

Skygac's Column

It is alleged that vast quantities of British opium is being smuggled into the United States to supply the demand for stimulants created by prohibition.

Miss Ellen M. LaMotte, a sincere and forceful writer with an uncanny knack at getting at the truth of the noise and getting facts that disturb the noise and peace of mind of the bourgeois is out with a new book "THE OPIUM MONOPOLY" (McMillan).

Miss La Motte quotes from the Statesman's Year Book and from various British documents, which reveal the information that the British traffic in opium in the far east is a government monopoly, carried out under a department of opium administration, and bringing a handsome revenue to colonial governments at the expense of the hideously wrecked lives of thousands of orientals.

The trade is not direct from England to addict. To quote Miss La Motte: "The men who buy this opium at these monthly auctions (of the British government) and afterwards dispose of it are a curious crowd of Parsees, Mohammedans, Hindus, and Asiatic Jews. Few British names appear in the opium trade today. British dignity prefers not to stoop beneath the taking in of profits; it leaves the details of dirty business to dirty hands."

Miss La Motte will be remembered as the author of "The Backwash of War" which contained the most remarkable picture of war horrors ever penned. This book was suppressed thru fear of the effect it would have upon civilian morale. In other words it was suppressed because it would never do for the people to learn the truth about war.

Wonder what Wilson thought when China thanked us for following Washington's advice?

John Maynard Keynes, a fellow of King's College, Cambridge, the leading British authority on gold and representative of the British treasury at the peace conference in his book "Economic Consequences of the Peace" advocates among other things, the reform of the currency founded upon INDIRECT REPUDIATION of internal national debts, cancellation of inter-Ally indebtedness dating within the period of the war, and a two billion loan!

He concludes that an anti-German economic peace would mean that the Central powers would collapse first dragging down the rest of Europe; that a pro-German economic peace would mean the collapse of the Allies first dragging down the rest of Europe; and a neutral economic peace would mean that all Europe would collapse together. In his view the nature of the peace merely determines which shall go down first; in the end all will go down, so far as any treaty of peace is concerned.

When a Socialist or Communist says similar things its red raids and persecution from the department of Justice (?), but when the British Authority on gold says it, I wonder if it will soak in anywhere!

The book is published by Harcourt Brace and Howe N. Y. (By mail \$2.64).

The bourgeoisie have now figured it all out. It was not the loss of the twelve million lives in the war that hurt. It was not the loss of the billions of dollars but it was the loss of THE HABIT OF WORK! That work habit is an awful habit and their diagnosis may be true, but is it not possible that the shock of the horrors of war made the people THINK for themselves and try to answer the question, Are we working to live or living to work?

I do not mind working in order to live, but I would hate to think that I lived just to work, especially when I had to work under such an arrangement of society that I got the work and the capitalists got the reward.

The Detroit News published a cartoon of a well and fashionably dressed fur-clad sassy looking little miss labeled "dancing teacher" talking to a poorly clad ill nourished bedraggled looking woman labeled "schoolteacher". She was saying "Educate their feet THAT pays."

Kansas now has an anti-strike law with teeth. The governor justifies it on the ground that the rights of the consumer are greater than the rights of the producers. Wonder how that governor would fit into a society where producers could be consumers and consumers MUST be producers?

Last Cuban sugar crop sold for about 6c a pound. If you are shy of sugar you can sweeten up on that information.

Now the "unspeakable Turk" has had four-fifths of his nation taken from him according to the daylie press.

COMRADES ATTENTION! Old Postage Stamps or original envelopes or entire stamp collections bought at highest prices, if you have anything to offer, call at the office of the Toiler or phone Harvard 3639.

You can't beat the Portsmouth, O., comrades when it comes to making the Toiler grow. R. Dodge sends in 10 in a bunch and orders a list of pamphlets.

Ten subs.—\$7.00—that's the work of comrade V. R. Kintz of Bucyrus, O. And he did it without any coaxing

No Mable, that does not prove the superiority of christianity over the Mohammedan religion. It merely proves that where there is oil the grabbers will find a way.

G. Bernard Shaw's Favorite Churchman, the Dean of St. Paul curly dismisses bible science as "a cosmology which has been definitely disproved."

I want to emphasize and corroborate an editorial statement which recently appeared in the Toiler that the local Commercial Clubs of America are the breeding places of the pestiferous White Guards of America and these in turn will become the White Terror of the days to come. Keep your eye on the doings of your local Commercial Club. They have a national Commercial Club with headquarters in their own building in Washington D. C., and the National Club sets in motion most of the unAmerican and repressive action which emanates from the National Capitol.

