living high, the professor discovers, is the middleman; the corner grocer, you know; the butcher, the store-keeper, retail merchant and the rest of that vile crew. They pile on the prices and take all the profits, hang them. It isn't the farmer; on the other hand it isn't the railroad company, nor the trust nor the banks nor Mr. Morgan, nor his express companies. What does all the harm is the corner grocer. He is such an insatiable cormorant that he makes everything dear. He may not have noticed this and you may not have noticed it, but it is a fact. Prof. Wilson says so, and you can wager the professor knows. Everytime. These wretched riddlemen are raking off the big money. Of course they are concealing it—hiding it in their cellars, I suppose, or burying it in their back yards, but they have it, nevertheless. They are so deceitful that they can't tell the truth about their wealth. As a matter of fact, every corner grocer is a millionaire. He pretends to be poor, but he is a millionaire. When he tells you that he has a hard time to get along and that the trust and the "chain" store and the nail order house are driving him out of business he is fooling you. But he can't fool your uncle, the professor. Not

once. The professor sees through all these little tricks. He knows perfectly well that the groceryman is hoarding vast wealth and adding to it—by increasing the cost of living.

Good for the professor! As I said before you can't fool a grand thinker such as he is. Other persons have imagined that the over-capitalization of the railroads and corporations, the development of the trusts and the increase in the gold supply have had something to do with the increased cost of living. Prof. Wilson has looked into all these vain imaginings and now sweeps them away. To his powerful mind they are but bosh. He knows what is the matter with us. It is that vile middleman, pushing up the prices of everything and getting enormously rich at our expense. That is what is the matter.

And now what are we going to do about it? Again the giant-minded Wilson proves himself the man of the hour. He has his remedy all ready.

Abolish the middleman! Down with the corner grocery! Down with the abominable retailer, now fattening upon the hearts and gizzards of the people! Away with the whole detestable crew! Let the consumer buy directly from the producer and thus outwit these diabolical and piratical grocers!

That is the professor's idea of a remedy. It seems so simple that you almost wonder no one has thought of it before, but you must remember that the grandest discoveries are always the simplest when you come to look at them.

Let us proceed at once to put this noble device into practice and bring to naught the devilish wiles of the middlemen, already laughing at their victims, while they despoil us. But let us remember that he laughs best that laughs last. It is now our turn. Observe how easily under the professor's guidance we shall put these villains to rout. Do you, poor victim of your grocer's tyranny, desire a sack of flour? Go to the mill and get it. Do you wish five pounds of sugar? The refinery is just across East River in Brooklyn. Do you wish a roll of butter? Hike out for the dairy; it is only five miles up the road. Do you wish a side of bacon? Walk down to the packing house; the fresh air and balmy odors will do you good. So will the packing house. Do you want some oil? There's the tank down by the railroad station. Soap? Get it at the factory. Potatoes? Take your trusty basket on your arm and walk out to Farmer Jones'. A ten-mile walk is just the thing for the sedentary.

Buy of the producer. That's the idea. Buy of the producer and watch the price of pork chops slide down. It's a wonderful discovery, Prof. Wilson. We are all pretty good thinkers when it comes to subjects of this kind, but not up to you. Truly you are the hot stuff.

We are now told by the Associated Press, that veritable guide to current events, how President Taft has had prepared and someone has introduced in the senate a bill that it is believed will settle the railroad problem.

It prohibits all railroad companies from holding stock in competing lines.

I do not wonder that Mr. Taft pins his faith to this measure as the final settlement of the whole troublesome question. Knowing something about the capitalists of his faith I am only surprised that he does not regard it as the settlement of every other problem. Why stop at railroads!

Some persons might possibly point out that as there are now no competing railroad lines, the scope of the act might be a little difficult to define, but that trifling obstacle will not chill the abounding faith of Mr. Taft. Neither will the other fact that no matter how much you may prohibit combines from owning railroad stock you cannot prohibit Mr. Morgan from owning as much as he pleases. Nor Mr. Hill; nor Mr. Hawley; nor Mr. Rockefeller. Nor can you prevent these gentlemen from getting together and fixing up rates and issuing securities upon which the public must pay the interest. It might still further be suggested that it is this ownership and these arrangements and not the investments prohibited by this law that make the trouble. But these considerations are not important. The glorious fact is that we are now to have another dose of regulative medication for our economic ills and of course that is good news for all of us. If there is anything we really need in view of the record of the last few years, it is a little more regulation.

NOTHING so pathetic has been disclosed in years as the fidelity of the British mind to its toy peerage. In the midst of the forward wave that is sweeping around the world British torism and American conservatism stand as two rocks. The British are far worse than we are. They have the chance to get rid of one of the absurd fantastic medieval burdens they are carrying and an actual majority of them cling to the load with touching and doddering loyalty. It is to this strange, incongruous and irrational element, I believe, that Woodrow Wilson points us as to a model for our own conduct. No wonder Mr. Wilson is the Interests' favorite candidate for President. A man that can see good in retrogression is just the man for them. How would it do to cease for a time from some of the yawp about the grand old Anglo-Saxon race? At present it seems far back in the procession. The Portuguese shame us; so do others that we have loftily despised. In a few years, at the present rate, the grand old Anglo-Saxon race will have to take lessons in democracy from many nations—possibly including the Chinese.

There is always one thing about evolution you can depend upon. It cares nothing for races; it has no patriotism. Let any nation weary of going ahead, and farewell! Democracy skips to New Zealand or Lisbon and the people in the front rank give the backslider the merry ha-ha.

# A WORKERS HISTORY OF SCIENCE

BY A. M. LEWIS

V. Empedocles.

While we are tracing the speculative foreshadowing of modern knowledge scattered so richly through Greek thought, we may well pause long enough to read and ponder well a fine passage from Sir Michael Foster's History of Physiology. We shall lose no time thereby, but gather a deeper impression of the importance of our task. Foster writes:

"What we are in part only of our own making; the greater part of ourselves has come down to us from the past. What we know and what we think is not a new fountain gushing fresh from the barren rock of the unknown at the stroke of the rod of our own intellect. It is a stream which flows by us and through us, fed by the far-off rivulets of long ago. As what we think and say today will mingle with and shape the thoughts of men in years to come, so in the opinions and views which we are proud to hold today we may, by looking back, trace the influence of the thoughts of those who have gone before. Tracking out how new thoughts are linked to old ones, seeing how an error cast into the stream of knowledge leaves a streak lasting through many changes of the ways of man, noting the struggles through which a truth now rising to the surface, now seemingly lost in the depths, eventually swims triumphant on the flood, we may perhaps the better learn to appraise our present knowledge, and the more rightly judge which of the thoughts of today is on the direct line of progress, carrying the truth of yesterday on to that of tomorrow, and which is a mere fragment of the hour, floating, conspicuous on the surface now, but destined soon to sink, and later to be wholly forgot."

We have already listened to the weighty opinions of several learned men on the merits of Greek thinking. We shall now hear from a man whose voice always commands attention among men of science—Professor Huxley:

"It may be doubted," says Huxley, "if even-handed justice, as free from fulsome panegyric as from captious depreciation, has ever yet been dealt out to the sages of antiquity, who for eight centuries, from the time of Thales to that of Galen, toiled at the foundations of physical science." Empedocles (495-435 B. C.) could hardly be called a toiler at the foundations of physical science. With a marvelous insight, he outlined some of the chief parts of the superstructure. In three directions he made important advances. They are here stated in the order of their importance:

First: Just as Heraclitus was the pioneer of the general idea of evolution, so did Empedocles forecast modern ideas as to the factors of evolution in the organic world. Adaptation to environment and the struggle for existence with the resulting survival of the best adapted forms is almost a complete statement of Darwin's "natural selection." What his theory means is that nature has by this process "selected" for survival and perpetuation, those creatures best adapted to survive in the given environment. And this idea, which is the chief corner-stone of modern biology, is stated, though clumsily, by Empedocles.

His claim in this field is secured by the sure authority of Aristotle who in his "physics" refers to Empedocles as having first shown the possibility of the origin of the fittest forms of life through chance rather than design.

Least an extravagant value be placed on his views we quote the cautious estimate of that brilliant pupil and close friend of Huxley, Professor Osborn:

"Empedocles," says Osborn, in his valuable book, *From the Greeks to Darwin*, "was an evolutionist; only in so far as he taught the gradual substitution of the less by the more perfect forms of life. He had a dim adumbration of the truth. There is no glimmering of slow development through the successive modification of lower forms into higher forms. His beings which were incapable of feeding, reproducing, or defending themselves, were all produced spontaneously, or directly from the earth. He thus simply modified the abiogenic hypothesis (spontaneous generation theory), and, by happy conjecture, gave his theory a semblance of modern evolution, with four sparks of truth—first, that the development of life was a gradual process; second, that plants were evolved before animals; third, that the imperfect forms were gradually replaced (not succeeded), by perfect forms; fourth, that the natural cause of the production of perfect forms was the extinction of the imperfect."

Happy conjectures, indeed, and most of them destined, in Foster's language, "to swim triumphant on the flood" of time. Especially happy when we consider that they were given to the world twenty-four hundred years ago. That the opening sentences of the above are not to be considered as discrediting Empedocles' evolutionary claims we quote another passage from the same book two pages earlier:

"Empedocles took a great stride beyond his predecessors, and may be justly called the father of the evolution idea."

Secondly: Empedocles anticipated Helmholtz and Mayer as to the destructibility of matter. He says: "Fools! Who think aught can begin to be white, formerly was not. Or, that aught which is, can perish and utterly decay. Another truth I never unfold: no natural birth is there of mortal things, nor death's destruction final. Nothing is there but a mingling, and then a separation of the mingled. Which are called a birth and death by ignorant mortals."

Thirdly: Empedocles was the first synthetic philosopher. Thales had held the primal stuff to be water. Anaximenes found the cause of all things in air. Heraclitus looked to fire. Empedocles sought to combine all these ideas and derived the universe from four roots: Fire, air, earth and water.

Yet I heard one person who desired to be a speaker say in public meeting that we had no political campaign this year. I do not know yet what the vote is, but I have \$50 up on it being an increase of two years ago and I expect to win it. Colorado is an expensive state to campaign in as our territory is large between towns and our railroad fare is from three to six cents a mile.

## Effective Organization and the Vote

From *Bostrum, Sec'y-Treas.*

When I some time ago wrote a letter to the *Daily Socialist* about the outlook in this state, I received some "kicks" of pessimism, because I was too modest to claim a hundred per cent increase in the vote.

I believe that I merely expressed the hope that we would pull out even. My reasons against an increase were. The Grange, which cooled the fervor of the small farmer, the I. W. W., which demoralized the proletarians and the fake movement gotten up by our quondam comrade, Dr. Titus, amongst the union labor element. To offset these inroads I figured on the natural growth of the sentiment, the principle that makes the snowball grow as it rolls down the hill.

But one thing was overlooked in these calculations, and that was the Milwaukee idea. The distribution of literature was just introduced and there was nothing to go by in estimating its effect. In the past it used to puzzle me and many wisser heads why the vote seemed to pay no attention to the organization. Some of the poorest locals in the state were commanding the situation in counties that gave the largest votes. Many who are too stingy to put up the quarter for monthly dues found a good excuse in this phenomenon claiming it as proof sufficient of the uselessness if not harmfulness of our mode of organization.

Satisfied that this hypocritical supposition was groundless, I was forced to adopt the theory that, seeing that all sane people who are not living by graft, are Socialists as soon as they learn what Socialism means; and seeing also that certain neighborhoods accidentally contained more people that understood the subject, it naturally followed that in these parts Socialism would sooner reach the last convertible individual, than in places where the teachers were fewer, and that alongside of this law of natural growth the feeble attempts of even the strongest local amounted to but little.

That I was right in this supposition has been conclusively proved in this campaign. Everett, throughout the past year the most compact and active local in the state, has demonstrated beyond a doubt that well directed, conscious efforts will discount the law of natural growth five to one. The distribution of leaflets and papers was introduced some six months ago. The increase in the vote of this county is 76 per cent. Skagit, Chelan and Kitsap counties increased their votes 53 per cent, 50 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively. And they were the most thoroughly organized. Organization has at last redeemed itself by showing its value.

The comrades have been quick to respond to the indication and the movement is continuing to grow at a tremendous rate. Pierce county has today probably as thorough an organization as can be found in these United States. There are eleven live locals, represented in a county committee that issues a weekly bulletin, that would be an honor to any state.

I have as yet received no positive news from half of the counties, but in the half received we are about 2,000 ahead of the Debs vote. I have every reason to believe that this is all the gain made, for we lost heavily in King county (Seattle), where the Titus renegades offset all the work by the comrades. The demoralizing effect of the bitter struggles in Seattle will probably neutralize the earnest work of the comrades for some years to come, but the fact that our party gained, their herculean efforts to the contrary notwithstanding, will necessarily have a paralyzing effect on the traitors. The English speaking element of our party has increased 125 per cent in five months, or from 650 on July 1st, to 1,500 on December 1st. We are at least 500 members stronger than at any previous time of our history.

Two thousand seven hundred and eight dues stamps were sold by the state office in November. I shall not feel satisfied with anything short of 4,000 at the end of next year, and shall look for the women, the county committees and the Milwaukee idea to accomplish the work.

## The Price

BY PAUL WEST

It's another cent on the price of meat. And a cent on a pound of tea. And a cent on this and a cent on that. To be paid by you and by me—To be paid by you and by me, my man. But it oughtn't to be—no rage. Or to make us mad, if they'd only add A cent as well to our wage.

It's only a cent on a pound of meat. On a loaf from the flour of the wheat. And a cent on the clothes we've got to wear. And a cent on all that we eat. Oh, they haven't forgot a thing, my man. From your shoes and your coat to your hat. Excluding the pay you earn, each day—They've added no cent to it.

But every cent they add, my man, is a cent they got to pay. When a half we call to their greed and a half. And that time will come some day. And the cent that you pay today, my man, Today when you're sore oppressed Will be yours when due—and it's up to you To collect it with interest.

—A Carpenter.

# The Little Old Men

By Theresa Malkiel



All the numerous great and small strikes which took place during the current year none seemed to me more significant and pathetic than that of the messenger boys. I have followed it from the beginning through the notices given in the press and as my interest grew with its development I decided to go down to the meeting halls, mingle with the youngsters and thus find out their personal conception of the grievances and the significance of the struggle.

"Johnny!" I addressed a boy who was fourteen, though he looked not more than eleven or twelve, a boy young in years, but old in experience of life's struggle and suffering, a child whose drawn figure, wrinkled face and sad eyes told the tale, even before he spoke, "tell me, Johnny, why did you go out on strike?"

"Because," said Johnny, gravely, looking me over from head to foot, "because they did not treat us right. Because they often made me run about for a half day before I could earn a dime. They tells me, 'Johnny! a boy is wanted at Nassau street,' and I runs for eight blocks, but when I comes there the big guy in the office says, 'Never mind, don't need you any more.' I goes back to my office, a half an hour spent and nothin' for it. You see the company don't pay us boys only when they gets money for it. Because we never knew when it's time to eat lunch, us boys must be on hand all the time and eat our lunch while on the run. I runs, runs the whole day and when I gets home in the evening I's too tired to eat."

"And what do you do with your money, when you make it?" I next asked of Johnny.

"I gives it to my mother, she's a widow—works by cigars. I have a younger brother, he goes to school. You see, my elder brother was a bookkeeper and uster help my mother so that I could go to school, but my brother he died of stomach trouble. I have stomach trouble, too. I liked school, I wanted to study, and the tears came into the boy's eyes. "But when my brother died I had to go to work. It helps ma to pay the rent and buy clothes for me and my brother."

"Does your ma scold you for being a striker?" "No, mam, she says that if all the boys stay out I ought to stay out, too. I won't be a scab myself."

"And what does it mean being a scab?"

"To take somebody's bread away." I left Johnny and sat down next to a boy who said his name was Sam.

"And how long are you on strike, Sam?"

"From the first day I goes out with the first batch," he informed me proudly.

