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By MR. FRANK HARRIS
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The war has not entirely diverted the MASSES artists from their normal preoccupations with what Mr. Dyson comprehensively calls 'Fat.' But they have done unusually good things on it. Their attitude with respect to the contending parties is derisive and impartial. They leave to other people the business of deciding who was the immediate cause of the war. Their tone was set by a cartoon at the beginning of the war. On various patches of Europe stood small uniformed figures, all stretching their arms upwards in supplication to the sky. High in the cloudy heavens a gigantic nebulous figure reposed, smiling absurdly and stroking his beard. Without de- namesition one country more than another, and preaching continually on Carlyle's text of the dozen British and the dozen French peasants who had no quarrel, the MASSES cartoons have escaped monotony. It is a feat."

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Hope Springs Eternal
HE railroad trainmen did not do any of the things that revolutionists would like them to do. They did not strike. They did not turn to the million or more trackmen, car men, and laborers working on the roads but ineligible at present in the Brotherhoods, and consolidate the interests of all in an aggressive organization. The scarcity of labor gave them an opportunity to do that. From the point of view of working class politics the very perfection and strength of their organization made the move obligatory. Their position would have been impregnable (troops could not have been mobilized) and the basis for working class solidarity might have been started. They did not do it because their point of view is—I was of course going to say—middle class. What it really is, however, is American—specifically New England. It is characterized by a simplicity of confidence that year upon year will pay. There is idealism in the Brotherhoods which might have emanated from Brook Farm. Mr. Garretson personifies this spirit and radiates it in his organization.

For over thirty years, true to their traditions, Mr. Garretson and his fellow officers have tried to gain advances in wage conditions for their members without seriously interfering with the business of the country or impairing the status of the railroads in the financial world. That is why Mr. Garretson’s checks were as wet as he stood by the table in the rooms of the Interstate Commerce Commission and refused the appeal of President Wilson and Senator Newlands to recall the strike order. “When the President of the United States asked me to postpone the strike I had found my Gethsemane; on the one side I faced the condemnation of every one of those powers that go so far to shape public opinion. Anarchist, rebel, no term is too evil for me. Do I feel it?”

He did—and that is the point. He had always expected that when the managers recognized that the trainmen were adamant on some point, they would submit. He expected they would, because he knew that they knew that the Brotherhoods would not push them to the breaking point, and that their demands were not disproportionate to the gains of the railroad corporations.

Of course if Bill Haywood had been in Mr. Garretson’s place he would have thrilled with the thought of the managers at the mercy of the men, and he would have had no mercy for them. But then Haywood represents “the worst element” in society.

“On the other side,” Mr. Garretson continued, “I faced the trusting loyalty of the men who expect me to lead them where they want to go. To do what the

President asks, what you ask, would be treachery. It means that across the fair record of thirty years would be written the word ‘traitor.’ Can I face that?”

The Railroad Brotherhoods knew the industrial situation. They knew, as Mr. Hill of the Great North-Western stated, that his road was doing thirteen times more business this last year than it had done five years ago. It was Mr. Hill’s position that, as there was that business to be had, all surplus income must be reserved for the capitalization it required. Mr. Hill did not have to remind the trainmen, and he did not of course, that when business is slack wages cannot be increased either. “What sort of prosperity is it?” Mr. Garretson asked the Commission, “that piles up great fortunes for the few and leaves the pockets of the masses empty? If that be prosperity, then prosperity is a damnable thing.”

There seems to be an inference that that is not what prosperity is, that it is not damnable; that with it come concessions to organized or unorganized workers. But Mr. Garretson is a keen man. He knows that prosperity is damnable, and he is working to make it something else. I am wondering, however, how Mr. Garretson really estimates the settlement of this year’s controversy over the demands of his organization, how he values the concession given by Congress. The Brotherhoods’ demonstration of power in successfully forcing from the country what the directors of the roads refused, must have thrilled into consciousness many thousands of unorganized workingmen and heartened the organized. Another point gained through the legislation voted by Congress is the extension of wage regulation and wage increases, not only to the men or the class of men who are eligible to membership in the Brotherhood, but to all railroad workers.

The universality of the act of Congress accomplishes what the union had been unable or unwilling to pay for, that is, an equalizing of economic gains among all the workers in the railroad industry. This fact eliminates many difficulties in the way of “one big union” in the railroad industry; it transfers from profits to wages (and to wages of the less skilled railroad workers) many hundreds of thousands of dollars which the original demands of the Brotherhoods for their own men never contemplated.

But it is now, by virtue of the act of Congress, the function of the United States government to fix wage conditions as it is its prerogative to fix rates. For the time, and I believe permanently, unless the Supreme Court declares the action of Congress unconstitutional, the fixing of the wage condition of trainmen is shifted from collective bargaining to politics and legislation. The trainmen are in almost the same relation to the government, so far as a strike for wages or hours is concerned, that they would be under government ownership. A strike could not, perhaps, with the same plausibility, be called mutiny, but the enactment of the eight-hour law by Congress is an assumption of responsibility of the Federal Government; it leaves the workers bound by obligations which the country will expect them to live up to. Corporations of financiers may in secrecy or even openly force concessions from Congress without paying for it, but an organization of workingmen cannot in the light of day.

The railroad directors say that they are going to test the constitutionality of the act of Congress that gave the men eight hours. The President of the Archon and Topeka has already announced that they would not observe the law, and they knew they would be upheld by the Supreme Court. They probably know their Supreme Court. I wonder if they remember that the seeds of rebellion have flourished in the hearts of just such gentle and righteous people as Mr. Garretson and his Brotherhoods represent?

The Brotherhoods did not want a settlement through legislation. In collective bargaining their course is direct and known; in the labyrinths of national politics it is unknown. But rather than involve the country in a strike, they accepted it. They do not believe in legislative regulation of wages as a method, but they do believe in their country. If the Supreme Court reverses the decision of Congress—the country sells out the trainmen. When that happens, we may—I do not say we will—but we may have to face the wrath of good men. I hope they will reward us for its postponement.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

THE present issue was published under extreme difficulties. Our paper contracts have expired and the kind of paper we are using now costs more than we can pay. So we are making plans for the use of a different kind of paper, which may involve a change in the shape of the magazine. This month we have printed as many pages as we had paper left to print on. But we have tried to make this, in spite of its smaller bulk, one of our best issues. You can judge for yourself whether we have succeeded. And for the future, whatever shape we may appear in, we promise you the most interesting magazine in America.
The Campaign—An Operetta by Seymour Barnard

TIME: Autumn of 1916.
PLACE: A Doubtful State.

President Wilson and ex-Justice Hughes are discovered searching for the ground carefully, cropping along on hands and knees.

WILSON AND HUGHES
Eminent nominees, Voters confronting, On our uncommon knees Issues are hunting:
Now to the right of us, Now to the left, Witness the plight of us, Wholly bereft:
Sadly we undertake, Sadly contrive, Factions to keep awake, Parties alive:
Eminent nominees, Groaning and grunting, On our uncommon knees Issues are hunting.

HUGHES
(To himself. Wilson listens unobserved.) Beyond the ken of common men, Where thought is all judicial, There came for me a call to be A more mundane official; And instantly I came to see What heretofore I couldn't, That those intent on government Were doing what they shouldn't.

WILSON
(Smiling confidently.) Watch and wait, Watch and wait, Wariest, willingest candidate:— Who would champion, Who would choose.

Hypercritical,
Carping Hughes?
(A sudden chill is felt. Shadowy shapes appear at right. A procession of political ghosts emerge.—George Washington, Roosevelt, Bryan, and others well known to historians. Taft and Root are seen among the pre-Revolutionary group.) (The ghosts carry the Issues of past campaigns.) (Bryan opens his mouth to speak. Roosevelt gets the start of him, while Washington waits respectfully.)