You can judge the culture of people by the popular songs they sing. Our popular songs are a mixture of Moody and Sankey hymns, a stuttering stable boy who "when the moon rose over the cow shed was waiting for Katie at the k-itchin door" and a jazzy jazy medley of suggestive nonsense, generally on the borderland of the indecent, the smutty—and the obscene.

It is a brave man these days that will keep an itemized account of his expenditures.

The bourgeois are getting alarmed, and rightly so, over the attitude of the negro. The colored boys who returned from France brought with them an arrogance and defiance suggestive of the humble man who has cringed for the last time.

When the working class will no longer cringe the dominance of the master class is doomed.

The Dean of St. Paul declared that "if the bishops refuse to ordain all those postulants who cannot swallow the creeds, the infallibility of the scriptures, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the virgin birth in the old fashioned way, the clergy will consist of fools, bigots and liars."

According to the plutes May Day this year is to be American Day. Let us hope so, with especial emphasis upon the first amendment of the American Constitution which declares for free speech, free press and free (and un-molested) public assemblage.

There is a shortage of study class teachers. When it comes to teaching proletarian science the prize unquestionably goes to Ludwig C. K. A. Alphabet Martens who has been engaged most of the winter holding a very successful class in proletarian science. He has been handicapped greatly as his classes were made up mostly of U. S. Congressmen. I do not contend that Martens is capable to accomplish much in the way of educating Congressmen, but over their shoulder he has succeeded in reaching a large portion of the newspaper readers of the nation.

Spring is here (on the calendar). In other words its moving day.

Rents are higher. So also is the indignation of the rent payers.

Pay it and grumble not. That's the system. We are a nation of rent payers, always paying for the privilege of being allowed to stay on earth.

The members of the master class are ALL class-conscious. It is only the members of the working class who believe the capitalist lie that there are no classes in America.

There are master class hotels and working class lodging houses; master class theaters and working class moving class jobs; master class cemeteries and working class potter's fields. Henry, you are indeed a Henry Dubb if you cannot see it!

According to a master class opinion, the working class idea of a bath tub is an ideal place for the storage of coal. If this were true, what a horrible commentary upon the effect of master-class control of the educational system!

"If you cannot beat 'em join 'em, has always considered good politics. It seems to be the Allied attitude towards Russia now."

Senator Borah waved his hand at President Wilson the other day, from this distance I couldn't be sure whether he was waving his hand or shaking his fist.

Now comes a fellow, according to B. L. T. who wants dictionaries instead of Gideon Bibles, in hotel rooms.

The dictionaries MIGHT be used.

too. If there is a way to keep a red from showing his colors, we haven't learned the method.

"I want to do my bit toward lifting some of the ignorance of the workers," writes comrade Chatman of Akron. And he takes the best method to do it. His literature order amounts to \$11.50. When those pamphlets get in their work there will be a lightning of the burden of ignorance that oppresses the workers.

"Every slave should read them," writes comrade Wobinoff Weston, W. Va. He means the list of pamphlets which he orders. We have more of them too. Some for you, comrade.

How the Pendulum Swings

LONDON.—The southeastern blockade of Russia, instead of being a blockade against Russia, is now a blockade against the allies, declares the Paris correspondent of The Westminster Gazette.

"The Red armies have broken the narrow circle; they are masters of an immense country with prodigious natural resources," he writes. "The grain of the Ukraine, the cotton of Turkestan, the copper of the Ural mountains, the coal and iron of Donetz are at their disposal, while they doubtless have great quantities of oil."

"The blockade was always a two-edged sword. The blunt edge was previously turned toward us. Now the sharp edge is against us, and the Bolsheviks can laugh at the blunt edge."

CHICAGO.—The curtain has now gone up on the second scene of the north woods drama which began with the demand by the convention of the Lumber Workers' Industrial union at Superior for decent living and working conditions. In The Chicago Daily News there recently appeared the following advertisement:

"Men—For guard duty with military service; must be of good build and thoroughly able to obey orders; must be at least 5 feet 10 inches and not less than 180 pounds; this service for the north woods. All applicants must state age and experience, and the best of references, and be citizens of the United States."

"This service is to rid our country of a real menace and we need real men. Address H. B., Daily News."