"And why do you strike?" "Because they don't treat us boys right—a cent and a half a message. I runs fourteen hours every day and makes three and half dollars a week. Then the company takes off a half a dollar for my uniform. I don't need deir old uniform—my mother buys me a pair of knee pants for a quarter, a jumper for fifteen cents and in the winter a sweater for a dollar, this is enough to last me for six months. My mother can't afford to spend half a dollar a week on my uniform; she need the money for sometin' else I'm surc."

"And for what does she need it?" "For so many, many things. My father is a cloak maker, you see; before the strike he made eleven dollars a week, then when he struck for six weeks and now he makes sixteen, but I have four little brothers, an' we had to borrow money while pa was strikin'; but my father he says that he's a union man and I got to be one, too."

"Then, how does your mother manage now that you are on strike?" "Oh, my mother, she's uster trouble. I don't ask no money from her; I comes down here and gets some coffee an' sandwiches; then I goes out for a little while to sell the *Call* and makes a few cents. Say, that *Call* is the only paper that tells about the strike. Then other guys won't say a word. Dere is a kid that went back on us, but we pulled him out after all," and Sam pointed to a neatly dressed, well fed boy near by.

I left him and made my way to the other chap. His name was Sylvester. He declared from the very first that his father was an importer, that he did not have to work if he did not want to.

"The boys tell me you went back on them; what made you do it?" "Because I saw no fun in striking. But, then, I felt ashamed when they called me scab and jeered at me. And I did not need the money so I stopped again. I've fifty dollars in the bank and my brother is an accountant in a big office."

"And what does your father say to your being a striker?" "He don't know," assured me Sylvester. "He don't care what I do—he's too busy."

"Will you go back on the boys again?" "Not on your life—they'll lick me if I do."

Here my attention was attracted to a boy whose face was black and blue, one of his eyes closed and swollen. I saw him follow their leader, Hoffman, from place to place shuffling in his torn shoes after him. An old ragged sweater and a pair of patched knee-

pants finished his attire. He looked so miserable and forlorn that I detained him to find out the cause of his special trouble.

"Dey took me out from my office and licked me an' made me come with them an' the other boys, too. Now there are two scabs in my office. An' I want that guy to send pickets to my office. My office is as good as them others. Dey's going to win an' what will I do? My father says if I don't bring four dollars next Saturday he'll give me a good lickin'; he don't care a rap about the strike. But the boys lick me if I am a scab."

The youngster's face was a study in itself—rage, despair and fear shone from the one open eye. The labor problem vexed him greatly; he could not, like the other boys, appreciate the significance of the strike, nor even understand his own deplorable condition. His father, as he later told me, was an old, disgruntled man who sold ladies' slippers when he was well enough to do so. One sister was sick in the hospital, another made eight dollars a week; the family counted six heads.

What was I to tell that puzzled, unfortunate boy? He wouldn't have understood my promises for the future—he needed an immediate solution. At the age of fourteen he was already past all hope and aspirations—the world held nothing in store for him. All he did realize clearly was the fact that if he would not bring the four dollars the following Saturday he would get a licking from his father, if he should try to earn them he was in for a licking from the boys.

But the meeting hall of the striking messengers was not a place for meditation; a shout of joy caused me to turn my eyes toward the entrance where a mere child, still dressed in the company's uniform, was leading another youngster—conducting him to the enrollment table.

"He's got another scab," informed the boys around me. "He's the shrewdest guy ever, that kid is. Got more scabs into the union than anybody else!"

The new convert paid his dime, received a card, had a strap with "Messengers on Strike" pinned to his cap. The conqueror's job was done and he was making for the door to hunt up some more scabs.

"Can you spare a few minutes of your time?" I said, as I intercepted him on the way out.

"Yes, if it'll do the strike good," replied Dick readily.

Dick was a handsome, dimple-checked, kissable boy, still full of the joy of living. His eyes were fairly sparkling with happiness over the lately made conquest.

"I'm a striker," was his answer to my next question, "because us boys could do nothin' else but strike; them big guys in the office of the company won't listen to us little fellers, 'cept when we're on strike. A union means all us boys together. An' even my teacher told us—united we stand divided we fall."

"And what are you doing to win the strike?"

"I'm getting the scabs away from them as fast as I can. See that kid there? I'll just tell you how I nipped him—went into a broker's office and asked if he hadn't sent in a call for a messenger boy an' while he was trying to find out whether anybody in the office wanted me I punched the messenger call box and went outside where I waited until the scab answered that call an' I got him—I'll get many more."

"And how does it feel to be a striker?"

"Fine! It makes me think I'm a big man. My pa was a striker, too. He's a union man and thinks us boys is right. We's tired of being treated like dogs; I ain't one bit afraid of them big guys now," he flashed his union card before my bewildered eyes and disappeared.

I continued my inquiries and as I walked from bench to bench talking to one boy after another I heard one continual tale of untimely worry over the bit of bread, a bitter cry of rebellion against hunger, want and privation uttered by childish lips coming from childish hearts already withered and often embittered beyond redemption. All knew perfectly well why they struck—they were tired of the inhuman treatment; they could stand it no longer so they went out to fight it to the bitter end to die of starvation or win better conditions for themselves and those to come.

To my plain mind the strike of these thousands of little old men is the writing on the wall for the money powers whose utter lack of every vestige of human feeling as exhibited in their treatment of these children, has blinded them to all else but their insatiable appetite for more and more dividends.

"From the mouths of the babes the truth cometh." Better that the American people wake up and heed this cry of warning—the striking messenger boys are the heralds of the coming conflict—they are becoming trained soldiers in the ever-growing army of labor. They are the future faithful workers in the cause of human advancement. Their spontaneous uprising cannot fail to bring results.

Ignorance arms men against each other; provides jails and penitentiaries; soldiers and police. All the physical force of the state is provided by ignorance; is required by ignorance; is very often wielded by ignorance.

# THE COMING NATION

PUBLISHERS: J. A. Wayland, Fred D. Warner.

EDITORS: A. M. Sidons, Chas. Edward Russell.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

## The Socialist Scouts

Morris: *The Appeal Is Mightier Than the Sword.*

Ninety per cent of boys and girls who take up the Socialist Scout work continue it, making pocket money for themselves and carrying on a splendid agitation for Socialism. These boys and girls are getting a training in Socialist party tactics that will be invaluable to them as they grow older.

Scouts sell the COMING NATION on the streets or deliver it to homes. Papers are sold to them at half price. They make two and one half cents on each sale. It costs nothing to start. I'll send ten copies of the NATION to any boy or girl who'll agree to remit half price for what he sells and return heads of unsold copies. Official Scout badges are furnished with the second order.

Applications should be addressed to "Scout Dept., Appeal to Reason, Girard, Kan." A letter of instruction is sent with first bundle.

## Scout News

This is the last week of the COMING NATION in newspaper form. Next week it will appear as a magazine, with pages just half the present size. This is also the last week of selling the COMING NATION and Appeal to Reason together. Hereafter the NATION will sell alone for five cents. Notify your customers.

"I hold my first ten papers in half an hour. Send me sixteen for this week."—Norman Purington, Mechanic Falls, Me.

"I have ten or eleven customers weekly and am getting more all the time."—Harry Flagg, Waupaca, Wis.

## Scout Joe Segal

Scout Joe Segal, of Chicago, Ill., is one of the Scout Army engaged in spreading the propaganda of Socialism in the very stronghold of capitalism. When Mayor Busse and other Chicago politicians swept the Appeal from Chicago news stands they did not reckon with young comrades of Segal's caliber. Formerly people had to go to a news stand and buy individual copies. Now Joe delivers them to their homes.

"All my papers sold easily. No trouble at all to sell the COMING NATION."—Rachel M. Farman, Bernharts, Pennsylvania.

"As my boys, Fred and Adolph, sold the first ten copies you sent last week, here is 75 cents to pay for thirty copies this week and 25 cents for the former bundle. It makes me happy to know my boys can do something to advance Socialism."—Mrs. Minnie Wicht, Minneapolis, Minn.

## It's Business

BY MARTHA EDGERTON PLASSMANN

Do you hear the patter, patter of the countless little feet? Do you see the thronging children as they hurry through the street? No Pied Piper lures them onward; driven, they, by cruel need, Daily victims for the altar of our great God Greed.

Faces dull from toll and hunger; bodies stunted by disease; All the winsome grace of childhood long has fled from such as these. Shall their helplessness and anguish still in vain for mercy plead? Aye! till we forsake the service of our great God Greed.

Men and women close about them, hem them in on every side, Goad them onward when they falter; their weak cries of pain deride. Should they wander from the highways, that to Mammon's temple lead, Who would glut their insatiate hunger of our great God Greed?

From the grass the flowers beckon; sunlight o'er them ben's the sky; Birds from swaying tree-tops warble carefree songs as they pass by. All in vain is Nature's luring; to her voice they give no heed; Crushed is every youthful impulse by our great God Greed.

How can you, oh fathers, mothers! silent stand and view this wrong? See! your cherished ones are yonder, in the midst of this sad throng. He! to the temple hasten! Is a holocaust decreed? Be it of the shattered fragments of the great God Greed.

Rich banker, (to his daughter's suitor) —Don't talk so much of love; you know that what really attracts you is the 80,000 marks that my daughter will get when she marries.

Suitor—What? No more than that? —*Fliegende Blaetter.*

He is the free man whom the truth makes free and all are slaves beside.—Cowper.

# A Christmas Job

By Allan Updegraff.



THE sticky snow came down, the odor of fresh printers' ink and hot machine oil came up and the glare of an electric arc lamp made a blue, unsteady twilight between. Before an iron-bound door labeled "Delivery," that stood at the focus of snow and odor and light, a small crowd was standing; some three score men and boys with a baker's dozen of women and girls about the edges. It was a clean, grim crowd, a crowd evidently dressed in its decentered, a crowd with little to say, a crowd without a smile.

Silently, doggedly, it was waiting for the first copies of the first edition of *The Morning World*. For there are hundreds of little advertisements for male and female help in *The Morning World*, most of them bona fide, and the person who can read them first has a certain advantage.

Somewhere in the upper darkness a bell struck one o'clock. The delivery door opened, emitting a flood of dim yellow light and the pungent, warm, almost appetizing smell of fresh newspapers. Two newspaper-loaded men came out. The crowd woke to sudden activity and to the accompaniment of determined pushing on the part of the buyers and of considerable snarling on the part of the sellers papers were exchanged for pennies. Most of each bulky paper, the parts which carried mere news and editorials and display advertising, went immediately underfoot. The crowd thinned out, like a flock of chickens given apple parings, each scurrying away to be alone with his prize, the timidiest going first and fastest.

John Pepperell's hands had been most prompt to exchange copper for paper; and, by virtue of the same size and strength that had enabled him to keep his place nearest the door of delivery, he had pushed his way through the crowd to the base of the pillar that supported the light. By the quivering glare, he rapidly searched the advertisements, brushing off big, soft flakes of snow as he read. Occasionally he made a little check with a lead pencil on the margin of the paper. His rather deep, very well-shaped brows were knitted with the rapidity of his search; his lips, a little too rounded and full to be called clear-cut, worked nervously. One looking only at the upper part of his face, topped by its precise derby hat, would have considered him a common enough American type. But the lower part, the mouth and chin might have been copied from that popular little bas-relief of Savonarola; they were the mouth and chin of a dreamer, of an emotional, unpractical man.

Abruptly he finished his search, drew a pencil mark around one of the advertisements he had checked, thrust the paper into the inside pocket of his short overcoat, and hurried toward the glowing semi-circle of a subway entrance. Fifteen or twenty of his former companions, all fiercely reading advertisements by the light of the incandescent lamps, were crowded together at the head of the stairway. He pushed through them, sickened a little by the odor of their damp clothing, hurried down to the platform, and took a north-bound train. Several newspaper-carrying young men boarded the train with him; and he avoided their tired, suspicious, hostile eyes as they avoided his and each other's. As soon as the train started, one and all buried their faces in the closely printed back pages of their papers.

Pepperell read his advertisement again, and committed to memory the address given in it. The place was in East Twenty-third street. A young man was wanted to serve as a book clerk, "over Christmas. Only those with experience and references need apply. Apply at 8 o'clock. Salary, \$7." He thought he knew the place; if his memory served him, it was a little second-hand book shop such as would make a specialty of post cards and calendars and cheap standard editions for the holiday trade. Many would be called by their advertisement; and only one chosen. He hated that last phase of the matter, even while he devoutly hoped that he would be the chosen one.

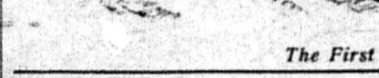
"Many called; one chosen," he muttered fretfully to himself, being a little stupefied by the reaction of the warm air of the subway on his chilled body. "Maybe fifty, maybe a hundred, in line; one chosen!"

As the train left Eighteenth street, he yawned with pure nervous exhaustion, got up and went on to the platform to stand before the door of exit. He poised himself, when the cars had shrieked to a standstill, and, immediately the guard had shot back the door, threw himself forward and sprinted for the stairway that led up to the street. Up the stairs he rushed, three steps at a time, and ran a hundred yards down the sidewalk before he looked behind him. Then he came to a sudden stop, with his heart hammering at his ribs and his breath coming in short, hoarse gasps, to look and listen. The street behind him was silent and vacant. In front, a lonely street car splashed with white patches of snow on windows and yellow sides came bumping and grinding toward him with a man asleep in each of its four corners. Looming large in the snow-blurred light of an electric lamp, half a block away, stood a policeman. The wet snow had formed a

white place, like a bald spot, on the top of his black helmet. The shadowy gray shape of a cat slipped across the street and took shelter under the stoop of an aged brownstone house. There was no other living thing in sight.

"Thank God!" said Pepperell, with a sincerity of thanksgiving that only those two words could express. "Thank God! At last I'm first!"

Walking slowly and uncertainly, like the exhausted, nervous, numb-footed man he was, he made his way through the broken snow of the sidewalk, peering up at numbers as he passed. He recognized the place of his destination a dozen doors before he reached it; it sat back a little distance from the sidewalk, and there was a small, sunken area-way between the walk and the door, where the book-seller was accustomed to display tables of his wares.



Seeing the place so near, Pepperell's face softened with the anticipation of coming victory. Victory, success, fortune, respectability, enough to eat and wear, a comfortable bed to sleep in of nights, all these things waited for him less than a dozen doors away; for, by force of concentrating his mind on being the first applicant, he had come to believe that there was only that one condition between him and the realization of his dreams. He made bold to whistle a little as he shuffled along. Confidently he patted the ham sandwich in his right overcoat pocket, and mumbled something like "Goodboy! Goodboy!" It was his friend; it would freshen him up just before the ordeal, or rather the formality, of his interview with his future employer.

He took as one the two stone steps that led down into the area-way. A little gray human shape, huddled down on the doorkill, sprang upright and stood facing him, back pressed against the coveted door.

For a moment Pepperell was too much astonished and embarrassed to feel even the beginnings of resentment. He stood perfectly still, with his legs set wide apart and his hands clutched in his pockets, and stared at the applicant who had been earlier than he. His tired brain almost refused to verify the evidence of his senses that he had been beaten, such was the surety of success he had felt. He blinked and gawked, like a confused, newly awakened man, at his successful rival.

There was an electric light just across the street that lit up the area-way with tolerable distinctness. The falling snow, falling without wind in big, slow flakes, made a sort of luminous mist about the defiant, impish figure of the first applicant. His thin boy's face was shadowed by a cheaply natty hat of green felt, beneath the brim of which his eyes peered out as keen and crafty as a ferret's. His yellow overcoat, also cheaply natty, swung apart a little at the throat, disclosing a high, white collar beneath. He held his arms behind him; evidently his hands were fastened on the handles of the precious door. The crouching watchfulness of his posture, the shrewd daring and pugnacity of his face and eyes, gave Pepperell a sudden sensation of faintness and despair. It was much as if a big, friendly St. Bernard, very hungry, had happened upon a mink with a fish.

