

The Call

Devoted to the Interests of the Working People.

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GOOD OLD PATRIOTISM

It was quite sane and safe, excepting for a few accidents, but the morning after it was discovered that those who furnished the fireworks, without which we never would know that we are the land of the free and the home of the brave, had done a considerable amount of grafting. They had merely received about five times the market price for the rockets and candles and other things. Of course, some of the city authorities must have helped them, and there is a suspicion that the safe and saners were the ones who did it.

There is really no such thing as sanity or safeness when it comes to business matters. As it is the whole duty of man to hammer out the largest possible profit, man does not much care whether he takes his profit from an individual neighbor or from his own beloved municipality or country. Sometimes it is better to deal with the country or the city because there is less chance of an unpleasant come-back. The individual is prone to be angered and he might raise the Dickens. For that reason it has always been looked upon as somewhat better to rob your own beloved country. It is a sane way of doing business because usually it is safe. Nobody cares, or, formerly nobody cared, and the thieves could get away with it.

At the present time, unfortunately, the public is manifesting a most unpatriotic curiosity about the expenditure of public money. That is what has caused the uneasiness among the fireworks gentlemen. Of course, they are hurt and shocked at the thought that there should be any question about their having merely furnished twenty cents' worth of goods for each dollar, retail price. Still, such things have had to come. The public is growing more and more curious. It is daily manifesting greater concern about what it gets in a civic way and it really wants a return for the money.

Perhaps this may be unpatriotic on its part. It may interfere with business, but it is all in the line with the growing consciousness that private business is not a thing that can any longer be permitted to interfere with public welfare.

A HOT WEATHER ILLUSTRATION

Very coyly and reluctantly the Interborough is reversing its former adamant decision, and intimates that if it is coaxed enough it will gain be willing to take some huge additional privileges from the city. At first it said it was out of the subway situation. It wanted all or nothing. Now it seems perfectly willing to take anything not tied down. This, of course, will result in a delay and it is delay for which the New York traveling public is panting.

Take the subway on any of these nice, sizzling hot days and nights. It smells beautifully sweaty, sour, foul and nauseating. It is a few degrees warmer than the warm out of doors. The fans in the car simply stir up in a languid manner the filthy, superheated, too often breathed air. When the cars are filled, as they usually are, a subway train is one of the most awful tortures this side of the nether regions.

As there is 18 per cent profit in it the backers of the subway do not care.

If a man or woman seeks to obtain relief the elevated is open to them. It is open also to a few hundred thousand other persons, also seeking relief. The trains are so crowded, and crawl at such a pace that it is torture as acute to ride in them as it is to ride in the subway.

But the Interborough knows the public is patient, that it is slow to wrath and ineffective in protest. It knows that as long as private ownership exists it will be possible to abuse the public and drive it in the same old profitable way. There has been very little demand for public ownership, or very little demand that has manifested itself. The chief newspapers of the city, allied as they are with private interests, have carefully smothered all such demands.

People can suffer acutely and it makes no difference. Out of their suffering is coined that handy 18 per cent, and that is all the company cares for. Such crowding and such viciously inhuman incompetence will doubtlessly increase the income of doctors and undertakers. That fact, however, has no influence on the heads of the traction companies serving this city.

Yet there is an excellent illustration of what the city can do when it has no interference from private companies. The best means of communication in this vicinity are the Staten Island ferries. The privately owned ferries are a disgrace. This ferry is as good as could be demanded. Travelers, however, do not bother about making comparisons. They simply go ahead and endure any indignities heaped upon them and suffer any discomfort the company sees fit to impose in its pursuit of greater profits.