ROOSEVELT
(Vociferously.) In early youth I learned this truth;— That people love to hear Of vigor, vim,—in short, of him Who is devoid of fear. So, by and by, imagined I A mighty man, and more— A man of pith, a man of myth, And called him Theodore:
I imitate his sturdy gait, His collar and his tie; And shout it out till none may doubt— "This Superman is I!"

WASHINGTON
(Shuttering, to Wilson and Hughes.) You may dispense with presidents With little loss to-day, For, though long dead, the things I said Still guide the U. S. A.
The undulating ship of state, On which I did my turn, Has at its bow the rudder now, The lookout at the stern: The little brat republic that I did my best to save, Is sitting by sarcophagi, Or laying a grave.

WILSON AND HUGHES
(Whispering together.) One well may dread to move ahead: We'll linger till the last: There may be no to-morrow and

We're certain of the past: For us the ancient counselor, For us the tried and true:— 0, some have won a second term, Avoiding what is new.

BRETAN
(Indicating the ghosts.) From off the strand of spirit land, Where life is all vacations, And one may hide till satisfied A-writing resignations,—
Among the hosts of genial ghosts, A limited selection, May quit the Styx for politics, Along about election:
We bear tides of past decades, To get the crowd's attention; And Issues vexed who once perplexed, To keep alive dissolution.
(The ghosts spread their Issues on the ground.)

TAFT
To take your choice you may proceed: Here are the Philippines unfreed!

ROOSEVELT
(At the top of his lungs, drowning out Washington.) Here is the true Americanism! (Wilson and Hughes make for Roosevelt. A scuffle ensues. They emerge, each with a fragment of Roosevelt's Issues.)

WILSON AND HUGHES
(Jubilantly.) O, Politics, O, Politics, Some deem you but to be The art to teach, the part to preach, Till others think as we: But, let us state, a candidate To get the vote to-day, Must test the mind of humankind, And learn to think as they. (They march off.)

CURTAIN.

ACCESSORIES BEFORE THE FACT

Mary Heaton Vorse

The country of the Mesalia Range—where are the richest mines of iron ore in all the world and where Steel is again fighting organized labor—is a country of great, gory pits with men and teams crawlin', small as flies, at the bottom of chutes so vast that they seem to be the result of some cataclysm of nature and not the work of the hand of man: towns, and the pits which are the mines surrounding them. There are other sorts of mines, holes in the earth, a series of tunnels, vast, mysterious, ending in blackness, tunnels shored up each foot of the way with heavy timbers: water drips from the walls, the place is full of small, disquieting noises. Now and then the darkness is pierced by the wavering light of a lamp on a miner's coat.

All about the mine are vast stock piles of ore, and everywhere one sees cars, train after train of little red cars loaded with red ore, trains so interminable that they cease to seem real, seem like some interminably repeated stencil.

Long red roads join one range town to another, along whose length lounge gumen—large, brutal and given to strong drink. On the same roads at night the darkness is forever broken by the gumen's fires by the roadside or by the flash of an electric light on the passing cars. There are gumen of all kinds from the property gumen: the mine owners show visitors and the respectable company guards, to plug-agiies reelin' drunk down the street of a sodlil, forsaken camp. But wherever you turn, now silhouetted against the skyline, now crouching by the roadside—there, watchful and on the lookout for trouble.

At first you smile at them, many of them are such caricatures: later you do not feel like smiling when you have seen the bruises on the bodies of women caused by their hands and clubs, or after you have heard the excited women in the little bleak villages tell in broken English stories of fights for water, of arrests and abuse.

They lurk at the back of strike meetings, audiences of serious Finns with their blonde and powerful wives, of Croats, of Italians, of Austrians, of Greeks, all that population that the steel companies brought on the range from Europe to break the strike of 1907 when they blacklisted three strikers and sent them forth to find homes for themselves in the wilderness. I have in my ears the voice of one of these strikers as he shouted "Scales" at some miners, and a poignant memory of their shamed and beaten look. All the intensity of the struggle was in that word. It summed up that new morality which decrees that scabbing is for a worker what desertion is for a soldier.

These are some of the pictures I have of the Mesalia Range, but I have also the picture of the other part of the story in Duluth, where a fat, kind-hearted sheriff's wife sat rocking on a porch outside a jail.

"I don't know what to do with her," she lamented. "I want her to let me take the baby out for air. But she's afraid—shesk I'll kidnap it. You can't make her understand. She just cries and cries something
awful! She don't understand what it's all about. Sometimes I think it's lucky she don't understand, for the girls in the jail—you know the kind—talk awful."

It happens that Mrs. Masonovich is in jail accused of murder. Just why she's there it's hard for anyone to understand. It's not much wonder she cries and cries, and that she won't even trust that kind, comfortable Irish body, the sheriff's wife. In the other part of the jail is her husband and their three boarders, all held for the murder of Deputy Myron.

There, too, are Carlo Tressa, Joe Schmidt, Sam Scarlett and two other organizers who were all conveniently gathered in as accessories before the act.

This is what happened to Mrs. Masonovich in the interests of law and order on the Mesaba Range: the miners on the range went out on strike in June and early in June a striker was shot and killed by a deputy. No arrests were made for that.

Philip Masonovich and his three boarders were striking miners. He lived in a bleak little frame house near the county road about a mile from Biwabik. It is an isolated place with woods behind and a mine not far off. On the afternoon of June 3rd the woman sat, with the baby in her arms, the other children played around, the men sat playing cards. Into this peaceful household walked Deputy Myron and three other deputies. They didn't knock; they just came in and told Masonovich he was "wanted." Just why they came is obscure. Some say there was no warrant, that it was manufactured afterwards. Some say that Masonovich had trespassed on company land to get water instead of going a mile and a half to town; for one of the ugly features of this strike has been forbidding the strikers the use of wells on company land. Almost every mine has its little cluster of houses around it, sometimes on company land, sometimes not, but the well is more often than not on company land. There is a third report as to why Masonovich was wanted and that was that he had a "blind pig."

He started to get his shoes from an inner room when a Deputy named Dillon, an ex-bouncer of a disorderly house, hit him on the head with a club. The woman with the baby still in her arms, now arose, and another deputy clubbed her. This caused trouble. A big Austrian, one of the boarders, knocked down the deputy and the brawl was on.

Myron drew his gun; the boarders grappled with him. The deputy who had been knocked down fired his gun. According to his own testimony the bullet that killed Myron came from a distance and as though fired by someone on the floor—but none of the strikers had guns.

This wasn't the end, although the State of Minnesota wasn't interested in anything that happened after the death of Myron.

During the struggle the other two deputies vanished, and a passing driver of a pop wagon heard the shots and came running toward the house. He was shot and killed by a deputy who must have thought him some other striker come to help.

There were no arrests made for his death.

It was an ordinary clash of strikers and deputies, for this was during the period of wholesale arrests. Many another striker has had his home entered and has been told to come along, but its tragic ending played into the hands of the mining companies.

The charge of murder as Accessory before the Fact is an old acquaintance of anyone who has followed the labor disturbances of the past years. With this convenient law it can always be alleged that a death was the result of incendiary talk on the organizer's part.

That's why Carlo Tressa and the others are in jail. The wife of one of the imprisoned men wheels the baby up and down before the jail all day. Joe Schmidt's wife is in Pennsylvania expecting her second baby.

Eleven people in jail for the chance killing of Deputy Myron, and no arrests for the shooting of the striker or the driver of the pop wagon.

There's nothing new in the situation. It's hard to write about it, for the strike has gone its appointed way. It's the same case as that of Ettor and Giovanniti: we've seen a similar state of things in Colorado and in California.

This case may be in some ways more flagrant, for the range is sixty miles long and the organizers were rounded up on all parts of it. Nor will the men get off easily. Any more than any of the strikers have gotten off easily for small charges. They have a judge up on the range whom the miners call "Old Ninety-days." When there is trouble between gunmen and strikers the strikers get ninety days and the gunmen go free, even for murder. That's another familiar strike feature—the gunmen.

The strike technique is something like this.

