A Note On The New Russian Poetry

By LOUIS LOZOWICH.

Had your international affiliation or personal curiosity led you to the new Jerusalem of Communist Russia in the busy lecture season of 1918, a certain poster would have, doubtless, attracted your attention, for it announced to red Moscovy a discourse of the famous Bolshevik poet, Vassily Kamensky. The title of the discourse was "The Career of a S— of a B— (Karyera Sukhawo Syna), and lest you misunderstood the drift and purport thereof a parenthetic subtitle came obligingly to your aid: "The Story of the Russian Intelligentzia" (Istoria Russkoy Intelligentsii).

The piquant incident is significant. Communist Russia is recasting old standards in new moulds, and, in the process, Intelligentzia comes in for a heavy drubbing. Well deserved, it must be admitted. The Intelligentzia dreamt the Revolution, gloried in it, deified it. From Hertsen to Plechanov, from Larrov to Mereszhkovsky the Revolution had been foreseen and foretold with prophetic exactness—its whole course can be narrated in extracts from their works. The Revolution came, and behold the Intelligentzia scatter precipitously to all corners of the globe squealing pitifully its disaffection. Well may the poet take it severely and mockingly to task:

You trembled apprehensively
Like children in some happy expectation.
* * * * * *
You welcomed the ruin and tragedy
And horror of a new deluge.
* * * * * *
And it came.
* * * * * *
We hear reverberating thunders,
Eternal foundations crash into the abyss.
* * * * * *
Why then do you not plunge into the storm of events,
Intoxicated by the strangely terrible hurricane?
Why do you still look sadly to the past
As to some land of promise?

Is it not because the past has now taken place of the future? Is it not because:

The dream was welcome only from afar
And originality pleased you
Only in books of poetic inspiration?
(Valery Bryusov, "Invective.")

Apparently, for revolutionary ardor has evaporated at the first approach of rough reality, and past prejudices still hold the Intelligentzia in the grip.

And who is this? Long haired
And speaking in a whisper:
"Traitors!
Russia is lost!"
Must be a writer. . . .
(Alexander Blok, "Traitors.")

And sticking out
From amidst the canon roar
Is seen the round-shouldered back
Of a bespectacled, sickly
Intellectual.
A shaggy head
Is muttering
Indignant words
About the importance
Of Constantinople
And the Straits.
(Andrey Bely, "Christ Is Risen.")

The world is shattered to its foundation, but the Intelligentzia still cherishes its old illusions. Perish the Revolution that the old prejudices might survive. This is how the renegades are regarded by those members of the Intelligentzia who stuck to the guns. But a further distinction must be drawn between the old and the young.

Bryussov, Bely, Blok, Ivanov, Sologub, men already in the fifties and the sixties, came to the Revolution with a baggage difficult to discard. Extreme modernists of some twenty years ago, they grew to maturity at a time when environment was so oppressive and life so banal that they might have exclaimed with the poet:

Un couchant des Cosmognies!
Ah! Que la Vie est quotidienne!
(J. Laforgue, "Complaint sur certains ennuis.")

Disgusted with the stifling circumambient atmosphere, they retired within their ego whence they exuded, as it were, a protective covering, a subjective poetry that sought respite in ancient Greece, in the far Orient, in the infinity of the Cosmos.

Too skeptic to accept official religion, they built up an ideologic logomachy of "God-seekers" (Bogoiskately) and "God-creators" (Bogostrotely). Masters of ancient and modern languages and literatures, thoroly versed in old and contemporary philosophy, esthetic theoreticians of a high order, prose writers of great power—it was in poetry that they reached their full stature. Never before had Russian poetry ascended such heights or sounded such depths; never before had the Russian language exhibited such subtlety, richness, expressiveness. They brought Russian poetry to a state of excellence that will compare favorably with the poetry of any nation.

The Revolution shook them from their torpor, but was powerless to transform them completely. True, they turned from dream to reality, they forced their intellectual selves to blend with the mass, but they were not sufficiently assertive. It is with their pre-revolutionary achievement that their fame rests.

But if these men, entrenched behind their deep rooted habits and convictions, behave with reticence and speak with reserve, the younger poets fling caution to the wind and bring their intemperate excesses into the market place. Shershenevitch, Mariyengoff, Kamensky, Polyetayev, Yesenin, Guerasimov, Mayakovsky throw a challenge to the whole world, exult in terror, blood, dynamite, blasphème Christ and God, denounce Pushkin and Raphael, threaten destruction to the old order, call to universal revolution, celebrate the reign of labor. In a great outburst of revolutionary patriotism they glorify the Communist fatherland. The German Expressionist poet has well expressed their attitude:

Tag der Freiheit heiliges Russland!
. . . . . Oh, Tag der Wonne

Nie hat Europa schoneren Tag, nie
unsere Jugend herrlicheres Ziel!
(Carl Ooten, "Fur Martinet.")

They sing paens to the new art and the new life. Art and life are for them indissoluble one.

Prikaz for the Army of Art.
The brigades of old men always
trudge on slowly
The same straggling step.
To the barricades, comrades!
To the barricades of souls and hearts!
* * * * * *
Enough of jog-trotting;
A leap into the future!
* * * * * *
Forward singing and whistling!
* * * * * *
Enough of pennyworth truth;
Sweep clean every old notion from
your heart.
The streets are our brushes,
The public squares our palettes.
* * * * * *
Into the streets, Futurists,
Drum players and poets!
(Vladimir Mayakovsky.)

Dekret About Fence Literature, Decoration of Streets, Balconies With Music, Carnivals of Art.
Come on, fellows—
Poets, artists, musicians—
Roll up your sleeves,
Yesterday the Tolstoys and Kants had
taught you;
Today it is your own head that works.
Let us take all vacant fences,
Roofs, facades, sidewalks;
Let us decorate them to the glory of
Freedom
Like universal cathedrals.

Then follows an injunction for poets to paste their verse on posters all over the city, for painters to decorate it, for musicians to play and sing with and for the nation.

There are six working days in the week.
And I boldly propose
To stage carnivals and processions
Every day of rest,
In praise of the spirit of Revolution
In the world.
(Vassily Kamensky.)

Technically little change has taken place in Russian poetry during the Revolution. All schools of Europe are represented. The Soviet government, master—nominally, at any rate—of the printing industry, has shown itself extremely indulgent (often too indulgent, one is tempted to say) with the poetic effusions of all schools and tendencies. Studios have been opened for recitation, theoretic analysis and esthetic discussion of poetry, anthologies have been issued, magazines have been published. When the shortage of paper is too great "oral almanachs" do duty for printed ones. Poetic production has increased to proportions never before attained in Russia.

At one end—on the right—are the Proletarian poets, who seek simplicity, and the Symbolists, who seek subtlety; in the middle are the Imaginists (Imaginistry), who seek rich imagery, and the Futurists, who seek the hidden contact of dissociated ideas; at the other end—on the left—are those who, like the Suprematists, seek the "zero point of art," and the Nothingists (Nitchevoki. "Art must be destroyed!"), who seem to have found it. Before the Revolution Krutchenych thought this admirable:

Dir boor shtchill
oobyestchoor
skoom
vy so boo
rlez.

And now Malyevitch thinks this superb:

Oole Ele Lel Lee One Kon See An
Onon Koree Ree Koazambe Moena
Lezh
Sabno Oratr Tulozh Koalsebee Blestore
Teebo Orene Alazh.

These quotations are as cryptic in the Russian original as in the literal English transcription. The theory of the extreme poetic Left absolves the poet from the use of comprehensible language. The great Russian poet Tyuetchev said:

A thought once expressed
Becomes a lie.

The poets of the extreme Left are evidently determined to utter no lie, for they express no thought. Poetry is to be sung in a language newly created by each poet, a language empty of logical content but full of emotion to all those whose souls are carry intelligibility, but communicate emotion to al those whose souls are attuned to receive it, and whose mood and temper are congenial with the poet's own mood and temper. Whether these chosen spirits be ten or a million is of no consequence.

In the background of the rich poetic activity there is an absence of speculation in the social theory of the new art (Lunatcharsky, Bogdanov, Fritche, Tchukovsky, Shklovay), Russian society—and all other—is passing from the Hell of Capitalism thru the Purgatory of Proletarian Dictatorship to the Paradise of Communism. To each different stage corresponds a different form of art (poetry, we know, is a prostitute—poesia e una ptana—which is not the least of her merits). Present Russian art is still wavering between capitalist reality and Communist visions. It would be therefore premature to draw a valedictory of Communist poetry before it found full expression. Daring experiments are tried and incompatible poetic elements often collide and burst into explosion. A school whose phylogenetic evolution, so to speak, took some five decades elsewhere is now ontogenetically recapitulated in five months. It is before all else a period of preparation, fermentation, incubation. It may be that some attempts are halting and some experiments crude; it may be that poetic circles are cluttered. But if the great energy liberated by the tremendous upheaval has sift yet crystallized into definite shape, hich enthusiasm sustains every effort, and, according to the Communists, when revolution is in full swing he who whines is an imbecile.

And perhaps they are right!

We Are The Mob

By OSCAR KANEHL

We are the mob. Thank God.
To suit?
We have no more to loose
Than our chains.

We are the mob. Thank God.
To be moderate?
Tell it those,
Whose measure doesn't overrun.

We are the mob. Thank God.
Considerateness?
Recommend it those
Who are lounging on cushions.