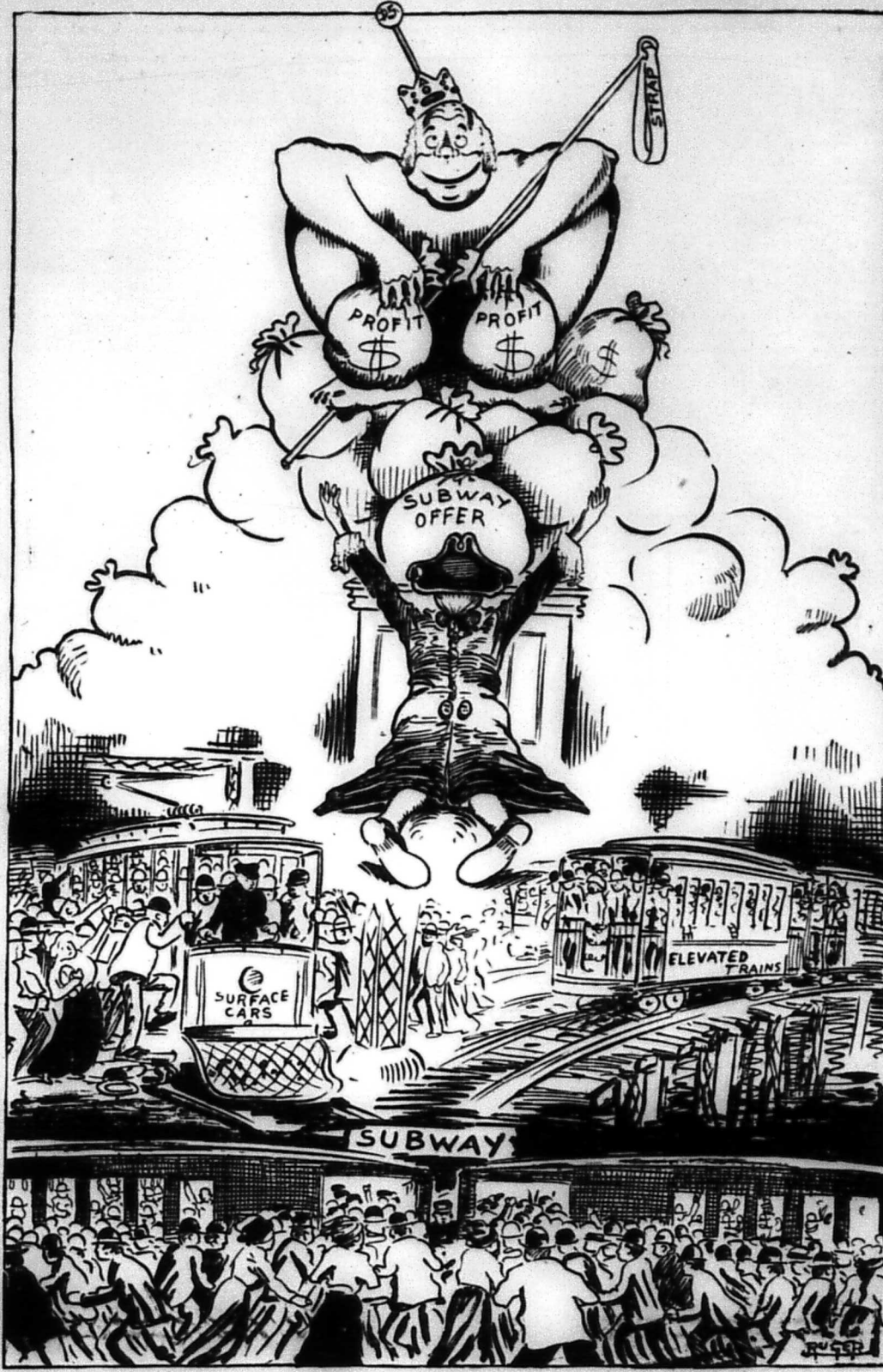
GROWING COMMONPLACE

Still another apprehended burglar admits he is a gentleman. There was no necessity for the admission, because all thieves are gentlemen. They will not submit to the coarse drudgery of work. The latest, self-admitted gentleman burglar is Karl von Metz Meyer. Now, if he was only von Meyer he would be doubly a gentleman and his name would look so much better in print. Had he been Baron Karl von Metz von Meyer, gentle both on his mother's and father's side, he would have been worth two pages in every Sunday supplement except that of The Call. He gets all the fame right here that is going to him, and that only by way of illustration.