A strike is called. At this the mine-owners cry "outside agitators." Next (continued on page 22)
Two years ago he pretended to feel so sorry for Belgium.

Two years ago he pretended to be horrified by Prussian militarism—
—Now he not only expects to walk over Mexico, but steal it.

American Militarism: Casts, Draft, Conquest and forcing children to become soldiers.

NOW!
I

In my travels along the various fronts of the fighting armies in Europe, I was struck by the astonishing

fact that military heroism is the cheapest of all virtues. For example, there are, let us say, some three millions of men—or more—at present in the

German trenches, perhaps the same number in the

French trenches, more in the Russian trenches, a million

or so in the English trenches, and countless others in the active armies of Romania, Serbia, Belgium, Boh-
garia, Turkey, etc.—all equally brave. Perhaps the most

astonishing ancient fact which has been brought home to us fresh in this War is, that the physical courage of

men in battle is the rule, not the exception. And in all

history, it has never required half as much bravery to

yield to the ugly emotionalism of the mob—keyed up to

kill and destroy in the name of truth and justice against “patriotism” and blood-riot.

If anything is needed to convince the neutral ob-

server that the claims of the belligerents to be Defend-
ers of Freedom, Democracy, Civilization, Culture, etc.,

are equally insincere, it can be found in the way the various Peoples have treated those men who dared to

challenge these things. In Germany, Russia, France, Austria, England, the journals which dared to tell the

truth about the Causes of the War, the “patriotic”

exploitation of workers by the rich, military and govern-

cmental crimes and corruption—who dared to criticize the brutalities and falsehoods of their own Govern-

ments—were ruthlessly suppressed; and the men who

had the courage to make themselves heard in these

matters, if inconspicuous, were ruthlessly done away

with; if prominent, were imprisoned, threatened, ban-

ished, or declared enemies of the State. To mention a

few, there were Kostylev of Russia, condemned to
dom and refugee in Switzerland; Liechtenfet of Ger-

many, imprisoned; Romain Rolland of France, threat-

ened and ostracized. But these are citizens of coun-

t ries ruled by military bureaucracies.

In England also—England, the Champion of Liberty

and Democracy, the Home of Free Speech, the De-

fender of Small Nations—the same thing obtains. Francis Neilsen, a member of Parliament who resigned

when the War began and came to America, wrote a

book called “How Diplomats Make War,” which

exposes, verse and chapter, the unsuspicious course of

English diplomacy; and the London Times called him

“an enemy of England.” Norman Angell is now a vir-

tual prisoner in London, forbidden to leave. And Ber-

trand Russell, Rector in Logic and Principles of Math-

ematics at Trinity College, Cambridge, probably the first

mathematician in Europe, and England’s most stimu-

lating philosopher, was sentenced to prison, fined, dis-

missed from his high position in the faculty of Trinity

College, and finally refused a passport to America, so

that, incidentally, he cannot keep his contract to lecture

at Harvard this autumn.

In England “Conscientious Objectors” are nominally

excused from active military service. But like so many “guarantees of human rights” in both England and

America, this provision is largely a bluff. If the Tri-

bunal is satisfied that a man has real conscientious

objections to the War, he is drafted into the Medical

Corps, the munitions factories, or some such non-com-

batant corps; but, as Bertrand Russell pointed out, this

“is an insult to Conscientious Objectors.” Though not

actually killing with their own hands, these men make possible the killing by others. . . . But as a matter of

fact, the Tribunal often decides that conscientious ob-

jectors are not valid; and the Objector has to either

fight or submit to the most terrible punishment. In

many cases men have been kept in solitary confinement,

in irons, for weeks, fed on bread and water, and even

tortured.

The No-Conscription Fellowship is a body of from

fifteen to twenty thousand Englishmen who have “con-

scientious objections” against military service. Over

one thousand of them have already been arrested and

handed over to the military authorities, and the arrests con-

continue at the rate of one a week—for simply refusing to

serve in the armies of England. It has never tried to

prevent men from enlisting, nor enlisted men from serving; it has not tried to create new Conscientious

Objectors; its purpose is to defend the principle of

Liberty of Conscience.

Bertrand Russell’s crime consisted in writing a leaflet for the Fellowship exposing the treatment meted out to a young teacher, E. Everett, who refused to obey an

order given by the military, and was given two years’

imprisonment at hard labor. The pamphlet said:

“Everett is now suffering this savage punishment solely for refusal to go against his conscience. He is fighting the old

fight for liberty and against religious persecution, in the same spirit in which martyrs suffered in the past. Will you join

the persecutors? Or will you stand for those who are defend-

ing conscience at the cost of obliged and pain of mind and body?”

Distributors of this leaflet were arrested and pun-

ished. Then Bertrand Russell boldly declared himself

the author of the leaflet, and invited arrest. Defending

himself before the Lord Mayor, in June, on the charge that

the pamphlet was liable to prejudice recruiting,” he said:

“... There was a time when we boasted that England was a

free country. That time is past. Freedom now has few friends

among us, and these few can only proclaim their love of free-

dom at the risk of being declared criminals. . . .

... The resistance of the Conscientious Objectors is not manufac-

tured by those who champion their right to resist. . . .

... I can well believe that injury to discipline results from

their resistance; but the responsibility for this injury rests not on

those who merely tell the civilized world what is happening,

but on those, against the express desire of Parliament, who have

forced these men from the Army. The way to prevent injury to dis-

cipline is to restore these men to civil life, not to con-

ceal what they are doing from all except the soldiers. . . .

... We wish it to be known that men who are profoundly con-

vinced of the immorality of fighting are suffering persecution.

We wish this known, not so much on their account, since

to suffer in a noble cause is a privilege and a happiness, but for

the sake of the nation, which has been hitherto the most

precious of our national possessions.”

His conviction under the Defense of the Realm Act

was followed by the action of the Council of Trinity

College. Democratic protest followed, even from

Trinity students, members of the Trinity faculty, and

well-known Englishmen of all opinions. Mr. G. Low

Dickinson, for example, could write this:

... The disgrace is that of the College and also of the University. Mr. Russell’s offence was political, and it consisted in

an endeavour to vindicate the rights of conscience and the

liberties of the individual. . . .

Mr. Russell would probably be called “coward” by Colonel Roosevelt and the other militarists; but to my

mind it took more courage to take the thing that the

Conscientious Objectors did, than to fight in the trenches. . . .

But Bertrand Russell has done even a braver thing—

he has published a book called: “Justice in Wartime.”

*Justice in Wartime.* $1. The Open Court Publishing Co.

Chicago and London.

which is by far the finest expression of opinion written

by anyone in a belligerent country during the War.

Romain Rolland’s “Above the Battle” is disappointing

to the reader who is searching for an absolutely fair
discussion of the War from an ethical and really inter-
national standpoint. “Justice in Wartime” is not a

cold, logical setting-forth of principles; it is written by

an Englishman who loves England and all its great

cities—of which the German “Superstate” and all its
developments—but who loves truth and humanity and

hates lies and brutality more, and is not blinded by

patriotism. To him the crimes of England, France, and

Russia, are as terrible as the crimes of Germany and

Austria; the excellencies of the Central Powers are

just as much excellences as those of the Entente; and

their responsibility for the War is about equal.

In the splendid article which opens the book, “An

Appeal to the Intellectuals of Europe,” he virtually

describes his own attitude in the following words:

... I cannot but think that the men of learning, by

allowing partiality to color their thoughts and

words, have missed the opportunity of performing a

service to mankind for which their training should

have especially fitted them. The truth, whatever it

can be, is the same in England, France and Ger-

many, in Russia and Austria. . . . They might

have used their reputation and their freedom from

political entanglements to mitigate the abhorrence

with which the nations have come to regard each

other, to help toward mutual understanding, to

make the peace, when it comes, not a mere cessation

due to weariness, but a fraternal reconciliation,

springing from realization that the strife has been a

folly of blindness.”