BERLIN.—The Social-Democratic party of Germany has formally acknowledged that there can hereafter be no possibility of accord with the Independent Socialists. At a meeting of the executive committee held in the Reichstag, the party somewhat tardily recognizes the decision reached by the Independents at their Leipzig conference Dec. 16, that the aims of the two parties are in direct antagonism. President Ebert and several ministers attended the meeting.

STOCKHOLM.—A forceful protest against the white terror carried on by the Social-Democrats of Germany has been issued by the Socialist party of Sweden. The statement calls upon the workers to western Europe "to create a current of world-opinion against this reactionary regime which is maintaining itself by force and stifling the voice of the working class by strangling its press."

NEW YORK.—The schools of New York city are being crammed with ignorant and unfit school teachers because the city administration will not pay wages high enough to attract well-equipped ones, Rose Schneidermann, labor organizer, reported to the Central Federated union recently. Miss Schneidermann declared that efficient teachers were resigning for want of a living wage, and that Mayor Hylan had lowered the standard of examinations in order to admit low-grade teachers.

LONDON.—That Great Britain means to establish a trade monopoly with soviet Russia at the same time she is carrying on war against her by means of her fleet and the Polish armies is the conviction of the Scandinavian countries, declares George Lansbury, editor of The London Daily Herald, who has just been to Scandinavia.

"All the Danish and Scandinavian people welcomed the raising of the discovered that it is still impossible blockade, but since then they have to do business with Russia, and that the allies are using the British fleet and Polish armies to continue war against Russia," he said. "Consequently, the view is gaining ground that Great Britain alone among the powers will be permitted to trade with Russia, and that at the same time she will carry on war with that country. No one believes here that the British fleet has

gone to protect people against the soviets, or that the Poles are defending Poland. It is well understood here that the soviets are on the defensive and that their one desire is peace with their neighbors."

PITTSBURGH, PA.—Negro workers imported to break the steel strike are now being discharged in crowds, it was reported at a meeting of the committee to organize the iron and steel industry held here.

NEW YORK.—Italy is in a state of revolutionary expectation, N. Giacometti, an associate of the famous anarchist leader, Malatesta, writes to a friend in New York.

"The situation in Italy is most peculiar," he said. "Every day it seems as if the revolution would break out, and then everything bursts like a soap bubble. Agitation, strikes and riots follow one another continually and produce a strange state of mind which helps to keep up abnormal social conditions and which would make any cataclysm that might occur seem natural."

"In short, we are in a period of revolutionary expectation, with the accompanying vague, general fear."

"My opinion is that this state of affairs will not end very soon, but will drag itself out, because among the leaders of the different revolutionary parties and organizations, there are not men of sufficient audacity and ability, to meet the present historical crisis. There is more revolutionary spirit among the masses than among the leaders."

PARIS.—Newspaper workers have adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a Sunday holiday over the whole country. The plan if adopted by the government, will mean that morning papers will come out Sunday but not Monday, and that evening papers will not appear on Sunday.

VANCOUVER, B. C.—The lumber interests of British Columbia are starting their heavy war tanks rolling against the lines of the Lumber Workers' Industrial union, section of the Canadian One Big Union.

A deftly worded notice has been posted in every logging camp in the dominion, announcing that hereafter the lumber industry will be run on the open-shop principle, but that no discrimination will be made against lawful organizations, or against individual workers.

Members of the L. W. I. U. here declare that this is nothing more nor less than a declaration of war, since the notice is so worded that their union may very well be declared unlawful in spite of statements to the contrary made by Gideon Roberts, minister of labor.

NEW YORK.—An Italian labor paper is to be established here—the first free working class organ to represent the 4,000,000 Italians in this country. The paper will be called Avanti! (Forward) after the famous Socialist paper in Italy which now has editions in Milan, Rome and Turin. The enterprise is being backed by organized labor in New York, especially by those in the textile industry, of which 75 per cent in the country are Italians.

PARIS.—Lloyd George is convinced that the peace treaty is a voodoo to its framers, according to a story in the Petit Parisien. Upon hearing that that the peace treaty is a hoodoo reported to have exclaimed to a friend:

"Who would have foreseen this? One would almost believe that the peace treaty is bringing misfortune to all who have touched it."

"That it so," replied his friend. "Orlando, Wilson, Clemenceau—of the four there remains only you—"

"And in six months," said Lloyd George, "it will be my turn."

The Black Sheep.

CHAPT. XXIII.