"Well," said Pepperell, when the silence and inaction had begun to make his head swim, "you got here first, didn't you?"

"How'd you guess it?" returned the boy. He took his hands from the door handles and relaxed into a one-legged slouch against the door jamb. He seemed to be pleasantly disappointed in the disposition of his rival; he grinned disdainfully. Pepperell had shown neither the blasphemous irritation nor the more portentous silence of unwarted power. Therefore, it was evident to the boy, Pepperell was a mutt—a plain mutt. Rat-faced defiance is withering to the shrinking souls of mutts. The boy enjoyed the situation.

"Why 'n't you bring a Morris chair, Willy?" he asked. "Or did you think the boss 'ud have one all ready for you? Thought you was goin' have everything your own way, I guess, eh Willy?"

The boy promptly huddled down again on the sill of the door. The snow fell slowly, steadily, straight down. Occasionally a car or a policeman or a slinking specimen of one of the city's myriad night-wandering breeds went by. Half an hour, an hour, passed. Pepperell dozed, and dreamed that he was first at the door, and that the man-

ager was offering him a position. "And we'll call it eight dollars a week instead of seven, seeing that you—"

"Say, Willy," said the boy suddenly, "what time is it by your gold watch and chain?"

Pepperell sat up with a start, and looked at his watch.

"Five minutes of three," he said.

"Hell," commented the boy. The word was sufficiently expressive of misery to attract Pepperell's attention.

"How long have you been here?" he asked.

"Since a little after midnight."

Pepperell found the answer intensely interesting. He connected it, in a dim sort of way, with the laws of the powers that ruled his destiny. How was any man permitted to reach an advertised job a little after midnight? He had done all that mortal could do, and he had not arrived till after one.

"No first edition," he said at last, "comes out before one o'clock, does it?" The boy sniggered. "Naw Willy," he said.

"Git onto yerself," he resumed, when he thought Pepperell's mystification had lasted long enough. "A young feller that works in Grosbeck's across



the street, he's sweet on the sister of a frien' o' my sister, see? He knows the boss o' this place, an' the boss tells him he needs a clerk, an' he tips off my sister. Do you git that, Willy?"

Pepperell considered the case for a short time.

"I don't think it's right," he said abruptly. "It isn't a square deal!"

"What ain't?"

"You getting that ad so much sooner and easier than anybody else could."

"My Gawd!" groaned the boy, making as if the answer sickened him at the stomach. "O what a mutt! Why 'on't you swab the glue outen yer eyes, an' pick the cotton outen yer ears? My Gawd!"

"Even if I was in your place," insisted Pepperell patiently, rather to himself than to his rival, "I'd think it was a rotten deal, just the same. I've taken a good deal more trouble to get this job than you have; and I know that I need the work a good deal more than you do. And yet, through a certain pull, you get in ahead of me! It's not right! It's not reasonable! It's not just! God never intended any such things to be!"

His voice had taken on a tremulous, ecstatic ring. The boy eyed him curiously, contemptuously, not understanding at all the changes that were going on behind the voice.

"The Salvation Army for yours, Willy," he said.

Pepperell got up, walked deliberately over to the huddled boy, and kicked him.

"Get out!" he cried. "Get out, you little beast of prey! By all the rights of God and man, I am the first applicant!"

Then the boy understood how great a change had come over his mutinous rival. He leaped up, clutched the handle of the door with one hand, held the other up in an attitude of defense before his face, and thrashed out wildly with one foot.

"Don't you touch me—don't you touch me!" he screamed. "Help! Police! Ah—ee!"

Pepperell reached out and clutch the thin, vociferous throat with both hands. He tore the boy from his hold, bore him down into the untrampled snow, and fell upon him. The boy kicked and squeaked and clawed desperately. Pepperell, in a frenzy of rage and exultation that admitted of no reasoning, pressed him down into the soft, cool, sticky snow, still gripping his throat with both hands.

"I am the first applicant!" he declared, in a hoarse, ecstatic whisper; and again and again: "I am the first applicant! I am the first applicant! I am the first applicant!"

When, after what seemed to him a long time, he found himself standing between a couple of policemen, he repeated the assertion. His shirt was torn open at the neck, his face was cut and bloody as from the claws of a cat, his hat was gone and his hair was gray with snow; but still he tried to show that he was perfectly calm and reasonable.

"It's all right, officers," he said. "I am the first applicant!"

"That's all right, too," returned one of the policemen, endeavoring to fasten something on his wrist. "You just come along with me!"

"No! My place is here—I am to apply at eight o'clock!" demurred Pepperell, jerking himself free. "I am the first applicant!"

But after the policeman had clubbed him into insensibility, he came quietly enough.

# Why I Got Fired

By Kate Hayman

LArrived in Lynn one cold morning in December, desperately in need of a job. I was a stranger to the city and I stood on the station platform for several minutes, feeling very lonesome and forlorn, wondering which way I should go to find lodging. As the baggage master came along I asked him if he could tell me which direction to take to find a room. He pointed to a long flight of stairs which he said led to Union street.

"Which house would you recommend?" I asked.

"No choice," he replied, shortly.

I started along in the direction indicated, carrying my rather shabby dress suit case, until I came to a house with a card in the window which read "Rooms to let. Steam heat."

I ascended the flight of steps and rang the bell. A neat looking German woman, of middle age, opened the door. I asked her to show me one of her cheapest rooms. She said she had just one, on the second floor.

The room was small, poorly furnished and uncarpeted and overlooked a back yard which had evidently been used as the dump of the neighborhood for months. But as the room looked clean I said I would take it.

The landlady asked if I had a trunk. As I had none she said she must have her rent in advance. I paid her the \$1.50 and wondered how I was going to get along on the remaining \$1.25 until my first pay day. I said nothing however, and took the key which she offered. Then I started out to find the shoe factories.

I had gone but a few blocks when I saw a sign in the window. "Girl wanted to wait on table for her meals." I entered the dingy looking place.

A man stuck his head through a slide in the wall and inquired what I wanted. I told him.

"Had any experience?" he asked. I answered in the negative.

"Humph," he grunted. "Well, never mind, I'm short of help. I'll try you. Be sure to come back at twelve."

I felt encouraged. I had, at least, a place to eat and sleep for a week.

I started to make the round of the factories hoping to get a job so as to be able to go to work in the afternoon. I went into factory after factory, in each one climbing four and five flights of dirty, narrow stairs. Each time that I reached the top flight I would have to stop and lean out of the window to regain my breath before talking to the foreman.

Never before did I realize how little value the bosses place on our time when we are not working for them. You would think that looking for a job was just a mere pastime for us. They would leisurely saunter down the room looking first at this then at that, finally to return in half an hour or so and calmly say, "No, we don't want any one."

The morning was spent in this way and although I was tired I hurried to the restaurant to wait on the table. The bill of fare read well but that is the best that could be said about it. The food was a collection of meat and vegetables that the grocer must have had ready for the dump.

I do not wonder that men take to drink when they are obliged to eat such truck after breathing the impure air of a factory all day. After the boarders were served the girls were to have whatever was left, and as there was an unusually large crowd that day we found pretty poor pickings.

But I was too hungry to care much so I ate what I could get, and then hurried away to the factories once more. By three o'clock I had found nothing and had about decided to give up the search for that day, for I was worn out, when I saw a sign "Stitchers wanted." The shop was at West Lynn. I had to take a car to reach it in time that day.

The factory was the dirtiest, most miserable looking one I had ever been in. I could not help hesitating about inquiring for the foreman, but I finally did. When he was pointed out to me I thought: "How in keeping he is with the rest of the shop."

He was a big, fat, ignorant looking creature, with cross eyes that helped to make his brutal face even more brutal. He hobbled toward me on a wooden leg and my first impulse, at sight of him, was to turn and fly, to fly down the rickety stairs and get away from him and his factory. But when you have but little over a dollar in the world to call your own you cannot pick and choose your foreman.

I am not sure that I was thankful when he said he wanted some one but not for the part I was used to work upon. But I could come in the morning and try it. So I had a job at last, but so far away from the restaurant that I would be unable to wait on the table at noon. Never mind, I thought, I may be able to get my breakfast and supper that way. After supper I told the restaurant proprietor that I couldn't come at noon any more but that I would come nights and mornings.

"Don't want you then," he snapped. "It is only at noon that we are hard pushed."

I consoled myself with the thought that I might as well starve as to get slowly poisoned by rotten food.

It was a little after seven o'clock when I reached my lodgings that night so I thought I would read for an hour before going to bed. The room seemed so cold that I thought the landlady must have forgotten to turn on the steam.

I went down stairs to learn what was the trouble.

The woman looked at me with a cold eye and told me the furnace was running full blast, but in a tone that said, "If you don't like it you can get out; I have your money."

I had to make the best of it, so I just said, "Never mind. Perhaps I will keep better in cold storage." Then I went up stairs again and crept into bed, where I shivered until morning. I soon found out that the only place where you can find steam heat in a lodging house is on the card in the window.

I arose at half-past five and hurried to a nearby restaurant where I ate a cup of coffee, the only things my slim pocketbook could afford. It was a little before seven when I arrived at the factory, and as I knew I would have to await the foreman's pleasure I got as near the steam pipes as possible, for I was chilled through and through. It was a dreary looking place to have to go to work, for the murky light of the winter morning that struggled in through the dirty windows did not make it any brighter than had it been the afternoon before. The long row of machines beginning their all day jar and whirl, the badly swept floor, the heaped up stacks of partly made shoes and the white faced women getting ready for work, with the smell of leather mingling with it all, made the shop very sordid indeed.

It was at least half an hour before the foreman came hobbling to me, looking more repulsive than ever. He said he would send me Cassie, the room girl. Soon she came, a sweet, delicate appearing girl, who showed me about the machine that had been assigned me and the easiest way to do the work. Then she left me, telling me if I had any trouble to call upon her at any time.

It was not long before I began to get acquainted with my neighbors. On my left was a young married woman, Nettie by name, a Daughter of the American Revolution, she was not long in informing me. She at once commenced to discuss the affairs of the factory.

"What do you think of Ben, the foreman?" she asked.

I said I had not had time to make up my mind.

"He is a beast!" she whispered, "he swears at his wife and he swears at us. I always tremble when I see him coming."

"Why do you tremble?" I asked.

"You know, this is a free shop. One can do what one pleases," she replied.

"Here he come now," she exclaimed a moment later, "and mad, too. Look out!"

Right over to us he came, rage in every line of his ugly face.

"Who did 1513?" he shouted, as he pointed to the case which Cassie, who accompanied him, carried.

"I haven't done any of that kind yet," I said.

"You ain't, eh? Let me see your book." He was sure he was right the first time.

As I had as yet only a few numbers on my book it did not take long to look them over. He banged the book down on the bench. Then he turned to Nettie.

"Give me your book. Ho, what's this? Rubbed the number off your book, have you?"

"No. That was a mistake," Nettie faltered, "that was a number that I copied wrong in the first place and had to correct."

Ben turned away sourly and went on to the next and then to the next, all down the line, but 1513 was not to be found. Some girl afraid of losing her job or of getting a good call down from the boss had taken warning and had had time to erase the telltale number from her record book.

Back came Ben, thinking he must have overlooked the number in the first search. Book after book he examined again but in vain. Baffled, he turned on Cassie.

"Stand 'em up in line," he snarled, "G— em, stand 'em up until I see who in hell looks like the one that did it. If I don't find out who did it I'll turn every G— damned one of them off so as to be sure that I get the right one."

We all stood out, while the foreman run his twisted eyes along the line. Down he came to Nettie, the Daughter of the American Revolution.

"By God," he said, "I believe it was you, and that was the number you rubbed out. You were lying to me, damn you. I've a good mind to fire you anyway."

More, much more, he said which I cannot remember and do not wish to remember. How my blood boiled to hear that brute, who held his position as foreman with nothing to recommend him except his capacity as a brutal slave driver, talking to a refined, sensitive woman in that manner.

Nettie stood with flushed face and trembling lips listening to him but saying nothing. When at last he had worn himself out with shouting and swearing and had gone away, and we had resumed our places at the machines, she laid her head on the machine and sobbed.

"He talks to me that way because I have to stand it," she wailed. "My husband has been out of work for months, as the work in the foundry early killed him. My mother takes care of the baby, but she is old and yesterday—baby drank bluing by mistake. I took her to the doctor's as soon as I got home and he said she

would soon be well." She dried her tears and began work again.

A moment after she looked up smiling. "George—that's my husband—hopes to get on at the electric works and is feeling better already. If he gets on I won't have to stand much more of this."

At dinner I had a sandwich that a boy brought from a nearby restaurant and we worked in silence the rest of the afternoon, the morning incident having cast a gloom over us all. We were glad to hear the whistle blow that night.

It had been snowing hard all the afternoon and as I could not afford to pay carfare I had to walk a mile and a half to Lynn. When I reached the restaurant where I had had breakfast I was wet to the knees. I ordered a couple of rolls and a cup of tea.

A woman who sat opposite me looked at my scanty supper and asked me if that was all I generally ate for my supper. I evaded answering by asking in return if she thought a hearty meal was good for one after a hard day's work. This seemed to stump her and she asked no more questions.

Rather than return to the cold room which I knew awaited me at the lodgings, I wandered through the stores until about 9 o'clock and then reluctantly, though I was tired enough, goodness knows, went to my room. When I reached the house my landlady met me in the hall and told me that the chambermaid, while sweeping out my room had knocked a cracked pane of glass out of a window and she was unable to get it reset.

I asked if she could not give me another blanket for my bed, as I would certainly freeze. She said she had none that was not in use but reached up and took down a portiere with the remark that that was the best she could do. I took the flimsy thing and went up stairs, and evading as best I could the piercing draft that blew in through the broken window I undressed and retired. Try as I might I could not get warm, and it was nearly morning when I went fitfully to sleep. As a result it was late when I awoke and I had to hurry to the car without my cup of coffee. To make matters worse the cars were delayed on account of the storm.

When at last I reached the factory and opened the door leading into the workroom, one of the girls who had been on the lookout for me hurried over and whispered, "Dodge into the dressing room—quick—here comes Ben."

I followed instructions and in a few minutes the same girl peeped into the dressing room and said "All right—he's at the other end of the room." I got to my machine without Ben noticing that I had been late.

Nettie told me that Cassie was sick that morning; she had been up all night with her sick baby. She fainted away in the dressing room after coming to work and she was afraid Ben would find it out and think she was not able to do the work, as she was paid by the day. The other girls were on piece-work. Nettie suggested that I get Cassie to come and look at my machine, so that she could have an excuse to sit down a few minutes.

I went after Cassie. She came, threaded my machine, stitched a few shoes and then sat down beside me on a box to look over my work. She said I was doing fine, but to work slow until I got used to it. Ben's roving eye caught Cassie looking at my work. He was sure something was wrong. Over he came.

"What's the matter here?" he growled. "Nothing much," answered Cassie. "I think the machine was not properly threaded. It is going all right now and her work looks fine." Ben grunted and stumped away. It was evident he was in a bad humor and anxious to get some one to "dress down." Presently he returned.

"You go down to the other end of the room," he said to Cassie, "and see how that new lining maker is getting along; if her work isn't just right let me know. We don't want anybody faking it around here."

Cassie went away. While she was still at the other end of the room, I got out of work. I told one of the girls that I hated to go after Cassie and make her walk the whole length of the room while she was feeling so miserable. The girl answered: "Sure; when Ben's not looking just help yourself off of the paster's bench. We save her a lot of steps that way." I accepted the suggestion. In my haste I got caught I must have grabbed a case with shoes that had not yet been pasted, and of course, as luck would have it, as soon as the case left my hands it fell into Ben's.

The first thing I knew someone touched me on the shoulder. I looked up. There stood Cassie and Ben. She had a case of shoes under her arm and she was shaking. Ben's face was distorted with anger.

"Is that your name?" he roared, as he held out the tag attached to the case. I said it was. I could not imagine what was the matter, as I was sure my work was all right.

"Where did you get that case?" he shouted.