We have seen so much of this “fury of profes-
s!” Think of the mutual recriminations exchanged

between the German and French scholars: think of

Professor Eduard Meyer; think of the Oxford His-

torical Pamphlets; think, for example, of the

apologist for the British Foreign Office, Sir

Gilbert Murray! And it applies as well to the

novelists—O the rot written and spoken by Hauptmann,

Anatole France, H. G. Wells!—and above all, to the

Socialists, the International revolutionists—Gustave

Herré, Peter Kropotkin, etc.—can you see them,

talking, writing evil rubbish?

I wish to call particular attention to the

chapter entitled “War and Non-Resistance.” As

far as I know, Mr. Russell is the only per-

son of any prominence to advocate non-resistance as

a practical national policy which makes for peace,

and to work it out in terms of actual events. True,

he is not so foolish as to believe that the world

would at present begin to practice non-resistance;

but he thinks a generation of education would train

any nation to make the experiment—and the inter-

esting thing is, that he thinks it would not be neces-

sary to wait until all the world agreed. In the

mean time, his ideas are not far removed from those of

Leonard E. Peck...

It is what the man Bertrand Russell is, as re-

vealed in his acts in England no less than in his

words in “Justice in Wartime,” that gives one heart

in these dark and dark days. And for those who

have lost faith in England, he shines out as an ex-

ample of the great international family of heroes

who have not been afraid to face a nation wrongly

in arms, and speak the truth as they see it.
Caught With the Goods

Those worried looking men are the railway presidents wondering how they can conceal that billion dollar surplus. It is not easy to make a twenty per cent. road look like a bread line.

During the New York street car strike, service in the subway and elevated was above normal. Suggesting to strap-hangers the interesting idea that it might be above normal all the time.

The low rumbling we hear in the south is the boys on the border wishing they had not raised themselves to be soldiers.

The barrel straighteners have gone on strike at Bridgeport. Those who expect to have their barrels straightened this winter will have to pay well for this pleasure.

Carl Liebknecht, on appeal, had his sentence increased to four years' penal servitude. But at least he had the honor and the pleasure of being expelled from the German army.

How, somebody asks, can a conference in New London, Connecticut, settle the affairs of far off Mexico. It can't, of course. The only way to settle the Mexican problem is to get a gun and chase somebody around in the cactus for a while.

The ex-heads of the New Haven railroad are now being sued for $160,000,000 and the public is getting its face ready for a hearty laugh. Charles S. Mellen as the Pirate King has a strong hold upon the affections of the amusement loving people.

Henry Cabot Lodge went to a country fair recently in a cart drawn by eleven yoke of oxen. Symbolizing in a subtle, cultured way, the relationship of Henry Cabot to the people of Massachusetts for twenty-two years.

Those anti-suffragists who are going around upon the Hughes campaign train might take this opportunity to tell the women to stay at home and keep out of politics.

Whatever the result of the election may be, it is clear that Hughes has the record for uninspiring campaigns formerly held by Alton B. Parker against firing competition by Taft. Judges all.

If you want to know how Hughes feels about the Germans read Roosevelt's Maine speech. If you don't want to know, read Hughes's.

If W. W. had stood firm for the divine principle of arbitration and let the railroad strike come on, what would candidate Hughes have said then? Nobody is entitled to more than four guesses.

What has become of the old-fashioned cartoonist who pictured the Republican party as the friend of the working man?

And Prosperity, too; that was born and brought up in the G. O. P. and now look what kind of a life it is leading.

Henry Ford believes that law, not dynamite, should settle international questions; therefore the Chicago Tribune calls him an anarchist. When they make a word mean as much as that, they ought, as in "Alice in Wonderland," to pay it extra.

Ford is suing the Tribune for $1,000,000 libel and all he will have to do is to convince twelve plain men that he needs the money.

Daniels predicts the end of all warfare and rushes work on the new navy. Probably for museum purposes.

Anyhow we can't call it Remainsia any more.

Howard Brubaker.

Local History

John Lyons, our efficient and genial business manager, has left us for other fields of enterprise not so wearing upon the nerves. The office staff, having gratefully in memory certain dark days when there would have been no pay-checks if it hadn't been for John's talents as a financier, gave him a farewell dinner the other night, having first borrowed the whereabouts from John. Arturo Giovanniitti made fourteen speeches, and a pleasant time was had by all.

Sumner vs. Forel

You may have heard that John S. Sumner, the successor of Anthony Comstock, paid a visit to our office recently, conscripted all the September numbers of The Masses on hand, and arrested our circulation manager, Merrill Rogers. The reason was that we had advertised and sold "The Sexual Question," by August Forel—a book recognized as one of the great authoritative works on the subject of sex. The case will be fought to a finish in the courts. In the meantime it is interesting to have a personal statement from John S. Sumner. He says: "It advocates sodomy"! Our readers have our word for it that it does, of course, nothing of the sort. If our recommendations had any weight with the authorities, we should suggest that some prominent vice-experts be detained for observation in Bellevue; their minds really do not seem to us to be normal. For the time being, however, they dictate what you shall buy and read.
Drawn by Maurice Becker.
“ENGAGEMENTS”

Elsie Clews Parsons

“WHY don’t we just go off and get married?” is a question sometimes asked by an impatient lover. And the answer expected by us, if not by him, is: “How could we? What would they think of us? It would be so inconsiderate.” The girl knows that “they” will feel cheated by the lack of an engagement, and that the less kindly among them will not only grumble about not having been “told,” but will remark upon the indecent haste of some people to get married.

People do not like to be “taken by surprise” and betrothal ceremonial—betrothal gifts, visits, festivity, betrothal taboo—offers the desired opportunity for adjustment to the novel situation. The opportunity is rather for outsiders than for the betrothed themselves. For them it is comparatively seldom a time (as we describe it) for getting acquainted. In many communities they are forbidden each other’s company and even the sight of each other is taboo. When a little girl is betrothed in New Britain she pays a visit of four days to the village of her boy fiancé; but at the time of her visit he is packed off to another village. She does not learn his name, nor his her. In the practice of infant betrothal in Albania it was customary for the girl, once the engagement was announced, not to speak to the boy and his kindred and even to keep out of their sight. In other instances the pair may have been familiar enough too before their betrothal, but once engaged they have to avoid each other. From the day of his engagement a Benui of the Red Sea has to keep away from his fiancé and, let us note, from her mother. Were the girl to meet him unexpectedly, she would lower her face and any friends with her would so surround her as to hide her from his sight. And yet before this the youth may have been quite free with her; he may even have chosen her himself. An Abyssinian maiden once betrothed may have nothing to do with her fiancé. She may have played with him before her betrothal, but should she catch sight of him on his visits to her father, she would cover her face and run off screaming. After an Ostiaki has settled about the bride-price, he must not see his fiancée, and if he visits her parents, he must walk into their house backwards and never look them in the face.

In these cases it may be that the avoidance taboo has been prompted by a sense of embarrassment in the couple themselves, caused by the idea of the change in their relationship. This explanation is far more probable than that usually advanced by ethnologists, the theory that the taboo is due to the apprehension of over-familiarity, of an untimely anticipation of conjugal rights. On his hypothesis, why in the cases I have cited at least, why should the taboo extend to the kindred of the betrothed? The taboo may often include mere acquainances too. No, betrothal taboo is not so much a safeguard, however you take it, for the betrothed themselves, as it is a safeguard for outsiders, for family and friends. The sight of the engaged couple together causes discomfort. Is not any slip into love-making in the open apt to be apprehended? “Letters appear in the newspapers every summer,” writes the author of “How to Be Happy Though Married,” “letters complaining of want of reserve in love-makers at fashionable seaside resorts. The writers of the letters were made shy and uncomfortable when they passed the lovers.”

Even separate, lovers may be disquieting. And so it is a common enough practice to forbid their presence on given occasions, better still, to force them or at least the girl, the more pliable of the two, into seclusion. An Abyssinian fiancée is kept indoors the three or four months of her engagement; a Tavetian is kept away from the sight of other men while her engagement lasts, perhaps for years. Among us it has been considered bad form for an engaged girl to go into general society for the few days prior to her wedding.