Socialists long ago announced the great economic discovery of the gentleman burglar. They put it in the form that all profit is robbery, that all exploitation is stealing, and that it is no more honorable to take money from a pay envelope than it is to blow open a safe.

They also are of the opinion that in this labor saving age it might be just as well to cut out the tautology involved in the expression "gentleman burglar." So are they all, all gentlemen. It is the sign of the craft. They toil not, neither do they hesitate to steal, and it is on their not toiling that their gentleness is founded.

WHERE YOUR NICKELS GO TO



A SERIOUS KIND OF JOKE

The New York Sun, a few weeks past, printed the following article. The Sun evidently thinks it funny. "A World of Imitations" does not appear to be tragic. Neither does that worthy newspaper perceive the cause of all this welter and hodge-podge of deception, this synthesis of lies which makes up capitalism. But we know—we rank, iconoclastic Socialists. We know the remedy, too, which is still better. Let us not, however, preach, but pass to the huge joke here, with sprung by the Sun which shines for all:

A WORLD OF IMITATIONS.

Henry Wickwire made his morning toilet with a cake of unadulterated soap, a near-linen towel and a hairbrush having imitation bristles. The comb looked like tortoise-shell, but it wasn't. His trousers were made of imitation wool. His waistcoat had a white edging sewed underneath the V. His coat was fearfully padded at the shoulders and had a make-believe set of buttons and buttonholes on each cuff.

His shoes were second, but they had been given a finish like that of the most expensive custom shoes. His shoelaces were imitation silk and so were his socks.

In his waistcoat pocket he carried a rolled gold watch. He fastened his necktie with an imitation pearl pin.

Henry Wickwire went to breakfast. He sat in a birchwood chair that had been stained to imitate mahogany. This imitation mahogany chair had an imitation leather seat.

On the floor was an imitation Turkish rug.

An imitation French clock ticked on the mantelpiece. The mantelpiece was made of imitation marble.

The silver on the table was silver plated. Henry Wickwire and a cup of coffee. This coffee was largely an imitation. He had two fresh eggs, soft boiled. These fresh eggs had been reposing in lime water for over six months.

He also had two slices of home-made bread which had been supplied by a baker. The bread was full of alum and the loaf had been short weight. The butter was country butter and had been made in Jersey City. Its beautiful color was artificial. Its flavor was the result of a combination of chemicals.

Henry Wickwire went to work. His gloves were imitation buckskin. His all-wool overcoat was 80 per cent cotton. His all-Havana cigarette had been grown in Kentucky.

He reached his office at a quarter past 9. He had been due at 9 o'clock and had thus short-changed his boss a quarter of an hour. He put on an imitation black silk coat and opened his desk.

Henry Wickwire was a claim clerk. Customers often claim that their shipments are short or that some other mistake had been made against them. Henry took up the first claim and glanced it over.

"Fine," said Henry. He was cutting it again when he came to a piece of thread in the center of the meat. He then perceived that he was eating chopped meat which had been pressed together in the form of a veal cutlet.

He left the cutlet and ate a piece of old-fashioned New England pie. This New England masterpiece had been fabricated at a pie factory on Houston street. Its composition was a mystery which we dare not try to solve.

Henry returned to the office and gossiped with the bookkeeper and the stenographer. The bookkeeper wore patent leather shoes, and after years of experiment and practice, he had learned to speak with the broad A. The stenographer wore black velvet shoes; a set of imitation Russian sables was draped over the hat-rack.

At the switchboard the operator was talking to one of her friends who lived in Brooklyn. The two assistant bookkeepers were discussing Matty's salary for 1911.

A step was heard in the hall. The next moment every one was hard at work and the next moment but one the boss returned from lunch. He left early. Henry Wickwire followed his example.

He dressed for dinner with unusual care and called on a girl in the West 30s. "I've heard of a new French table d'hôte," said Henry Wickwire, "an awfully bohemian place. Shall we try it, Doris?"