We are the mob. Thank God.
Patience?
Desire it from those
Who are eating from filled dishes.

We are the mob. Thank God.
Ever to toil only?
We have nothing in our body
Nothing upon the body.

We are the mob. Thank God.
Desire nothing more from us.
Recommend us nothing.
Tell us nothing.

We are the mob. Thank God.
Why keep it secret?
We are the mob. Thank God.
We will show it to you.

Translation by Paul Acel.

"The idea becomes power when it penetrates the masses."
—Karl Marx.

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Where Do You Stand On June 17th?

By ALEXANDER BITTELMAN.

This question should be addressed to every leader of labor in the country and to everyone who claims to represent the interests of the exploited farmers. Now is the time for each organization of workers and poor farmers to take a definite stand on the convention of June 17th in the Twin Cities, which is to cement and consolidate the farmer-labor forces of the country for an independent political struggle against the domination of capital and its servants in the government. Now more than ever is the time for positive commitments on this momentous issue in the life of the oppressed masses of America. Where do you stand?

It is no longer the old abstract proposition of independent political action versus nonpartisan politics of the kind practiced by Gompers and the C. P. P. A. Nor is it a mere matter of preference, taste or desire. No, it is a perfectly concrete, definite and practical problem that is now confronting the workers and exploited farmers. It is the problem of June 17th or July 4th. Which do you choose?

And remember: there isn't much time left for making up one's mind. In another few weeks the workers and poor farmers of America will have to take action. They will have to decide in which of the two gatherings—June 17 in the Twin Cities or July 4 in Cleveland—they will participate. Hence, the immediate necessity of placing this question on the agenda of all organizations of workers and poor farmers.

A Third Party or a Labor Party.

Of course, a class farmer-labor party, this is what the workers and exploited farmers need. A party of their own. A political instrument for their own battles. A means to further their own interests as against the interests of the exploiting and ruling classes.

Who will undertake to challenge or disprove this contention? Only those who don't give a damn for the interests and well-being of the workers and exploited farmers; only those who are consciously or unconsciously working for the promotion of the interests of capital, big and small. In short, only those who represent interests other than the interests of the workers and exploited farmers will deny the imperative necessity of a class farmer-labor party.

This pressing need of a class farmer-labor party is not of recent origin. It has been with us for many and many years, practically since this republic of ours was established. But never, never as yet in the history of the country were conditions so ripe and favorable for the realization of such a party. And, furthermore, never was there so much at stake for the life interests of the oppressed masses depending upon the immediate and successful formation of a mass farmer-labor party. Who will deny this?

The C. P. P. A. and July 4.

Much of what has been said before will no doubt be accepted as true by quite a number of leaders of labor and exploited farmers. Which is progress, indeed. For there was a time, and not very long ago, when the nonpartisan bunk of Sam Gompers, and the newer edition of the same thing by the C. P. P. A., were practically dominating the American labor movement.

Happily this is no longer the case. Social and political events have the great virtue of compelling action, if not always understanding and sympathy. And so it came about that even Gompers was compelled to congratulate Magnus Johnson from Minnesota on his election to the Senate, in spite of the fact that the election of Magnus Johnson was the result of a third party movement, which is clearly at variance with the political "philosophy" of this same Gompers.

This, of course, is not the most significant symptom of the times. With Gompers it means very little after all. Regardless of what he may feel compelled to say at one time or another, he is positively hopeless from the point of view of progressive developments in the American labor movement.

But there is another case which is of much more significance. It is, namely, the result of the last conference of the C. P. P. A. in St. Louis. The leaders of the 16 standard railroad unions, who mostly compose and completely dominate the Conference for Progressive Political Action, came to St. Louis to endorse William G. McAdoo as the presidential nominee of the Democratic party. This decision was to be the crowning act of a year or more of nonpartisan "progressive" political action, whatever that may mean.

But the gods of politics (and the developments of the class struggle) willed differently. It was not to be McAdoo, not in St. Louis. The presidents of the railroad unions could not—don't you see, they couldn't—endorse McAdoo after it has been publicly proven that he had been on the pay roll of Doheny, one of the biggest oil magnates in the country.

Did the presidents of the railroad unions, which is the C. P. P. A., suffer a change of heart because of these developments? Not at all. Neither a change of heart, nor a change of mind. The same old thing. Which is best proven by the fact that most of the presidents of the railroad unions, who did not dare to endorse McAdoo in St. Louis, gave him their endorsement in Chicago only a few days subsequent to the St. Louis gathering.

While in St. Louis, however, they merely delivered and listened to speeches, applauded vigorously all the fine sentiments of Morris Hillquit, and decided to hold another conference on July 4, in Cleveland.

Speaking again of the virtue of events and developments to compel action, here is a case. The C. P. P. A. has been clearly and expressedly a non-partisan proposition in the sense of supporting "good" men on the tickets of the two old parties. It was going to complete this policy by endorsing McAdoo on the ticket of the Democratic party. The interference of events prevented this from happening. What is to come next?

To answer this question is to define the present nature and political tendencies of the C. P. P. A. and of the conference of July 4 in Cleveland. The answer is: that at and after the conference in St. Louis the C. P. P. A. has taken a definite turn in the direction of a third party. Which means, in other words, that the C. P. P. A., at its conference in Cleveland on July 4, may under certain conditions throw in its lot with a third party—bourgeois liberal party.

This eventuality is by no means absolutely certain. It must be borne in mind that many of the leaders of the C. P. P. A. are so completely and intimately bound up with the old capitalist parties that nothing can divorce them from these parties. Many of the leaders of the railroad unions will stick to the old parties to the very end.

And again we must not lose sight of the fact that the strategy of Senator LaFollette and his group will have a determining effect upon the whole third party movement as far as the coming elections are concerned. Which means—what? That the C. P. P. A. and its conference of July 4 are totally at the mercy of the plans, policies and tactics of the LaFollette group.

From Words to Action.

The only thing that can, therefore, be said with any degree of certainty about the C. P. P. A. and its conference of July 4 is this: that it is moving in the direction of a third party; that it finds itself in the wake and not in the lead of this movement; and that, in spite of the fact that it is made up mostly of labor unions, it is completely dominated by petty bourgeois liberal ideology.

A Movement of Leaders.

The C. P. P. A. is a movement of leaders and not of the rank and file. This, too, determines its nature. And here we are not arguing against leaders in general, but against a certain kind of relationship between labor leaders and the rank and file of their organizations. We want the rank and file of labor and of the exploited farmers to consciously mould and create their own movement. We want them to put the stamp of their sufferings, needs and desires upon the policies and actions of their organizations. We are conscious of the fact that the rank and file in the shops, factories, mines, railroads and on the farms are much more alive to the needs of the working masses than are the well-paid and comfortable officials of the labor and farmer organizations.

The C. P. P. A. does not reflect the state of mind of the rank and file, nor does it respond to their desires. The leaders of the C. P. P. A. are afraid of the rank and file. They don't want them. Proof? Why, take the make-up of all the national conferences of the C. P. P. A., the basis of representation. And what do we find?

Everybody is welcome to these conferences: presidents, vice-presidents and other high officials of labor unions, professional politicians of all kinds and sorts; in a word, everybody but the direct representatives of the rank and file—delegates elected by local unions and local organizations of exploited farmers. These are not wanted. It will be well to remember that the leaders of the C. P. P. A. have adopted such a basis of representation to their July 4 conference which excludes from participation all delegates from local unions.

In view of all this, what is to be expected of the July 4 conference in Cleveland? At most a continuation of the non-partisan bunk of Sam Gompers. At best a hip-hip-hooray explosion in favor of a petty bourgeois third party candidate for president. If the former happens, the Socialist party and a few more delegates may split away from the conference. If, on the other hand, the latter takes place, some of the die-hard reactionaries may split away. But whatever happens, no farmer-labor party can result of the conference of July 4.

June 17 the Only Instrument.

To bring about a consolidation of the farmer-labor forces, we must turn to the convention of June 17 in the Twin Cities.

In the first place this convention is being called by the politically organized elements of the workers and exploited farmers—by the Farmer-Labor Party movement of the United States. It is predominantly a class movement for a class party. In the second place, this is a rank and file movement, which is going to produce a rank and file convention. If at any time anywhere in the United States there was a gathering capable of producing a united and strong political movement of workers and exploited farmers, such a gathering will take place in the Twin Cities on June 17. In addition to international unions, state and city central labor bodies, national and local organizations of exploited farmers, all existing farmer-labor parties, other working class political parties, national and local fraternal organizations of labor and co-operatives—in addition to all these, every local union will be called upon to send delegates to the June 17 convention.

Now is the time to pass over from words to action. In saying this we are particularly mindful of those labor leaders and labor organizations which are theoretically in favor of a class party of workers and exploited farmers, and do make the distinction between a third party and a labor party. We might refer, by way of example, to the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, whose official organ, the "Advance," carried in its issue of March 27 an editorial in favor of a labor party. The editorial is significantly entitled "Labor Party Not a Third Party," and concludes by saying that:

"To cope with those evils (in our industrial system) the workers must have their own labor party. No other party could or would do it."

Correct. Only a farmer-labor party and not a third petty bourgeois party can or will effectively tackle the problems of the oppressed masses and lead successfully their struggles.

This is true. But what does it mean concretely? Under the present conditions and on the eve of two conventions, June 17 and July 4?