But even for girls seclusion is not always feasible. The alternative to it is a thoroughgoing advertisement of the engagement. In New Guinea as soon as a Koita girl is betrothed the pattern of her taboo is extended. The Loango fiancée was painted red; the Corean wears a red jacket, notices even more conspicuous than the engagement cards sent out in Germany or than our own engagement ring.

Outside of modern circles a man may also advertise his engagement. In one of the Bedouin tribes he wears in his turban a twig given him by his prospective father-in-law.

Alternative too to the separation of the betrothed is their more or less compulsory association. To others their conduct must be circumspect, to each other conspicuously devoted. Bracketing them together enables their public to keep out of their way, to ignore them, or at any rate to consider their relation only ceremonially, just as after marriage it will be considered.

Still an engagement can never be as satisfactory to the outsider as a marriage; there is generally too great an element of suspense about it, and suspense is troublesome. Nor is it without practical inconvenience. Hence, except where the betrothed are mutually taboo, and for a very definite period, tranquillizing conditions almost eliminating suspense, people are apt to say they do not approve of long engagements. And the mother of an engaged girl is quite likely to say to her, according to one authority on marriage, “You’ll want to see your young man every day, and if I don’t go with you to places people will talk. Then there must be as many rooms reserved for you as for Royalty, and if your father smokes cigars, he won’t like it and other young men will become shy of the house, and your sisters will be bored, and, my dear, if you are going to be married, marry soon, and have done with it.” In the Islands of Torres Straits the fact that a suitor would keep parents from sleeping at night and would greatly hinder work in the garden by day was given as one of the reasons for female infanticide.

In a spirit somewhat the same as that of the Papuan or English parent outsiders too will say, sometimes rather querulously, “If they are not engaged they ought to be,” or, “Why don’t they make up their minds and get married?” To most of us it is more satisfactory to have people engaged than merely in love, more satisfactory to have them married than merely engaged. It is even more inconsiderate of lovers not to settle down than not to tell us they intend to, inconsiderate, we mean of course, of ourselves. That lovers should consider themselves is quite an unaccustomed thought.

1 In parts of the country it is believed that if she venture out she will be bitten by a snake.
2 I am not overlooking the theory that betrothal seclusion is a practical precautionary measure against trespassers. But in other ways too, I venture to suggest, the girl may be a source of disquiet.
“Youth” — a splendiferous name for Miles Malleson’s play (published by Henderson’s in England, and on sale at The Masses Book Store) — for it is precisely this swift and singing quality that runs through these three acts. It is a comedy of manners and comedies should be serious. One and it is thus doubly accurate — for, old men and comic weaklings to the contrary, nothing is so serious as youth. Back of all the surface flippancies and skyrocketing and irresponsibility is a restless intensity, a searching curiosity that probes and questions with all the fervor of the wisest and most middle-aged analyst. Miles Malleson is a perfect Shavian figure.

Douglas. But why! Tell me why?

Douglas. Well, just to begin with — “prostitution” — that word’s got to come out. (To May) Don’t you agree with me?

Douglas. May (imperiously good-humored. Bowler well on the back of his head. My dear boy, you’ve got to consider your audience. They like Revues, and they won’t stand this at all. That’s what’s got to come out. I’m not thin-skinned. I’m a man of the world, but you may take it from me, they won’t swallow talk like that.

Douglas. Too much “sex” about it. Puts your play straight to bed, ol’ boy — down the sink in a week.


Douglas. I’m asking a simple question. If temperamentally and economically one can’t get married, what ought one to do? After all, it’s a pretty vital question; it deserves to be looked at from every point of view.

I’d much sooner have any of it cut. I’ve put it away in absolute absence of the right of any love outside marriage, and the sense extreme one mustn’t talk about — I think both hopelessly wrong.

Gunn. (looking at the audience.) Of course if it remains of uncivil things — stuffy little back-rooms, well, doesn’t that show where we’ve got to? Sex — the driving force of the world. Bigger than the night sky, cleaner than the sea; and I’ve got a nasty mind if I talk about it!

Gunn. (very staid and kindly May) But they can afford that. This thing we got on for next week...

“... The Slut Skirt” — huge success in the West End — you should look on, Mr. Hetherly — fine thing.

Blaze out the attractiveness and rush up the mess!

There is a slight interruption due to a few irrevocable stage changes, and the actor, Cecil (who is a grown-up edition of Douglas) proceeds in the part:

A MONTLY REVIEW CONDUCTED BY FLOYD DELL

VOLUME III

No. 5

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1932

BOOKS THAT ARE INTERESTING

The Will To Believe

The Future of Democracy, by H. M. Hyndman.

Mr. HYNDMAN believes that democracy has a future. I suppose even the wilder pacifists do not believe that it will be achieved as one of the results of the present war. But it is difficult to discover from this book any grounds for his belief except his determination that it must be so. It is an excellent reason for any belief, and few of us have a better one for ours.

As to Mr. Hyndman remarks, apropos of something else: "In all the sense, revolution has been made and entered upon, it is essential to pull down the shutters on one side of the intellect. Discussion is at an end: determination takes up the tale." Mr. Hyndman is in this happy frame of mind. He has, like many other Socialists, decided that this war must and shall suppress the vested interests of democracy. He has pulled down the shutters of the intellect, and closed the specious, cynicism and all the moods that paralyze the will. He is now engaged in working to make the war bring about democracy.

Enyuing him, as we well may, for his possession of this state of mind, let us see how it is maintained, by some subsidiary beliefs. It is obvious that if one is to believe in the democratizing effects of this war, one must have a satisfactory conception of its origin. The theory that it is the inevitable result of economic forces is rejected at the outset: for the victory of one set of capitalists over another, to say nothing of the endless vista of further struggles, leaves little room for democracy as a result. It is necessary to have a simple explanation of the little stories. Mr. Hyndman being an Englishman make a victory of the en- tente allies a progressive fact. This explanation is found in the theory that the war was caused by the military caste of Germany in its effort to (a) secure domination of the German state, and (b) put an end to the menace of the German social-democracy. This, it is a perfectly prepared war of capita- list aggression against rival capitalists is the final
push the nation forward. Their willingness to accept war as a premise is a measure of their sincerity, at least.

"The mass of our people when the war began," says Mr. Hyndman, "were ignorant, unorganized, undisciplined, physically untrained, apathetic and indifferent. Their children were growing up like themselves. Great numbers of illiterate persons lived in such deplorable social conditions that they were, and are, quite unfit to supply soldiers for the army, or thoroughly efficient men and women for industry." [What a pity, one is moved to exclaim, that this beneficent war did not come along sooner! For—"the exigencies of war have done much in a year to make the physically capable more vigorous, in body and in mind, and to teach them the advantage of disciplined cooperation. It is not a lesson they are likely to forget. But it will take at least a generation to replace the etiolated millions of our populace by sound men and women." [Put down to profit and loss.] "War, I say, is teaching us much,"

It is written that he that hath as much faith as a grain of mustard-seed can move mountains. So perhaps Mr. Hyndman and the other pro-war Socialists of Great Britain will succeed in getting a—something—out of this war. Who knows?

F. D.

Jesus and George Moore

The Brook Kerith: a Syrian Story, by George Moore. $1.50 net. [The Macmillan Co.]

ONCE upon a time a lady gave a Bible to Mr. George Moore; and, what may seem stranger still, Mr. Moore read it. He found, to his surprise, that it was an interesting book. He did not so much expect the Old Testament, at least of all for the thundering of the Prophets; in a phrase full of self-revelation he deplored in them the lack of "piano passages." But he was vastly interested in Jesus; and being of that essentially religious turn of mind which is nowadays called irreligion, he proceeded to refashion the story of Jesus in his own mind.