"I took it," I answered calmly enough. My calmness added to his wrath.

"Oh, you did, did you?" He came a little nearer, repeating the words, "You took it, did you?"

"Why, yes," I said, in the same even tone. "I have already told you that I did."

He was striking with rage by this time and the veins on his temple looked ready to burst. He was so enraged to think that anyone should have the au-

# THE CHILDREN'S OWN PAGE

EDITED BY BERTHA H. MAILLY



## THE FIRST DOUBT

BY HELEN HILFSTERN. (Illustrated by F. R. Abbott.)

It is a lovely Christmas Tree  
That Santa Claus has brought to me.  
The popcorn balls and shiny things,  
And birds, and flowers and sparkling strings.  
The drums and angels, canes and spears,  
And vandy cornucopias.  
The balls of glass and beads like ice,  
Silver and bells are all so nice.  
Then wooden horses, woolly sheep,  
And sticky toys that will not keep.  
While down below glass snowflakes  
A big Kris Kringle's at the top!  
It's snowing out of doors today,  
But I can see across the way  
Where there are little girls and boys  
Down in the alley without toys.

### How Christmas Came

By Ellen Dalrymple Mazon

THE cold country of Sweden the days in winter are very short. They are so short that children have to go to school by the time it is light and it is dark as soon as they get home in the afternoon.

A long time ago the fathers and mothers of Sweden were afraid that as the winter was so long and the days were so short the children might forget that summer would come again.

Then they said, "Let us make a holiday for the children to remind them of summer."

First they went to the woods and brought the evergreen trees. "These green trees will make us think of the green grass," said they as they placed the trees in the houses.

Then they said, "We must have the trees blossom and that will make sunshine," so they hung frissons of popped corn around the tree for blossoms and put candles among the branches to remind us of the sun.

Later the glass balls and the tinsel and bright colors helped this idea along.

Then they said "A holiday must have some special kind of food," and they thought for a long while for the most appropriate food for their new holiday.

At last they decided that the food must come from the land of the sun so they took rice and spice and raisins.

When we are happy we give gifts. This was a good place for Santa Claus to come in and he comes to the children of Sweden just as they have sat down to the table to eat the Christmas rice.

When they are all busy eating, he opens the door slyly and drops the presents under the tree.

He is all dressed in fur, for it is very cold. They cannot see his face but they wish to catch him.

They have never caught him for he is very swift and his reindeer are trusty steeds.

When they find they cannot catch him they come back and dance around the tree, singing songs of the day.

Everybody is glad because the summer will come again.

One day a little girl sat looking out of the window and as she watched the birds playing in the snow, she said, "who has told the birds that the summer will come again?"

Everybody looked sad, for no one had thought of the birds before.

"I know how we can tell them," exclaimed brother, "I will get the sheaf of wheat that is in the loft and tie it to the chimney and when the birds see it they will come and eat it and think of summer and be happy too."

After that the boys of Sweden never forgot to save a sheaf of wheat at harvest time for the birds' Christmas.

Now these people of olden times had to choose a day for the holiday to come each year. Some said one day and some another but a wise old man said, "We cannot have it while the days are getting shorter, but we can watch for

## A Story of Christmas Eve

By Kate Baker Heltzel

'Twas a winter evening, long, long, since,  
On a day we count as holy,  
When a little child was born on earth  
Mid the poor, the meek and lowly.  
There were few who cared when the infant came  
And few who gave it mention;  
And its bed was made where the cattle fed  
And it shared the same attention.  
There was scarcely room in the crowded inn  
For a wailing babe and its mother;  
And the law they lived was "an eye for an eye"  
And they really knew no other.  
So the baby lay in the cattle trough,  
And the good book tells the story  
That the wise men came and brought him gifts,  
And the angels sang in glory.  
But the wise were few and they numbered three  
And they came from quite a distance,  
And they could not know that 'no truth  
Christ brought  
Would rouse the world's resistance.  
For the child so poor was the Christ we love  
Or at least I hope we love him;  
For if we do, in the way we should,  
We'll place naught else above him.  
And the young child grew as a baby should,  
With parents' love surrounded;  
But the things he taught as he elder grew  
The wisest men astounded.  
But he said their law of "an eye for an eye"  
Would no longer do for living,  
And as brothers all should dwell 'n peace  
And all should be forgiving.  
But the way Christ lived and the things He taught  
Enraged the men in power,  
For He said that love was the greatest law  
Even to his last sad hour.  
And the only place in the life of Christ,  
Where His anger is recorded,  
Is the temple scene, and the money sharks  
Whom He justly there rewarded.  
For He took a whip and He drove them forth  
Like the swine they were, so greedy,  
For Christ had said that He came to earth  
To help the poor and needy.  
To lift their burdens from their backs  
By the law of love he brought us,  
And as brothers all should share their work,  
The truth is plain He taught us.  
But the men of power in the days gone by  
Were blinded with their feeling,  
And they said that the Christ should be put to death  
Who rebuked them for their stealing.  
And the babe who lay in the manger-bed  
Who loved the poor and lowly  
Is the only one we have ever known  
Who was really, truly, holy.  
And the good book says that the children came  
And He held them near and blessed them,  
And he charged each one in His written word  
That they dared not to oppress them.  
And the hearts of men in the life to come  
In the words of Christ, so mild—  
Should be free from sin and filled with love  
Like the innocent heart of a child.  
So they took the man whom we know as Christ  
Who told them to love each other;  
And they put Him to death in a cruel way  
In the sight of His friends and His mother.  
And the love of gold and of gaining power  
Which they hoped this way to strengthen,  
In time to come will pass away  
As the centuries shall lengthen;  
For the world believes in the love of Christ  
And the brotherhood He taught us,  
And they'd love to live in the way Christ said,  
And fulfill the law He brought us.  
But the men in power who are few but strong  
Who still love gold and plunder,  
Are blind, and dumb and seeming deaf  
To labor's distant thunder.  
And the children whom the Lord hath said  
That we should greatly cherish,  
Are placed in factory, mine and mill  
Of over-work to perish.  
And the things Christ taught which we want to do  
As the truest way of living,  
Are set aside by the very class,  
Whom He had died forgiving.  
So—children dear, when the bells ring out  
Their usual Christmas greeting—  
Remember whose birthday 'tis we keep,  
And the first strange Christmas meeting.  
And think of the Christ-Child's life and death  
And the truth He died to teach us,  
And 'twas all in vain if the truth falls short  
And really fails to reach us.  
And the truth is this—  
That you can't love God and you can't do right  
If you do not love your brother.  
And the chance you have in the world to live  
The same should be as the others.  
So remember Christ when the bells ring out  
In the star-decked air above,  
And the message borne to the heart attuned  
To the one great word of love.

dipping little white drops of sweet in hot chocolate. Sometimes she has been so tired that her feet would scarcely lift themselves and the tears slipped silently down her cheeks as she hurried along in the dark street.

"There are many of these bears that fall from the eyes of young working girls. Often they dry upon the lashes, or fall to the ground while she who sheds them turns away her face. Sometimes they are caught, 'as I was, in the things they are making, and then they either leave an ugly stain, or make the food taste bitter."

"See, I am directing your vision to the room where she lies asleep. She lies close to another girl, for the bed is narrow and the covers too thin and few to give much warmth. A third girl lies asleep on a cot in this tiny room. The carpet strip is frayed on the ends and the walls are bare but for a print or two. There are no curtains at the window.

"See her stir a little. By the magic of my memory and the sadness in her heart, she, too, is dreaming and she is dreaming of—you.

"She sees you with the joy and love of life around you. She sees you sitting in your pretty warm room, reading your books and eating the sweets she has worked to prepare. She does not know that these are the very chocolate drops she handled, but a cry rises in her heart:

"Why can't I, when I work so hard, have some of these nice things?"

Then the streak of moonlight began to pass away from the bed and as it withdrew, Ruth sat up in bed and holding her hands out to the moonbeam, cried softly:

"Oh, Spirit of the Tear, tell the little chocolate maiden that I see now, and so long as she has to do the work and has so little joy, and I have the nice things and don't work for them, all the candy and other things will be a little bitter to me. But some day I'll find the little chocolate maiden and then together we will share both work and play."

### Lillian's Letters

Lillian Goes Christmas Shopping.



Dear Mamma:  
It seems awful queer to be here in New York, away from home just at Christmas time, 'cause we're always so busy at home just before Christmas—popping corn for the tree and making things for presents and learning pieces for school.

Oh, you know, Mamma, that girl I told you about that I got acquainted with at the Socialist school last week? She told me that day she worked in a five and ten cent store and it is not far from where Auntie lives. So when you sent me that fifty cents to spend for Christmas I thought I'd go to that five and ten cent store, 'cause you can get so many things there for fifty cents.

I pretended to Auntie that I was just going for a walk, because I wanted to get her something. I don't think that was a real lie, do you, mamma?

Then I went to that place and I got an ash-tray for Uncle Jim, for five cents and a lovely vase for Auntie for ten cents and a handkerchief for Bessie and

## GIFTS FOR ALL UNDER SOCIALISM



### Who Made the Toys for Christmas?

From away over the ocean almost all of the toys come to the United States. The home of the toy-makers is a group of countries of Europe. In Germany the greatest number is made, while Switzerland, France and Hungary send great loads of toys all over the world.

When we say that Germany makes a great number of toys, what sort of a picture comes to your minds, boys and girls? It's some kind of a big, uncertain looking person, handing out tops and dolls and skates, isn't it?

What do we really mean? Why, we mean that the real men and women, just like your fathers and mothers, and real children, just like yourselves, with real hands and fingers and eyes and minds, touched the toys, molded them, finished them, packed them and went home afterward, too tired to do anything but eat a bit of supper and go to bed.

Here is a little cheap doll that you can buy anywhere for five or ten cents. At least a dozen persons worked on it in the factory to get it ready for sale.

Some Father ground up and rubbed into a paste with a sort of gum, old rags and other old materials. This he did working in a hot steaming room. Then when the doll came out of a mold it had to be smoothed with sandpaper. Perhaps Brother did this and passed it on to Mother who fastened on the little wisp of hair on the head.

Then one girl put a little dab of red paint on its cheeks, another girl blackened the eyebrows and another fastened on the arms which were made in a separate machine, pouring them out by the thousands.

So you see the whole family appears to work at the making of toys. And this is true. In the parts of Germany where the toys are carved out of wood, babies as soon as they can walk begin to learn to carve. And all the rest of the family works at it, too.

For many, many years this has been the custom in the toy-making parts of Europe, but where as they used to remain at home and make the toys by hand, now it is largely done in roaring, whizzing factories where it is very unpleasant and unhealthful to work. All this change has come about because so many kinds of machines have been invented by which toys can be made very fast.

These factoryies turn out thousands of toys every day and many of the working people in these "toy" countries are employed in that way. There are 50,000 in Germany alone. That's a great many. And in the quaint old town of Nuremberg, where almost all of the tin

soldiers come from, there are thousands more. In Hungary, where the rubber toys are made, there are still other thousands.

Then, if we jump away over to Japan where the bamboo and ivory toys come from, we shall find other great factories where other thousands of people work.

Now think for a little, children, and tell me, are those thousands of men, women and children who work in the toy factories of Europe and Japan, all that have to do with the making of toys? Thing hard.

Some bright girl or boy is saying "No, some people had to work to make the machines to make the toys." Yes, and others had to chop down trees to get the wood out of which to carve the toys. Others had to get the minerals out of which the paint is made to paint the faces. Others had to bring all of these things to the factories.

Others had to get the iron ore out of the earth to make the steel to construct the machines.

Others had to make the clothing for all these workers connected with the toy industry.

Others had to produce food for them to eat.

Why, children, I could go on for a long time and tell you of hundreds of groups of people who work to produce the toys sold at Christmas, until at last some boy or girl would say:

"I guess it takes the whole world to make a few toys."

And that would be just about right. It does take a mighty army of working people to make a few toys.

When we have settled that, just look at the picture on this page and ask yourselves "who, most of all enjoy the toys?"

### The Yule Log

The Yule log which is still part of the Christmas celebration in England and Scotland, is a remnant of the feast of Juno, when the Scandinavians built huge fires in honor of their God Thor.

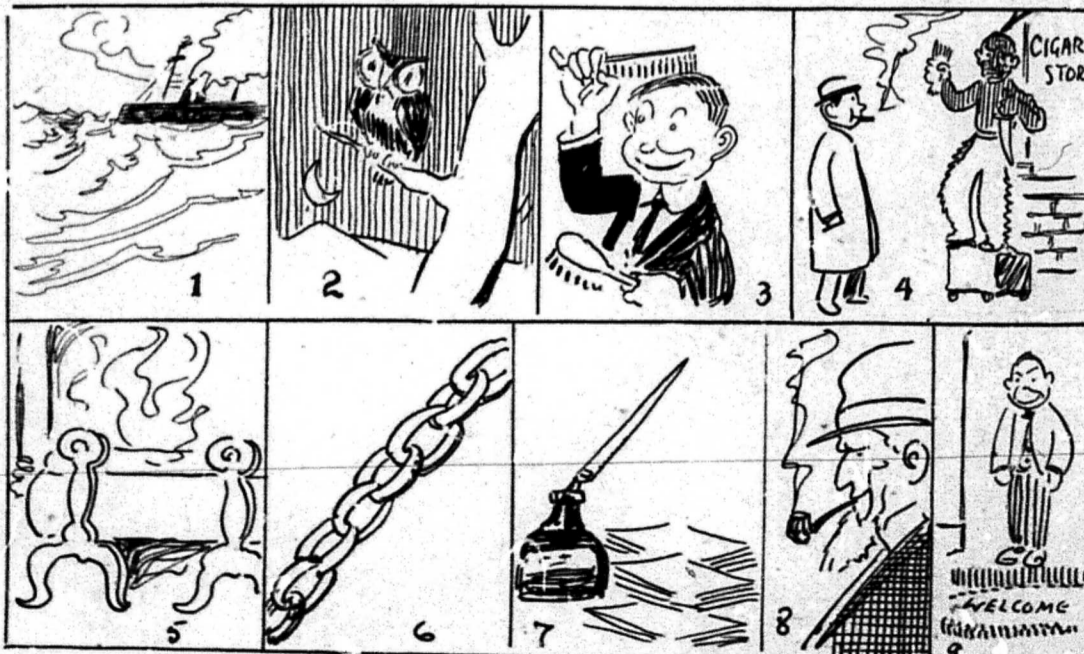
Part of the Yule log was kept hidden away for a whole year to light the Yule log of the succeeding year. It was the common belief that if there was a piece of the Yule log in the house, the house could not possibly burn down.

It was also believed that if a squinting woman should enter the room while the Yule log was burning, it would bring bad luck on the house.

In parts of England the bringing in of the Yule log was the principal ceremony and was the time of unlimited hospitality. Here is an old inscription which shows the feeling:

"Welcome be ye that are here;  
Welcome all and make good cheer,  
Welcome all another year,  
Welcome Yule."

Even toys show what is most important in life at any time. The little children who lived in the times of the early Christian martyrdom had for toys representations of these scenes. Nowadays the child who has up-to-date toys must have a toy automobile or air ship or trolley car.



### PICTURE REBUS

The first letters of the above pictures if correctly guessed and properly arranged will spell something that is in the air. What is it?

# Fair Play

A Little Story of Real Life

By George Allan England



LATE afternoon was verging on toward evening in the "Five-and-Ten-Cent Bazaar." The incandescents were beginning to glow above the jumbled counters, behind which listless girls, pale and overdriven, wrapped parcels without end or made interminable change for the jostling public.

Haste, noise and petty greed—the place half-sickened David Evans, "Big Dave," but still he pushed his way along toward the toy-counter. For there was something he wanted to buy, and his flat purse said "No" to any other place than this.

Time had been, not very many weeks ago, when Dave's pocketbook had been less lean. When, up at the saw works, he had drawn his twenty-five per. And this, in spite of the active agitation he had carried on for organization; in spite of the Appeals and Coming Nations he had handed round, the little noon-hour talks he had given to a score of listeners; some sympathetic, some jesting, but all eager to hear what he had to say.