"Awfully jolly," said Doris. Doris's godmothers and godfathers had given her the name of Henrietta, but she had preferred the name of Doris. She also affected to like caviar and made much of these phrases, "Awfully jolly," "Si'l vous plait" and "Merci Mieux."

Wherefore Henry Wickwire thought he loved her. They went to the bohemian place and drank French wine that came partly from a California vineyard and partly from Crotan waters. They also consumed a quantity of lukewarm macaroni covered with brick sauce and spiced with glue.

They gazed curiously at the other bohemians, and in due course of time Henry Wickwire took Doris home. Later he went home himself. He laid himself down to sleep on an imitation brass bed and an imitation hair mattress. A pair of imitation woolen blankets kept him warm.

"I never saw a neater figure than Doris," he reflected, "nor such beautiful hair."

And as for Doris, over on the West Thirties, she had put her hair on the bureau and hung her figure on a coat hanger.

A BLIND COMRADE'S REQUEST

Dear Comrades—In order to make clear what I wish to state, I will quote from part of an article which appeared in the Matilda Ziegler magazine for the blind April, 1911: "We have been accustomed to regard the unemployed blind as a victim of their infirmities, that is to say, that if their sight were miraculously restored they would find work. The problem of the underpaid and unemployed is too large to discuss here. There are, it is estimated, over a million of unemployed, not because of physical defects, but because of physical defects of production necessitates a large margin of idle men. The means of employment, that is, the land, factory and mine, in fact, all the tools of production are in the hands of a minority and are used rather for profit than to keep all men busy. Hence there are more men than jobs. The workman has nothing but his labor power to sell, so naturally the weaker man is thrust aside to give place to the stronger."

Then the article goes on to tell how only in one corner of this great problem we find the unemployed blind. We may build special factories, schools, etc., for them, but the blind man cannot become an independent member of society until his seeing brothers have an equal opportunity. In order to study the economic problem of the blind, we must first study the economic problem of the seeing. The magazine recommends such books as "Poverty" and Kelly's "Twentieth Century Socialism." As I only wrote this article from memory, I have not it exactly as it reads, but have condensed it a little. What I want to get at is this. We of the Socialist party are expending vast sums of money to put out literature to educate the people. As this literature is printed only for the seeing, those of the blind who are socially inclined, and who are not fortunate in having people read such literature to them have no chance to become educated along these lines. Why cannot something be done for them? The minds of the blind have already been poisoned with such books as "Present Day Problems," by President Taft. Now all good thinking Socialists know what little good that book is to the unemployed blind. The religious papers have flooded the blind with their literature, which does them but little good only to tell them that they ought to be glad they are blind because it is a blessing from God, etc. Now it is up to the Socialists to give them something that will educate them to their own advantage. We do not ask for a periodical such as the Appeal or International Socialist Review, but we would be satisfied

ON ROTATION IN OFFICE

Editor of The Call: The International Socialist Review shows a refreshing frankness in its July editorial on the "rotation in office" referendum.

When the rotation scheme was first sprung (and carried by being linked with a provision for annual elections) the pretense was made that it was a good plan in general not to permit any Comrade to be elected to national party office for more than two years in the course of his life. It was pretended that the purpose of the scheme was to assure the election of humble and unknown Comrades, who otherwise would have no chance.

Now that New York, Boston, Milwaukee, and other locals have initiated a separate vote to repeal the rotation scheme, the Review is forced into the open. It now concedes that the rotation plan may not be good as a general and permanent rule. It frankly admits that it wants the plan maintained long enough to cover the next election, and after that is quite willing to have it repealed.

In other words, the only object of the scheme is, not to give Jimmie Higgins a chance, but just to disqualify eight particular Comrades from being candidates at the next election, and thus to improve the chances for certain other candidates. If we have a free election, the Review fears that the party members may choose to elect the present national secretary and some of the executive members. Its only hope of defeating these men, whom it believes that the party members trust, is to get the party to tie its hands in advance.