"It may be noted parenthetically that a religion is alive only so long as the people who profess it live. Jesus, a little differently, a little more, a little more to one's taste or fancy. The fact that the four gospels contradict each other, that each evangelist presents a different Jesus, is a proof that Christianity was very much alive when they were written. And from the miracle-plagues of the middle ages, those jocund and farcical comedies of the market-place in which God and the Devil and Jesus and all the saints appear as heroes and villains and comic characters at the pleasure of their authors,—from such evidence the historian can deduce that Christianity was at that time zooming along. In the present moribund state of Christianity, when its stories are too sacred: i. e., dead, to be tampered with, Mr. George Moore appears, much to our surprise, as one of the few remaining Christians—that is to say, a man to whom the Christian story means so much that he must tell it again in his own way, with his own additions and improvements, in something of the spirit of those naïve litterateurs, the evangelists.

For this thought occurred to Mr. Moore: suppose Jesus did not die on the cross, but was healed in the house of Joseph of Arimathea, with his body from the cross, and that suppose that in after years when, Jesus had returned to be a shepherd among the Esse- scenes, Paul had visited their monastery: what would Jesus think of Paul—and what would Paul think of Jesus? Mr. Moore thought he knew; and he told the story of that meeting many times at dinner tables, until a few years ago it began to come back to him accredited to someone else! So he hastily sat down and wrote it out in the form of a scenario, with a few scenes presented at full length, and this was published. But being dissatisfied with that, he wrote the present version, in which the whole story is told at great length at the point of view mainly of Joseph of Arimathea. At great length; yes, at devastating length; with too much about Joseph of Arimathea and too little about Jesus. It is in fact only halfway through that the book commences to be really interesting; though the boyhood of Joseph of Arimathea is described with much charm in the early chapters.

I got to Mr. Moore's Jesus; and without withholding my admiration for Mr. Moore's sincerity and honesty, I confess to finding his Jesus a little dull. The Jesus of Mark is far more interesting to me. And I think I know why: Mr. Moore, with his fondness for "piano" effects, has created a dulcet Jesus with not enough blood in him.

Floyd Dell

A New English Novelist

Casuals of the Sea, by William McFee. $1.50 net. [Doubleday, Page & Co.]

FICTION is accustomed to deal with people who are either the masters or the victims of life. But ordinary people do not fall into either category—which is one reason why most fiction, even of the best, is false. Few of us, except in romantic daydreams, are masters of our fate; but most of us do, now and then, break up and refuse to let circumstances imprison us in their accustomed way. We are none of us without our little triumphs. But it takes an unusual novelist
to make a first-rate story, without exaggeration or sen-
timental heroizing—or, what is still less to the point,
piety—out of these lives.
Mr. McFee, however, is such a writer; and he has
made one of the most interesting books I have read in
years out of the lives of two ordinary people, without
finding it necessary to invest them with any false
glamour. They are a brother and a sister, who, like
many brothers and sisters, are not in the least alike.
The girl has that curious kind of hardness which, when
it is native and ingrained, deals successfully with cir-
cumstances that would overwhelm people of weaker
fiber. She doesn't struggle with circumstances; she
only finds them, among them. A factory
girl, she is put in the way of a better job as a
private-secretary-and-maid-of-all-work to a lady jour-
nalist, at whose house she meets an enterprising entre-
preneur of a new electrical device. He likes her; and
without hesitation she becomes his mistress. But
with her this is not the first step of failure; it is the first
step of success. Some years later, after a career in
which she has gained experience, education and the
power of self-expression, she marries a sea-captain and
settles down quietly in a London suburb, respected by
everyone, including the reader.
Her brother is a softer type, more easily exploited,
more easily fooled. But his sensitiveness saves him
from becoming a complete victim of the web of cir-
cumstances which he weaves. He leaves the sea, in
which he is going to be shot up the rest of his life, and
the girl who is going to marry and manage him, and
runs away to sea.—It is not as a mere literary
phrase that Mr. McFee has put the sea into the title of
his book. For the sea does to him symbolize life—
the sea which is never conquered utterly, but with
which one can live a life of self-respect and true affection.
One can love the sea, knowing that it would
as soon kill you as not. And one can live with life on
the same terms. The boy learns that on board ship,
and returns to effect his little triumph in the marrying
of the girl that he really fancies—a haraamid, with
whom he sets up a public house of his own, and lives in
quiet contentment until he dies of a cold.
There is revealed in the telling of this story a quality
of mind which is so new in literature that there are
no terms as yet invented by which to describe it. It is
at the farthest remove from the sentimentalism of the
Victorian period; but it is just as English—an English
coarseness, a complete imper turbateness in the face of
life. It is true that this sang froid is usually main-
tained only by refusing to see what is before one's eyes.
But when it is combined with curiosity and candor, the
result is fascinating in the extreme. Certainly this
book is one of the events of the literary year. F. D.

A New American Novelist
Windy McPherson's Son, by Sherwood Anderson
$1.40 net. [John Lane Co.]
I CAN remember vividly how one day in Chicago I
picked up the typewritten manuscript of an unpublished
novel in the home of a friend. "Who did it?"
I asked.
"A man named Sherwood Anderson," said my friend.
I took it up idly, a little cynically. Another novel,
I thought, to be added to the pile of those I would have
to read and review—just one more like all the rest. I
began to turn the pages—and then before I knew, I was
reading . . . with a curious and growing excite-
ment.
It wasn't like all the rest. It was, in fact, almost too
good to be true. I said to myself, "This is impossible!"
and read on, waiting to be disillusioned.