But now a change had come. No, the company had done nothing—nothing that Dave could lay a finger on. They hadn't dared to fire him. Dave's hold upon his mates, they knew, had been too strong. The company had feared revolt if Big Dave had got the axe. Yet, just the same, here was Dave now, out of his job; glad of casual labor, a pariah and an outcast, wifeless and with a little girl to support from his scant, uncertain earnings. How had all that come to pass?

Dave wondered dully about it all, as he halted in front of a counter. He looked very shabby and ill at ease, very much out of place among those painted trifles. His mind seemed clouded by all the hardships, by the shock of losing Anna, by the blasting sorrows of the past few weeks.

"If Anna was only dead, I'd stand it," he murmured. "But this—"

His thick fingers trembled just a little as he fumbled with a toy auto, a bubble-blowing set, a child's mirror set round with sea-shells. He seemed to be weighing the relative desirability of these and all the other playthings spread out in gaudy rows before him. He put the mirror down and took up a miniature tea-set.

"Which d'you suppose the kid would like best?" he murmured with sovereign indecision. "Too bad—can't get her more'n one."

A melancholy smile lighted his plain, good-humored face. He glanced down with honest gray eyes at his hard-worn coat, with its button-holes frayed to the binding. That sight pained him. In the better days, Anna would have put the coat in shape. Her deft fingers always had been ready to patch and mend and keep Dave neat. Now Dave felt very lost and lonely. He wondered, with a great and yearning wonder why Anna had taken up with Slattery, the new hand at the works. A groan escaped him.

No, there was no doubting the evidence of his senses. He had seen them walking together twice—and then, that letter—! Dave had done the only thing that had seemed honorable to him, he had taken the little girl away put her in hiding, and had written Anna that everything was over. He hadn't dared risk an interview with her. Neither had he sued for divorce, nor yet killed Slattery. A peaceful man, Dave, but inexorably honest. And as he had seen his duty, so he had done it.

But from that hour he had gone down, down, down. His work had fallen off in quantity and quality. He had been unable to pull together. It had been, to him, as though the mainspring of his life had snapped. The blue envelope of discharge, well-merited (he thought) had come as no surprise. He had picked up and left, saying good-bye to his old-time pals, telling them the fault was his, bidding them keep on with the good work of agitation. Himself, he felt, had been done for. All that remained was just little Irma, the six-year-old. Dave groaned again.

"You bein' waited on?" slurred an anaemic girl, smoothing back a tremendous pompadour through which a "rat" protruded.

"Guess I'll take this" answered Dave, tapping the auto with sudden resolution.

"Ten cents, please!" And the girl waited, auto in hand, while David counted out a nickle and five pennies, one by one.

As she wrapped the top in slimsy paper, David stood looking at her with unseeing eyes. His gaze pierced through her, through the cheap shams of the "Five-and-Ten" through the whole city, away and away to a second-story room of a suburban tenement.

"Wonder what Irma's doin' just now?" mused he. "Wonder if she's bein' fed all right, and watched, by Mrs. Blake? Kind of tough luck, ain't it? Worse'n as if her mother'd died, that's sure!"

He laid a big hand on the counter and studied it.

"Look-a there, now, will you? Mor'n one callous on that paw for her an' the gal—an' still she wouldn't stick to me! Give it all up, her man,

kid, home an' all, for him, an' left me without—well, without nothin' but a room to keep Irma in, on hired care!

"What kind o' care is hired care, I'd like to know? An' for a young'un that age, too? It's rotten, all right! If she'd just died, why, I'd ha' know where she was, anyhow—but now—"

"Here y'are, sir." The shop-girl's toneless voice recalled him with a start. He noticed with surprise that his fist was tightened.

"Thanks," he muttered shame-

Only a growl for answer "Dave, take her this, anyway, if you won't listen to me! Give it to her and tell her mamma sent it. Even though I can't see her and don't know so much as where on earth she is, I can send it to her, can't I? That's what I bought it for—just that chance to send it sometime!"

She tried to thrust the doll into his hand, but he drew back.

"Oh, it's paid for!" she added quickly.

"Yes, with his money!" "Oh, Dave, how can you?" "Well, ain't it?"

anything—you threatened what you'd do if I tried to see you or even tried to send you word! You left me without any way to clear myself. Never gave me a chance! Never let me explain! Not one word from you in all these five weeks since you sent me down-town that day for medicine and stole Irma away from me—"

"There, now, that's enough!" he interdicted. He squared his shoulders and protuded a defiant lower lip.

"But you did steal her, Dave! Tell me, is she all right? D'you keep her covered up, nights? You know how she used to kick the clothes off,

cheek, the updrawing of the mouth as this sudden, unaccustomed mental effort racked his consciousness. Tremendous readjustments, she felt instinctively, were taking place in David's mind—renunciations of fixed ideas, new thoughts battling with old; and pride, too, fighting desire.

With open lips through which her breath drew unsteadily, she stood there waiting, watching with eyes wherein burned a fire of supreme appeal—an appeal which David could not see. She leaned against the counter edge. Her strength, she felt, was very nearly drained away, and

bullet. All at once comprehension dawned upon him. His muscles tensed; his fist knotted itself into a terrible weapon.

"So that was the game they put up on me, t' get me out, was it?" he cried in a loud voice. "Didn't dare to do it open an' above-board, so—"

He stopped short.

"Here, girlie," he exclaimed, thrusting the toy he had bought into her hands. "Go to Irma. Tell her—tell her you've been away on a visit. Tell her you're never goin' to leave her again!"

"But, Dave, where is she? And aren't you coming, too?" the woman cried, dazed with the joy and shock of reconciliation.

Hastily Dave gave her the address. Then he added:

"No, I'm not coming, quite yet. But I'll be back soon, girl. Back with a clean score again, to take up work like a man—to make good."

"Where—where you going, Dave?" He laughed. "Oh to Chicago, for a day or two. I'll get there somehow and I'll come back safe, never fear. I've got business, pressing business, in Chicago!"

He drew the woman close in his arms, even there in the street, kissed her tenderly, and then, suddenly releasing her, turned and vanished in the crowd.

Only then did Anna realize that down her cheeks the tears were coursing, the tears of a long-pent repression, the tears of a great and sudden joy.

## Why I Got Fired

(Continued From Page 3.)

darity to say she had done some forbidden thing.

"Who told you to take it?" he demanded.

I looked at Cassie. Poor girl, she was trembling so I thought she would drop the case she was holding.

"No one," I said. "I took it because Cassie was at the other end of the room and I was waiting for work."

"Well," he retorted, "you know what you can do? You can finish up that case and get out."

"What for?" I asked. "The shoes are not spoiled. The staves can be cemented on as well as before and the stitching is all right, isn't it?"

"That don't make a damned bit of odds. You get out and get out damned quick. You need not mind finishing your case, d'ye hear? Get out!"

As I looked at this man, with his face distorted and purple with rage, I could not help thinking what satisfaction it is with one with a small mind to be able to say to another human being "Get out!"

Tears, not of fear but born of anger, sprang to my eyes at the thought that a monster like this had it in his power to turn me out for telling the truth. If I had lied and he knew it, it would have been all right with him. But because I was not afraid to tell him the truth—that was too much. His puny mind balked at the outrage.

As I did not move while these thoughts were passing through my brain he gave another yell "Get out! I tell you, Get out!"

"Mr. Bun," I said, as steadily as I could, "You seem to have forgotten your authority over me ended when you first told me to get out. There is a certain amount of time allowed me in which to get out and I intend to take it."

That evoked a fresh outburst. "You get, damn you, get! or I'll throw you out!"

"No you won't!" I said, and this time I was neither very calm nor very steady in my manner of speaking. "You cowardly cur, you dare not do it, for you know you won't, look well in the police court to-morrow morning. I think there is a limit even for such as you."

This made him gasp like a fish, and his eyes became more distorted and horrible looking than ever. To finish it off, a slight titter arose from the crowd that had gathered, unable to resist taking in the scene. That turned his attention to them.

"What in hell are you doing here?" he yelled. "Get back to your places, all of you, or by God, you'll all get the same dose."

They scattered like frightened sheep and before I could get my things picked up and gathered together they were all back at their machines, apparently intent upon their work. As I passed out the few girls with whom I had become acquainted glanced up furtively and whispered goodbye. Nettie, without daring to look up, grasped my hand and said "Goodbye, I hope I'll see you again sometime." I saw a tear fall upon the shoe she was stitching.

I went to Cassie to have her O. K. my slip so that I could get my pay.

"Oh, I'm so sorry that you got fired," she said, "I was so afraid that you were going to say that I gave you that case and I have a sick baby to support. I don't know what would become of me if I lost my job."

As I went down the dark, creaking stairs to the street the thought of what awaited me—the cold room at the boarding house, the sordid, cheerless restaurant, the weary search for another job through the wet, snow-driven streets, the dirty factories to be invaded and the arrogant foremen, to be interviewed—all this, crystallized into one bleak vista, arose before me and then somehow, by some strange twist there flashed through my mind a phrase learned in childhood "Speak the truth, speak it ever, cost you what it may."

And I laughed.

THE BREAD LINE CHRISTMAS EVE MIDNIGHT



CHRISTMAS SCENES

expecting a turkey from Uncle

She shook her head.

"No, not his, nor yours. Mine!" "Where'd you get any money? I s'pose you'll tell me next that you're workin'." You'll tell me you never run away from me an' the kid with—him?"

"That's the truth, both times, the living truth! I am working; have been, almost ever since it happened. Working on paper boxes down to Wright & Wheeler's. Twenty cents a gross and docked for all I spoil. As for my running away—you know better!"

"That so? How about—?" "I never, so help me! It was all a lie and a mistake, mostly all a lie, a mess o' lies! Things looked bad, I know, but there wasn't any real truth in what he said, not a word o' truth!"

Dave laughed with bitter scorn. "I s'pose you'll be tellin' me, next, I didn't see you two walkin' together a couple o' times!" he jibed. "I s'pose you'll say you never wrote that letter!"

"I never did, so help me!" "What?" "He wrote it, Dave! Oh you don't know, Dave, you just don't know the truth!" Her words came swiftly and with growing supplication. "You don't understand at all! You judged me w'out a hearing. You wouldn't even listen or let me write you, or

her knees were trembling under her.

"Oh Dave!" she whispered. "Just a chance to tell you! Just a show to make good! Just fair play!"

The man's hand dropped. The Anglo-Saxon instinct was aflame.

"By God!" cried he, his eyes widening with a new resolve, "by God, you'll get that, anyhow—fair play! Come along out o' here!"

He seized her hand and drew it through the hollow of his arm.

"Come along!" "You promise, Dave, to—?" "I promise nothin'! Nothin', only to listen."

"That's all I want—for now!" Together they went elbowing out into the human tide, away toward the door.

Once outside, in the street, the woman stopped him.

"Dave, listen!" said she. "Well?"

"He's gone, now, Slattery is. I s'pose you know that?"

"Huh?" "Gone."

"Where? Why?" "Henderson, you know Hendy—he found some typewritten stuff last week that Slattery'd dropped. Stuff from the Blackerton Detective Agency, in Chicago. So they got on to what he was. After that, well—he didn't stay long."

Dave started as though struck by a

UNDER THE MISSILE TOE



John Sloan - 1910

# A Shop Girl's Christmas Story

By William Mailly

**H**ER name was Nettie Myerson. I met her first under unusual circumstances. It was on Christmas eve—or Christmas morning rather for the big clock on the Metropolitan tower showed that midnight was past and the first hour of the great festal day was nearly spent. I was hurrying home, where I knew a warm Christmas welcome awaited me. The night was clear and a seasonable premonition of snow impregnated the chill air. The wind-swept streets, lined with tall, dark office buildings, towering above irregularly lit-up dwelling houses dwarfed by contrast, seemed forlorn and bare in the bright moonlight, and the sidewalk echoed back my footsteps sharply. I was glad that home was not far away.

Suddenly around a corner, so that it startled me, came swiftly the hurrying form of a woman, and close behind, on her very heels almost, followed a man. So suddenly did they appear, and so fleet were they that the high-pitched voice of the woman reached me only after they had passed.

"Leave me alone! Stop following me! I'm a decent girl! Leave me alone, I tell you! Go away!"

So genuine was the note of distress in the shrill voice, that I stopped, turned, hesitated a moment, and then hastened after the couple. Soon they turned another corner, where a church fenced in by iron railings, stood in lonely, sombre shadow, she, pursued, evidently making for the lighted thoroughfare beyond, he, pursuing, evidently eager to stop her ere her goal was reached. I followed and as I neared them I saw him put his hand upon her arm while she fought him off, still shrilly protesting. Then I called out and he, looking around, saw me and, with an oath, thrust her from him, darted across the street and disappeared.

She, staggering from the blow, also saw me, and when I reached her side, she was clinging to the church railings, white-faced, sobbing and hysterical. Then I saw she was but a girl, and a working girl at that. I spoke to her reassuringly, but it was some minutes before she became calm.

"What was the matter? Who was he?" I asked.

"Oh, I don't know. . . . I never saw him before. He stopped me and when I walked away he followed me and . . . I couldn't shake him."

I understood. I had heard of these things.

"But come," I said, "he's gone now. There's no need of being afraid."

For her startled eyes still kept glancing fearfully around.

I offered to see her home.

"Home?" she echoed. "That's the trouble. . . . I have no home."

She leaned her head against the railings, clasping them with her thin-gloved hands, while her body shook with repressed sobbing. Then I noticed, also, how thin and well worn her clothes were.

Well, not to go into too many details, the upshot of it was that she came home with me, after much urging and explaining on my part. And thus we came to have in this young, brown-eyed, black-haired Russian Jewess, an unexpected and interesting Christmas guest.

And this is the story, in part, that Nettie told my wife and me when she had rested over night and felt somewhat at home.

"This seems like a dream—sure it does. I was coming from the store—S—'s, you know it, that big department store—when you saw me last night. And say, I'm glad you did see me and come after me. I was so scared I couldn't stop to speak to anyone. That was the second time that happened to me this week. One doesn't know hardly what to do at such a time. The store was open late, being Christmas, you know. Ugh, I hate Christmas! All us girls do, it's such a sham. You've heard that before? Well, it's true. So would you if you were in our places. We've good reason to hate it. . . ."

"A lot of us was laid off last night. They always do when the Christmas rush is over. I don't know how many there was of us—hundreds, I guess. And I was one of them. You see I was only on during the rush season, like a lot more. We knew it was coming, but each one of us was hoping she'd be kept on. That's what they do—make each girl think that if she does well in sales, she'll be kept on, so we don't know until the last minute almost whether we're going to keep our jobs or not. Some of the girls cried, they was so disappointed."

"That wasn't the worst of it, either. When I got my pay tonight there was 50 cents docked for fines. They said I was late five mornings, look, here's the slip checked up. Well, I was late. I was so dead tired after working till eleven o'clock every night for nearly two weeks I slept late those mornings. So would you, mam, if you was on your feet fifteen and sixteen straight hours with no rest, not even to sit down. Some of the girls couldn't hold out—they just fainted dead away."

"I wasn't the only one that was fined; we nearly all was. Some girls had a dollar taken off their pay. Some of us kicked but it didn't do no good. They told us we knew the rule when we started in. So we did—but what's the use? Other girls said nothing—they were the regular ones and they were afraid of losing their jobs. . . . Gee,

but we girls do have to put up with such a lot of things, you wouldn't believe! . . ."

"That wasn't all, either. I had awful bad luck this week. I lost some money, yesterday once and twice on other days. How did I lose it? Just dropped it in the store, that's all. First, a quarter, then a dime, then a whole fifty cents—eighty-five cents in all. That's a regular thing, too. You see, we used to get so nervous, what with the customers rushing us and the noise and the shoving and crowding and the things getting all muddled up and the floorwalker watching us, we couldn't hold onto things—they'd keep falling out of our hands, especially the money, when we were handling the change. And once money would get on the floor there was no finding it again, there was so much paper and boxes and things piled up under our feet behind the counter. Then, anyway, there wasn't time to stop and look for it, so we had to make it up out of our own pockets."