If Barnes, Carey, Berger, Hillquit, and a few others in whom the party members have again and again shown their confidence, can be kept off the ballot, there will be a better chance for the election of Kerr, Walling, Haywood, Bohm, and other representatives of that minority whose theories and policies the majority of the party have rejected in four national conventions, in numerous national referendums, and in the State conventions and sections of national committee men in most of the States in recent years.

The Review knows that in an election of national party officers, party members do not vote for unknown

Comrades, but for men having a national reputation. It knows that certain proportion vote for the best known names on the ballot, without thinking very much about their own theories and policies. If, then, the best known men among those who stand for the accepted policies of the party can be barred from the ballot, there is a stronger chance for the election of known opponents of those accepted policies to be carried into office by the votes of those who actually favor their views, plus the votes of those who are more influenced by the best known names than by a consideration of what these names stand for.

The group which the Review represents have tried by all means to control of the party. They have failed to convince the majority that their views are correct. They have resorted to a campaign of personal slander against the present national secretary and the present members of the executive. They have heaped upon accusations and insinuations, dodged every demand for proofs, and depended on iteration an repetition to make their slanders stick. Their latest card is to take advantage of the impression created by these slanders while they are fresh in memory to snare the party into depriving itself of the opportunity to exercise a free choice in the next election.

If the opposition were honest in its claims that Barnes, Carey, Berger, Hillquit, and the others do not represent the rank and file of the party, and if it were honest in its professions of devotion to democracy, it would want to have the question settled by a free and open vote. Knowing that these Comrades do represent the rank and file, its only hope is to have a snap judgment that will, so to speak, paralyze the majority and leave the organized minority supreme.

Comrades, if you agree with me in wanting the party always to have its hands free, if you want to see its rule maintained and its policies not rebuked, see that your votes recorded this week in favor of my proposal to strike out all of Article III, Section 3, following the words "annually."

ALGERNON LEWIS
1186 Madison avenue.

THE CONTEST IN GERMANY

By HERBERT E. KINNEY.

That the Comrades must encounter an occasional disappointment on the road which leads, as we all believe, to ultimate victory is a truth enforced by recent occurrences in the Reichstag.

The administrative control heretofore exercised by the workers in connection with the funds to which they have themselves contributed under the law for insurance against illness has been taken away by the passage of an act proposed by the Government.

The vote in the Reichstag was 209 in favor of the change to 101 opposed.

This action of the majority shows, in a way not to be mistaken, that the hostility to the worker in the growth of the working class movement and that a time has come when the workers must expect not only lack of progress in social policies but now and then retrogression, as well as assaults upon existing rights.

Of a similar character is a revival of the suggestion for the enactment of a law punishing strikers with imprisonment. The success of this proposal seems very doubtful, however, in face of the widespread protest which the scheme has already provoked.

Although reaction has scored a temporary success in the matter of the insurance law the Comrades are confident of victory in the elections, while their opponents are correspondingly depressed.

A cartoon entitled "Election Terrors" shows the "Hotel Reichstag" with two guests in the open doorway prepared to depart, one of them a representative of the Center and the other Heydenbrand, "the brains" of the Chancellor, while Rothman-Holloweg himself, as hotel porter, stands with the hand baggage on the hotel piazza.

All three are looking out upon a stormy landscape, where Jupiter Tonans (Social-Democratic party) is hurling his thunderbolts.

The legend below the picture reads: "When 'We' can go on in this weather. Let's wait till winter; it may be over by that time!"

THE BOSS'N YARN.