If it means anything at all, it means this: that every labor organization must participate in the convention of June 17 and not in the conference of July 4. This the official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers failed to say, whereas without this conclusion no amount of professions and expressions in favor of a labor party will have any practical meaning.

The left wing of the American labor movement has at present a serious duty to perform. It must awaken the rank and file workers and exploited farmers to the significance of the June 17 convention. It must make it clear even to the backward masses that the call of the hour is the class farmer-labor party. This party may, under certain conditions, co-operate with or even support the candidates of a third party. But the primary condition for this as for everything else is first and foremost the consolidation of the farmer-labor forces into an independent and distinct party of their own.

Hence, the convention of June 17.

Don't Miss It!

In the Magazine Section of the DAILY WORKER, today, we start the publication serially, of the great work, "At the Doors," by Boris Pilniak, another famous Russian author, greater than Iury Libedinsky, author of "A Week," published recently.

"At the Doors" will appear in three installments, to be published on three successive Saturdays. Be sure to make your arrangements with the news dealer to get your copy regularly. In order to be sure to get your paper, better subscribe. Our new address is: DAILY WORKER, 1113 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago, Illinois.

AT THE DOORS - -

By BORIS PILNIAK

AT THE DOORS is a picture—or rather a series of pictures, of Russian life. The author gets his results by the cumulative effect on the mind of the reader of sketches in rough outline of characters and their surroundings. There is no plot in "At the Doors" in the conventional sense of the word. There is no hero and no heroine, no action of characters grouped around a central figure culminating in a breath-taking climax but there is strength and beauty of touch giving the reader an extreme consciousness of the reality of the life with which the author deals.

AT THE DOORS is more like a play than a story. It consists of five pictures each complete in itself but at the same time all part of what might be called the color scheme of the writer. The colors are mostly gray and black—there is very little red—yet it is a revolutionary novel, a beautiful sample of the new culture that is coming into being in revolutionary Russia.

(A word of introduction. This story forms a connecting link in the chain of stories about the Splendid Face of the Revolution. And it is a story that tells about the snow of yesteryear melted under the fence.)

* * *

So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things know that it is near, even at the doors. St. Matthew, 24, 33.

I.

Some years ago the merchant's wife Olga Nicolayevna Jmukhina had a pumping station built at the foot of Siberna Mountain. The station was nick-named after its owner, Olga Nicolayevna. No water was being pumped any more, but the whistle still blew regularly at 8 o'clock in the morning, and at 2 and 4 in the afternoon. Whenever the morning whistle blew at the foot of the mountain, Ivan Petrovitch Bekesh, who lived at the other end of the city, would wake up, and, filled with an inexpressible sadness in his half-drowsy state, would begin to weave dreams about the beauty of human life and the splendor of human spring. Ivan Petrovitch had once passed two days on the Volga, and the whistle of Olga Nicolayevna seemed to him exactly like that of "Caucasus Mercury". Who indeed, does not know the sweet melancholy of the Volga in spring and the longing its cool, red mornings inspire to embrace the whole world? Ivan Petrovitch would get up, drink his classical carrot-tea, and go to work at the Finance Section. The life of Ivan Petrovitch was dull.

Olga Nicolayevna stood at the foot of the mountain, and on the mountain itself, beyond the ramparts, near the Kremlin Gates, was the building formerly known as the Social, now as the Communist Club. At the 2 o'clock whistle, Doctor Andrey Andreyevitch Veralsky dropped in for lunch. In the old days, the bartender would call his boy before the doctor's arrival and say, "Hey kid, make it fresh." And the boy would use his tongue to refreshen the caviar sandwiches which he handed the doctor together with a glass of vodka. Now, the doctor was served an empty glass which he would fill from a special vial, always kept in his vest pocket. But as ever before, when lunch was over, the doctor would shout thru the window and across the street: "Ilya, fetch the carriage," and drive forth to his patients.

Christmas.

Owing to the holiday, the whistle of Olga Nicolayevna did not blow at 4. The real Olga Nicolayevna, Mrs. Jmukhina, had died from terror two years previously when her furs and smoked geese were requisitioned. Hand-written posters hung on the walls of the club. And the bartender knew that the orchestra of the Cavalry Division would play on Christmas night at the ball of the Voyenkom* to celebrate his wife's birthday, and that on New Year's eve (old style) the Voyenspetz ** of the Division would arrange an out of town picnic. On Christmas Eve everybody went to the Church of St. John the Baptist to meet the new Church warden, the Commander of the Division, comrade Tanatar. Comrade Tanatar, a handsome Caucasian, dressed in a leather jacket and boots, was selling candles and passing around the plate.

The entire population was busy killing poultry, exchanging shirts for butter, baking pies with beetroot instead of sugar. A week before the holidays, all drug stores in the city were cleaned empty.

Frost and Storm.

In the deadstill brick house of Doctor Veralsky, on the Sibirna Mountain, only two rooms were fit for habitation. All the others were extremely cold and frost-covered. On the first day and night Olga, the doctor's

(*) Voyenny Kommissar (Military Commissary).

(**) Voyenny Spetzialist (Military Specialist).

intense blue, and the moon seemed lost in it. Morning came yellow and daughter, sat watching the weather outside. The frost was playing with its cold diamonds; the sky was an wax-like. The sun was yellow like wax, yellow like the face of a corpse. The barometer fell to 32. Ilya said the birds were falling frozen to the ground. In the evening some one called up to say that a snow-storm was coming from the Ural. It soon came sweeping along, dancing, howling, groaning, shrieking above the fields and the city, around the Sibirna Mountain, and in the empty parlor. The only place in the house where one could support the weather was the corner near the stove. Olga Veralskaya saw now the revolution as a snow-storm and the people in it as mere snow-flakes. It seemed to Olga that the snow-storm had killed her. Dressed in a fur coat and top boots, she sat huddled near the stove, tired of thinking, tired of reading.

Nevertheless, with the storm raging outside, she sat reading the diary of Ivan Petrovitch Bekesh.

Five image-lamps burned before Olga Veralskaya. The couch stood facing the stove and was all cluttered with fur-coats. The tiles of the stove shone dimly. And behind the wall the wind was blowing in the empty rooms.

July 11, 1913.

At the ball of Olga Nicolayevna Jmukhina.

Having cleaned our faces of the make-up, we went there together with Volynskaya. We found the party in full swing. The old and middle-aged occupied two rooms; our own company chose one far from indiscreet eyes. Samuel Tanatar sat beside me and Volynskaya opposite me. No sooner had I drunk the first glass of vodka than Volynskaya came proferring advice: "Don't drink too much." She had promised to spend the evening with me and allow me to accompany her home if I did not get drunk. Before an hour was over everything was topsy-turvy. Some one shouted: "Wine!" Some one burst out singing. A roar went up. Plates began flying. . . . . . My organism refused to drink any more. I began to feel tipsy. In order not to become completely drunk, I said to Volynskaya: "Well, who is going to see you home, Tanatar or I? She was just then sitting beside him, and they were preparing to go home together. "I do not really know" she said and added: "But you are already tipsy, Vania." "Alright," I answered and went into the next room where I found Doctor Veralsky, the father of my beloved Olga. As soon as he saw me, he made me sit down and silently treated me to a glass of some strong drink. I drank it to spite Volynskaya, and at once became dead drunk. My friend took me into the garden, gave me some soda water to drink, and went away. I sat there for a while, crying over my sorry state and thinking of Olga Veralskaya, the only woman I truly loved. Why, for Heaven's sake, did I ever drink so much and spoil my whole evening — and spoil everything? I did not remain alone for long. Volynskaya came, sat down beside me, put her arms around me and began preaching morality: "One must not drink so much." In full possession of my wits I answered: "I am not to blame, it is all Samuel's fault. I heard you arranging to go home together. And now I am far too drunk to do what we intended." She pressed close to me and embraced me. I was kissing her hands repeatedly: "Forgive me, forgive me," and begged her not to leave me, adding: "I know that this is the last time I see you." At these words I tried to break away from her and Tanatar (the latter had been present, all this time). She sought to hold me back, but I escaped. Tanatar caught me and made me sit down beside her again. She took me into her arms and said: "Vania, if you only love me, you won't commit suicide," and clinging passionately to me she pressed her lips to mine and remained motionless. Oh, how much pity there was in this kiss, how much despair, frenzy, passion, how much unselfish love! Minutes passed, each an eternity and each rich in memories (of Olga Veralskaya). Yes . . . . . that kiss gave me the illusion of happiness; mere illusion, it is true, but still of happiness. When Volynskaya left (she went to dance) I noticed Tanatar and drove him from me, shouting: "Rascal, scamp, you shattered my happiness!" I even began to cry. "I won't have anything to do with you." Tanatar washed my head and gave me some soda water to drink. I felt sick. The boys tried to put me to bed, but no, by Heck! I would not have anybody except Volynskaya. She helped me to reach the bed (I could not walk alone) and was on the point of leaving when I detained her and sang:

"Please don't go away, please stay
with me,
I feel so happy, so light-hearted."

There she stood before me. I saw her splendid sensual body, her thick golden hair (the chignon), her snow-white teeth framed with red voluptuous lips—and felt an electric current shoot thru me. . . . . Yes, happiness was so near, so near (Tanatar got it) . . . . . Oh happiness!

July 12, 1913.