Another Phase of the Struggle.

Two weeks after his incarceration Jack was once more brought into the fifth littered court room of the multiplicity of Anamossee. Here the jailer handed him his suit case and a railroad ticket and laconically told him to get the next train out of town. He was not a little surprised when the boy informed him that that would be alright if his two companions accompanied him; and that unless they did he would not go until his sentence had expired. The jailer not accustomed to hearing such talk from what he considered a mere hobo attempted to employ the time honored methods of petty officialdom. Said he: "The judge gave me orders to turn you loose and to see to it that you got out of town, that is all there is to it. Now you git."

"And if I don't get, then what?" "Then By God I'll lock you up again."

"Well that's what I want. So that isn't so bad."

"No, we'll put you on the train and see that you git out of town. It's the judge's orders."

"Well, I'll tell you partner, the judge can put me on the train and send me out of town and I can get on the train and come back again. Merely throwing a cat out of the window does not stop her from going under the bed, and what is more I might as well tell you right now that I am going to stay in this town in jail or out until my partners are released and neither you nor your judge nor any one below the supreme court of the United States is going to exile me. I will stay here if I have to go to Harvey and get a district Court order restraining justice Duffy from letting me out of jail. Either we all come out or I go back in." So saying he flung his suitcase in the corner and sat down upon a bench and grinned at the jailer.

Low Brow did not know how to take this so he walked out of the court room and into the livery barn office to inform hizzoner of the boy's decision. The story amused the fat Irishman and after taking a copious draft of the forbidden juice, which he kept in large quantities under the oats in his feed bin, he then followed the jailer into the court room.

He smiled good humoredly on the prisoner; it was the first time he had seen him since ordering him to jail. After once more listening to Low Brow's story which this time was far more accurate than what it was at the trial he asked the boy if that were really his attitude. Jack admitted that it was. The judge then told him that he was a bigger fool than he had considered him to be. "These bums would not do that for you kid. They would let you rot and beat it the first chance they got. One of the reasons I have for letting you go is that I came to the conclusion is that you were not really bad but simply in bad company. Now take my advice and get out of town; it is the best thing you can do. Has Low Brow given you a ticket?"

Here the jailer told the judge that the ticket had been offered to the boy but that he had refused it.

The judge using his wit where he lacked wisdom resorted to diplomacy. "Any way," said he, "go up town and look around. Get yourself a bath and a hair cut, in the meantime I will see the city attorney and find out what I can do about your friends. I know that what you say is true, all that I can do is lock you up again, and I don't want to do that. But I'll be hanged if I'll turn those other bums loose until they have served their time."

"And I refuse to be turned loose," persisted the boy. "I'll go back into that jail and stay there. I am as guilty as they and they are as innocent as I. I'm not going out of this can until we go together."

"Well any way go up town and get fixed up and then come back and we'll lock you up," said the judge, handing the boy his suit case. "Take this along, you may want to change clothes or something. Come back in a couple of hours and we'll put you in."

"That's a bargain," said the boy as he took the suitcase and walked out of the door.

Jack had no sooner left the court room than the judge turned the key in the door, as he said to his officer: "Now he is out, and he'll have to go some to get back in."

"Yes," agreed the other, "you have him out of jail but how are you going to get him out of town?"

"Don't bother your head about that. He has only two or three dollars in his pocket; he'll be hunting another climate in a day or so. I can't understand why Gus is so damned anxious to get him out of town. In fact I don't know why he is interested in the case. I wouldn't have turned him loose but we can't go against Gus. He'll simply raise the devil I could turn the other two out but that would raise a stink. Every body would want to know why we did it. Once get a bunch of hens to sneaking and you don't know where it'll end. I wish Gus hadn't butted in." So saying he went over to the livery barn and called up the city attorney. The two went over the entire case. Small head was of the opinion that "The young snot should be locked up again, but when Duffy informed him that Anderson wanted him freed he immediately read an entirely different meaning into the law."

On the point of running him out of town however the lawyer agreed that it could not be done without running serious risks if the boy had any backing. He was fully aware that there were powers in the United States greater than those of the chief taxpayer of Anamossee.

After this conversation Duffy hitched up a team and took a trip out of town so that when Jack came back to re-enter the jail, neither judge nor jailer could be found. And in view of the fact that it was the second of December in the state of North Dakota he was literally left in the cold.