For this Sherwood Anderson was writing like—I had
no other phrase to express it—it like a great novelist.
I felt myself in the presence of a powerful mind, with
a magnificent grip on reality, pouring itself out in a
flood of scenes—a mind vivid, profound, apparently
inexhaustible in its energy. A mind full of beautiful,
interesting ideas.
Then and there I finished the book, and, curiously
shaken, went out to look for its author. I found him
—a tall, keen, robust, laughing man, black-haired and
blacking-black-eyed, in his late thirties—an advertising
writer by profession. He had never sold a story in his
life; but he had been writing novels for the last three
or four years, and he had a trunkful of them.
Upon my modest demand, he turned over the
key of the trunk to me, and I proceeded to read some of
the most extraordinary and, as I still think, some of
the best novels ever written about American life.
This is one of them; and if I fail to write about it
in the calmly analytical manner befitting a book-review,
it is because the glow of that incredible discovery still
lights up its pages for me. It is not every day that
one stumbles upon a great novelist. Nevertheless, I
will try to refrain from mere praise, and tell what the
book is about.
It is about America. More specifically, it begins in
the village of Caxton, Iowa, inhabited by people like
Valmore and Freedom Smith and John Telfer, talkers
and fighters, braggarts and dandies, drinkers and
philosophers and failures too real ever to have got into
American fiction before. Among these boisterous,
jocund, turbulent and disturbing influences the boy
Sam McPherson grows up, a seeker after he does not
know what, listening curiously to the wisdom that is
uttered by the town philosophers and the town lunatics
—listening and wondering and adventuring. He has in
him, fluttering timorously, the soul of a dreamer; but
he smoothes it, for a reason which appears to him
good.
The reason is his father, a veteran of the Civil War,
useless now and idle, a boastful old relic—"Windy
McPherson." It is in short because his father is an
incompetent idealist, who allows his wife to take in
washing to support the family while he brags in the
streets about the glories of his soldier days, that Sam
in hurt boyish pride smothers his own idealism.
Ashamed and angry, he cries, "You may laugh at that
fool Windy, but I laugh at Sam Mc-
Pherson." And he becomes the man of the family,
hard-headed, practical, cold, and a little cruel, even as
a boy. He is going to be successful.
He is successful. Halfway through the book we find
the son of "Windy" McPherson rising rapidly in an
arms-manufacturing company in Chicago. "I cannot
see myself belonging in the rot most business men talk,"
he writes to his sweetheart. "They are full of senti-
ment and ideals which are not true. Having a thing
to sell, they always say it is the best, although it may
be third-rate. I do not object to that. What I do ob-
ject to is the way they have of nursing a hope within
themselves that the third-rate thing is a first-rate thing,
till the hope becomes a belief. . . . I would lie
about goods to sell them, but I would not lie to my
self. I will not stultify my own mind. If a man
crosses swords with me in a business deal and I come
out of the affair with the money, it is no sign that I
am the greater rascal, rather it is a sign that I am
the keener man.
His philosophy is put to the test when at the height
of his career it becomes necessary for him to turn
against his father-in-law, through whose assistance he
has achieved control of the company. He is stung
visciously and votes to throw the useless old man out. The old
man does not act so sensibly: he broods over it and
shoots himself.
That, naturally, does not improve Sam's relations
with the old man's daughter, his wife. But the mar-
riage was already moribund, without that. Sam had
believed in his marriage—deeply; yet somehow it failed
to be all that he wished. Here certainly he philosophy
faded out. He could not be happier. He is, in
fact, though he does not as yet realize it, a failure in
life. But he grinds ahead.
Only one does not quite lose sight, in the hard and
successful business man, of the wondering, puzzled,
listening boy of Caxton, trying to get at the meaning
of life. He still tries to be the man he had determined
to be—the man he believed in. When the news of
his father-in-law's suicide comes to him, his comment is:
"The old fool." A just comment, according
to his philosophy. . . . But that same day he
realizes that life has become meaningless to him.
Whereupon he walks out of his office and disappears
from the world.
Two men, neither one nor the other. When one's philosophy
of life has broken down, one must find a new one or
go insane. So, severing without a word every tie that
binds him to the world, he walks out of Chicago, down
a country road, seeking the truth—his truth.
Things happen to him: such things as might happen
to a millionaire—or anybody else—who did such a rash
thing as to go in search of the truth. Once, curiously
enough, he tries to find it in the Socialist Party; but
he is not interested—"let the party be, and I regret to
say, do not hit it off. . . .
What he finds, after what adventures, I will leave
you to discover. After all, the story is not the most
important thing. Nor, to me, is the important thing
the emotional power and the rich humor of the book,
or its intimate truth to American life, nor the passion
and splendor of its literary quality. The thing which
 captures me and will not let me go is the profound
sincerity, the note of serious, baffled, tragic questioning
which I hear above its laughter and tears. It is, all
through, an asking of the question which American
literature has hardly as yet begun to ask: "What for?"
The old facile answers are unsatisfying; the facile
new ones not less or worse. Perhaps there is no answer.
But we must ask. And the writer who puts that ques-
tion in intimate and vivid terms of the lives of men
and women, completely, fearlessly, candidly, is such an
interpreter of American life as we have need of.
For it is that spirit of profound and unresting ques-
tioning which has made Russian literature what it is
today, which goes through all their pages—.
Turgeniev and Tolstoi, Dostoiev-
sky and Tchekhov, Artibashev and Gorky. It echoes,
too, in this book, like a great bell pealing its tremen-
dous question to the unanswerable sky, and waking
awareness within one's self something that one has
carefully laid to sleep, perhaps one's soul, who knows?
FLOYD DELL.

Explanation
CONSIDERING how many other interesting things
we left out of this issue (because, as we explained
on page five, we didn't have enough paper), we
feel that we have been very generous of space to the
book-review section. Nevertheless, we had to leave out
a lot of reviews of books—among them "Joseph Fels:
His Life and Work," by Mary Fels; "Towards a Last-
ing Settlement," by G. Lowes Dickinson and others,
and "New Wars for Old," by John Haynes Holmes;
all of which we take this opportunity to recommend
to our readers. In the new form of the magazine
which we are now contemplating we expect never to
limit the number of pages to a book review.
THE MASSES

Why Is a Hippodrome? Beginning a New Department

The purpose of this new department in The MASSES is to provide me with free tickets to New York theaters. I am not a dramatic critic. I’m a long way from being a dramatic critic. But these New York shows are a long way from being drama. New Yorkers don’t want drama; they want shows. “Hildy Night with the Dolly Sisters” is just the thing New Yorkers want to see. They let such a piece of supreme dramatic art as “The Weavers” struggle along for a few weeks and go broke.

New York apparently says “The Weavers,” and New York doesn’t like anything it approves of. But that’s old stuff. I’ve just made a new discovery that’s infinitely more important than that. It is this: New Yorkers are not attracted by things that interest them. Leave it to any veteran producer in town. Ask the manager of the “Big Show”—he knows, whether he will admit it or not.

I didn’t go to the Big Show to see the Big Show. I went there to see Pavlov. It is a safe guess that more than half of the five thousand people who crowd into each performance have the same motive.

“Pavlov!” say all the signs. And unquestionably Pavlov draws the crowd. And when the crowd is scared, it has seen Pavlov, it responds with every courteous applause—and goes into raptures of enthusiasm over the Ice Ballet. Pavlov attracts them. The Ice Ballet merely interests and fascinates and satisfies. I never understood New York until I studied this Big Show. Now I understand it perfectly.

In the first place, the Big Show opens with a song song with a dreamy dummy of Uncle Sam who avers over and over that we are not too proud to fight when we’ve got a good excuse, etc., etc., to that effect.

Does the audience like that? It doesn’t get enthusiastic, so that you can notice it, and you might think it doesn’t care. That is, if you didn’t understand applied psychology the way Mr. Dillingham does. But did you ever watch a thoroughly eupenic Methodist getting ready to wade into a fragrant hunk of roast beef? What does he do first? Sniff and lick his chops? By no means. He assumes a thoroughly bored expression, folds his pious digits under the table, points his closed lids toward the chandelier and mumbles a blessing.

Now, the audiences that travel to big shows hereabouts are not all Methodist. But they’re near relatives. They’ve got to have the blessing asked or else they won’t bite. And the “patriotic” stunt is the only sort of blessing they know. Thanks be that patriotism in New York has got down to the mumbled stage.

The Hippodrome is exceedingly well polished. It’s as safe as the Calvary Baptist Church. If anybody wanted to fight, excuse or no, he wouldn’t have any more chance than Bonck White against a Bergoff and Waddell choir. And that is just the place for the average New Yorker to acclaim his fighting qualities. I haven’t heard that the recruiting offices have had to work overtime because of the Big Show and I don’t expect to. Personally I won’t care about this whether mine host asks the blessing or not and I’ll never make an issue out of georgianochristian patriotism. It’s the actual bill that counts. And the actual bill at the Big Show makes me warm up to New York.

I say that it amounts to something to see ten thousand people a day, throughout the year, so enthusiastic over such a purely beautiful spectacle as that ice ballet. It is too bad that they call it “ballet,” as the word suggests the mechanics of soft and high heels and all the ding-a-ling tom-tourley of sexless sex that goes to make up the average so-called “musical show.”

There are no automatic conveyances like the ballet. Girls have to be alive to skate like that; and the exultant rhythm of their movements is no more to be compared to the cut and dried ballet than is the flying of Isadora Duncan’s bare-limbed girls to be compared with the untied toe-dancing of the Pavlova school.

I am strong for the Big Show. And I am longing to see the winters when the boys and girls of New York will have ice enough for all—and good skaters enough, and the time and energy and enthusiasm to make skating a great communal art.

What is the funniest thing in life? The most absurd joke that a New Yorker can conceive of? It’s marriage.

Marriage, in the popular notion, is a bigger joke than hell. That is because it is more sacred. There was a time when hell was a big joke, too, but that was when we believed in hell and held it sacred, too. Nobody believes in hell today. And everybody still holds marriage so sacred that it must not be mentioned except in fun. Only the ultra-radicals who oppose marriage take it seriously. The great public still laughs uproariously whenever it is mentioned.

If you want proof of these statements, take up any comic paper. Seventeen and sixty-tenths per cent. of all the whereas they couple, by a moderately formal, order, be about women marrying their husbands, husbands tying to their wives, bffs at fidelity which everybody can see through, post-honeymoon dissolutions, etc., etc.