Woke up at one in the afternoon and the first man I saw, right in front of me, was Vassia Federoff. He slept in a curious position; his head was on the pillow and his entire body on the dirty floor. We looked into the mirror and—Good Lord, what a sight! My clothes were all crumpled, spewed over in various parts, and covered with feathers from top to bottom. Having performed the morning ritual, we went into the garden. We met Tanatar coming from the other end, where he had probably been sleeping. He looked a terrible sight. On the front, his clothes bore everywhere traces of vomiting; on the back they were thickly covered with dirt, as if he had been dragged by his feet over the ground. After Tanatar, we met the girls coming from the pavilion where they had been sleeping. Soon everybody was present and Heavens, we did laugh! The lunatic Federoff, was the first to speak. Hardly able to stand on his feet, he had sneaked into the pavilion just as the girls were turning in after the ball... He bade them all good night, then seizing somebody's dress, jacket, and hat, he put them on and took to dancing. A young chap, scarcely known to anyone, had spent the entire evening with the hostess Olga Nicolayevna Jmukhina in a carriage outside, where they had supper and wine, spiced abundantly with frequent kissing and smutty talk. Then the girls told their version of the story. They had scarcely undressed when Sammy Tanatar broke in dead drunk announcing his intention of sleeping with them. The girls, of course, all got frightened and hid under the blankets. All their exhortations and prayers for him to leave the pavilion were of no avail. Then, disregarding all rules of decency, the girls jumped out of bed and threw him out of the pavilion by main force. Immediately after Tanatar's departure came the lunatic Fedoroff, but everybody only laughed at him because he was nice and behaved more decently than Tanatar.

Happiness. Happiness and laughter.

A half forgotten nursery tale is revived in some corner of her mind. If you plunge a sharp knife into the funnel of whirling snow you will kill the grand-daughter of the snow-storm—the snow-flake. A drop of her cold white blood will fall on the ground and this blood will bring happiness—happiness. If one could only believe this tale, go out into the snow-storm—waylay the snow-flake dancing carelessly its round dance—and attain happiness—

But what if one believes in nothing?

Happiness. Happiness.

And Olga Veralskaya knew: she was that snow-flake; she had been killed. The storm was blowing, sweeping onward, howling, raging. The fur coats were lying on the couch. The five images were burning, the tile was shining dimly. Doctor Veralsky was heard snoring. The diary had fallen in her lap; tears were falling in her lap. Tears for him. Her head had fallen in her hands.

But what if one believes in nothing? What if they had killed her like a snow-flake? No, not they—he had killed her. The story of Olga Veralskaya's life was simple: high school, college, the Red Front, where one could neither understand nor condemn, then he . . . . A dark military hut, the smell of horses, a dim lantern on the wall, a horse's head, black eyebrows, black eyes—red lips—pain, pain, horror, horror, horror, disgust. That was all.

The diary had falled in her lap; tears were falling in her lap. The image lamps were burning. Her eyes were lanterns in an autumn rain. Anxiety. Pain.

Doctor Andrey Andreyevitch Veralsky, dressed in fur coat and felt boots, came out of his room yawning, and got near the stove.

"Olenka, I've brought some mutton. Shall we treat ourselves to some mutton roast or use it for soup? Tell Ilya about it."

"Father, what did Olga Nicolayevna Jmukhina die from?"

"She died from a shock. Got frightened when her house was searched. They found her dead under her bed. Why do you ask that?"

"What was she like?"

"What sort of a person you mean? Well, rather depraved but kindhearted. Won't you tell, then, Ilya about the meat?"

Doctor Andrey Andreyevitch yawned sweetly.

(To Be Continued Next Saturday.)

(Translated by Louis Lozowich.)

* A sort of meat pie.

** Hot drink.

*** A cheap tobacco.

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The Economic Condition of the Landless Farmers in the U. S.

By LOUIS ZOOBOCK.

Agrarian unrest is now spreading all over the country. The mortgages upon the farmers have more than doubled in a period of ten years; the number of those owning farms has greatly decreased while the number of tenant farmers has considerably risen. The farmers are on the brink of ruin.

Financial capital is conquering agriculture. The monopolists and exploiters of this country, who control the machinery of the government, the presidency and the congress are responsible for the distress of the farmers; they have brought to a condition where the income of the agricultural laborer is transferred to the pockets other than his own. A very careful statistician has estimated that out of every dollar of farm products sold to the consumer the farmers gets only 38 cents; that 62 cents of his dollar goes to the other agencies that handle the farm product before it gets to the consumer. It is generally estimated that the cost of distribution of the varied farm products to the consumer range from 50 to 65 per cent. These estimates only partly tell the story of the farmers' distress.

What is more important, is the growing speculation in land. Thruout the country land is held for speculative purposes. Financiers, bankers, etc., have contributed to the speculative spirit—purchasing land with idle funds, deriving whatever income it yielded in the hands of tenants, and awaiting the natural increase in value. The effect of this speculative activity has been to raise the value of land far above the capitalization of its rent at the current rate of interest; many farmers were ruined and passed into the class of landless farmers.

The same group of financiers have brought about a process of forced deflation which has overtaken the country in the last few years. "During the autumn of 1920, while crops were being harvested and when the farmer was looking forward to a winter of fair prosperity, the process of deflation began. Loans were called and renewals were refused." Freight rates had, in the meantime, been raised so high that in many places the farmers' products were allowed to rot on the farms because the freight rates were equal, if not exceeding, the price received for the products; if we add to this the increase in taxes of 126 per cent in the last 8 years, taxes which absorb one-third of the farm income, we get a complete picture of the farmers' distress.

Depopulation of Farms and Tenancy.

The distress of the agricultural population has led to two results: (2) many farmers left the country and moved to towns, thereby increasing the reserve army of unemployed, (1) it increased the number of tenant farmers.

Hard times on the farm are causing a rapid shift of population. In 1922 no less than 2 million people gave up the effort to get a living out of the soil and moved to towns and cities. To offset this about 900,000 left town for the country, a loss of 1,120,000 of the farm population. This exodus was accompanied by the ruin of the best farmers: in many cases they have been compelled to forfeit large sums of money as part payment on farms and finally have the mortgage take it all. The mortgageers then kept the farms idle for speculative purposes. Thus, in Michigan 18,230 farms were idle in 1922, and 11,531 in 1921. Of the 276,000 men on farms three years ago, 46,000 have since left; in Ohio, 60,000 farmers left the farms for the city up till June, 1922. In Minnesota, in 1923, 14,690 farmers were bankrupt and 4,959 have been forced to abandon their farms and the country.

But the most alarming fact in American agriculture is the rapid growth of tenancy accompanied by the development of huge estates owned by corporations and operated by salaried managers upon a purely industrial system. It is the economic condition of the tenant class that we are mostly interested in.

The growth of tenancy in the United States may be illustrated by some figures. On the basis of number of farms, tenancy increased 44.5 per cent in the United States between 1880 and 1910. The percentage of farms operated by tenants was 25.6 in 1880, 28.4 in 1890, 35.3 in 1900, 37 in 1910, and in 1920 out of every 100 farms in the United States, 38 were operated by tenants. The whole number of farms operated by tenants in 1900 was 2,024.964 as compared with 2,454.804.

The per cent of farms operated by tenants increased in all but two Southern States—Florida and Alabama; it increased in all states west of the Mississippi, except Nevada, Oklahoma and Missouri. Oklahoma tho a new state, has half of its farms operated by tenants. As a rule, tenancy is highest in the Southern and Western states, where in the last 10 years it increased most rapidly. Tenants now operate over one-fourth of the farms in half of our states, over 40 per cent of farms in 15 states, and over one-half the farms in eight states. In brief, 4 out of every 10 of the farms in the United States are operated by landless farmers.

General Living Conditions.

The tenant farmers are divided into five classes:

(1) Share tenants, who furnish their own equipment and animals and pay a certain share of the product, as one-half, one-third or one-fourth, to the landlord for the use of the farm.

(2) "Croppers"—share tenants, who furnish their work animals. This class prevails in the South.

(3) Another class of share tenants "who pay a share of the products for part of the land rented by them and cash for other part."

(4) "Cash tenants"—who usually pay cash rental.

(5) "Stanting Renter"—those who pay a stated amount of farm products for the use of the farms.

No nation-wide investigation of the living conditions of tenant farmers has ever been made, but from the scattered studies made by different scholars we may deduce that the economic condition of the tenants is extremely bad and that in many places he is far from being free. As a rule, the tenant is badly housed, ill-nourished, uneducated and hopeless. Year after year, he continues to eke out a bare living; in his despair he moves from place to place in the hope that something will turn up. Without the labor of the entire family, he is helpless. As a result, his wife is prematurely broken down and his children remain uneducated and "without the hope of any condition better than that of their parents."

A great number of the tenants are hopelessly in debt and are charged exorbitant rates of interest. "Over 95 per cent of the tenants borrow from some source and about 75 per cent borrow regularly from year to year."

Leases and Rents.

The leases, concluded between the tenant and his landlord, are in many cases in the form of oral contracts. They run for one year and make no provision for compensation to the tenant for improvements which may be made upon the property. Furthermore, the tenants are in many cases the victims of oppression on the part of the landlords. This oppression "takes the form of dictation of character and amount of crops, evictions without due notice and discrimination because of personal and political convictions." This is especially true in the South and on the estates run by managers.