"So I had only \$2.65 for my week's



She leaned her head against the railings

work, and me owing two weeks room rent, which is three dollars alone! . . . How many hours was that for? Well, figure it for yourselves—at least fifteen a day. And you know they had us work the last two Sundays, nearly all day, fixing up the counters after Saturday's rush. We always had to fix up the counters the other nights after the store was closed. Of course, we got our meals Sundays—that was something. Then they gave us 35 cents for supper every night, that's instead of pay for overtime. We wouldn't spend all that for supper, of course—35 cents was my 'umit, so we had the rest for breakfast and car fare, those of us that didn't walk home. Usually I walk to my boarding house, it's not far, but those mornings I was late. I took the car, trying to get to the store on time. Yes, we had our meals in the store. They wouldn't let us out, you know; took up too much time. Some of the girls brought their lunches with them."

"What did I do in the store? Well, first, they put me in the grocery department, selling nuts and oranges and dates and so on. But they said I was too slow, that I was too green to weigh quick enough the first couple of days, so they shifted me to the book department. That grocery department sure was a terror. There was only three of us there and there was work for a dozen. Lord knows, what it was like Christmas week. One of the girls was in bad shape, too. She had been there through the Thanksgiving rush and she wasn't over it yet. Sometimes she just let go of things, she was so nervous and strung up, and I've seen her when she could hardly mark the figures in her charge book."

"One day I was switched off to the toy department. I couldn't understand this until I found the rush there was getting so great they needed girls that had some experience already and wasn't too green. And I stayed there until I left last night. It was real interesting at first, with all the queer little toys—the horses and wagons and airships and automobiles and tumbling men and other things. It seemed real fun at first but after awhile they got on my nerves, and I couldn't see any fun in them. There was so many different kinds and we had to handle them so often and wind them up and explain them and sort them and answer questions about them from the children that I got to hate the sight of toys. I used to dream about them at night and see all kinds of wild things flying and jumping around and the ricketty-racketty noise used to run through my head like fireworks going off, so I was more tired when I got up than when I lay down."

"The rush got worse every day and we were going every minute, except when we were eating, which wasn't long, just fifteen minutes, though we're supposed to get forty-five. The last days, they just served coffee and sandwiches to us at the counters and we grabbed a bite when we could. If

we could only have got sitting down sometimes, it wouldn't have been so bad, but we couldn't. Oh, yes, there was stools there for us all right, but we could only use them when there was nobody to wait on, which never happened, and we stuffed the stools under the counter out of our way. The best we could do was lean up against something. Gee, how my back used to ache and my legs got so weak I couldn't hardly stand. And my feet—well, there ain't no words fit to describe them."

"There was times the last couple of days when we girls got so worked up we'd feel like throwing the toys at customers' heads when they was specially cranky. Some of them was fierce, and the nearer it got to Christmas the fiercer they got. (And the women—they was worst of all. The men was easy. Being usually in a hurry, they'd take most anything we'd give them, unless they had special orders. But the women, with their kids, would turn over everything they saw and we'd have to straighten out after them, and they'd ask all sorts of silly questions and criticize until we'd almost scream, we'd get so excited. Such women don't seem to stop to think what trouble they cause and they're the ones that ought to think seeing as they know what young girls have to go through at times."

"Before the rush got too bad, we used to spell off for lunch in pairs and go up to the store restaurant and eat. You see that store is not a swell one—that is, not very swell—just so-so—and we girls was allowed to eat along with the customers. But we didn't eat what they did, oh, no; Katie—that was my chum—used to say if they paid us decent wages we'd order more and the restaurant would do a bigger business, and they'd get our money back anyway. A sandwich and cup of coffee and a piece of cake or pie or a charlotte russe was usually what we got. That cost us 15 cents. Some days we got a plate of soup or ice cream, if we felt flush, and that'd be five cents more. But that wasn't often."

"Katie was a nice girl. She was Irish, but that didn't stop us from getting to be good friends. It's funny, ain't it, how people brought up different—of different races, I mean—get to be chums when working alongside each other? I've noticed that often. Katie and me never talked about religion and such things. Somehow we never thought of such things, and she didn't seem to mind me being a Jew. We'd talk about clothes and hats and moving pictures and the shop and the customers and—well, beans. That is, Katie would for I didn't know any fellows much."

"One day she got extra confidential and told me she had a fellow once, a real steady. They went together a long time and they'd have got married, only they kept waiting until he got more wages. You know how it is. I've seen lots that way, haven't you? Well, Katie's beau worked in that very store once. He was a deliverer on the wagons and they got acquainted just by accident. It was awful interesting the way Katie told it. I couldn't tell it the same way. He must have been a real nice fellow. They used to see each other regular and he used to rush through his work so as to walk home with her across town, which wasn't often, as he usually worked later than she did."

"Well, I can't repeat all she told me, not the same way, anyway. It sounded like a real story you read about. But they didn't get married like lovers do in the stories. They waited so long for him to get a raise—\$30 a month was all he got—Tom—that was his name—he got impatient and one day he braces the boss for more money, but he didn't get it. The boss was so uppish about it Tom lost his temper, he was so disappointed and all, and they had words. It was near Christmas, too, last year, and the boss he didn't say anything more right then, and Tom thought he'd forgotten all about it, but what'd you think? When they laid off the extra help after Christmas Tom he was laid off, too! He'd been there such a long time, he never expected it, but the boss saw there was lots more men anxious to get the job at the same pay."

"Tom was all broke up about it, and so was Katie. There he was out of a job, right in the dead of winter! Of course, he tried to get another job, but he could only pick up odd ones here and there and what with one thing and another he and Katie sort a got parted, seeing as there was no chance of them being married at all. The day she told me, Katie hadn't heard from him in months. She thought he'd gone off some where else—enlisted in the army or something. And ever since then Katie couldn't seem to get another fellow."

"She used to get dreadful discouraged at times and have the blues awful. One day she give me a bad scare. 'I declare to God,' she says sudden, when we sat down to have lunch, 'if it wasn't for dad and the shame it'd be to him I'd go bad!'"

"What?" says I, "you wouldn't do that, Katie, you know you wouldn't!"

"Oh, yes, I would," she says, with a queer look in her face—I can't describe it exactly—, 'other girls do and get away with it, and why shouldn't I? Its business, that's what it is. Look at Sadie B. over at the doll counter. She does it and nobody cares. We have to earn a living, haven't we? But dad is the only-one I care about. He'd die of shame if I brought disgrace on him. He'd never hold his head up in church again. Oh, I shouldn't think of such things but I just can't help it."

"Then she put her hands to her face and I saw she was crying. I couldn't say anything, I was that thunderstruck! After awhile she looked up and wiped her eyes and says, 'never mind me, Nettie. I get these fits often. Tomorrow I'll go to late mass and feel better. I tell

you I get a lot of good out of going to church. The music's grand at high mass and it sort of lightens me up. I always forget the sermon but the music stays with me all day. I wouldn't miss it for anything!'"

"Katie never spoke that way to me again, but somehow I felt she was still thinking that way, just the same. Not that such talk was new to me. I've heard lots of it in the shops where I've worked and I've known girls that went bad and worked right beside me. They said they had to do it, it was a matter of business, just like Katie said. It's their families that holds girls back more than anything. They ain't bad—at least not what you would call bad. Its not having things they ought to have. . . ."

And there's always lots of men waiting around to help them; get started bad. We used to spot them in the store right along. We got to know them. They'd



Katie Wiped Her Eyes

come along making believe they wanted to buy only, but really it was to get talking with the girls. Of course, we couldn't afford to offend customers with the floorwalker watching as but it didn't take long for us to let them know there was nothing doing. You know, its the prettiest girls that go first? Oh, its hard, and around Christmas time, somehow, it's always hardest. Because there seems to be more of the things we ain't got, I guess. Good people they look down on girls that go bad but nobody knows what we girls go up against. . . . I'm going to try and keep friends with Katie. She told me where she lived."

"All us girls are sore on Christmas. There ain't any enjoyment for us, and I don't think there's much for other people, either—not as much as they pretend, at least."

"Katie said it was better this year than last because of the agitation some women outside had carried on, but then, she said, not everybody had money enough to buy ahead."

"And that reminds me what happened to us one day we was having supper and two women came and sat at the same table with us. One of them was younger than the other, and she was about forty, I guess. I noticed them particular, as they didn't seem like the other women that bought things—I mean in the way they looked and talked. We couldn't help hearing what they said and they was talking about some law to stop working women and girls' overtime and how it was all right so far as it went, except at Christmas time. I was so interested in what they said Katie had to pinch me to wake me up. And one of the women noticed I was listening and she leans over and asks us some questions. Katie was awful close-mouthed, and she such a great talker other times, but I answered them, and just as we got up to go one of the women—the oldest one, she was thin and wore glasses and had a nice smile—she says quite straight, 'Girls, why can't you get together and form a union? You know we can't do anything for you while you go on this way. You've got to help yourselves. Its a shame—' But Katie she pulled me away and I missed the rest. The women looked disappointed, too. And when we got back to the counter Katie said, 'You'd better not say anything to the other girls about what them women said, or you'll get into trouble. They're agitators. Unions ain't allowed here.'

"There, I guess I've talked enough now. What time is it? Gee, I must be going. I've got to see my landlady, you know. She'll think I've run off with my room rent. I've got to give her something—that'll stand her off for another week. I don't feel so afraid to meet her as I did last night. I just hated to face her. She ain't bad, you know, or she wouldn't let me owe her at all. She's her own rent to pay—then its me for another job tomorrow or next day, though there'll be nothing doing until after New Year's, and that's a full week off."

"But look here," interposed my wife, "you're not going away like that, Nettie. You've got to stay and have dinner with us. It's all ready. This is Christmas day, you know. We couldn't think of letting you go this time of day. . . . there, be sensible now. You must forget all about a job today or tomorrow, or even the next day. You've got to have a real merry Christmas with us."

"A Merry Christmas, mam! Here with you? . . . Oh, I didn't expect that, mam, I declare I didn't. . . . but if you really want me . . . Well, I'll go and see my landlady first, and get that off my mind. . . . where are my things? . . . I'll be back soon. Yes, I will. . . . but, oh, mam!"

I slipped from the room and left the two women together while the girl had her cry out on my wife's shoulder. We knew that all Nettie said was

true. She was not the only one. She was but one of many—one of the hundred thousand women and young girls employed in department and retail stores, candy and box factories in New York, and subject to the same excessive toil and low wages, vexations economy, bitter self-denial, temptations and humiliations as she.

**Working 85 Hours A Week.**

The following facts, the result of extensive investigations carried on by interested parties in previous years, are submitted in partial corroboration of Nettie's story:

"In none of the stores investigated was there direct payment for overtime, which for the nine open evenings was at least 36 hours, or more than 3 1/2 working days. The remuneration was 35 cents supper money in three stores, 25 cents supper money in one store, supper donated in one store, in another two sand-



Katie Wiped Her Eyes

wiches and a cup of coffee were given and in three stores no return except two days off, which with January "white sales" and steel taking were often delayed until February."

A girl 16 years old worked in the audit department of one store from 8 a. m. to 10 p. m., meal time excluded, every night in the preceding fortnight before Christmas; a weekly total of 7 1/2 hours. This girl continued to work until 9:30 p. m. three days a week until January 22d. Another girl 18 years old worked from 8:15 a. m. to 10 p. m., meal time excluded, 7 3/4 hours a week during the 10 days preceding Christmas; her weekly wage was \$5, with nothing extra for overtime except three days off later in the season, when her services were least likely to be needed. Another girl during the week before Christmas worked from 8 a. m. to 1: p. m., that is, 8 1/2 hours—and obliged to stand all of the time."

"Women were seen coming out of stores at 1:40 a. m. They had been there since 8 a. m. and were to return at 8 a. m. Wagon boys and helpers have been seen in attendance upon the wagons as late as mid-night."

Regarding the candy stores an authority at a Home for Working Girls said: "A girl in a store on 34th street—one branch store of a large company—worked two Sundays before Christmas all day, receiving a full day's pay. Beginning December 14, she worked until 10, 11 and on Christmas eve, 12 o'clock. The extra pay for this, was 50 cents a night. Half an hour of her lunch time was taken off in these busy weeks. She has been ill ever since—part of the time in an hospital." In this same company's factory one girl received \$5.50 a week, others not less than \$6 and the average was admitted to be \$7 a week.

**Fighting For Improvement.**

Nevertheless, bad as conditions are there has been some improvement in recent years, mainly due to the passage of the Mercantile law of New York state, enacted after seventeen years of intense agitation by the Consumers League and the labor organizations. Even then this law was ineffective for some time, because a "joker" in the bill placed the enforcement of the law under the boards of health in the cities, which were totally unfit for the work. But renewed agitation succeeded in placing stores under the State Factory Inspection with a consequent improvement. This change was only made against the organized opposition of the store proprietors.

Under this law there is a ten-hour limit on the work of women under twenty-one but as the court of appeals has decided that it was unconstitutional to establish any closing hour a normal closing hour becomes almost purely illusory. Already in November of this year the shops making candy and behind these the box factories manufacturing for the rush trade were working illegally without interference.

Further an exception in the law exempts women from protection as to hours at the very time they most need protection. That is, up to this year, during the two weeks from December 15th until January 1st, the ten hour limit was suspended. This year, it is reported, the exemption is cut down to one week, viz: from December 15th to December 23rd.

**Some Things I Gained.**

Seventeen years ago there was no legal protection for women or children. Now children under 16 can work only 8 hours in factories or 9 in stores. They must be sent home from the factories at 5 and the stores at 7. Of course, the usual difficulty of evasion of correct age has militated against the operation of this law.

The Consumers League, which has led in the agitation for legislation for working women, has 59 stores on its White List of which over 40 close voluntarily

not later than 7 and some at 6. The League will put no house upon its White List which keeps open more than 9 or 10 nights Christmas week or after 9 o'clock on any night.

As for the men workers around the stores and factories—the drivers, packers, porters, cleaners, elevator runners, receivers, etc.—there is no protection for them except that which organization can bring; and these men are poorly organized.

The newly established Drivers Union, as a result of the recent express strike, in which many store drivers joined, has forced the dry-goods stores to promise extra pay of 25 cents per hour for overtime and this year will be the first in the history of that trade to pay the over-worked drivers something extra for the long hours they put in during the Christmas rush. Some of the drivers claim, however, that this innovation is of doubtful benefit, as the system of "docking" is such that the employers will be the real beneficiaries in the long run.

The drivers go to work at 6 in the morning and have to attend to their own particular districts. When the day's work during the year is estimated at ten hours, it can be easily imagined how late they work in the season when the trade is three or four times as heavy. The men have to get through with their loads, no matter how long it takes. So they are kept on their wagons from early morning until late at night, not infrequently pulling in as late as twelve and one o'clock.

The Drivers Union has obtained a \$15 a week wage for drivers but so far this is not in full force; \$9 to \$12 has been the rule heretofore. Helpers and receivers get \$5 and \$6 a week. Every driver and helper is bonded, \$500 being the sum in security. This, however, covers only fraudulent cases but missing articles have to be paid for by the drivers themselves and this is taken from their wages. One man interviewed had to pay \$4.80 for a piece of silk that had been snatched from the wagon that very day.

With the great rush, hard work, bitter cold, late hours, weariness, exhaustion and sleepiness on the one hand, and the persistent activity of the sneak-thieves on the other hand, missing articles are more common during the holiday season than at any other time and many children have to forego the much hoped-for and dreamed-of presents because their fathers have had to make good for other presents, stolen or lost in the mad and terrific attempt of civilized society to make and enjoy a merry Christmas.