"Did I ever tell you the tale, sir, of the rats on the Mary Ann? How we salted their tails to catch 'em, and slaughtered 'em to a man, all except one hoary varmint, a wily old bundle of craft, who, when 'e had dodged us neatly, put 'is paw to 'is nose and laughed? But one day we cornered 'im nicely, and all of us crowded round. Did he give up the game, d'ye say, sir? Not a bit of it, you be bound. No, 'e jumped on the deck-rail, blow me, and, takin' a mighty leap, 'e landed on top of a seagull wot was swimming the vasty deep. They fought for a moment gamely, but the rat 'e was at 'er throat, and when 'e 'ad killed 'er thro' nor, 'e turned 'er into a boat. Yas, 'e lifted 'er right wink quickly, as a sail for 'e to catch the breeze, and rowed with the left to the shore, sir. Wot's mine? The same asin, please."

with one or two books for the present. We know the party is not so well fixed financially as the other party that has poisoned the minds of the blind, but I think there are Socialists enough in the United States to support the printing of at least one or two books. We do not ask for more at present, because it costs considerably more to print for the blind than for the seeing. One of the blind Comrades recommends "Foundations of Socialism," by Richardson, to start on. The blind man needs something simple at first as the majority are not well read along these lines. I had first thought to write the Appeal, but on second thought, I deemed it wiser to present the case before Local Rochester, as they probably understand more about agitation of important subjects than I do. Hoping this will meet with your favor and Local Rochester will do what it can to aid this cause. I am yours in the fight for universal brotherhood.

R. G. FERTIG.

AFTER SIXTEEN YEARS

By JOSEPH E. COHEN.

However heartbroken the insurance might be over such an incident, it is becoming more and more apparent that Taft will be nominated for re-election by the Republicans.

And it seems to be equally certain that Governor Woodrow Wilson will be accorded the Democratic standard.

Let there be any apprehensions upon the part of timid capitalists whose Mecca is Wall Street, a "conservative" will be Wilson's running mate. And, similarly, should Taft's nomination put "progressive" Republicans into sulking in their tents, so-called "progressive" will be chosen as Taft's running mate.

But it is equally likely that the man to manage the Republican campaign will be Senator Penrose, the boss of the Pennsylvania machine, who will be general of the reciprocity war.

So that the new characters on the forefront of the 1912 campaign will be Woodrow Wilson and Bolsé Penrose.

Such a situation recalls what happened in this country in the campaign of 1896, sixteen years ago.

At that time Bryan was the hero of the day. He came as a fresh leader, with his crown and cross and bolt, with his gaze thrown to the money lords who fattened by the standard, who oppressed alike the mechanic and farmer.

By Bryan lost. Since that time he has passed through a process of being vindicated. The only murmurs of a vindicated policy economically he has offered in recent years was that when he brought with him from abroad government ownership of railroads. And that he quickly rid himself when he found his own colleagues would not stand sponsor for it.

As against the economic decline implied in the crown and cross principles, he now babbles something about "letting the people rule," which is just as meaningless as it is hoary.

And Bryan's defection from his principles the defection of his party indeed of both parties. In the sixteen years many a paper-monger has gone to the waste basket, Roosevelt, Tom Watson and Hearst, in addition to the more prominent ones, in addition to Bryan. And nothing has happened after them but a few idle words of idle hour.

So that Woodrow Wilson, the hero of his party, has no policy that can be put into definite terms, has accomplished nothing of any real importance to the people of his country and has no program but that of the shifting sands of popular opinion for political change.

For that matter, the whole of the village show in Washington is being worked by the resident managers of the two old parties whose eyes have been fed on the 1912 situation.

The funniest feature of the show is the attempt of the mass media to make it appear there is a shade of difference in their condition of blackness.

Penrose is interesting, as was what was sixteen years ago, when he was the protégé of Matt Quay. He was then at the zenith of his power. And take him all in all, Matt Quay was a Napoleon among the politicians and a man who was a "straw" in an "insurgent" of the Washington stripe, went to school to the strategist.

But "what a falling off there between the old King Quay and the new Penrose, who took his place!" Penrose is only interesting as a how long after Quay's death, because he built runs, because of his political impetus he gave it.

Yet Wilson and Penrose are men who will strutt before the lights in the memorable past. Can we expect anything from them but low comedy, with hardy excitement to keep the crowd rapt?

But there will be no end of it in that same campaign. It is none of the old party's business. Nor would it so amuse them. Nor would they so amuse them after hardly having had time to serve for the marriage bed of the Socialist party and the masses.