In the South, where "cropper" tenancy prevails, the landlord has such complete control over the renter and the term of the lease is so short that the negro as well as the white farm laborers are reduced to a system of peonage. There are at present 225,000 croppers in the Southern states. The difference between a "renter" and a "cropper" lies in the fact that whereas, the first "runs himself" the latter is run by his landlord. He possesses no property and has no permanent habitation. He is constantly on the move from place to place, cultivating one farm after another on "halves." He supplies nothing except his labor and that of his wife and children. For years and years he was producing cotton "on a pauper level at a pauper daily wage." The "cropper" is the man "whom God forgot."

The condition of the renter is not any better. In Texas and Oklahoma the conditions are unusually severe. In the former state, the one-crop and the chattel mortgage system works great hardships on the renter. "One crop and a chattel mortgage on it, and on the property used in producing it, hold thousands of tenants in economic bondage." In Oklahoma, tenancy is about as intensive as in any part of the Union. The leases are usually drawn in favor of the landlords; rents are high and evictions are a frequent occurrence.

"Framing-Up" Tenants.

The laws have been changed so that justices of the peace, before whom eviction cases are tried, are elected by "electric-light cities" in which the landlords live. The landlords control the elections of the justices and the cases are decided in favor of the landlords. The juries before whom many of the tenant cases are brought are selected from the non-renting class, renters being quite effectually excluded.

Again practically all renters are burdened with chattel mortgages assumed to carry them thru the season. "In the case of many renters who are close to bankruptcy, the landlords, bankers, etc., force or weedle them into auction sales, the goods being frequently bought in to the great disadvantage of the renter."

Some large estates, such as the Scully farms in Illinois, Kansas and Nebraska impose rack-renting conditions on the tenants. Wm. Scully paid about 75 cents an acre for farm land when land was cheap in Illinois. He rented it to tenant-farmers at $4 an acre on condition that they would build good houses and barns at their own expense. The contracts were mostly for a year at a time, but with provisions that if the farmer moved, the next farmer should pay him for his improvements. So long as Wm. Scully lived, the contracts were kept; when he died an executor of the estate came from Ireland "who disliked the farmers because they did not doff their hats to him." To punish them, he raised the rent to $10 an acre and "told those that did not like it to get off, with the loss of improvements."

Absenteeism.

This is only a typical example of the deplorable conditions which prevail on the huge estates operated by managers upon a purely industrial system. These estates are as a rule the property of absentee landlords, who are for the most part millionaires, residents in the Eastern states or in Europe. Some of the estates embrace within their boundaries entire counties and towns; they are a law in themselves; and the landlords are the absolute dictators of the lives, liberties and happiness of their employes. It is industrial feudalism, pure and simple.

Such are in general the economic conditions of the landless farmers. Some of "our" agricultural scholars, including well-known professors have tried to minimize the importance of the problem of tenancy. They consider tenancy as merely the first step on the "agricultural ladder," as the first step towards farm ownership, but this only proves how little they have studied the problem. A concrete analysis of the wages and other living conditions of the tenant farmers, which will be given in the next article, will conclusively prove that under the present conditions the tenant's wish of acquiring a farm is hopeless.

Landless farmers and homeless city workers are a rapidly increasing body of people thruout the country. In 21 states of the Union and especially in the industrial area north of Ohio and east of the Mississippi, they are now an overwhelming majority. Will this common condition of the landless at last result in a commonmindedness?

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PITHECANTHROPUS NOT SO ERECTUS

By MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD

Take an animal which is predatory, thick-furred, dark brown, arboreal, long-tailed and carnivorous. Take another which is timid, wiry-haired, light grey, littoral, tailless and vegetarian.

Would any scientist proclaim that these two beasts belonged to the same genus and species?

* * *

A ferry-boat is a small world—Gopher Prairie commuting to Zenith. There is more room than in a train, to move around, to listen in, and to observe the temporary population.

I sit in the cabin of the ferry, and half a dozen conversations assail my ears. The sea-gulls whine without, and the sea-gullibles chatter within.

* * *

"Attaboy! Whacher reading?"

"Oh, hello there, Henry. This is great stuff. Ever see it?"

A book is passed. "Selling Yourself," by Charles Q. Higginbotham.

"Good, eh?"

"You betcha. Tha bird's got something. Listen here:

"'Your only value to the boss is what you can persuade him you are worth. He gets his money by the amount of service he renders society, and you will get yours by the amount of service you can render him. If you want a raise, you must serve him better; just as it wants a bigger profit he must serve the world better.'"

"Pretty good, I'll say."

"Sounds all right. A little deep for me."

* * *

"Walter! Keep your hands off mama's embroidery. How many times have I got to tell you? Do you want the big black man to get you?"

"Want you to buy me some candy."

"You've had enough candy already. You'll make yourself sick. Walter! Come back here!"

"I—want—some—candy!"

"Mama said no! Naughty boy!"

Loud sobs from Walter.

"Oh, well, all right. Come on, I'll get some. Look after my things a minute, will you, Mrs. Harvey? I simply can't do a thing with that child!"

* * *

"Oh, boy! Some party! So when we got to the beach, everything was closed. And I said to the dame, 'What'll we do now?' And she said—

"Say, listen! Fellow I met the other day, told me he can get good stuff—good stuff, mind you; I had some of it—at two and a quarter a pint. Fellow he knows makes it himself—he's got one of those electric things makes it twenty years old in two hours."

"Well, I was telling you. We didn't get home till 4:30. And as soon as I opened the door the wife called out—"

"You might listen a minute, Joe. What do you say we chip in together and buy us a gallon or two?"

* * *

"Bertie made it for me. Isn't it pretty? How that girl finds the time for everything, I can't imagine. She's learning to play golf now, and you know what a fiend she is for Mah Jongg."

"It's awfully sweet. Well, Bertie doesn't have much to do, with a Jap and two girls."

"Oh, but my dear, that big house! And you know how much it means to have two girls. Arthur says Bertie keeps two servants all right—one on the way to the job and one just leaving."

* * *

"I have her in history. I can't bear her. She's awfully sarcastic.

"Yesterday she said to Marie, 'I hoped when you bobbed your hair you'd give your brain an airing.' What do you think of that?"

"I know; she's just fierce. Edith changed schools rather than have her again."

* * *

"Well, that's all right, Dick, but there're limits. I don't mind being polite and all that, but when he comes right up in front of everyone in the office and—"

"Sure, I know all that, but that's not the way to handle him. You just get hot and tell him where to get off, and what good does it do you? Now the next time he starts some of this smart Aleck business, you just go to the old man and tell him—"

"Gee, I'd have a hot chance with that. The old man thinks he's the cat's pajamas. 'Now, boys, if you were bringing in business the way Ellis ta'—that kind of stuff."

"Now, listen; I know for a fact that his own brother is one of those wild-eyed reds. They say it's a fact he served time for it, up north. Now you go to the old man as if you just hated to do it, and just say to him, 'Mr. Levy, I think it's my duty to tell you the type of man you're employing.'"

* * *

"Oh, I don't think you mean that, Mr. Saunders! I'm not the least bit clever—poor little me! I couldn't do it in a thousand years."

"Go on, I guess I know what I'm talking about. This is straight—I know a fellow whose sister went to Hollywood and inside of three months Lasky's were talking about starring her. And you're a dead ringer for her, in looks and everything."

"Well, everybody says I'm a screen type. But I'd never dare—I'd just die of fright when I got in front of one of those cameras."

"Get out! You'd have 'em eating out of your hand in no time. No kidding, now; why don't you try it?"

* * *

"Well, sir, give me Ford. That man's got a head on his shoulders. If we had a president like him—"

"What's the matter with Hiram Johnson?"

"Johnson's too radical. Now Ford would run this country the way he runs his factories. Efficiency, that's what we want. Standardized production in government."

"Well, I'm for Coolidge, myself. He's handling a big job in a big way. Look how fine he's acting in this oil business."

* * *

"I don't know what on earth I'm going to do with Grace. She's got the piano cluttered up with the queerest things—people no one ever heard of, like Ravel and Debussy, and not a tune in the lot of them.

"I said to her, 'Daughter, here you've been studying music for twelve years, and yet you can't play for your friends to dance. What's the use of all the money papa and I have spent on you? Do you want to grow up a regular high-brow?'

"You bet Jazz is good enough music for me. They say the people who wrote 'Yes, We Have No Bananas' have made a hundred thousand dollars out of it."

* * *

"You ought to join the Legion, man. What do you want to do, be a slacker when the war is over? Don't you want to get in with your buddies and keep things going straight in God's country?"

"I never had it put to me like that before. Sure, you can put my name in at the next meeting."

"That's the kid! It won't hurt you none in the insurance game, either."

* * *

"So I said to him, 'If you think, just because you're the only butcher in town, that you can charge me three prices for a pork roast, you're very much mistaken. Mr. Gorham will bring my meat from the city every day, and then where will you be?'

"I tried that, and he just laughed. I think it's awful. He knew Jim would rather never eat meat again than drag it out from the city every day."

"Well, he took fifteen cents off. That's better than nothing. I showed him he couldn't put anything over on me, anyway."

* * *

"Yes, sir, I say you can see that town grow. Why, when I bought my first lot there, in 1904, there wasn't a thing between Grant's place and the station. And now they've had to put up a new telephone building to take care of that section. You couldn't do better than buy that place right next to mine."

* * *

"But listen, I do care. You just won't understand."