## Abolishing Tuberculosis

By ALLAN L. BENSON

The way to wipe out tuberculosis in a hurry, for instance, would be to destroy every habitation that is known to be hopelessly infected—and there are many such—permit no habitation to be erected without provision for sufficient sunlight and air; permit no factory or other workplace to be erected without sufficient provision for sunlight and fresh air—and destroy such workplaces as now exist without this provision; reduce the cost of living so that the millions who now cannot afford to live in sanitary homes and buy adequate food could do so; isolate the infected and educate the people with regard to the necessity of sleeping with their bedroom windows wide open.

If this program were put through, tuberculosis would cease as soon as those who are now infected should either have recovered or died. It is because such a program has not been put through that, according to Professor Fisher, there are always 500,000 Americans suffering from tuberculosis, and the annual death-roll from the disease is 150,000. Any municipal government, if it were disposed to do so and the courts were willing to let it do so, could put through the housing part of the program, in a single summer. The dangerous habitations could be condemned. The governments, if necessary, could build and rent at cost, sanitary houses in the suburbs, as the government of New Zealand does for its people. Congress, the president and the courts, if they were disposed to do so, could reduce the cost of living. If the government can teach farmers by mail how to prevent hog-cholera, there would seem to be no reason that it could not teach human beings by mail to breathe fresh air both night and day.

What stands in the way of immediately putting through such a program? Nothing in the world except the men whose property would be destroyed, or whose stealings in food-prices would be stopped. The property loss would be enormous. (Think of calling the destruction of a lot of deathtraps a "loss.") The "value" of the property destroyed might be a billion dollars. Maybe it would be two billions. What difference need it make if it should take five billion dollars' worth of labor, lumber, bricks, steel and other materials to replace death-traps with life-traps? One hundred and fifty thousand lives would be saved every year from tuberculosis alone, and the rebuilding operations would create greater prosperity for labor than was ever created by any act of congress.—*Pearson's Magazine.*

## Joy

By MATHEW WARREN.

Thro' air flying; water diving;  
Oh, for swimming to and fro,  
After frightened fishes spring,  
Where the sand gleams white below.  
Without drying; homeward hieing;  
Oh, how fine to be a boy!  
Life for girls is mighty trying,  
Sat for fellow all is joy.

# Out of the Deep

JY C. N. DESMOND SHAW

British Correspondent Coming Nation

My brain is reeling and my poor wits are performing a glorified phantasmagoria in what I call my head.

For I am writing this to you my American friends in the thick of my parliamentary election contest in what is generally regarded as the key-constituency of London if not of the whole country—the Battersea Division. And my opponent? No less a redoubtable person than the King of Renegades, and "Swankors," John Burns, Cabinet and ex-Socialist Minister.

He thought he had a straight, comfortable and certain fight with Sir John Harrington, the Tory, but the Socialists fell on him hip and thigh seven short days before the election, decided to run your humble servant as Socialist candidate, and here we are!

In, I believe for a bad beating, but if I can only poll 1,000 votes, Burns is down and out for the constituency which he has misrepresented since 1892. And if he is put out—well glory be! The Roosevelt catastrophe is a fool to it.

The papers are full of it and we shall know our fate in six days.\*

Britain, just now, is election mad. I fear the labor men are going to lose some seats, though I hope not. I think probably the Liberals will be returned but you will know all about it ere you receive this.

I honestly believe that another general election will follow this very soon, for the present election decides absolutely nothing. It is a liberal trick to secure another term of office whilst the Free Trade campaign is "booming," and whilst the trade of the country shows such inflated returns—for the bosses, but not for the bossed, who are out of work in enormous numbers.

The Labor Party is fighting this election with the halter of the Osborne decision around its neck.

### The Fight Grows Sharper.

The introduction of three bills into the chamber of deputies by Briand, the French John Burns, for the purpose of inflicting the heaviest penalties upon railway and other public servants who dare to strike, is not going unheeded in England as an object lesson of what may easily be the next step of a British government. The back of the Welsh strike is broken and the men have voted against a general strike. I cannot say, nor can anyone else, what will be the next move of the Trade Unionists here, but I prophesy a terrific struggle both in parliament and industrially in the near future to throw off the shackles which capitalism is slowly but surely weaving around the feet of labor.

\*"Cribbed, cabined and confined," Dispatches say that Burns was elected with a Socialist vote of about 800.—Ed.

## THE ROLL CALL OF NATIONS

### XI.—Italy.

The reports presented by the various parties at the International Socialist Congress constitute a mine of information on the working class such as has never been gathered together at any one time before. The Coming Nation will publish each week a summary of one of these reports. If these are set out and posted in a group book, the result will be a reference work on the International Socialist movement of value to any library.

The Italian Socialist party made a good gain in the elections of March 1909. In the preceding legislature there were thirty deputies in the beginning, but as a result of an internal disagreement these all resigned and in the elections which were held to fill the vacancies so created only twenty-five were elected. At the last election, however, this number was increased to forty-one. Thirty-nine of these are members of the organization and subject to party discipline. One was elected as an Independent and the other refuses all direct party allegiance.

According to the election reports there were four more Socialists chosen. Three of these were unseated and in the fourth case a new election was ordered in which the Socialist was defeated. In nearly twenty other cases the elections were extremely close. In very many the Socialists being defeated by less than ten votes.

Since an electoral agreement had been made with the republican and radical parties providing for a mutual support of candidates where two parties had not nominated it is impossible to give any exact statistics of the Socialist vote. A great number of municipalities, especially in the north of Italy are controlled entirely by the Socialists and they also have a strong provincial legislative body.

There has been considerable internal conflict and this has resulted in an apparent decrease in the number of members. At the close of the year, 1909, there were 43,000 members of the party. At the congress held that year, the dues were raised from twelve cents to thirty cents per month, two-thirds of which was to be counted as a compulsory subscription to the daily paper, *Avanti!* At the same time a section composed of syndicalists left the party. These two facts combined caused the party membership to fall off to about thirty thousand. The earthquake at Messina also contributed to this decrease by practically wiping out several large organizations in that locality.

The party has five daily and about twenty weekly papers. Its extensive cooperative activity has already been described in these columns by the articles from Odon Por.

stuffed, but always struggling. Demos feels that he is fairly "up against it."

The most striking thing about the political situation here is the entire failure either of Robert Blatchford or of the Tory party as a whole to raise any interest in the question of increasing the national defenses. Nobody seems to care two straws about them. Imperialism rampant is as dead as mutton, though I must say that Robert Blatchford's three articles in the "Daily Mail," masterpieces of simple English, were enough to arouse a dead man. Alas! and alas! we Socialists here are still very much at sixes and sevens, and nothing up to the present has so much contributed to our dissensions as Comrade Blatchford's attitude on the German Invasion.

### Cheers for America.

But the American Socialist victories have set English Socialists ablaze with enthusiasm. Oh you are the boys that can hand it out all right, all right. Half-arm jolts, uppercuts and every trick of the political prize-ring, with the great fires of enthusiasm and sincerity underneath to generate steam.

You have got the Roosevelt hobnob—and you will get the test of the gang as time goes on. Now that that ring-tailed roarer, that perhistoric man type with the carnivorous teeth has gone, you may hope once more. What a cannibal!

The Irish are up and the boys are having the time of their lives. The Liberals shrink like whipped curs at the heels of their master John Redmond, who evidently has put Asquith through it. Tremendous meetings are being held in the Green Isle. London is alive with strutting bands of Irish players and foragers. For the first time since the great Charles Stuart Parnell passed over, they are undergoing the delicious thrill which passes through the Irishman when he has his foot on the neck of the prominent partner. And I really think not only Ireland, but England, Scotland and Wales are almost within sight of Home Rule.

The Social-Democratic party are only running one or two parliamentary candidates, the chief one being that of H. M. Hyndman, the veteran Socialist at Burnley, Lancashire. He did not fail by many at the last election—but this, I think, is his last chance for he is an old man. But the S. D. P. have not that genius for organization possessed by their comrades of the I. L. P. which is half the battle in election fighting.

The Socialist and Labor movement as a whole will, I think, lose somewhat in prestige at this election—but wait until the next and we will show you that the American circus is not the only show on earth!

### Holiday Reflections

By Eugene V. Debs

At this season of the year people are wont to make merry and far be it from my purpose to dampen the ardor of their festivities, but even in the midst of the happiest scenes incident to our customary Christmas celebration and other holiday events I am reminded, whether I will or not, of the many, many sad and suffering beings in human form to whom the holidays mean nothing except to accentuate their misery and make them feel more keenly their wretched lot.

How often when I have felt myself lifted into the realms of joy at a family reunion during the holiday season a shaft of pain pierced my heart and the shadows of sorrow fell upon me as I thought of the wan faces of others I had seen whose gloomy habitations were never made light and merry by the music and revelry of the holiday season.

And what makes it all the more sorrowful and the reflections in regard to it all the more bitter is that, search as we may, there is no excuse for it on the face of the earth.

How unspeakably sad, how tragic in fact, that in all creation human beings are the only living creatures that have lost the instinct and lack the sense to feed themselves!

The earth and all its fulness are for the people but they know it not and dearly do they pay for their blindness and perversity.

All about us there is hunger, and who can feel himself fed while this is true?

On every street there are shivering victims, less to be envied than vagabond dogs, the sport of winter's icy blasts.

In ten thousand dismal huts and hovels sit moaning mothers and starving children.

And but for these civilization would collapse. "The poor ye have always with you."

The collapse cannot come too soon!

The other day at Newark, N. J. a paper box factory went up in fire as if itself had been a paper box, and in less time than it takes to recount it some thirty young girls employed in the trap lay on the ragged streets and pavements surrounding it, crushed, mangled, shapeless victims of the fate so common to the wage-slaves of the capitalist system. I can see them now, even in the midst of these holiday festivities, their horror-stricken faces at the windows, the lurid flames like hungry demons devouring their tender flesh—and then—the paper said "the air was full of them" and that "eleven of them lay in one bloody, horrible heap."

These working children were driven to their horrid doom by the Demon of

Profit. That factory was a six-storied, profit-gouging social crime.

I am thinking of those girls as a part of my holiday enjoyment. [And I am thinking of Fank Lane, the crushed and helpless coal-digger, all but murdered by the corporations, outlawed by the courts, and left to drag his paralyzed remains to a hole in the potter's field.

Oh, the countless thousands of box factory girls and Frank Lanes there are under the present system! Who can contemplate the crimes of which they are the victims and be satisfied? Who can enjoy the merriment and join in the revelry of the holiday season without a thought of "Les Miserables" who are suffering, dying of hunger and neglect, within the sounds of their festivities?

But there is more than alternating joy and sorrow, cheerfulness and gloom in my holiday reflections. I am trying to feel my own responsibility. I am a part of all that suffers and a part of all that is responsible for it. I am a part of the social system responsible for the crimes, the sufferings, the sorrows of my fellow-beings, and I am going to exert all my strength to change that system so that it shall no longer inflict pain and misery upon so many of my fellow-creatures, but bring freedom, plenty and joy to them all, so that all the days shall be holidays and the holiday season shall never end.

### A Peep Into the Future

By Henry T. Jones

I am looking into the future and I see a nation not having one case of poverty—not one.

I also see a race of humans perfect morally, mentally and physically.

In that new world I see tens of millions of happy, smiling faces among the men, women and youth; I hear the merry laughter of children, the songs of birds, the chirping squirrels. The deer, antelope and dogs fraternize in joyous companionship; the huntsman's bullet no longer brings a dread. It is plain to the observer that the savagery of the spectre of apprehension has long been unknown to man or beast. On all sides I see harmony of thought, harmony of action, harmony of relation and harmony of intention. I see ladies and gentlemen without exception who would disdain to accept a service they could not return in kind.

And there are some things I do not see. I do not see one hovel or one child or one woman working in the mills, mines, factories, offices or fields. The modern twentieth century spectacle has been changed to model places of industry, million-acre farms, magnificent spacious homes, and the world's work of the production of material things is being easily and speedily done by the harnessed forces of nature manned by man.

Neither do I see one case of tuberculosis, typhoid, nor any of the other numerous preventable ills which now afflict the earth.

Prisons, jails, police, soldiers, insane asylums, poor houses, charitable institutions, slums, red-light districts, saloons, courts, dirty streets, shoddy clothing, bankers, grafters, money-lenders, politicians, intemperance, disease, bums and all the other beauties of present day civilization are only matters of history in this new world.

In place of all this the face of bountiful nature is dotted with spacious homes and magnificent public buildings whose harmony of design and color is in perfect contrast with the beastiality of those things now seen in our modern coke-towns in the shape of hideous skyscrapers, crowded business blocks and rows of houses unfit for shelter.

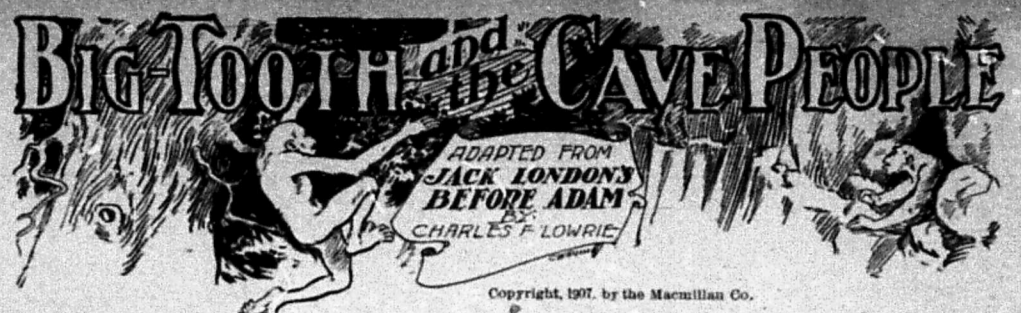
In this new world work is a joy, not a brutal struggle; life is a pleasure, not discomfort. There I see life with art and life with industry. Life without joy and pleasure there is known to be savagery, and life without art is known to be brutality. Art in this new world I can see is of man's joy in his labor.

And what a perfect race of men I see. I see a race that is so complete as to be incapable of an impure thought to say nothing of temptation to commit an impure act. I can see also the observance of a code of ethics so different from the modern standard that many things we now regard as wrong are there recognized as right, and many things we now accept as right are known to be wrong.

I see a world ruled by science and love. And does this ideal world contain a race of satisfied people? Is the human mind of this more perfect man content? No, the human mind as long as the world survives will never be content. The mind of the man in this new world is constantly striving for greater and better things. Man having been permitted to become perfect morally, mentally and physically ever strives to make the world better and brighter than he finds it. To seek higher, nobler and better things is the incentive that is moving this new world.

If man should ever reach a plane of complete satisfaction and contentment the world would go back into night. But do not fear. Human nature is all right, not all wrong. We do not need to change human nature. It is climbing the heights toward truth and it will not—it cannot fail. That new world is coming as surely as it has a right to come.

And why is it that I can see this vision of the splendor of this future world in all its radiant majesty, and you cannot see it? Because I am a—bu—I'll not tell you. It might offend you. But you who are class-conscious will understand what I am.



(Continued from last week)

### CHAPTER XV.

It was in the early fall of the following year that it happened. After his failure to get the Swift One, Red-Eye had taken another wife; and, strange to relate, she was still alive. Stranger still, they had a baby several months old—Red-Eye's first child. His previous wives had never lived long enough to bear him children. The year had gone well for all of us. The weather had been exceptionally mild and food plentiful. I remember especially the turnips of that year. The nut crop was also very heavy, and the wild plums were larger and sweeter than usual.

In short, it was a golden year. And then it happened. It was in the early morning, and we were surprised in our caves. In the chill gray light we awoke from sleep, most of us, to encounter death. The Swift One and I were aroused by a pandemonium of screeching and gibbering. Our cave was the highest of all on the cliff, and we crept to the mouth and peered down. The open space was filled with the Fire-People.

Their cries and yells were added to the clamor, but they had order and plan, while we Folk had none. Each one of us fought and acted for himself, and no one of us knew how great was the calamity that was upon us.