While up town he had taken Judge Duffy's advice. He had spent the

money he had in his pocket for a hair cut and shave, had eaten a meal at the restaurant, bought himself a suit of underwear and found to his joy that his fall's wages was still between the lining and the cover of his suitcase. This money however he determined not to use unless he absolutely had to do it, which now seemed eminent. He had only twelve cents left.

Not knowing what else to do he wandered about the town and finally decided to call on the preacher. This was an act of atavism, for generations his ancestors had been priest ridden. The preacher is a powerful factor in orthodox Christian life. Those who have read "The Doctor of the Old School" and "The Doctor of the New Bush" by Ian MacLaren will understand some of the spiritual workings of a powerful church organization on unlettered minds. Also how even the educated will retain the mental characteristics through out all the days of their life. As Kerwood says in his stories of the Northland in describing the characteristics of the wolf Swift Lighting, "was the Ghost of Skagan the great Dane which ran in the wolf's veins and drew him irresistibly to the light in the white man's cabin. So it might have been said of Jack, the radical and the thinker that it was the Ghost of Calvin, of Knox and Cotton Mather down to the blood of his own father and mother which drew him toward the church. Mentally he knew that the church symbolized the cross and was therefore alien to the Christ; but it was this hereditarily compelled him to go to the preachers house. His early training in this played but an insignificant part."

It would be difficult just to describe his emotion. A man coming from a poor region and settling in a fat pasture often feels a longing to go back to his native heath. Many foreigners who are successful in accumulating a little wealth in the land of their sojourn return to their peasant life in their home land. So the boy after feeling for several months in rich mental pasture now felt a strange urge to visit a preacher and to hear some of the old familiar jargon. It was a phase of the homesick instinct that asserted itself. It was a mental throw back.

When he arrived at the parson's house he felt a wonderful mingling of emotions. It was a conglomerate of hereditary reverence and mental aversion. He was firmly convinced that what this man and his institution stood for was nothing but deception and fraud, and yet, there was a certain mysticism that threw a kind of halo around the man of the cloth. As the boy phrased it in later years, "I felt like kneeling at his feet and punching him in the jaw," all at the same time.

The preacher received him in his study and looked righteously horrified when the boy told him that he had just been released from jail and that he could not get in again. That the judge had gone back on his promise to return him to his cell. He told the preacher all that had happened, also why it had happened and asked him to find him shelter for the night, or to find the proper officials to return him to his mates.

It is needless to say that the parson could not understand his mental attitude. He proceeded to lecture the boy on his unbelief. He urged him to go home. To get out of town any where so that he would be out of the way. But help, no he could not do it. He could not afford to associate with jail birds. He had to consider his standing in the community. His was a spiritual work apart from the world. He was sorry for the boy but could do nothing.

Jack didn't argue points with him very much. He was only impressed with the truth of his friend's philosophy. Collins had made the remark once that there was more christianity at the water front than on king hill that there was more human charity behind the colored lights of shame than behind the colored lights of the church; that there was more brotherhood in the jungles than in the room the boys met, so he decided to try his luck in the other part of town. He simply was resolved to test out the theory of his friends.

Leaving the parson's house he slowly walked down the hill toward the main part of town. He passed a few people on their way home as it was now late in the day but no one seemed to notice him. When he reached Main street he met the first familiar face, it was Olive Anderson on her way home. She looked him square in the face and stopped. Jack could not find words with which to break the silence which had last but a few seconds, yet which appeared as an eternity to him. It was the girl who spoke first saying, "it was a hard job to get you out boy, but I did it. I simply did not give 'em any rest until they turned you loose."

Now Jack found his tongue, "I had almost said that it was very kind of you, but now that I am out how am I to get in again?"

"Why should you want to get in again?"

"For several reasons. First my friends are still in, and I don't want to leave them. I was as guilty as they and they are as innocent as I. In the second place, they took all my money and with only twelve cents in my pocket to face this bitter night out doors is no pleasant prospect. Frankly I'd rather be in jail. Still do not misunderstand me, I fully appreciate your efforts. You did a noble work. It is indeed such as yours our faith in the basic goodness of human kind is anchored."

"Where are you going to stay to-night?"

"I don't know, Box car may be."

"No you won't. You go and stay in the poolroom and wait. I'll go and see the Rev. Goodman."

"That's no use, I've just been there. He dare not do anything. He is afraid that my sin may stain his celestial garments, or tarnish the luster of his crown."

"I might have known that. Any way go to the pool room and I'll go home and see Dad."

(Continued next week.)

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