"Yeh—it looks like it. Where were you when I called up last night? 'Ruth's not here—she's gone out for the evening!' That's the way—out for the evening. Didn't you know I was coming over?"

"What did you expect me to do—dream it? You haven't been near me for a week. Yesterday I met Ethel, and she said, 'Aren't you going with Bob any more? I saw him with Myrtle Bronson twice last week.' Do you c-call that c-ca-aring?"

"For heaven's sake, Ruth, cut it! Somebody'll hear you! Listen, I do—I do! Why can't you be reasonable?"

* * *

In anguish I gaze about me for one glance of responsive intelligence—one intimation of conscious thought. I find it. Two men; perhaps forty odd; rather loosely dressed; a pair of dreamy gray eyes and a pair of keen blue ones; pipes; hair a little too long for fashion; occasional words—

"That era is past; the time has come to look at the thing from the standpoint of . . . . Dunno's speech at Portland was . . . . That was perfectly true under the Kerensky regime. . . . . It needs de-bunking. . . . . The same situation obtained in 1870. . . . . Sort of heaven of Jurgen's grandmother. . . . . End of the peace to end peace . . . . . Clever thing Mencken said in . . . . ."

* * *

Across the way from me, the lightly satirical voice of a lady.

"Have you noticed those two over there? Do look at them! Aren't they funny? A mixture of garlic and Bolshevism!"

An answering masculine grunt.

"Ought to go back there if they like it so much."

They return to the Hearst paper and The Saturday Evening Post.

* * *

Either these entities around me are not human beings, or I am not a human being.

As to which of these theories is correct, I am overwhelmingly indifferent.

The Situation in Greece

By D. K. MINTILOGLI

The class struggle in Greece has taken on a very sharp character since the the militaristic government of Col. Plastiras came to power. The Greek masses disappointed after ten years of continuous war in Thrace and Asia expressed their dissatisfaction by throwing their guns away at the Asiatic Front nearly two years ago which resulted in the famous disastrous defeat.

The Greek soldiers at that time not only refused to fight and sacrifice their lives for the British imperialism, but were also seized by a real revolutionary fever which threthened to sweep off, all the bourgeois elements who had thrown the masses into such unspeakable misery. The soldiers were already singing "Bolshevik!" songs as they marched back, threatening to enter Athens and avenge their tyrants.

No sooner was the revolutionary government established than the masses began to feel the oppression of Col. Plastiras, the man whom they backed to power. Plastiras was a Venizelist under mask and Venizelist for Greece means a blind tool of European Imperialism. Under his rule the masses of Greece were subjected to an oppression unheard of before. Class-conscious workers were persecuted, jailed, and often shot in the streets, like dogs. In the recent general strike, the unions were declared illegal by the Government of Col. Plastiras. The union funds were confiscated; the whole country was placed under strict martial law; the Communist daily was suppressed, and the autrocitics of the "Revolutionary Government" were manifested openly in attacks of white soldiers upon the strikers. They could not go on forever. The dissatisfaction of the masses reached such a point that Colonel Plastiras had to give in. So he decided to have an election. What happened then?

Mask Torn Away.

The purpose of the Venizelist was to destroy the "Conservative" party of Greece which was under the banner of Metaxas. The conservatives tried their coup'd'etat which resulted in their complete destruction. When one of the two major parties of Greece was uprooted the Venizelists in order to deceive once more the Greek masses divided themselves into two different parties: "Liberals" and "Democrats." These two parties appeared before the "People" which were compelled to choose between the devil and his son.

The Communist Party of Greece did not keep aloof from this political struggle, applying Communistic tactics correctly. The Communist Party of Greece had formed a united front with the organizations and put up some 90 candidates. Freedom of speech and of press was given just one week before the elections. The Communists were not allowed to demonstrate. Numerous mass meetings were scheduled to take place with speakers of the working class explaining to the workers and farmers the political situation and the role of the party which was fighting for their interests, these meetings were not permitted by a Government order issued just one day previous to the elections. Nevertheless the workers gathered at the meetings "en masse" and the army was called upon to disperse them. Such is the liberty of Venizelos.

Fattening the Calf.

The workers of other countries are exploited by the capitalists of their respective countries, but the workers of Greece are sweating and bleeding for both, the Greek and English capitalists, and it is the later of whom Venizelos is an obedient servant. And it is thru their power that he came to rule Greece again. Greece is a helpless victim of British Imperialism. The revolution of 1821, of which Byron sings so enthusiastically and Webster speaks so eloquently, was fought solely for the interest of capitalism of England, France, and Russia, and it is to them that Greece owes her liberation for the Turkish yoke and her subjugation to allied capitalism.

Ever since that time Greece has been merely a colony used by and for the protection of foreign interests. So it is today when British imperialism has spread to all parts of the earth. Greece owing to her geographical position, plays a great role as the guardians of foreign imperialism. And now, with Venizelos back in power, we can convincingly assert that there is another imperialistic war in sight, and that he was sent to Greece by Zaharoff & Co. to prepare the way for such an adventure in which the Greek workers will be called upon to play the role of mercenaries again.

Task of Communists.

We hope tho that the Communist Party of Greece will in spite of all the oppressive measures of Venizelos lead incessantly the workers to the establishment of a Soviet Republic.

INTERNAL PARTY PROBLEMS

Statement of the Central Executive Committee of Workers Party of America.

To the membership of the Party.

Comrades: We are on the eve of big developments. The successful consumation of the June 17th Convention will mean a gigantic stride forward in the life of the American Labor movement. It will also increase manifold the prestige and influence of Communist ideas and consequently of the Workers Party.

And yet it is only gradually and slowly that our membership is awakening to the realization of these immense possibilities. This statement and appeal to the party is issued in the hope that it will accelerate this process and thereby enable the party to mobilize all its resources and energies for the impending task and carry it out.

Internal Conditions for Our Success.

The Central Executive Committee fully realizes the conditions that must prevail in the party in order that our present labor party campaign may be crowned with success. These internal conditions are:

1) The membership of the party must be fully conscious of the nature of our task as well as of the strategy and tactics to be employed in the realization of these tasks.

2) The membership, or at least its overwhelming majority, must have complete confidence in the ability and competency of the C. E. C.

3) The entire party membership and party organization must give whole-hearted and unstinted support to the leadership of the CEC.

Actual Situation in the Party.

The CEC is glad to say that our membership has reached a pretty thoro understanding of the general nature of our immediate task and objectives regarding our labor party campaign. The thing, however, that is yet to be achieved by our membership is just as a thoro a grasp of our strategy and tactics.

This is just as important as a clear understanding of our objective. To define at any given moment the immediate objective of a Communist Party is hard enough to be sure. But when this objective has been defined correctly, then the entire success of the struggle to attain it depends upon the correctness of the strategy and the tactics applied.

On this point, on the point of strategy and tactics in our labor party campaign, we still find in the party a lack of sufficient clarity and understanding, with the result that the party organization does not respond readily and quickly enough to the leadership of the CEC, and that in a few instances party units have actually deviated from the established party policy.

We also find in the party at present a clear manifestation of an organized factional opposition. Irrespective of the merits or demerits of its case, the harmful effect of such organized opposition upon the fighting ability of the party cannot be successfully disputed.

The Study of Strategy and Tactics.

The Central Executive Committee wishes to impress upon the party membership the vital necessity of studying party policy with particular regard to the strategy and tactics involved. We have already become accustomed and pretty well trained to analyze party policy always from the point of view of the fundamental Communist principles. This is a great achievement indeed. But we have yet to learn to analyze the means and methods for the realization of our immediate objective; that is, the art of strategy and tactics.

Toward this end we recommend a critical and careful study of the last thesis of the C. E. C., also the thesis of comrade Lore and Olgin and the reply thereto by comrades Cannon and Bittelman, the recent speech of comrade Ruthenberg to the party membership m[illegible]s which the C. E. C. is publishin[illegible] pamphlet form, and the recent [illegible]ed letters of the C. E. C. to the [illegible]rict Executive Committees of Min[illegible]sota and Michigan respectively.

Deviations From Party Policy.

In recent weeks the C. E. C. had occasion to deal with the following deviations from party policy:

1) Failure by some of our members to consider and treat our policy in regard to the Third Party movement as an integral part of our general labor party policy. Altho the final decision in the matter of the Third Party movement rests now with the Comintern; nevertheless, it must be accepted as established party policy that our attitude toward the third party movement cannot be treated as something separate and apart from our general labor party policy. A certain portion of our membership, particularly in the East, has not as yet accepted this point-of-view.

2) An inclination by some of our members, when engaged in united front campaigns, not to make known the fact that they are Communists, and members of the Workers Party. This inclination manifested itself recently in Minnesota.

3) An exaggerated anxiety to avoid conflicts with so-called progressive labor leaders to the point hesitating to fight openly and promptly the idea of Labor organizations supporting candidates on the old party tickets. This manifestation took place recently in Detroit.

These deviations from correct Communist policy, have their origin in two different sets of circumstances. The incorrect treatment of the third party movement reflects a conception of Communist tactics and policy which Comrade Lenin described as "Leftism." In our case this conception is motivated mainly by the fact that some sections of our party have not yet fully entered the daily struggles of the workers, have not actually engaged in united front campaigns on a large scale, and therefore have failed to realize the intricate and complicated nature of Communist strategy and tactics. It is by no means accidental that these leftist ideas prevail in the East where our party organization, so far, has not engaged in large scale united front campaigns.