By the time we got to stone-throwing the Fire-People had massed thick at the base of the cliff. Our first volley must have mashed some heads, for when they swerved back from the cliff three of their number were left upon the ground. These were struggling and floundering, and one was trying to crawl away. But we fixed them. By this time we males were roaring with rage, and we rained rocks upon the three men that were down. Several of the Fire-Men returned to drag them into safety, but our rocks drove the rescuers back.

The fighting had now become intermittent. It was a sort of deadlock. We were in the caves, and the question with the Fire-People was how to get us out. They did not dare come in after us, and in general we would not expose ourselves to their arrows. Occasionally, when one of them drew in close to the base of the cliff, one or another of the Folk would smash a rock down. In return, he would be transfixed by half a dozen arrows. This ruse worked well for some time, but finally the Folk no longer were tricked into showing themselves. The deadlock was complete.

Behind the Fire-People I could see the little old wizened hunter directing it all. They obeyed him, and went here and there at his commands. Some of them went into the forest and returned with loads of dry wood, leaves, and grass. All the Fire-People drew in closer. While most of them stood by with bows and arrows, ready to shoot any of the Folk that exposed themselves, several of the Fire-Men heaped the dry grass and wood at the mouths of the lower tier of caves. Out of these heaps they conjured the monster we feared—FIRE. At first, wisps of smoke arose and curled up the cliff. Then I could see the red-tongued flames darting in and out through the wood like tiny snakes. The smoke grew thicker and thicker, at times shrouding the whole face of the cliff. But I was high up and it did not bother me much, though it stung my eyes and I rubbed them with my knuckles.

Old Marrow-Bone was the first to be smoked out. A light fan of air drifted the smoke away at the time so that I saw clearly. He broke out through the smoke, stepping on a burning coal and screaming with the sudden hurt of it, and tried to climb up the cliff. The arrows showered about him. He came to a pause on a ledge, clutching a knob of rock for support, gasping and sneering and shaking his head. He swayed back and forth. The feathered ends of a dozen arrows were sticking out of him. He was an old man, and he did not want to die. He swayed wider and wider, his knees giving under him, and as he swayed he wailed most plaintively. His hand released its grip and he lurched outward to the fall. His old bones must have been sadly broken. He groaned and strove feebly to rise, but a Fire-Man rushed in upon him and brained him with a club.

And as it happened with Marrow-Bone, so it happened with many of the Folk. Unable to endure the smoke-suffocation, they rushed out to fall beneath the arrows. Some of the women and children remained in the caves to strangle to death, but the majority met death outside.

When the Fire-Men had in this fashion cleared the first tier of caves, they began making arrangements to do the same with the second tier of caves. It was while they were climbing up with their grass and wood that Red-Eye, followed by his wife, with the baby holding to her tightly, made a successful flight up the cliff. The Fire-Men must have concluded that in the time between the smoking-out operations we would remain in our caves; so that they were unprepared, and their arrows did not begin to fly till Red-Eye and his wife were well up the wall. When he reached

the top he turned about and glared down at them, roaring and beating his chest. They arched their arrows at him, and though he was untouched he fled on.

I watched a third tier smoked out, and a fourth. A few of the Folk escaped up the cliff, but most of them were shot off the face of it as they strove to climb. I remember Long-Lip. He got as far as my ledge, crying piteously, an arrow clear through his chest, the feathered shaft sticking out behind, the bone head sticking out before, shot through the back as he climbed. He sank down on my ledge bleeding profusely at the mouth.

It was about this time that the upper tiers seemed to empty themselves all at once. Nearly all the Folk not yet smoked out stampeded up the cliff at the same time. This was the saving of many. The Fire-People could not shoot



Red-Eye's body landed in the midst of them.

arrows fast enough. They filled the air with arrows, and scores of the stricken Folk came tumbling down; but still there were a few who reached the top and got away.

The impulse of flight was now stronger in me than curiosity. The arrows had ceased flying. The last of the Folk seemed gone, though there may have been a few still hiding in the upper caves. The Swift One and I started to make a scramble for the cliff-top. At sight of us a great cry went up from the Fire-People. This was not caused by me, but by the Swift One. They were chattering excitedly and pointing her out to one another. They did not try to shoot her. Not an arrow was discharged. They began calling softly and coaxingly. I stopped and looked down. She was afraid, and whimpered and urged me on. So we went up over the top and plunged into the trees.

This event has often caused me to wonder and speculate. If she were really of their kind, she must have been lost from them at a time when she was too young to remember, else would she not have been afraid of them. On the other hand, it may well have been that while she was their kind she had never been lost from them; that she had been born in the wild forest; far from their haunts, her father maybe a renegade Fire-Man, her mother maybe one of our own kind, one of the Folk. But who shall say? These things are beyond me, and the Swift One knew no more about them than did I.

We lived through a day of terror. Most of the survivors fled toward the blueberry swamp and took refuge in the forest in that neighborhood. And all dry hunting parties of the Fire-People ranged the forest, killing as wherever they found us. They must have planned it all beforehand. They had increased so fast that all of their own caves were full so they had decided on making a conquest of ours. Sorry the conquest! We had no chance against them. It was slaughter, indiscriminate slaughter, for they spared none, killing old and young.

It was like the end of the world to us. We fled to the trees as a last refuge, only to be surrounded and killed, family by family. We saw much of this during that day, and besides, I wanted to see. The Swift One and I never remained long in one tree, and so escaped being surrounded. But there seemed no place to go. The Fire-Men were everywhere, at their work of extermination. Every way we turned we met them, and because of this we saw much of their handiwork.

I did not see what became of my mother, but I did see the Chatterer shot down out of the old home-tree. And I am afraid that at the sight I did a bit of joyous teetering. Before I leave this part of my story, I must tell of Red-Eye. He was caught with his wife in a tree down by the blueberry swamp. The Swift One and I stopped long enough in our flight to see. The Fire-Men were too busy with their work to notice us, and, besides, we were well screened by a thicket in which we crouched.

Fully a score of the hunters were under the tree, discharging arrows into it. They always picked up their arrows

when they fell back to earth. I could not see Red-Eye, but I could hear him howling from somewhere in the tree. After a short time his howling grew muffled. He must have crawled into a hollow in the trunk. But his wife did not win this shelter. An arrow brought her to the ground. She was severely hurt, for she made no effort to get away. She crouched in a sheltering way over her baby (which clung tightly to her), and made pleading signs and sounds to the Fire-Men. They gathered about her and laughed at her—even as Lop-Ear and I had laughed at the old Tree-Man. And even as we had poked him with twigs and sticks, so did the Fire-Men with Red-Eye's wife. They poked her with the ends of their bows, and prodded her in the ribs. But she was poor fun. She would not fight. Nor, for that matter, would she get angry. She continued to crouch over her baby and to plead. One of the Fire-Men stepped close to her. In his hand was a club. She saw and understood, but she made only pleading sounds until the blow fell.

Red-Eye, in the hollow of the trunk, was safe from their arrows. They stood one of them climbed into the tree. What happened up there I could not tell, but I heard him yell and saw the excitement of those that remained beneath. After several minutes his body crashed down to the ground. He did not move. They looked at him and raised his head, but it fell back limply when they let go. Red-Eye had accounted for himself.

They were very angry. There was an opening into the trunk close to the ground. They gathered wood and grass and built a fire. The Swift One and I, our arms around each other, waited and watched in the thicket. Sometimes they threw upon the fire green branches with many leaves, after which the smoke became very thick.

We saw them suddenly swerve back from the tree. They were not quick enough. Red-Eye's flying body landed in the midst of them. He was in a frightful rage, smashing about with his long arms right and left. He pulled the face of one of them, literally pulled it off with those gnarly fingers of his and those tremendous muscles. He hit another through the neck. The Fire-Men fell back with wild fierce yells, then rushed upon him. He managed to get hold of a club and began crushing heads like egg-shells. He was too much for them; and they were compelled to fall back again. This was his chance, and he turned his back upon them and ran, still howling wrathfully. A few arrows sped after him, but he plunged into a thicket and was gone.

The Swift One and I crept quietly away only to run foul of another party of Fire-Men. They chased us into the blueberry swamp, but we knew the tree-paths and the further mosses where they could not follow on the ground, and so we escaped. We came out on the other side into a narrow strip of forest that separated the blueberry swamp from the great swamp that extended westward. Here we met Lop-Ear. How he had escaped I cannot imagine, unless he had not slept in the caves the night before.

Here, in the strip of forest, we might have built tree-shelters and settled down; but the Fire-People were exterminating us thoroughly. In the afternoon, Hair-Face and his wife fled out from among the trees to the east, passed us, and were gone. They fled silently and swiftly, with alarm in their faces. In the direction from which they had come we heard the cries and yells of the hunters, and the screeching of some one of the Folk. The Fire-People had found their way across the swamp.

The Swift One, Lop-Ear and I followed on the heels of Hair-Face and his wife. When we came to the edge of the great swamp, we stopped. We did not know its paths. It was outside our territory, and it had been always avoided by the Folk. None had ever gone into it—at least, to return. In our minds it represented mystery and fear, the terrible unknown. As I say, we stopped at the edge of it. We were afraid. The cries of the Fire-Men were drawing nearer. We looked at one another. Hair-Face ran out on the quaking morass and gained the firmer footing of a grass-hummock a dozen yards away. His wife did not follow. She tried to, but slunk back from the treacherous surface and cowered down.

The Swift One did not wait for me, nor did she pause till she had passed beyond Hair-Face a hundred yards and gained a much larger hummock. By the time Lop-Ear and I had caught up with her, the Fire-Men appeared among the trees. Hair-Face's wife driven by them into a panic of fear dashed upon us. But she ran blindly, without caution, and broke through the crust. We turned and watched, and saw them shoot her with arrows as she sank down in the mud. The arrows began falling about us. Hair-Face had now joined us, and the four of us plunged on, we knew not whither, deeper and deeper into the swamp.

(To be continued.)

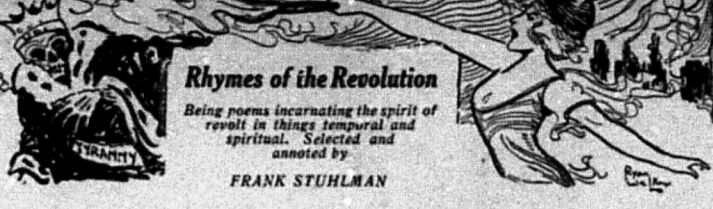
One-half the world must sweat and groan; the other half may dream.—Longfellow.

WHO MADE THE TOYS FOR CHRISTMAS?



Readings in Literature

Selected by William Mallory
The Pauper's Christmas Carol
By Thomas Hood
Full of drink and full of meat.
On our Saviour's natal day,
Charity's perennial treat;
Thus I heard a pauper say:
Ought not I to dance and sing
Thus supplied with famous cheer?
Heigho! I hardly know—
Christmas comes but once a year!



Rhymes of the Revolution
Being poems incarnating the spirit of
revolt in things temporal and
spiritual. Selected and
annotated by
FRANK STUHLMAN
Note—Prof. William Herbert Carruth of Kansas is the author
of some of the best short poems in current literature. A few years
ago his "Each In His Own Tongue" marked the advent of a real
poet. This gem is reprinted again and again in literary journals
by request. Prof. Carruth has only two small volumes of verse
published, but it is largely pure gold. This fine poem was first
printed in the American Magazine.

The Time to Strike
By William Herbert Carruth.
My God, I am weary of waiting for the year of Jubilee;
I know that the cycle of man is a moment only to thee;
They hold me back with preaching what the patience of God is like;
But the world is weary of waiting; will it never be time to strike?
When my hot heart rose in rebellion at the wrong my fellows bore;
It was "wait until prudent saving has gathered you up a store";
And, "wait 'till a higher station bring value in men's eyes";
And, "wait 'till the gray-streaked shall argue your counsel wise."

Come Have A Smile On Us



The Passing of the Optimist
By Boston Crabby
We care for the booster much less than we "used ter."
The optimist pleases no more,
The cheerful old chappy whose jokes kept us happy
Is justly considered a bore:
For now we're exceedingly fond of the reading
Of matters that startle and shock,
And if you'd be famous your cue is to shame us,
So get out your hammer—and knock!

FLINGS AT THINGS

FLINGS AT THINGS
BY D. M. S.
The Old Standbys.
The standard objections will never grow old
Though time does not act to their favor
Nor do they in telling new beauties unfold
And sweetly of sanity savor:
The only incentive to work it will kill;
'Twill make us all slaves to the nation
'Twill break up the family, discourage all
skill
And never would work in creation."

True Explanation.

True Explanation.
"The people seem to have gone
land crazy."
"They are moving in that direction."
"They must all want to farm."
"Na, they want to buy a farm and
sell it to some sucker at an ad-
vanced rate."



Little Flings.
Nothing the matter with the imag-
ination of the preacher who asks
Rockefeller to be a Christian on
Monday.
It is only the man with blinders
who can't see Socialism coming.
It takes an empty coal bin to
preach an eloquent sermon.
Some hope for a people who finally
saw through Roosevelt.
The sainted rich thought one of its
vested rights was to lie its way
through the custom house.



The Rose in the Slums
Drawing by Tula Stevenson



A Wail from Maine
Editor of COMING NATION:
I am tired of waiting for Socialism. It is a great deal like waiting for Santa Claus. When it gets here I expect to have disappeared in a hole in the ground. Well, it will be O. K. for my kids or for posterity won't it?
Speaking about posterity. What has it ever done for us? I am a bachelor by trade and I have no vocation at present. My vocation is spelled with an "a" after the "v."

Felt It Was Typical.
"How long have you been in this country?"
"Sixty days."
"Then you don't understand the spirit of our institutions yet?"
"Oh, yes, I do."
"You must have caught on quick."
"Well I just met up with a pick-pocket."

Obvious.
The question is plain
As the side of a train,
The answer a school boy could fix up
Shall the trusts gobble us
Without making a fuss
Or shall we gobble them in the mixup?

That and Oil.
"Who discovered America?"
"John D. Rockefeller."
"No. It was Christopher Columbus. Who can tell what Mr. Rockefeller discovered?"
"I can," said Willie Jones.
"Tell the class Willie."
"That the people were a lot of easy marks."



Homer

Homer
BY FRANKLIN KENT GIFFORD.
The dogs barked on his approach, and he cried out.—(Life of Homer, Herodotus.)
I am but Homer, the singer, a blind old man of Chios!
Forgive me, good Sir Lackey, and call your dogs to their kennels!
Look, while I hold my harp aloft from their leaping and tearing!
Once it is lost, my harp, I Homer am naught but a beggar!
Thank you, my good Sir Lackey, for calling the dogs in season.
Many a time they have torn me, and once they have torn my harp-strings.
Gods, I am faint and hungry and thirsty and foot-sore and heart-sick!
Hast thou a piece of bread, and water or wine for a poet?
Thanks O kind Sir Lackey! I can not sing without eating—
Gods, that poets are men, and can not sing without eating?
Think you, the good, kind lords will harken again to my music?
Nay, 'tis a brave old song, and touching the wrath of Achilles.
Gladly the lords and ladies of Naxos heard it at dinner,
Giving me bread and wine at a corner for my poor music!
Now let me nap awhile, ere in the good warm sun I
That takes nothing, Sir Lackey, from good kind lord' and ladies.
When I have rested a little, perhaps I shall sing the better.
Yes, 'tis a brave old song, and touching the sorrows of Hellas.
Long ago I sang it, first of the singers of Chios.
Young was I then, and bold; and lords and ladies were kinder—
Nay, not kinder than thine, Sir Lackey; for who could be kinder?
Ah, my good Sir Lackey, 'tis sad to be born a poet!
Certain it is that for sins, committed mayhap, in dreamland,
I was condemned to suffer, and therefore was born a poet.
Happily, my life-long sorrow will turn the anger of Heaven;
And when I am born again, I shall not be born a poet.
Yea, if the gods are kind to repentance, as poets have fancied,
I shall be born a good Sir Lackey of lords and ladies!
Then will I not forget the bread and the wine thou givest,
But bear me as kindly as thou to Homer, the blind old beggar.