If you want further proof, go to a funny show in New York. “Seven Chances,” by Roi Cooper Megnre, playing at the George M. Cohan Theater, is an excellent example. It just suits conventional New York, because it lambastes their most sacred institution all over the map. There is a married man in the play who damn’s his luck eloquently while the audience scrunches its delight. There is another married man who claims he is happy and the audience is politely silent. At one of his lines advocating marriage, one girl in the audience started to applaud, and the whole audience laughed at her. Whether it was part of the show, I couldn’t tell; but if the management is wise, it will keep it up. It was one of the best bits of the play.

The theme of the play is the agony of a fifty dollar a week clerk who has to get married in twenty-four hour order and inherit twelve million dollars. Megnre’s lines are simple, the company is fairly good, and the play can’t help succeeding. But suppose some playwright would say in all seriousness, either that marriage is a sensible institution, or that it isn’t. If he said the first, he would never get a hearing. If he said the other, we would arise as one flesh and send him either to Matteawan or Blackwell’s Island.


They were right. This play is surely true to life, as it is lived. And life as it is lived is decidedly artificial.

Listen! Can you imagine the son of a Big Crook in Wall Street going to perdition in the usual way until the governor throws him overboard to save his soul? And then, can you imagine the son of the big crook becoming a little crook, disgracing his father’s crooked name in every old dump from here to Shanghai? And then, can you imagine his “coming back”—honest farming and all that—not another drop of booze—self-reliant, proud, honest for the first time in his life?

And listen again! There’s a girl. She’s a cabaret-singer—straight. When he’s shanghaied to Shanghai, she pursues. She goes the limit, apparently, hits the boot, then the pipe; and the wreck of her meets the wreck of his, a hop joint. But presently he discovers something. He does what she has done everything but—that. In the depths, then, she becomes his inspiration and accounts for his “coming back.”

Do you see the moral? Why, if she had done “that,” she would have spoiled the beans. She couldn’t have inspired him then. Now, I imagine, away up in my occasional brains, that I would rather that she had done everything but “that” than to smoke hop. But that’s not life, and this play is true to life. Isn’t life damned artificial?

Charles W. Wool.

“Intolerance”

M. GRIFFITH has a savage hatred of intolerance. No one who didn’t have a genuine and deep emotion of anger at the way we misuse the gift of life, could have produced the film-play at Liberty Theater. Genuine emotion is always impressive; and “Intolerance” is to me particularly so. It seems to me the expression of a profound and underlying desire, a mind which loves life and beauty and joy, and is moved to rage and pity by the deliberate malice with which, in all ages, life and beauty and joy is destroyed.

Slow to start, the play develops the simplest sort of story, which is, in effect, that people were happy and loved life in ancient Babylon, in Samaria, in old France, as they are happy and love life today. Against a spectacular or familiar background, the four stories proceed, with some elaborate and supererogatory assistance from the captions. People live and laugh and drink and dance and love. And then—the vials of intolerance are poured forth, and there is a great earthquake and the sun becomes black as sackcloth and the moon red as blood and the stars fall to the earth and the heavens are rolled up like a scroll. Or, to speak in less Apocalyptic language, we see the fall of Babylon, the crucifixion of Jesus, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the almost-execution of a man condemned to death as a murderer. Toward the end the swift convergence of the four tragedies is nothing less than tremendous.

There is much of loveliness in the play, both of spectacle and of human nature; and I only wish the exigencies of concentraction of four centuries into one evening had not compelled Mr. Griffith to be so brief with some of them. But the thing which makes “Intolerance” more than a gorgeous and exciting spectacle is the portrayal of the most violent and extreme and terrible emotions. It requires one who loves beauty and tenderness to exhibit the horror of death and the fear of death, without offense: Mr. Griffith does it with the splendor of a great sincerity.

There are parts of the play that, for all Mr. Griffith’s art, are not what he would have done had he been told that he has done everything but—that. But I will refrain from instructing Mr. Griffith in the art of motion pictures, except for the mild suggestion that some of the captions are unduly self-righteous, others are unduly informative, and half of them at least could be dispensed with.

There is, perhaps, something ironic in the idea of the producer of that hate-breeding film-play, “The Birth of a Nation,” telling us to be tolerant. But it is not more ironic than the spectacle which some of us haters of censorship furnished when we tried to stop its production—and left a trail of film-censorships in our wake which it will take twenty-five years to abolish! As a brilliant epigrammatist of an Oriental country once remarked, let him that is without sin cast the first stone.

F. D.
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DEAR God, send me Nietzsche—
Mad, melancholy and all,
Bad breath, stomach ache, narcotics,
And grouch—he's been telling me
Stuff that sticks
In my memory:
This is the last being read
Those paragraph piles
He called books.
And I like his hierarchy of life.
Because, of course,
I'd belong on top—a marquis
Of the intellect.
I wish he'd come back for
A day or two to inspect
Things he hadn't seen when
He wrote, "A good war halloweth
Any cause!"—Superman
And Will to Power!

I'd show him ten thousand
Bridges to the superman
Gone in an hour!
And "peace is a means to new wars!"

So said Nietzsche—
Never having heard the roar
Of trinitotouloll—never having seen
A clerk, "sick and botched,"
In bred, simple, stupid,
Kill one thousand healthy ones—
By turning a crank!
The fate of all,
And the stupidest—
Nights gone of the abyss,
I tell you this:
What you said of Christ
Is true of Nietzsche!...
Had you lived till now,
YOU would have dared to dissaw!
Not dead, Nietzsche,
As you toast in Hell,
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Is to tell
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Pater and Oscar Wilde

THE fine review of Mr. Frank Harris's "Confessions" of Oscar Wilde in your column sent me to the book itself, and there amid a plethora of reminiscences, some of them highly re-massed from the imagination, I found my own addition of anecdote. Wilde had been sentimentalising to Mr. Harris of his-Pseudo-Greek (that is Pater's) ideal-consciencious (I suppose) that he was sup-plying him with copy for the Confessions. Mr. Harris quotes Wilde as say-"I remember once talking to Pater when we were seated under some trees at Oxford, etc. . . . I really talked as I was inspired, and when I saw Pater—"still, quiet, silent Pater—"suddenly slipped from his seat and knelt down by me and kissed my hand. He got up with a white strained face. "I had to," he muttered, glancing about him fearfully: "I had to; I had to once."
Now this anecdote means nothing in itself, aside from the fact that it is as cheap as dirt, and is obviously an im-perinent invention. Mr. Harris himself admits that the incident has been "ripened" and set in a higher key of thought. His gift for this sort of ripening is well known, and so was Wilde's. One does not get the drift of the story however, until he has read Mr. Harris's book and F. D.'s review of it. Unfortunately your critics have been pleased to take up and exploit the suggestion in the narrative, and refers all too lightly to a connection between pseudo-Greek (that is Pater's) ideal-and invented notions about sex.
It is well to be clear about these things. This is not the place to assert what Pater was, or what he stood still, and this holds for, or to vindicate his ideals. But to associate the latter with the perversion which forms the real subject of Mr. Harris's book is to con-fuse ideas and to think muddily. It is enough to look at the story in the light of probability and common sense. Pater was never effusive in his relations with the best of friends, and it is equally certain that he knew Wilde only slightly. He was always shy, stou转载 to the point of religious austerity —and Wilde was then a big, stoutish, unapproaching fellow, "with something dirty about him," as Mr. Harris puts it. If anyone sincerely believes in the sublime rapprochement described by Mr. Harris, I can only say that he has his reasons. There is much that is of-fensive in Mr. Harris's "Confessions," but I should have thought that he would have refrained from slandering in such a connection the noble and defenseless dead.

Cooper H. Wright
Kent School, Kent, Conn.

Note
STUART DAVIS asks us to say that he did not intend the publication of the picture which appeared on our back cover for September.

Note
THE frontispiece of our last issue, "The Masque of the Red Death," was engraved from a painting by Board-man Robinson illustrating Edgar Allan Poe's story of that name.
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