Nor is it accidental that the deviations manifested in Minnesota and Michigan are rather of an opportunist character. It is there places (the West generally, and particularly in Minnesota) that our united front campaign have assumed the biggest proportions. It is there that we have made our greatest practical achievements.

No wonder, therefore, that some of our most active comrades in these districts have become over-sensitive to the requirements of expendiency, practical advantage and immediate success.

Deviations from Communistic policy of an opportunist nature are mostly the result of practical success, just as deviations of a leftist nature are the result of isolation and pacivity. Both must be guarded against constantly and carefully.

The C. E. C. lost no time in correcting the mistaken ideas of our comrades in the districts referred to above. We are glad to report that the instructions and corrections of the C. E. C. have in all cases been accepted in proper Communist spirit.

Organized Opposition to the C. E. C.

At the membership meetings recently held in Philadelphia and New York, an attempt was made by some of our comrades to raise factional issues and, by indirect means, to crystalize opposition to the leadership of the C. E. C. Resolutions of the same contents and practically of the same wording were introduced at both of these meetings, calling upon the C. E. C. to do the following:

1) To combat and stamp out the opportunistic tendencies manifesting themselves at present in the party.

2) To take action against Comrade Lore for his alleged attack upon the Comintern.

The identify of the resolutions, as well as the manner in which they were introduced, convinced us that we have before us a clear manifestation of an organized opposition against the C. E. C.

Consider the facts:

1) At both of these meetings Comrade Ruthenberg appeared in the name of the C. E. C. and delivered an extensive report on the policies and activities of the C. E. C. From his report, as well as from the party press, it should have been obvious to everyone that the C. E. C. is perfectly alive and alert to every situation in the party, and that opportunistic tendencies—wherever and whenever they made their appearance—were promptly dealt with by the C. E. C. in a proper Communist way. In fact, it was only from this report of the representative of the C. E. C., and the published letters of the C. E. C. to Detroit and Michigan, which were designed to point out and combat opportunist deviations, that the comrades could have learned of their existence. Then why did the comrades find it necessary to introduce resolutions "calling upon" the C. E. C. to take action which had already been taken in each case, promptly and decisively?

2) These meetings were called by the C. E. C. for the express purpose of clarifying some of the issues of our labor party policy before our membership, and of mobilizing them for the June 17th Convention.

3) The C. E. C. considered the case of comrade Lore some five weeks ago. After thoro deliberation, the C. E. C. decided that the articles of comrade Lore in question give rise to misconceptions regarding the history of the Comintern. It decided, therefore, to call upon Comrade Lore to submit for the approval of the C. E. C. a draft of a statement correcting the impression that might have been created by his article, and that this statement, upon approval by the C. E. C., should be published as an editorial in the Volkszeitung. Comrade Lore agreed to this decision.

5) In the course of the membership meetings in New York and Philadelphia comrade Ruthenberg related all these facts.

It appears from the above facts, that the C. E. C. took prompt and proper action in the case of comrade Lore, and, also, that the C. E. C. needed no reminder in the matter of combating opportunist deviations in those sections of the party where they arise.

And yet some of our comrades in New York and in Philadelphia found it necessary to introduce resolutions of a sort which could have no other purpose than to sow doubt and suspicion in the party ranks against the C. E. C. and thus, by indirection, to undermine its authority, crystallize opposition to its leadership, and generally demoralize the party organization.

Aside from this, the introduction of these resolutions was bound to divert the attention of the membership from the main purpose of these meetings, thereby seriously interfering with our campaign for the June 17th convention.

We Need a United Party.

The success of our work, particularly on the eve of the June 17 convention, demands a united party. The C. E. C. appeals to the party membership for unity and action.

We also appeal to the comrades involved in the opposition to lay aside for the present their factional differences, and to give the C. E. C. and the party the necessary support and cooperation to make the labor party campaign a success.

The C. E. C. is fully in favor of freedom of discussion within the party organization and in the party press of all new problems and difficulties arising out of our activities. But at the same time the C. E. C. feels in duty bound to insist that once a matter has been settled by the proper party authorities, and a call for action issued, the party ranks must close, and every party member must rally to the C. E. C. the utmost support and cooperation.

Close the ranks, Comrades!

Strengthen the party organization!

Forward to the June 17 Convention!

To a Class Farmer-Labor Party!

To a Workers and Farmers government in the U. S. and thence to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
C. E. Ruthenberg, Secretary.

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REVOLUTION OR WAR?

By CHARLES RAPPOPORT

The biggest argument in favor of the fundamental Communist demand—the political and economic expropriation of the capitalist class lies in the fact which dominates the present situation and which consists in the expropriation of the nation by the capitalist class (confiscation of communal property, exploitation of labor-power, the depreciation of currency, taxation.) All those who have no class interest to blind their eyes and to stop their ears should be struck by this fact, which turns the entire social economy topsy-turvy. This fact is not of a theoretical order. It touches the most sensitive spot: the purse of every one. By the high cost of living, it invades each household, however modest it may be. It colors the setting of every-day life.

Capitalism Crumbling.

Every man who thinks, above all every worker, every peasant, every employe, is obliged, in fact of this fundamental fact, to reflect as follows: Either capitalism, in continuing its thievery will force me to the wall, expropriating me every day more and more of the product of my labor, or of my small savings, or I will forestall it by depriving it of the power to injure men, expropriating it for the benefit of all. Either capitalism will "get" me, or I will seize capitalism by the throat. There is no other outcome possible.

This being granted, the question of method inevitably comes up. Yes, we are told, you are right. Capitalist society has become bankrupt. It steals, it murders. It steals to murder and it murders to steal. From a producer it has become a destroyer. Yesterday an economic and social shelter, today it threatens to tumble about our ears and to bury us beneath its ruins. But how are we to overturn it? By revolution? By another blood-letting?

Is Blood-Letting Revolution?

Now, this reasoning is artificial—contrary to the facts. Revolution is not necessarily a blood-letting. The greatest revolution of all times—that of November 7, 1917—did not cost more than a few dozens of victims. This is not too much for a social revolution which has overturned one-sixth of the globe. I am speaking of the triumphant assault upon the Winter Palace by my friend Antonoff Ovseeko, who, during the war, conducted at Paris with Trotzky, Losowsky, Vladimiroff and your humble servant the newspaper called "Nashe Slavo" (Our Word.)

It was after the seizure of the seat of the Kerensky government that the power of the Soviets was proclaimed, to the applause of the immense majority of the population of the vast Russian empire.

How are we to explain this thundering victory, which, without the armed intervention of the governmental and capitalistic canaille of the entire world, would have been the least bloody in all history? The army, the expression of the people, was on the side of the revolution. The armed hand of the masses was put to the service of the revolution. It was thus that all the revolutions of history triumphed. It was the united front, the bloc of workers and peasants, which overturned everything at once, Czarism and capitalism. Therefore, the problem is to win over the masses of the people—the rest comes as a natural consequence if one knows how to maneuver—and the revolution is accomplished without, or almost without, the spilling of blood.

But, even admitting that the aroused resistance of the fortunate masters brings about a bloody conflict, it is, under the present circumstances, a saving of blood of violence and of suffering. For it is beyond doubt that capitalist society, if it maintains itself, is heading toward a new world war. Moreover, it is already known what will be the nature of the war which will come. Some days ago, M. Herbette took notice in his "Bulletin du Temps"—"capitalism made into a newspaper"—of the construction, in Wilson's America, of giant aeroplanes which, in one week's time, could wipe out cities like Paris with its four million inhabitants. Mr. Lloyd George, the ally of the pacifist Ramsay MacDonald, builder of cruisers and airplanes, truly said that the next war will be a war of extermination and of obliteration of all the civilian population: men, women, children, old and young, well and sick.

When he finds himself facing a fact as formidable as this, every man of good sense ought to say to himself: before capitalist society causes the whole of humanity to vanish, I will do all in my power to cause capitalist society, the murderer of the world, to disappear.

What Is the Co-operative Movement?

By ANDREW SHELLEY.

The fourth congress of the Comintern gave our movement its policy in regard to the consumer's cooperatives, but in a country where these organizations are so comparatively little developed as in North America, and where the party is so preoccupied with other pressing problems, it seems that we are in some danger of neglecting this important part of our work.

The resolution on co-operation adopted at the 1922 Congress of the C. I. speaks of the aid rendered by the consumers' co-operatives during the capitalist offensive, and also of the way in which the old social compromisers have entrenched themselves within them. In certain countries, it states, the social-democratic parties, thru having the leadership of the co-operative movement in their hands, derive funds from it for the support of their parties. The same resolution points out especially: (1) the imperative necessity for all Communist Parties carrying out the instruction that all the members of the Party shall be members of the Consumer's Co-operatives and take an active part in their work. A plan for the organization of nuclei in the co-operatives is outlined, and it is emphasized there must be no separation of the revolutionary elements into separate organizations. On the contrary, on lines analogous to the trade union tactics, we must demand admission to, and do our work thru organizations which include all of the working class which is or may be co-operatively organized, and permeate them with our principles and policy.

Program of Action.

(2) We have also to lead the co-operative movement into the political path, and carry on an energetic campaign against political neutrality, and against the illusion that economic salvation can be achieved by voluntary co-operation alone; and an extensive political and economic program is outlined for the co-operatives.

(3) Communist co-operators should also carry on purely co-operative work advocating the amalgamation of the smaller societies, repudiation of the old principle of dividends, and in their place the employment of the funds for strengthening the working class movement, establishing strike funds, subsidizing the workers' press, etc., etc.

In moving around in the Workers Party one meets from time to time workers who are actively hostile to the very idea of co-operation and many more who are, to say the least, indifferent to it. Yet the very fact of its weakness and newness in this country, due to the extreme development of bourgeois psychology among the working class, placee upon those of us who lived our early years in a more or less co-operative atmosphere the duty of educating our comrades and fellow workers.

Here let me take my readers in imagination to a typical manufacturing center in Great Britain, where Rochdale co-operation, the typical working class system, is so strongly developed. Let us watch the workers doing their week-end shopping. We shall probably find not a single "department store" on the American plan in the community. That great American institution is to be found in the larger cities, but its patrons are mostly of the better-to-do classes except in London, which is scarcely typical of the rest of the country.

The village and small town department store are unknown, and even in the large towns they play a far less part than in these United States. Their place is largely taken by the co-operative store.

Rochdale System.

The store does not probably occupy the principal street. It does not pay fancy prices for ground rent. Its "display windows" are smaller than those of the private traders, and it does practically no advertising. Yet we find the store crowded to capacity, and the help is working for all it is worth. There is a noticeable lack of servility in their attitude to their customers, tho the latter stand to them also in the relation of employers. The reason is that they are not so afraid of the customer-members running around to a rival establishment.

You may see the housewife, getting the week's supplies, or she may send friend husband or one of the children with a list of what she wants, and the distinctive feature of the transaction as you see it in the store, is that the purchaser gets a brass check along with the goods. The check represents the amount of money spent, and it is saved up carefully until "divi" day, usually a half-yearly event causing no little local excitement. These are the occasions when the society declares its dividend on purchases, and the members receive back a proportion of whatever have spent in exchange for their checks.

It is precisely this last named feature which radicals admire least, and it is condemned by the Comintern, yet as practical people with an appreciation for realities we must recognize the part it plays in keeping the masses loyal to their store.

The payment of "divi" on purchases, however, is but one comparatively small part of the system. The most important thing from our point of view, is that the workers own the stores, and back of the stores, thru the Co-operative Wholesale Societies, they own quite considerable industries. The English Co-operative Wholesale Society alone, in normal times, sells about half a million dollars' worth of goods a year, mostly manufactured in establishments owned and controlled by the working class, co-operatively organized. It has its own extensive factories for the manufacture of soap, at Irlam, and it also makes its own tobacco, clothing, automobiles, etc. It has considerable farming property in Canada, and tea plantations in Ceylon, and it brings fruit from Spain in its own fleet of steamers. In more recent years it has also developed banking and insurance.

Political Action.

I am more desirous, however, of directing attention to the essential features of the local societies, for they are the unit cells out of which the movement is built. Each such society has a certain share capital, subscribed almost wholly in small amounts by the proletarian class, and on this share capital a flat rate of 5 per cent interest is usually paid, and in all the well established societies the investment is regarded as a particularly safe one, practically "gilt-edged," in fact. Whatever profits are made above this 5 per cent, after providing for the needs of the business, is divided into two portions, one of which is paid out as dividend on purchases, the other is spent for educational and other purposes. The things which have been accomplished with this latter portion would fill an interesting and instructive book. The most recent important development is the financing of co-operative political candidates, some of whom have won seats in the recent elections and are sitting with the Labor Party. And they are not the least advanced of the Labor crowd.

There is naturally a continual struggle going on between those workers who are reactionary in ideas, and those who have ideas above mere "divi." As to the amount of "divi," there is a pretty general understanding that it stands at 50 per cent of the available profits. We would like to reduce or abolish "divi," but it has to be recognized that it has in the past had a useful disciplinary effect.

(Continued On Page Five)

Another Big Feature of The Daily Worker

What is behind the present strained relations between the Japanese and American governments? What is all this talk of "grave consequences" being hurled at Washington by Tokio?

The DAILY WORKER will answer these and many other questions in a series of articles beginning Monday by Jay Lovestone on the growth and significance of American imperialism.

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If you want to know whom, why, where, when and how the bosses and their government have been and are oppressing and exploiting in the colonies and various spheres of influence now in the grip of our ruling class, follow up the whole series of startling revelations completely disclosed for the first time by the DAILY WORKER.

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The series is a distinct best for the DAILY WORKER. The question of imperialism is a most vital one affecting the fundamental interests of every workingman and exploited farmer in this country. This series will be a real arsenal of ammunition blowing up the arguments of the jingoes and militarists now getting on the job to fan the flames of hatred between the American workers and the working men of Japan and other countries.

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The DAILY WORKER, 1113 West Washington Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois.

What Is the Co-operative Movement?

(Continued From Page Four)

If you make a purchase at a private trader's store you lose your "divi." It operates like a fine.

Educational Work.

In my experience the fight put up by the advanced elements has not been so much as to the amount of the "divi" to be declared as to the fate of the remaining 50 per cent of the profits available. I grew up in a town where we had a big "co-op," which spent a great deal of money on its education committee. The local branch of the Social-Democratic Federation, of which I was a member, fought and obtained seats in this committee and largely controlled it. There had previously been a scholarship system whereby a few children of co-operative parents, who were clever enough to win the prizes, were sent to the Secondary (High) School and the Universities. This system they opposed and they succeeded in having the co-operative lectures, great events in a community of about 50,000 people and held in the town hall, delivered by Socialist orators.

In earlier years, before there was any public library, this same committee conducted the only library in which one could get books on economics or political questions, these subjects being rigorously ruled out of the Sunday school libraries, practically the only other libraries available. I owe not a little to that library myself, and to the "co-op" news rooms, where I read papers and magazines I never could have afforded to buy.

Strikes—Wage Disputes.

Much emphasis was laid, in the discussion and resolution at the Comintern, on the part played by such organizations in the class struggle in recent years, as well as upon the valuable part they play in the transition to a Communist state of society. In ordinary times the "co-ops" will not give credit to members, but at the time of a strike they have often done so when supplies of food and other necessaries could not elsewhere be obtained. Just previous to the war, when I was in England, there were two notable instances of this. During the great national coal strike, one of the biggest things of its kind in Labor's history, there was a move to alienate the sympathy of the vast body of the public, including the workers, from the striking miners by a combination of coal dealers to put up prices and blame the miners for the increase. In this country, needless to say, they would have got away with a little thing like that and the whole country would have been at their mercy. But in Britain they had to reckon with the co-operative movement. The "co-ops" were invited to join the price raising movement, but they refused, thereby not only giving very material help to the strikers, and to the working class as a whole, by breaking the price ring, but they most effectually exposed the methods of the coal barons. Facts like these have greatly helped to create a demand for socialism of some kind in the working class, which has resulted in the rise of the Labor Party; and altho Communists may—nay, certainly will—have to criticize Ramsay MacDonald's government in many ways, there is no denying that its existence is the clearest proof of a demand on the part of the working class which will have to be satisfied somehow, and if not in MacDonald's way, then eventually in a way less palatable to the governing classes.

Another spectacular instance of beneficent aid given to the militant working class movement by the co-operative movement was the sending of the food ships to Dublin, where the transport workers, under the leadership of Connolly and Larkin, were engaged in one of the bitterest struggles in Irish industrial history. But for this move the strikers would inevitably have been starved into submission. It was done at the request of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, who pledged their word that the trade union movement would pay for the goods. Needless to say, no capitalist concern would take action of that kind merely because a committee of labor union officials passed a resolution asking them to do so. Fancy a parallel situation in the little old U. S. A.! Some thousands of the poorest paid workers belonging to a radical union are on strike. The union funds are exhausted, the leaders in prison, the strike seems practically broken. Mr. Samuel Gompers and his brethren of the A. F. of L. pass a resolution asking some big grocery distributing concern (which in this country would have to be a capitalist one) kindly to send them all the food they need, and the A. F. of L. is sure labor unions, when they get around to it, will see that the goods are paid for. And the goods are sent! And the workers win the strike. Yet this is exactly what happened in the Dublin Transport strike.

Of course there are many criticisms to be passed against the "co-ops." Criticisms coming from us, however, should be constructive. They should also be made from inside the societies, and for their benefit.

The Poor Fish says he don't blame young men for being against war but that the bankers and bosses are always too old and some one has to do the fighting.

ORGANIZATIONS, ATTENTION! NEW YORK CITY, April 17.—District No. 2, Workers Party, has arranged a grand excursion and moonlight dance on the Hudson river for Saturday, June 28th. The commodious steamer Clermont, having a capacity of 3,000, has been chartered for this occasion.

Friendly organizations are urged to keep this date in mind and not arrange for any affairs that week.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF HUNGER IN GERMANY

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This enables German Big Business to produce cheaply.

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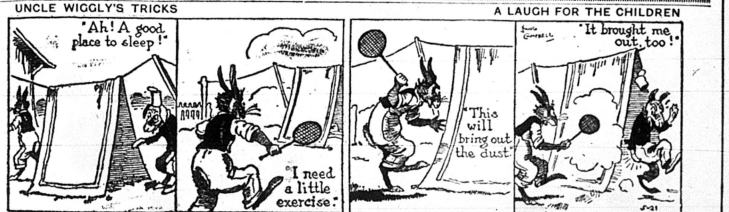
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